

University of Illinois  
Urbana-Champaign Senate  
Final;Information

HE.02.05 Report on the Board of Higher Education Meeting, December 11, 2001

The BHE met in Chicago at the Swisotel with Chair Philip Rock calling the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. The Board set an Executive Session for noon to interview candidates for Executive Director. An additional meeting for this purpose will be held at O'Hare on January 7. No decisions will be made in executive session. UIUC Chancellor Cantor was among those introduced. Executive Director Sanders noted his participation in the Sam Gove Hall of Fame program honoring Gove's legislative internship program. Former U of I President Stanley Ikenberry will participate in a February conference on the role of teacher education at community colleges; a program on teaching of math will be held in March and a conference on assessment in late spring. On November 13 the BHE was asked by the Governor to create a \$25M reserve drawn from operations and grants in the current year's budget. Faculty salaries and retirement benefits are exempt, as are almost all elements of MAP—the Monetary Awards Program for Students.

The first part of the session focused on institutional reports of efforts to meet the goals of *The Illinois Commitment*. The Board wants more attention to alternative certification programs, and baccalaureate completion programs at community colleges. The role of the Prairie State Exam was noted in that only 4% of public school juniors report no college plans, yet only 40% are taking the college preparation core. There are notable gaps in preparation for low income, Hispanics, African-Americans and American Indians while Asians score particularly high. About 75% of the candidates for a teaching certificate passed the new enhanced skills test which is set at approximately the freshmen level of college. College student debt is up sharply, tuition rises go beyond MAP (Monetary Assistance Program) increases; students are working more, borrowing more, and taking longer to complete college.

The next item was adoption of "Performance Indicators to Assess Progress Toward Meeting the Goals of *The Illinois Commitment*." (Copies of this and the previous item are on file in the Senate Office and were forwarded to the Senate Ed Pol Committee.) Future reports will be filed in accordance with these requirements.

An hour was spent on budget issues. The FY '03 budget presentation by Deborah Smitley stressed that the budget had been scaled down from the current year and represented a 3.7% increase of \$100M for the operating budget and \$494M for capital improvements. She stressed the need to support faculty salaries, physical facilities and MAP. Testimony was heard from a variety of groups. All supported the budget as needed and short of real needs but responsive to the economic situation. The student member of the Board called for scaled down planning for projects that result in higher student fees and tuition increases. He blamed the colleges for increased costs rather than the state for its failure to support higher education. (This brought a sharp response from President Stukel.) The budget recommendations were adopted.

A brief presentation was made on the report "Improving Illinois' Educator Workforce" with the recommendations adopted. The focus was on issues ranging from recruitment of prospective teachers to retention and continuing professional development with particular concern for subject matter areas where there are significant shortages of teachers.

A number of other items were treated briefly. College enrollments have essentially held steady with a slightly greater headcount increase at independent institutions as compared to public 4-year schools while community college enrollments are flat. A review of policies concerning students called to active military service in response to Board concerns seemed to allay those concerns. Items on the consent agenda including minutes of the previous meeting, new degree programs, and allocations of grant funds were approved without comment. A report mandated by the state legislature indicates that there is a shortage of dental school graduates but no BHE action was recommended.

Advisory committee reports were brief and in some instances limited to a wish for "Happy Holidays." FAC (Faculty Advisory Council) resolutions on assessment and the FY '03 budget and the Procedural Rules for the Faculty Advisory Council were presented. There was a call from independent colleges for larger increases in the MAP. The community college representative protested elimination of educational programs in correctional institutions as short-sighted as the elimination will increase the recidivism rate as well as have very negative impact on the institutions offering the programs.

The rush through the agenda to ensure adequate time for the executive session resulted in the meeting adjourning at 11:30 a.m.

**Editorial Comment:** The BHE continues to make *The Illinois Commitment* central to its budget discussions and various reporting activities required from institutions. There is significant attention to increasing the amount of money that goes to the MAP (Monetary Awards Program). While not mandated by law, that program has become almost as untouchable as the required by law appropriation amounts to SURS. Indications suggest that the replacement for Keith Sanders as Executive Director of the BHE may be known by late winter. The report on part-time/full time, non-tenure/tenure-track faculty mandated by the legislature will be on the February Agenda of the Board. The report is being drafted and will be the subject of some type of hearing or review by the Board Committee charged with developing the report in mid-January. There was essentially no mention of the CMS (Central Management Services) shortfall in covering health insurance cost increases or the impact this could have on the current or future budgets. Also, there was little specific reference to actions with regard to the current budget in terms of reductions.

Ken Andersen, Chair, FAC to the BHE