

BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Minutes of the Meeting
September 20, 2006

University of Connecticut
South Campus, Rome Ballroom
Storrs, CT

Members

Present: W. Bevacqua, D. Brennan, H. Penner, J. Reynolds, F. Ridley, A. Vertefeuille

Members

Absent: W. Aniskovich, B. Flaherty, R. Hollander, P. Vissepó

Members of the Public: P. Boothe, University of Hartford; T. Bradley, University of Hartford;
J. Ferraiolo, CSU; S. Jarvi, UConn; Z. Kremens, CCSU; M. McLeod, ACC;
R. McCullen, UMass; J. Noonan, OPM; G. Ragosta, CCIC; P. Susan, BOTCTC;
T. Thorington, CSU

1. Call to Order

H. Penner called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

2. Approval of the Board and Committee Minutes of the June 21, 2006 Meetings

A. Vertefeuille moved, and D. Brennan seconded the motion, to approve the June 21, 2006 minutes of the Academic Affairs and Planning Committee, Finance and Administration Committee and the Board of Governors, with one correction to the Board minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Participation

None.

4. Report of Board Chairman

H. Penner thanked Board members and Department staff for attending the Board's retreat which focused on examining higher education issues and management of Board business. An immediate result is a modest change to Board meetings at which Board Committees will no longer meet separately from the full Board. Rather, all Committee work will be conducted within a single session of the full Board which will be scheduled earlier in the day.

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H. Penner noted the visit of the high-ranking delegation from the Province of Shandong, China with whom the Board members will have an opportunity to meet later in the day.

5. Report of the Commissioner

V. Lewis reported on her participation in September 19th hearing conducted by the national Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance in Washington, D.C. The hearing addressed a new report titled *Mortgaging Our Future*, simplifying the FAFSA and textbook issues. Connecticut was the lead presenter on the latter; Virginia and Minnesota also are actively engaged in this issue. The Advisory Committee is holding regional meetings before submitting a final report to Congress and the President in June 2007.

V. Lewis noted that Governor M. Jodi Rell has asked her to co-chair the Early Childhood Education Research Council with David Nee of the Graustein Foundation and John Rathgaber of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. The group's plan is due to the Governor this November.

Lewis summarized a new report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which warns that the U. S. is slipping in global education ratings. This report will be discussed during the Board's dialogue with the delegation from the Province of Shandong, China.

Lewis stated the New England Board of Higher Education will hold its annual meeting in November in Providence, Rhode Island to examine international issues of exchange, cooperation and collaboration.

She then called attention to the need for greater state investment in student financial assistance, and the Department's activities to obtain more comprehensive student data to make this case to lawmakers.

6. Commissioner's Consent Calendar

On a motion made by A. Vertefeuille, seconded by J. Reynolds, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the following items:

- a. Appointments to the Advisory Committee on Accreditation, 2006-2007
- b. Central Connecticut State University – modification of the program in Technology Education, leading to a Bachelor of Science degree
- c. Fairfield University – approval of a program in Music (with certification, Pre-K thru 12), leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree

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d. University of Hartford – program modification: licensure of a concentration in Illustration, leading to a Master of Fine Arts degree

e. Approval of Agency’s Affirmative Action Plan

7. Academic Affairs and Planning Items

Action Items

a. Asnuntuck Community College – reaccreditation of the College

J. Zdanys introduced President Martha McLeod, who represented the College. President McLeod commented on the importance of institutional self-study. She provided the Board with an overview of the College’s mission, administration, enrollment, graduation rates and accomplishments.

After discussion, J. Reynolds moved to accept the NEASC assessment and grant reaccreditation to Asnuntuck Community College through September 2011 and that the Board of Governors for Higher Education require the College to submit to the Department of Higher Education a copy of its Spring 2008 report to NEASC as well as a copy of its Fall 2010 Interim Report. F. Ridley seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

b. University of Massachusetts, Boston – authorization to place students in the programs of teacher of students with visual impairments, school psychology and school counseling for required field experience and clinical practice in Connecticut schools

J. Zdanys reviewed the staff report and introduced Robert McCulley, Program Director, who represented the University.

After discussion, J. Reynolds moved to grant approval to the University of Massachusetts, Boston, to place students in the programs of teacher of students with visual impairments, school psychology, and school counseling for the required field experience and clinical practice in Connecticut schools, for a period of three years, until June 30, 2009. D. Brennan seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Progress Reports

c. Quinnipiac University – Master of Science in Organizational Leadership

J. Zdanys summarized the interim report provided by the University. D. Brennan and F. Ridley commended the report and the program’s progress at the University.

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d. University of Phoenix, Norwalk Campus

J. Zdanys presented the staff report to the Board, noting the University's intentions with regard to library holdings and funding to sustain the library. J. Zdanys commented that, although the University does not have a "wet lab" facility, students come in to the program with a significant amount of General Education transfer credits, which often include the required laboratory work. The University is prepared to provide a laboratory in the future, should the need arise. The report indicates that the University has met expectations thus far and the Department will conduct a formal evaluation visit by December 2006.

Information Item

e. Monthly Update

J. Zdanys gave a brief overview of the Monthly Update.

8. Finance and Administration Items

a. Twelve-Month Quarterly Operating Request

M. Johnson reported that with the exception of the UConn Health Center, the constituent units ended the year on a better financial note than originally planned due to healthy revenues. A significant spike in energy prices this past year translated into fuel and utility cost increases of 25 percent and more systemwide. Yet, these cost increases were offset to some degree by reductions in other expenses. She also noted that there was higher-than-planned spending in federal student financial aid mainly due to increased enrollments. In addition to the energy price concern, M. Johnson listed the following common areas of uneasiness: declining federal research funding, fringe benefit cost increases, inability to sustain investment income results and declining part-time enrollment.

The Health Center continues to face some financial challenges to remain competitive. They ended the fiscal year with a net loss of \$6.8 million compared to a projected breakeven budget. The following drivers are cited for their losses: significant decline in federal research funding, lower patient volume and required increases to malpractice reserves. M. Johnson expects significant discussions during the next budget cycle on the state's Health Center subsidy.

On a motion made by A. Vertefeuille and seconded by J. Reynolds, the Board unanimously approved the quarterly reports for the twelve-month period ending June 30, 2006 for the University of Connecticut, University of Connecticut Health Center, Connecticut State University, Community-Technical College System and Board for State Academic Awards for submission to the Office of Policy and Management and Appropriations and Education Committees.

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b. DHE Current Services Budget

M. Johnson reviewed the budget assumptions in the Department's FY 2007-09 General Fund Current Services Request. The request calls for a total of \$103.5 million in state support for FY 2008 and \$95.1 million for FY 2009. It assumes no increase in current staffing levels, but includes required funding increases for student financial aid and for the Higher Education State Matching Grant program. As a result of these mandated funding requests, the budget represents an increase of \$49.7 million (92.3 percent) and \$41.5 million (76.8 percent), respectively, over the FY 2007 appropriation.

On a motion made by A. Vertefeuille and seconded by F. Ridley, the Board unanimously endorsed the Department of Higher Education's FY 2007-09 Biennial General Fund Current Services Request of \$103,486,376 for FY 2008 and \$95,101,972 for FY 2009.

Information Item

c. Preliminary Operating and Capital Budget Requests

M. Johnson summarized the preliminary systemwide operating and capital budget requests. She reported that the constituent units have low increases in their current services budget mostly because of unsettled collective bargaining agreements. She stated that the Office of Policy and Management plans to hold discussions concerning relief for increased energy costs. The Department has not yet received direction as to when and how to submit requests for budget expansion options.

9. Report of the Standing Advisory Committee

G. Ragosta reported that the Standing Advisory Committee has been very active with their two subcommittees. One, led by Sharon Braverman, is compiling college and university articulation agreements within Connecticut. The other, headed by German Bermudez is the subcommittee on student preparation for college. The Standing Advisory Committee will meet jointly with the Board on November 15 to discussion student preparation for college.

10. Other Business

Chairman Penner thanked Department staff for implementing Board recommendations to re-structure Board meetings to allow greater time for discussion and debate of issues facing higher education.

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He noted the Board will meet next on October 19th, Connecticut Technology Day, at the Connecticut Convention Center. The Board's Medal of Technology will be awarded at a dinner to follow. The Board's November 15th meeting will be held jointly with the Standing Advisory Committee. The Board's December meeting will focus on student financial aid and affordability, followed in January by a joint meeting with the State Board of Education.

11. Adjournment to Special Session

A. Vertefeuille moved and F. Ridley seconded the motion to adjourn at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Constance Fraser
Secretary