



College Reach-Out Program (CROP)

What is the College Reach-Out Program?

The College Reach-Out Program (CROP) was established in 1983 for the purpose of increasing the number of low-income educationally disadvantaged students who complete a postsecondary education. Under this program, participating middle and high school students are provided with a variety of academic enrichment services delivered by postsecondary educational institutions, which are intended to motivate and prepare the students to attend and successfully complete college.¹ Postsecondary educational institutions are annually selected by the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to offer the program and receive funding through a competitive statewide grant solicitation and selection process.²

Which students are eligible to participate in the program?

A student in grades six through 12 is eligible to participate in CROP if, at the time he or she enters the program, the student meets at least one criterion in each of the following two categories:

- ❖ **Economic Criteria.** The student's family income does not exceed 185 percent of the federal poverty level; the student's family is receiving temporary cash assistance (TCA) under the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program³ or other public assistance; or the student is eligible for the Free and Reduced-Priced Lunch Program under the National School Lunch Act.⁴
- ❖ **Academic Criteria.** The student is potentially a first generation college student; has specified indicators of poor academic performance, such as having been retained in a grade, possessing a grade point average below 2.5, receiving below average scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, or failing to successfully complete certain Mathematics or Science courses in grades nine through 11; has been suspended or expelled; has been absent for more than 21 school days; or has participated in a Dropout Prevention Program.⁵

According to the most recent data available from the DOE, 7,103 students participated in CROP during the 2008-09 FY at 10 State University System (SUS) institutions, 25 Florida College System (FCS) institutions, and four independent postsecondary institutions.⁶

¹ Section 1007.34(1), F.S.

² Section 1007.34(3) and (9), F.S.

³ 42 U.S.C. ss. 601 et seq.

⁴ 42 U.S.C. 1758(b).

⁵ Email, Florida Department of Education, CROP Coordinator (Sept. 19, 2010); see s. 1007.34(2), F.S.

⁶ State Board of Education, Consent Item, *Approval of 2010-2011 College Reach-Out Program Funding* (June 15, 2010), available at http://www.fldoe.org/board/meetings/2010_06_15/agenda.asp.

What types of services are provided to CROP participants?

A postsecondary educational institution that receives a CROP grant provides student participants with academic enrichment activities from the time the students enter the program until they complete high school and enroll in a postsecondary educational institution.⁷ Activities are year-round and include the following: career and personal counseling, homework assistance, tutoring, test preparation for state and national exams, field trips, community service projects, motivational sessions, and summer opportunities at postsecondary educational institutions to live on campus, interact with students and faculty, and attend classes.⁸

How are postsecondary educational institutions selected to participate in CROP?

CROP is a statewide competitive grant program. To compete for CROP funding, a postsecondary educational institution, either individually or jointly with other institutions, must annually submit a proposal to the DOE that:

- ❖ Sets forth a statement of the program's purpose, including a description of the need for and the results expected from the program.
- ❖ Identifies the program's service area and sets forth community and school demographics and postsecondary enrollment rates for high school students within the area.
- ❖ Describes the program's activities and the criteria to be used to identify schools for participation.
- ❖ Provides for the collection and analysis of specified data in order to facilitate an annual evaluation of the program's effectiveness.⁹

The proposals are reviewed by an advisory council appointed by the Commissioner of Education, which recommends an order of priority for proposal funding to the State Board of Education.¹⁰ When selecting proposals the state board must give preference to proposals that:

- ❖ Are jointly submitted by two or more institutions.
- ❖ Are submitted by applicants with demonstrated success in conducting similar programs.
- ❖ Include innovative approaches.
- ❖ Commit to matching grant funds or using private or federal funds to supplement grant funds.
- ❖ Demonstrate an interest in cultural diversity and address the unmet regional needs of varying communities.¹¹

⁷ Section 1007.34(4), F.S.

⁸ *Id.*; Florida Department of Education, *College Reach-Out Program Annual Evaluation: 2007-08 Cohort with 2008-09 Postsecondary Outcomes*, at 18-19 (Feb. 2010).

⁹ Section 1007.34(7), F.S.

¹⁰ Section 1007.34(9), F.S.

¹¹ Section 1007.34 (5), F.S.

Which postsecondary educational institutions currently participate in CROP?

For the 2010-11 FY, 10 SUS institutions, 23 FCS institutions, and four independent postsecondary institutions are participating in CROP. These institutions are:

- ❖ **SUS Institution.** Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University; Florida Atlantic University; Florida Gulf Coast University; Florida International University; Florida State University; University of Central Florida; University of Florida; University of North Florida; University of South Florida; and University of West Florida.
- ❖ **FCS Institution.** Brevard Community College; Chipola College; College of Central Florida; Florida Keys Community College; Florida State College at Jacksonville; Gulf Coast Community College; Hillsborough Community College; Indian River State College; Lake-Sumter Community College; Miami Dade College; North Florida Community College; Northwest Florida State College; Palm Beach State College; Pasco-Hernando Community College; Pensacola State College; Polk State College; St. Johns River State College; St. Petersburg College; Santa Fe College; South Florida Community College; State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota; Tallahassee Community College; and Valencia Community College.
- ❖ **Independent Postsecondary Institutions.** Barry University; Flagler College; Florida Memorial University; and Jacksonville University.¹²

How is CROP funded?

Funding for CROP is annually appropriated by the Legislature to the DOE. The DOE allocates the funds to postsecondary educational institutions selected by the state board to receive CROP grants.¹³ The appropriation for CROP in FY 2010-11 is \$2,236,166.¹⁴

Where can I get additional information?

Florida Department of Education

Bureau of School Improvement
(850) 245-9961
<http://www.flbsi.org>

Florida House of Representatives

Education Committee
(850) 488-7451
<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>

¹² Email, Florida Department of Education, CROP Coordinator (July 23, 2010).

¹³ Section 1007.34(3), (5), (7), (8), and (9), F.S.

¹⁴ Specific Appropriation 86, s. 2, ch. 2010-152, L.O.F.

