



## State of Connecticut

### The Connecticut General Assembly

#### The Planning Commission for Higher Education

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 1800

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#### Judith K. Resnick, Chairperson

##### Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2013

2:30 p.m. Room 1E

The meeting was called to order at 2:44 p.m. by Judy Resnick.

The following commission members/designees/guests were present:

Vagos Hadjimichael, David Walsh, Jason Jakubowski, Mary Lou Aleskie, Lois Schneider, John Bennett, Judith K. Resnick, John Shemo, Judith Goldfarb, Ted Yungclas, Lindy Lee Gold, Meg Green, Sharon Palmer, Dennis Murphy, Aynsley Diamond, Sally Reis, Pam Reid, Jen Widness, Roberta Willis, Beth Bye, Kerry Kelley, and Steve Cassano.

Judy Resnick introduced the newest member of the Commission, Mary Lou Aleskie

The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Members introduced themselves.

Dennis Jones shared this was part two of a set of data presentations. This will be on going through the entire project. Dennis stated that NCHEMS heard from a commission member regarding discussion items missed at the last meeting, specifically data about access and success of men versus women and numbers of degrees granted by field of study. Dennis said he will speak on workforce and the alignment of higher education to the workforce and starting down the path of fiscal context for higher education.

Dennis Jones gave a presentation on "*The Context for Higher Education Policymaking in Connecticut.*"

Judy Goldfarb asked if they have done a comparison of income to cost of living.

Dennis Jones responded that cost of living information by state is very difficult to find. They realize that, in addition to be a high income state, Connecticut has a high cost of living.

John Bennett asked if the difference between the type of post-secondary education, Ph.D. or certificate of value, is ever split out.

Dennis Jones indicated that will be covered in a few minutes.

Pam Reid was surprised that fields of engineering, math and computer sciences were not on the list of growing jobs in Connecticut.

Judy Resnick asked for Dennis Jones' thoughts for what that means.

Dennis Jones replied that he thinks those are jobs that, unfortunately, have been out-migrated.

Pam Reid asked if it might also be related to high wages, so that the high wage jobs are not staying here.

Dennis Jones responded in the affirmative and that with high wages comes a high cost of living in Connecticut.

Judy Goldfarb shared that a good percentage of childcare workers are now required to have an Associates or Bachelor's degree.

Dennis Jones continued with his presentation.

Judy Resnick inquired about the change in related post-secondary teachers' employment; specifically does this indicate that we will be turning out lots of faculty now?

Dennis Jones indicated that this is about employment, not production of.

Judy Resnick asked if that means we are hiring more faculty.

Dennis Jones replied that UCONN is hiring several hundred more faculty, they aren't all hired yet, but UCONN has started the process.

Lindy Lee Gold asked how adjuncts are counted.

Dennis Jones shared that they are counted once and that the data is individual data.

Beth Bye asked about openings for architects and engineers.

Dennis Murphy replied that he would have to learn more to answer the question.

Beth Bye asked if we still have a shortage of them.

Dennis Murphy responded that the answer to that is yes.

Steve Cassano asked if we have data on engineering jobs before and after the quota system came into being for people from countries like India.

Dennis Murphy replied that the Department of Labor has those data in that sequence of time.

Steve Cassano said he would be interested in seeing that.

Dennis Jones shared that in engineering, in particular, there is a rapid deterioration of skills. Engineers either have to work hard to keep up, or move into management and get filled in behind. These positions are usually filled with recent graduates because they are more current. He continued his presentation.

Roberta Willis asked if this incorporates just debt for students who went to school in Connecticut and live in Connecticut, or does this include students who went to school outside the state and came back to live.

Dennis Jones replied that this is average student loan debt for students who went to school in Connecticut.

Beth Bye asked if the high loan debt is a function of students who were churned through to get the dollars in the first or second year.

Dennis Jones responded that they are trying to dig through that information.

Pam Reid pointed out that the numbers being looked at were for college graduates.

Beth Bye indicated she would like numbers on student debt for students who did not graduate.

Judy Goldfarb asked if we have debt information for students who are taking non-credit courses.

Dennis Jones replied in the negative. He continued his presentation indicating that 2/3 of students graduate with debt.

John Bennett asked where the solid lines on the chart come from.

Dennis Jones shared that the solid lines represent the efficient frontier and were they created by him.

Judy Goldfarb asked about the difference between price and cost. She asked if price is the tuition that students pay and the cost is what it costs the institution to deliver that credential.

Dennis Jones responded in the affirmative. He asked the commission members to identify the three or four things they would like to see changed ten years from now.

Aims McGuinness suggested members think of themes, not to worry about the framing of a goal. He asked the members to look at the data and let him know the three or four things that really stand out.

Roberta Willis said that closing the achievement gap to reduce income inequality in Connecticut stands out to her.

Judy Goldfarb has concerns about governance, which has not always been reflected in the data. She feels that to make things work, the governance structure is critical. In Connecticut we have a mixed governance structure. Judy also expressed concerns about non-native English speaking students. She asked if there is a way to provide support to them so they don't graduate with so much debt, and graduate in a more timely basis.

Dennis Jones discussed the ends to be achieved, for example, closing an attainment gap is an end, and that governance and finance are means. Dennis continued that the group will get to those issues in the context of "these are the ends we want to achieve, what means do we have to deal with in order to arrive at those ends."

Dennis Jones continued that there will be discussions on governance, finance and accountability. He offered that it would be helpful right now to keep the conversations regarding ends and means separate.

Dennis Murphy shared that remediation needs to be focused on, and a greater focus on performance in high schools. He continued that we need to assure accessibility to everyone, and to financially reward those institutions that have a better connection with the workforce needs. Dennis also indicated that we need a robust information sharing system between the State Department of Education and the Board of Regents, the University of Connecticut and the Department of Labor so that we can measure the success of these programs. He would like more support for on-line teaching, which speaks to the accessibility and cost issues.

Aims McGuinness offered to focus the conversation again away from discussing the means and focus on the goals. He asked what are the real issues to education attainment and quality of life in Connecticut that are not being addressed that need to be addressed for this to be a competitive state in the future.

Dennis Murphy indicated that completion rates need to be looked at.

Aims McGuinness gave an example of a goal that another state had: 60% of the population with some kind of a post-secondary education credential. Aims continued that goals drive the system.

Jason Jakubowski brought up these subjects to correct: the gap between white and minorities, lack of first time students attending Connecticut institutions, and costs to families and individuals, both the immediate cost of education and the long term cost.

Vagos Hadjimichael was also struck by the difference in college attainment between whites and minorities. He also indicated that college information has to be placed in the hands of families to make their kids college ready.

Aims McGuinness brought up that in the future, the commission members will need to decide the specific strategies that Connecticut needs to pursue to arrive at the goals the commission will set. He continued that we don't want to invent things that others are already doing. Aims continued that he wants to push on with what the major themes are.

Vagos Hadjimichael continued that there needs to be a tri-partite college access and retraining alliance among high schools, colleges and businesses for the purpose of workforce re-training in areas of workforce shortages in Connecticut.

Lindy Lee Gold brought up that we need to align our education goals with the population demographics.

Pam Reid expressed concerns about adults who already left college and how to get them back to complete their college degrees. They have college debt, but no credential making them worse off.

Judy Resnick interjected that the meeting has only about 20 minutes left and asked that voting members share their main goals.

Mary Lou Aleskie would like to create more opportunities that are aspirational and not just limited to jobs related education tracks, but will advance our opportunities in society.

Lois Schneider thinks the commission should help find ways to keep college students in Connecticut after they graduate. Lois would also like the commission to look at what students are actually studying and tie it to a workforce type of environment.

David Walsh shared that there is under-utilization on all college campuses at certain times of the year. Colleges could offer full programs in the summer and in between sessions to provide more opportunities for people. This would be particularly helpful if colleges offered incentives, such as lower tuition and fees for classes during these times. This would be a good way, without a major cost, to make more education available.

Sally Reis stated that UCONN's culturally diverse student graduation rate is about 72 %, but UCONN does not know why their graduation rates have increased. She would suggest some studies be done on what works, and that successful practices need to be shared.

Aims McGuinness inquired that if there was a major state investment at UCONN, what were the three or four goals that investment was to achieve. Aims continued to explain that's the level the commission needs to be at. He asked what were the goals that were aimed at with the investment in UCONN.

Sally Reis replied to increase the production of STEM graduates.

Aynsley Diamond discussed the seamless coordination of data systems from early education through work placement and the coordination of agencies.

Aims McGuinness offered that is another means, and suggested that one of the goals would be having a system that is more student oriented, that follows students through multiple providers so we can get a sense of how they are achieving completion.

John Shemo shared that his priorities fall under degree completion, specifically adults returning to college, and better retention rates.

Kerry Kelley agrees with the goals of affordability, workforce needs and the achievement gap.

Meg Green puts her voice behind increasing minority graduation rates and completion rates in STEM fields.

Vagos Hadjimichael shared that the question is not what new programs you offer, but how do you motivate students to participate in those programs. They have to be motivated to participate.

Aims McGuinness summed up that in December the commission needs a much sharper list of goals and the metrics related to those goals. At the end of the next meeting the commission should have a tentative list because that will be the list used at the regional forums. Aims indicated that at that stage we will be going around the state saying this is a snapshot of the data the commission has seen, and asking how they resonate in each region, what are the manifestations of those, and what are the major barriers to achieving those goals.

Judy Resnick discussed that two-hour regional meetings are being set up during the three days after the next commission meeting. These are not large meetings. These are going to be discussions of 20-25 people. Employers from large and small companies from key industries, economic and workforce development professionals, civic and political leaders, trade associations and chambers of commerce will be at these meetings. Commission members are required to attend one of these meetings as the eyes and ears for the commission, but not be part of the conversation. Judy continued that the goal is to

not turn these regional meetings into commission meetings. The goal is for these regional meetings to be the community's voice. Dennis Jones and Aims McGuinness will facilitate these meetings. A separate set of meetings will be set up with the higher education institutions.

John Bennett suggested that information be given in advance to attendees of the meeting and that an agenda be set for these meetings. John also offered that they be given a homework assignment to provide feedback.

Aims McGuinness offered that the goal of these meetings is for NCHEMS to share data to extend the conversation, NCHEMS will also share the commission's tentative goals. Indirectly they will be trying to educate each group of people. The second part, which is always touchy, is that when you have a second group of people, similar to those who will be invited to these meetings, they often have mis-information about what is going on. Aims continued that one of the problems with having educators in the audience is that the educators spend most of the time correcting the invitees. Aims agreed that it is important for commission members to listen to the significant mis-information that is out there, because that is what creates the agenda for the legislators. The regional meetings will be an opportunity for commission members to hear what people do not understand about what is going on.

Dennis Jones shared that one of the other purposes is, that because Connecticut does not have regional employment data, to listen to folks in different regions and put some nuance to what we do have to get a better sense of what don't we know from looking at state-wide or national data.

Roberta Willis asked about including superintendents on the employer side at the regional meetings.

Judy Resnick reviewed that at the next meeting Dennis and Aims will have round two of the sharpened goals theme.

Aims McGuinness confirmed Judy's comments and stated they will take the feedback just given to them by commission members, add their reflection on the suggestions made today in a draft for the commission members to review.

Judy Resnick reminded the Commission members that the next meeting is Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in room 1E.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m.