



PRESS RELEASE
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Report: FL Will Fall 391,000 College Degrees Short Of New Economic Demands

~Florida needs 5.7% annual growth in degree production to make up for expected shortfall~

Tampa, FL- According to a new report released today, Florida will fall 391,000 degrees short of what will be required by Florida's new economy if degree production growth remains at current levels. The new report, produced by ENLACE Florida, says that meeting the shortfall will require increasing the growth of annual degree production in Florida to 5.7%. Policy makers and organizations throughout the country have embraced the goal of increasing the percentage of working (ages 25-64) Americans with high-quality degrees and credentials from the longstanding rate of 39% to 60% by the year 2025 in part due to expected future workforce demand and global economic requirements. For Florida, this target means the state would have to produce or attract 2.3 million more individuals with an associate's degree or higher by 2025. "We harbor no illusions that this big goal will be easily attained," said Paul Dosal, Executive Director for ENLACE Florida. "However, our economic recovery—at the state and national level—hinges on our ability to restore our competitive edge in the global marketplace, a goal that can only be achieved by raising the attainment rates for high quality, higher education degrees," said Dosal. In the report, ENLACE Florida analyzed census data, demographic trends, post-secondary degree production, as well as estimates made by other organizations to determine what it would require for Florida to reach the goal of having 60% of its working adult population (aged 25 to 64) with an associate's degree or higher by 2025. According to the report, Florida can reach the goal by increasing the annual rate of growth for associate's and bachelor degree production to 5.7% among all sectors of higher education. Historically for Florida's State University System (SUS), the annual rate of growth sits at around 4.4% requiring an increase in degree production of at least 1.3% per year in order to meet the goal. "We've got to acknowledge here that the increases required to attain this big goal will strain the capacity and productivity of our higher education institutions, particularly the SUS," said Dosal. The new report emphasizes that attaining the big goal should not come at the expense of quality and will require all education stakeholders and sectors to work together constructively if Florida is to indeed succeed. To view the report, click here or visit www.enlaceflorida.org.

ENLACE FLORIDA is a statewide network promoting college readiness, access, and success for Latinos, African-Americans, and other underrepresented students through non-partisan research, communication, advocacy, and support.