



## Indicators of Program Appropriateness to Higher Education

SACSCOC accreditation standard 9.1 requires that educational programs of the college “are based on fields of study appropriate to higher education.” This issue of *Chipola College Facts!* presents information on how the college ensures that its programs comply with standard 9.1.

The appropriateness of Chipola’s degree programs to higher education is grounded in state law. Appropriateness is also ensured by requirements that program offerings be approved by the college curriculum and courses of study committee, Florida Department of Education, and college administrative personnel. Members of the curriculum and courses of study committee review course syllabi and content as well as the entire program of study for proposed new programs in accordance with college policy and procedures as a way of ensuring program appropriateness to higher education.

Florida Statute (FS) 1007.23 mandates the same minimum general education requirements in degree programs at state public universities and colleges. The statute supports the assertion that the AA degree program and the college’s general education courses are appropriate to higher education as students certified as having successfully completed the course requirements are exempt from additional general education requirements at a State University System (SUS) or other Florida College System (FCS) institution. FS 1007.23 also requires the transfer acceptance of certain courses within the AS degree into baccalaureate programs.

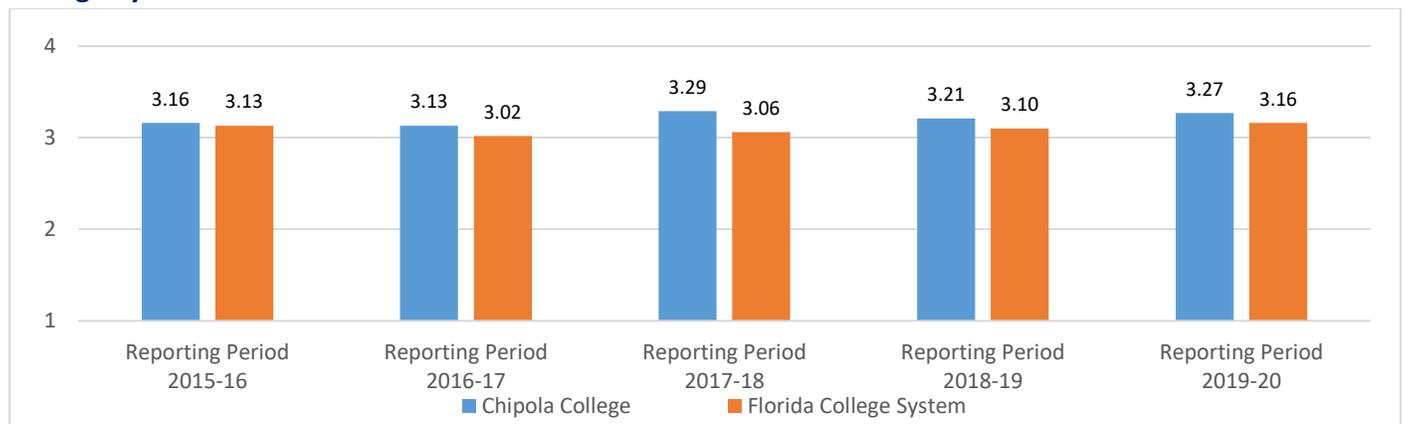
FS 1007.25 required that faculty committees be appointed to identify core course options within the required 36 semester credit hours of general education courses in AA and baccalaureate degree programs. The committees included five faculty members from FCS institutions and five from SUS institutions. The committees were to complete their work in time for first-time students entering in academic year 2015-16 to meet the new requirements. The faculty committees identified up to five courses in each of the communication, humanities, mathematics, social science, and natural science disciplines; the courses comprise the general education core. Per State Board of Education Rule 6A-14.0303, FCS students must complete at least one core course from each discipline, and the remaining general education course requirements are set by the institution. The thoughtful and deliberate process of identifying core general education courses in accordance with state statute and administrative rule provide further evidence that the college’s AA degree program and general education courses are appropriate to higher education.

The Florida Department of Education places a high priority on providing a seamless transfer from AA degree programs into baccalaureate programs in Florida public institutions. Chipola follows the requirements in the Florida Department of Education Common Prerequisites Manual, which identifies common lower-level prerequisites for all baccalaureate degrees offered by SUS institutions, thus ensuring that the courses of study for students are coherent and appropriate to higher education. In accordance with the Common Prerequisite Manual, the Chipola College guided academic pathways facilitate a smooth transfer from Chipola into a baccalaureate program in a Florida public college or university.

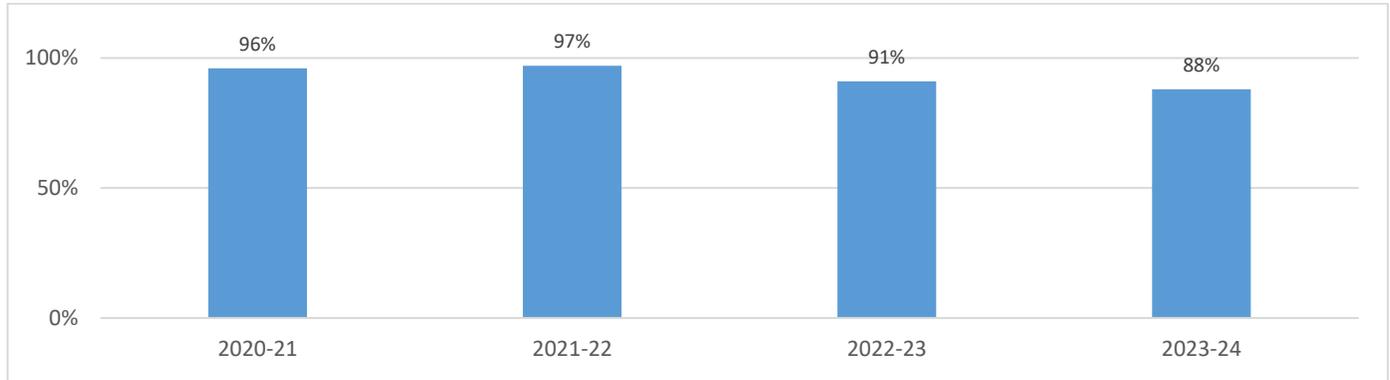
The Statewide Course Numbering System was created in the 1960s as a component of Florida’s K-20 seamless articulation system. This articulation system provides a database of postsecondary courses at public technical colleges, state colleges, universities, and participating nonpublic institutions. The assigned course numbers describe course content to improve research, assist in program planning, and to facilitate the transfer of students. As a state public institution, Chipola College can only offer courses that have been approved by the Florida Department of Education. This required consistency in course numbering and content among the public colleges and universities ensures that the courses are appropriate to higher education.

Evidence that Chipola’s educational programs are based on fields of study appropriate to higher education is also found in the results of multiple and varied measures Chipola uses to assess student achievement. Two examples are (1) average grade point average of students who transfer from Chipola to a State University System institution after earning an AA degree and (2) student performance on certification and licensure exams.

**Mean Cumulative GPA Attained in SUS Institutions by Transfer Students: Chipola College and Florida College System**



## Certification and Licensure Exam Pass Rates: All Programs (All Attempts)



By adhering to state law, Florida Department of Education requirements, and college policy, Chipola College ensures that its educational programs are based on fields of study appropriate to higher education. Student performance at state universities and on certification and licensure exams provide further evidence of program appropriateness as well as effectiveness.

*Chipola College Facts!* is a monthly accountability and institutional effectiveness fact sheet published jointly by the Chipola College Assessment, Compliance, and Grants Office and the Office of Information Systems. Its purpose is to facilitate informed decision-making by publishing relevant information throughout the year. For more information, contact Brent Shelton at Chipola College, 3094 Indian Circle, Marianna, FL 32446 or at [sheltonb@chipola.edu](mailto:sheltonb@chipola.edu).

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