



State of Connecticut

HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 1800
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591
PHONE: (860) 240-0280 / FAX: (860) 240-8833

SENATOR BETH BYE
CO-CHAIR

REPRESENTATIVE ROBERTA B. WILLIS
CO-CHAIR

Planning Commission for Higher Education

Meeting Minutes

August 13, 2013

3:00 p.m. Room 1E

The meeting was called to order at 3:09 p.m. by Judy Resnick.

The following Commission members/designees/guests were present:

Theresa Madonna, Headley Freake, Jason Jakubowski, Judith Resnick, John Shemo, Judith Goldfarb, Gregory Gray, Braden Hosch, Catherine Smith, Sally Reis, Pam Reid, Roberta Willis, Beth Bye, Toni Boucher, and Kerry Kelley.

Judith Resnick introduced Gregory Gray the new President of the Board of Regents.

Dr. Grey addressed the Commission.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Members introduced themselves.

Judy Resnick discussed the RFP applications and evaluations.

John Harnick from the Office of Legislative Management gave an update on the RFP. His office will finalize the details of the contract with the vendor. They are looking at a mid-September target date for completion.

Judy Resnick reviewed the list of members of the review committee. Judy also brought up that the Commission members are hungry for data, and introduced Braden Hosch who provided a presentation on "Connecticut Data – Implications for Higher Education."

Commissioner Smith asked about immigration.

Braden Hosch responded that immigration policy will be the same as it was. A national change in immigration policy could affect this.

John Shemo asked what percent of our college population are Connecticut residents.

Braden Hosch will get the Commission that number.

Headley Freake inquired about those earning both an associate's degree and a bachelor's degree.

Braden Hosch responded that this is not people, this is completions. You can earn both.

Judith Goldfarb asked Braden Hosch if he had any data on non-English speaking students in terms of the time it takes them to complete a degree.

Braden Hosch replied that Higher Ed in general does not capture non-native English speaker as K-12 does.

Kerry Kelley inquired about state appropriated fringe benefits being included in the numbers he was discussing.

Braden Hosch responded that it is supposed to include fringe benefits and it is supposed to include financial aid. He shared that there is a little bit of noise in all these numbers because of different budgets.

Judy Resnick asked about credit attainment.

Braden Hosch indicated the Connecticut shows up in the middle of the pack. The BoR does not have broad explanations for why this is the case. It is something they are looking at.

Beth Bye brought up an analysis requested from the community colleges on the number of credits by degree by institution. It showed that some majors require 66 credits and 60 credits. To have someone have to take an extra semester to get the same degree from the same system seems silly.

Roberta Willis asked with regard to cuts to Higher Education is the ratio of college counselors to student population indicative of the lack of adequate counseling for students going through the system who don't have a good plan.

Braden Hosch replied that it is possible, and perhaps likely. Braden suggested that technology could limit what someone could take, rather than people. They would be automatically registered for classes each semester. If they needed to change a class, then they would see a counselor if they need to opt out of a class.

Judy Resnick followed up on that and asked how many students come into college knowing what their major is?

Braden Hosch replied that to answer that question we have to know more about intent than we do at the present time. He shared that many colleges very forcefully encourage students to declare a major.

Braden suggested that the question becomes how hard do you push a student to declare a major and how long are they allowed to explore.

Roberta Willis followed up in terms of numbers, do General Studies or Liberal Arts students take longer than other students?

Braden Hosch responded that these students are not in this particular data collection. He added that some programs like, engineering, education and nursing have more credits, so it is difficult to determine why particular students take longer.

Theresa Madonna inquired about AS degree students going to school full time and taking 4.3 years to complete a 2 year degree.

Braden Hosch explained that students may start full time, but don't remain full time. Students not maintaining constant enrollment status create a challenge.

Theresa Madonna requested a clarification that students starting as full time are still classified as full time even though they drop to part time.

Braden Hosch confirmed that is correct. He continued that this is part of the noise inside of graduation rates, that students will drop to a part time status yet we are assuming that they had intended to go full time the whole time.

Toni Boucher shared that this highlights major challenges in our population base, especially within the 18-24 year olds. We also have a demand for additional revenues for the higher educational institutions, as well as additional staff. She pointed out that we need new ways to reach a different set of students, such as reaching into the corporate section and proposing employees might want to consider another degree.

Braden Hosch confirmed Toni Boucher's comments. He said that money follows people.

Pam Reid shared that the time frame mentioned early of 4.3 years to get an Associate's Degree partly has to do with remediation and remedial programs. Students who may be ELL may take 2-3 semesters of full time classes with no credits.

Headley Freake discussed the number of high school graduates are going down and that only 47% of them get Associate's or Bachelor's degrees and we need to get that number to 60% to follow the President's directive. He asked if it's just different students who need to be addressed.

Braden Hosch replied that it depends on the age population that we want to tackle. If we go all the way up to 65 years old, then we have to address the older students. What isn't in the numbers is that a lot of students in our completion numbers are from out of state and move back to where they were. The students who attend college out of state do not come back at the same rates. Braden shared that there are pockets in the Gen Y group 25-34 where we have some opportunity.

Commissioner Smith shared that Massachusetts is putting together a package so their community colleges would receive better funding when they produce better outcomes. She asked if Braden Hosch has seen this anywhere else, and does it help.

Braden Hosch responded that there are 8-10 states that are pursuing performance funding. Tennessee is one of them. He believes the jury is still out on whether they will see increased outcomes. There has been no effect in completion rates for Bachelor's degrees in states who have done this.

Sally Reis brought up a point that addresses a question that was raised earlier that is just because the number of high school students is shrinking, that doesn't necessarily mean the number of students going to college will shrink.

Beth Bye shared that our colleges haven't dealt with what we are dealing with now. Colleges need to target students who will do best at their institution and how do they turn undecided students into students.

Judy Resnick thank Braden Hosch for his presentation. She asked if the Commission members would like to have someone speak on distance learning in September.

John Shemo asked if we could bring in a speaker from another state who has gone through this process to share their experience and the implementation of their strategic plan.

Sally Reid offered United Educators.

Judy Resnick pointed out that Judy Greiman reviewed those states with us. Perhaps someone from one of those states could speak with the Commission.

Jason Jakubowski agreed with bringing someone from another state to speak with the Commission and suggested it be someone who can also address distance learning.

Commissioner Smith suggested we use technology to bring out of state speakers to the Commission and use video conferencing.

Pam Reid reminded the commission members that we have the Connecticut Distance Learning Council that they can call upon to be part of the discussion.

Roberta Willis offered that when bringing in someone to speak on a strategic plan from another state be sure they have information on the implementation portion.

Judy Resnick let the commission members know that the next meeting is set for Tuesday, September 10th.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.