



**LEGISLATIVE
GUIDE
2017-2018**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Organization.....	3
Purpose of this Guide.....	5
FCSSGA Legislative Process.....	6
FCSSGA 2017-18 Legislative Platform Planks.....	10
The Florida Legislature.....	11
Rally in Tally	13

ORGANIZATION

About FCSSGA

The Florida College System Student Government Association (FCSSGA) represents the nearly one million students enrolled in the Florida College System's 28 colleges. The organization promotes legislative advocacy and training, leadership development, service learning, promotion of campus activities, and strong citizenship.

Our Mission

To unify the member colleges in order to best attend to the appropriate concerns of the students of the Florida College System and serve as a vehicle to communicate these concerns to the Florida Legislature.

Our Colleges

<u>Broward College</u>	<u>North Florida Community College</u>
<u>College of Central Florida</u>	<u>Northwest Florida State College</u>
<u>Chipola College</u>	<u>Palm Beach State College</u>

<u>Daytona State College</u>	<u>Pasco-Hernando State College</u>
<u>Eastern Florida State College</u>	<u>Pensacola State College</u>
<u>Florida Keys Community College</u>	<u>Polk State College</u>
<u>Florida Gateway College</u>	<u>St. Johns River State College</u>
<u>Florida State College at Jacksonville</u>	<u>St. Petersburg College</u>
<u>Florida SouthWestern State College</u>	<u>Santa Fe College</u>
<u>Gulf Coast State College</u>	<u>Seminole State College of Florida</u>
<u>Hillsborough Community College</u>	<u>South Florida State College</u>
<u>Indian River State College</u>	<u>State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota</u>
<u>Lake-Sumter State College</u>	<u>Tallahassee Community College</u>
<u>Miami Dade College</u>	<u>Valencia College</u>

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to educate students on the process our organization follows in regard to legislative affairs. Additionally, this guide provides insight on the legislative process of the Florida Legislature. Our organization follows guidelines outlined in the FCSSGA Constitution, FCSSGA By-Laws and Florida Sunshine Laws.

FCSSGA LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

The FCSSGA legislative process can be broken down into four (4) sections: Plank recommendations, approval of issues, official statement of position, and lobbying and advocacy.

Section 1: Plank Recommendations

A member college/campus or State Executive Board member shall have the right to recommend an issue that will represent the platform planks.

A. FCSSGA will only accept issues that affect the entire state or issues that affect Home Rule Charter Counties within state or federal legislation.

B. Member colleges/campuses submitting issues shall present them to a District Coordinator or other State Executive Board member for the State Executive Board's approval. A timeline for submission will be determined each year based on the planned legislative session.

Issue Recommendation must have supporting documents/articles along with past FCSSGA history on the issue, if available.

Section 2: Approval of the Issues

The State Executive Board shall determine the issues prior to the respective conference in which they are to be addressed. A majority of the State Executive

Board shall be necessary for approval of all issues determined for each conference.

The State Executive Board shall determine plank recommendations for the Presidents Assembly based on the issues submitted.

The State Executive Board shall present the potential planks to the Presidents Assembly where the final Platform will be determined. An effective platform shall have a minimum of two (2) planks not to exceed five (5);

The State Executive Board will determine the open/close dates of submission to determine the planks. The state executive board will review the planks on an annual basis and remove any deemed unnecessary;

Following the approval of official planks, the members of the FCSSGA will then begin to submit bills that support the planks;

Once the bill submission dates close the students will vote on which bills will be placed within the planks;

Purpose of the Platform: A platform provides members of the FCSSGA the power to incorporate legislative issues year-round.

Section 3: Official Statement of Position

The President, with the assistance of the Director of Legislative Staff, will draft a document known as an “Official Statement of Position”. This document shall contain the following information:

- The official name of the Legislative Platform;
- The specific planks;
- Any supporting documentation;
- FCSSGA’s full name, its relation to the FCSAA, the total number of member colleges/campuses, the approximate number of students the FCSSGA represents, and the President’s signature;

The “Official Statement of Position” shall be notarized; A copy of the official statement of position shall be sent to all college SGA/SAB/CAB’s, all college presidents, the Executive Committee of the FCSAA, the Executive Director of the AFC, the Chancellor of the Florida College System, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Vice President of the United States of America, the State Senate President and the Speaker of the House as “Informational items.”

Section 4: Lobbying and Advocacy

FCSSGA shall recognize lobbying as any written or oral communication directed to policy-making boards or officials on behalf of FCSSGA.

The President shall be the primary spokesperson for FCSSGA. The Director of Legislative Staff and the Vice-President may serve as alternate voices of the association acting only at the President’s request.

Member colleges/campuses have the ability to lobby and advocate for the FCSSGA Legislative Platform at the local grass roots level under the following conditions:

- The Director of Legislative Staff, with the approval of the President, shall organize and coordinate any lobbying and advocating efforts by member colleges/campuses;
 - A member college/campus must have received the “Official Statement of Position” from the President in order to officially represent the FCSSGA Legislative Platform;
 - Lobbying at the local level will be supervised and directed by the SGA/SAB/CAB President/Chairperson, or the student leader who holds the highest position on campus, working in conjunction with the campus advisor;
 - The FCSAA and/or FCSSGA funds may not be spent on lobbying efforts as mandated by Section 11.062. Florida Statutes “no state funds appropriated to any executive department shall be used by any state employee or other person for lobbying purposes”.
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2017-2018 FCSSGA LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM PLANKS

The following legislative platform planks were unanimously approved by the Presidents Assembly on September 25, 2017.

1. College Affordability

- FCSSGA will support any bill and/or laws that will increase access to the Florida College System for current and future students. The Florida College System is a critical partner in building our State University System through our 2+2 articulation system.

2. Safety and Security

- FCSSGA will support any bills and/or laws that continue to provide the highest level of safety and security of our students.

3. Increase FCS learning opportunity (baccalaureate, Associate in Science/Associate in Arts, & Certification programs)

- FCSSGA will support any bills and/or laws that expand learning opportunities for our students.
- FCSSGA recognizes the important role the Florida College System plays in preparing students for degree and workforce education, certificate programs through the traditional mission, balanced with the increased demand for baccalaureate educated graduates in specific, high-demand workforce fields

4. Increase Funding for FCS

- FCSSGA will fight for economic equality between the FCS and the major universities in our community
- The Florida College System is the primary entry point for first generation in college, minority, and working adult learners
- Negatively impacting the Florida College System places further barriers to those families who stand to benefit the greatest from access to affordable higher education

The deadline to submit bills to the executive board is **Friday October 20, 2017**.

Bills can be submitted using this link: <http://www.fcssga.org/platform-submissions.html>.

THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE

Overview:

The Florida Legislature consists of two houses: Senate and House of Representatives. The legislature is housed at the Florida State Capitol in Tallahassee. The Senate is composed of 40 individuals and the House is composed of 120. The legislature usually meets starting in March for a period not exceeding 60 calendar days. However, during midterm election years such as 2018 the legislature may meet early, usually starting in January.

Powers & Processes:

The Florida Legislature is authorized to create and amend laws by way of the Florida Constitution that are subject to the governor's veto. Legislators propose pieces of legislation called bills. These bills are drafted by nonpartisan, professional staff. To become law, legislation must go through committee review, three readings on the floor of each house, garner majority of votes, as required and signed into law by the governor or veto override which is 2/3 majority vote of each house. Legislators also have the power to propose constitutional amendments. On average, legislators file about 3,000 bills for consideration, but only about 300 of them become laws annually.

Leadership:

The House of Representatives is headed by the Speaker, while the Senate is headed by the President. The House Speaker and Senate President control the

assignment of committees and leadership positions, along with control of the agenda in their chambers. The two leaders, along with the Governor of Florida, control most of the agenda of state business in Florida.

President of the Senate: Joe Negron (R)

President pro tempore of the Senate: Anitere Flores (R)

Majority Leader of the Senate: Wilton Simpson (R)

Minority Leader of the Senate: Oscar Braynon (D)

Speaker of the House: Richard Corcoran (R)

Speaker pro tempore of the House: Jeanette Núñez (R)

Majority Leader of the House: Ray Rodrigues (R)

Minority Leader of the House: Janet Cruz (D)

RALLY IN TALLY

At our annual legislative conference we facilitate and participate in what we call the 'Rally in Tally' where every student government member present, community leaders and legislators come together at the Florida State Capitol building to speak up about the issues our organization feels strongly about. This is a time for us to formally announce our platform and what pieces of legislation we will be fighting for. Legislators and other officials will usually have an opportunity to briefly speak to the students as well. Following the rally, students will spend the majority of the day visiting with their local delegation to discuss the issues we are fighting for and attending higher education committee meetings.

2017-2018 FCSSGA State Executive Board

State President: Jacobi Bedenfield

State Vice President: Zachary Saad

State Secretary: Lilly Jimenez

State Jurisprudence: Philip Papendick

District 1 Coordinator: Joelle Sullivan

District 2 Coordinator: David Duvet

District 3 Coordinator: Mikka Mendoza

District 4 Coordinator: Haley Schipper

Director of Legislative Staff: Nathyn Montagano

2017-2018 FCSSGA State Advising Team

State Advisor: Rochelle Popp-Finch

State Advisor-Elect: Allison Walker

District 1 Advisor: Lindsey Goldstein

District 2 Advisor: Stephen Tomasovitch

District 3 Advisor: Barbara Fumano

District 4 Advisor: Shyann Schmid

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LEADERSHIP - ADVOCACY - SERVICE

