



STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM of FLORIDA Board of Governors

Chancellor's Update

Update from Frank T. Brogan, Chancellor October 5, 2011

It has been a busy time in the Board office, and while we continue to advance a number of important matters amid legislative committee weeks, I wanted to pause for a moment to reflect on the hundreds of thousands of students who have returned or just started in our System this semester. Knowing that students drive everything we do, it seems fitting that this "Chancellor's Update" is devoted to student issues. We will follow up shortly with an update devoted to several follow-up issues from the most recent Board of Governors meeting held in Miami.

Florida Student Association Holds Annual Planning Conference

A number of Board staff members and I accepted an invitation to participate in the Florida Student Association's annual planning conference assembly in Daytona Beach in the late summer. We are thankful to Senator Evelyn Lynn, who was in attendance and made remarks.

Our dialogue was focused on identifying ways to improve the State University System through better coordination and collaboration. Along with other topics, I spoke about the importance of each university aligning its respective undergraduate, graduate and research agendas with the greatest needs of the state so that we can ensure public resources are fully maximized.

We discussed the Floridians who have stopped just short of achieving a degree (so-called "adult learners") and the potential for a system-wide effort to reach out to those students and help them complete their degrees. Recent news coverage has given this extra steam as well, both in-state (http://www.flbog.org/pressroom/newsclips_detail.php?id=16563) and nationally (http://www.flbog.org/pressroom/newsclips_detail.php?id=16720).

We also discussed the severity of the state budget realities, which are so challenging that it is likely more cuts will occur yet again. We talked about the potential impact on student tuition and fees, along with the critical role that needs-based financial aid has in providing access to opportunity. Senator Lynn re-affirmed her commitment to student access, affordability, and success issues

– and will continue to emphasize these issues through her committee leadership post.

Much praise goes to Governor Michael Long, the Board of Governors' new student representative, and all of the student body presidents and student leaders for taking the time to be there.

Board of Governors Foundation Distributes Student Scholarship Funds

The Board of Governors Foundation has made its annual disbursements from two of its scholarship funds that help students pursue their educations in the State University System:

- Helios Foundation (\$123,700 total this year): These checks were distributed to 10 universities prior to the fall semester to support scholarships for first-generation students.
- Theodore and Vivian Johnson Foundation Scholarships (\$300,005 total): These checks were distributed to 11 universities prior to the fall semester to support scholarships for need-determination students with disabilities, following the definitions outlined in statute.

Student Aid Discussed by University Presidents, Board Chair

Many of the university presidents discussed student aid and student access in great detail during the taping of their "Presidents' Perspectives" interview, which are 30-minute video segments filmed in partnership between the Board of Governors and The Florida Channel. You can view the presidential interviews that have been taped thus far at: <http://www.flbog.edu/pressroom>. These are playing currently on The Florida Channel and its partner public broadcasting stations across Florida.

Notably, Board Chair Ava L. Parker appeared in the late summer as a guest on "Florida Face to Face," a very popular statewide public affairs and governmental issues program produced by The Florida Channel. Her interview is posted at the same link.

Student Loan Defaults

We continue to see increasing numbers of our students default on their loans. For the first time, in numbers just released from the federal government, Florida is now tracking with the national average, instead of tracking just under the national average. This is no doubt more than disconcerting to all of us, and that change in trend likely will worsen when the 2010 data is released, as the economic activity and job market continued downward after 2009. I am speaking with staff and with several Board members about this issue. At the Board of Governors' workshop in January, the topic of loan defaults was a part of our

discussion, but perhaps an issue that we need to return to and look at closer in the near future. We would welcome your thoughts on the matter.

Thank you for your leadership and support of the State University System of Florida.