

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill Number:** HB 260

**52nd Legislature, 1st Session, 2015**

**Tracking Number:** .199012.1SA

**Short Title:** Santa Fe Community College Higher Ed Center

**Sponsor(s):** Representative Luciano “Lucky” Varela and Others

**Analyst:** James Ball

**Date:** February 14, 2015

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**Bill Summary:**

HB 260 makes an appropriation to create a 2+2 degree program in hospitality at the Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) Higher Education Center.

**Fiscal Impact:**

\$125,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Higher Education Department (HED) for expenditure in FY 16. Unexpended or unencumbered funds revert to the General Fund.

**Fiscal Issues:**

According to HED, this request was not submitted by SFCC as part of the annual budget review process.

**Substantive Issues:**

According to HED, there is a potential market for a baccalaureate degree program in hospitality in the Santa Fe area. To explore potential interest in such a program, SFCC surveyed some of its currently enrolled students. Approximately half of those responding expressed an interest in continuing their studies to complete a baccalaureate degree.

The analysis by HED also notes that:

- New Mexico State University (NMSU) offers the only public baccalaureate degree in hospitality in New Mexico, with approximately 75 graduates per year;
- SFCC offers certificate and associate degree programs in Culinary Arts/Chef Training, Hospitality Administration/Management, and Business, all of which support the first two years of a 2+2 program; and
- NMSU and SFCC are committed to exploring a 2+2 program as an option for students.

**Background:**

According to the college’s website:

- in 2009, SFCC submitted a proposal to HED to establish a higher education center to address the unmet needs of the Santa Fe community for affordable, convenient access to a bachelor's or master's degree;
- in August 2010, voters in the SFCC district approved a \$35 million bond measure, \$12 million of which was to fund construction of a facility for the Higher Education Center (HEC);
- in August 2011, the HEC pilot program began operation at the SFCC campus, in partnership with the Institute of American Indian Arts, New Mexico Highlands University, and the University of New Mexico;
- NMSU joined the HEC in July 2013; and
- on January 14, 2014, the HEC celebrated the grand opening of its campus on a site adjacent to the Santa Fe University of Art and Design (formerly the College of Santa Fe).

**Committee Referrals:**

HEC/HAFC

**Related Bills:**

None as of February 14, 2015.