

Syllabus

FOTS 2009: The Death of Higher Education in Florida

INSTRUCTORS: The former faculty and students of Florida's higher education system
OFFICE: The Unemployment Office OFFICE HOURS: Anywhere, Any Time

REQUIRED READING:

Invest in Florida's Future by the Author the Legislature Ignored

Constitution of the State of Florida

Dream State by Diane Roberts

St. Petersburg Times, Tallahassee Democrat (and other state papers with an interest in education issues)

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE:

To examine and understand why and how higher education was allowed to expire (die) in the State of Florida during the 2009 Legislative Session.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To understand why a state like Florida would gamble with its future prosperity by eliminating or slashing the budgets for higher education in the state, including community colleges, state colleges, and research universities;
- 2) To follow the career paths of those students from Florida who had to leave the state to complete their college degree(s) elsewhere;
- 3) Understanding how the program, Bright Futures, was transformed into Dim Futures when many of the programs and majors available to students were eliminated;
- 4) To review how Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, and South Carolina, states with far less per capita wealth than Florida, were able to fund their higher education systems;
- 5) To see how the majority party in the Florida legislature refused to increase revenue by reforming the dysfunctional tax code.

COURSE ACTIVITIES:

Visits to former campuses where FSU, FAMU, and TCC used to be. Artifacts and other historical remnants will be collected for analysis in class. Textbooks, computers, and other examples of learning and education will be examined. A "dig" may be organized as well.

Aerial photos of the former "football field," "president's house," "student union," and "library" will be scanned and examined for greater understanding of what a higher education institution used to look like.

Each student will be expected to complete an in-class presentation of 10-15 minutes to explain some aspect of the erosion and elimination of higher education.