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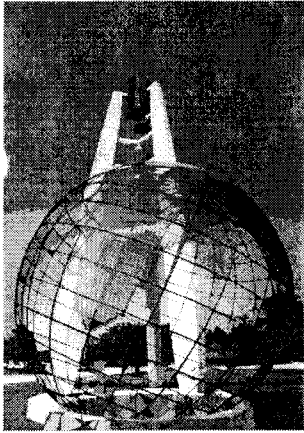
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# GSU Universe

Governors State University's Weekly Newsletter

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*Truth, nature, fact should be your sole guide."*

*John Adams*

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## **Governor Calls for New Way of Doing Business by Higher Education**

In his first major statement on higher education, Governor Rod Blagojevich announced several initiatives to control costs and improve accountability. First, he directed the Illinois Board of Higher Education to deliver within 30 days a strategic plan to reduce administrative costs at the state's nine public universities.

Second, he asked IBHE for a separate plan that focuses on savings that can be achieved through new creative, business-like approaches, such as joint purchasing and cooperative ventures.

Third, he asked for detailed, itemized budgets for state universities, replacing the lump-sum budgets currently in use.

Fourth, he called for an end to freebies to lawmakers as well as the governor and his staff, such as tickets to football and basketball games.

Fifth, he proposed the elimination of the current legislative scholarship program, to be replaced by scholarships based on need and merit.

Sixth, he placed immediate limits on travel, meal, and entertainment expenses by university trustees, faculty, and staff, asking that all state university travel, lodging, and meal expense be brought under the same rules that govern other state employees under the Travel Control Boards.

Seventh, he called for an immediate halt to all charter flights by university trustees.

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## **Confusion and Concern Sure to Increase**

The Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee on Higher Education, Representative Ricca Slone, has asked Board Chair Bruce Friefeld and President Stuart Fagan to testify before the committee on March 13. In her letter of invitation, Rep. Slone was specific about the points to be covered in the testimony: progress toward the goals of the Illinois Commitment; faculty diversity; administrative spending; tuition rate trends; and the percentage going on to post-graduate education. Chairperson Slone also wrote, "Because of the state's budget crisis each institution will be asked to propose budget reductions from the FY03 levels of 5 percent and 10 percent. While we all hope reductions on this scale will not be necessary, we need to be prepared for this possibility." GSU was also informed that it should be prepared to appear before the committee again, after Governor Blagojevich delivers his budget address in April.

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### **Look at it as an Opportunity to Tell the GSU Story**

President Fagan said, “One of my concerns has been that the Governor or the Legislature may assume that all universities are identical and therefore they will treat us all the same. This hearing gives us the opportunity to show that in working through the budget crisis one size does not fit all universities.” He added, “We will make the case that GSU is unlike the other universities in the system. We have a unique mission to serve the working adult. And we do. We are affordable and accessible. We are the most diverse university in the state and our administrative costs are low. We have also been charged to be a catalyst for economic growth and racial harmony in the region. The Governor and the Legislature should take those facts into account before making final decisions on the budget.” The President also sent a letter to the Governor explaining GSU’s distinctive nature.

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### **Is a Budget Cut for Higher Education in the Cards?**

State revenues fell \$100 million short of projections in January – the deficit hole gets deeper. “But no one knows what the Governor will propose, and we probably won’t know until April,” President Fagan said. “I appreciate Ricca Slone’s preparing higher education for a worst case scenario.” As to Governors State, the President said, “Obviously we’re preparing scenarios for every possibility we can imagine. But we will make no decisions on staffing, programs, or other possible new expenses until we know exactly what financial resources are available to us.”

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### **Rumor Mill about to Go into Overdrive**

President Fagan said, “With all the ambiguity, the rumor mill will go into overdrive. We’re looking at ways we can quickly get the facts out to everyone. Next week we hope to announce the creation of an information hotline – ask a question or check on a rumor and you’ll get an answer within 48 hours. We may broadcast some answers to the community as a whole. But confidentially and anonymity will be assured to anyone who requests it. My intention is to keep everyone in the community in the loop.”

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### **GSU Scholarship Sails: Expertise on Successful Accreditation Recognized**

Provost Keys presented a paper on “Effective Management Support for Successful Accreditation” at the winter meeting of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. Drawing on his research and personal experience at Governors State and other universities, Dr. Keys discussed various management principles from the perspective of the President and the Provost. “Management needs to be involved, be informed, be able to identify barriers, and then knock them down,” he said, summarizing his paper. And the GSU record? The university is accredited by the NCA/The Higher Learning Commission for a full ten years. College of Education recommended for NCATE accreditation by the site visitation team with no findings. MSW is on an accelerated track for accreditation. Physical Therapy is accredited for a full eight years. Nursing was recommended for re-accreditation without findings.

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### **A Good Man, a Good Friend Has Left Us**

Bill Dodd, GSU’s former development officer and a leading force in the creation of the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park and the Center Performing Arts passed away February 11. The GSU community grieves. He was a man of uncommon intellect, uncompromising honesty, and unfailing compassion. A memorial service will be held Sunday, February 23 at 10:00 a.m. in the Center for the Performing Arts. Everyone in the Governors State University community is invited to celebrate the life of this extraordinary man.

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