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GSU nAverse

Governors State University's Weekly Newsletter

December 8 – 12, 2003

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"Intermingle...jest with earnest."

Francis Bacon

*To the GSU Family: Have a safe and happy holiday
GSUniverse will resume publication the week of January 4*

Indecision on Higher Education Budget Continues

There was very little positive news coming out of the December 9 meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education. GSU President Stuart Fagan reported that the presidents of the public universities received no guidance on the higher education budget for FY05. IBHE staff indicated that a budget would be discussed in January and voted on at a meeting in early February. In years past, IBHE discussed a budget for higher education in November, approved a budget in December, and sent it to the governor in January.

IBHE Priorities

At the moment IBHE has four *apparent* priorities, identical to the priorities presented at the "big picture" meeting held at GSU October 17. First, stewardship with an emphasis on efficiency, productivity improvements, and accountability. Second, increased faculty compensation, which may be tied to improvement in faculty productivity. Third, increased need-based student aid. Fourth, deferred maintenance.

IBHE Focus on Faculty Productivity

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees the afternoon of December 12, Fagan reported on IBHE discussions concerning improved faculty productivity and further elimination of academic programs offered by the public universities. He said the IBHE has decided to initiate a study of faculty base load and credit hour generation. Fagan told the trustees he expressed his concerns about this limited approach to the IBHE staff and board "because it doesn't take into account the large amount of time a professor must spend preparing for classes, grading papers and tests, advising students, conducting scholarship, and providing community service. A professor spends much more time working outside the classroom than he or she does in it," Fagan said, "so an analysis that looks exclusively at base load and credit hours is not going to accurately reflect how faculty spend their time, how productive they are, and how valuable their work is." At the trustees meeting, Fagan also indicated that he and Provost Paul Keys would work with the Faculty Senate to get that point across to the IBHE staff doing the study.

Academic Programs on the Chopping Block Across the State

There were several references at the IBHE meeting to program elimination. It was noted that over the past two years, 26 programs have been eliminated at Illinois public universities and 80 programs have been eliminated by the state's community colleges. Fagan told the GSU trustees, "I don't want to cut programs. I want to add programs. But unfortunately, IBHE is talking about program elimination." And in a reference to the program review our colleges are currently conducting, he added, "We need to be prepared for the possibility that IBHE will mandate program reductions. In that eventuality, I want GSU to control its own destiny. If we are directed by IBHE to eliminate programs, which ones may be cut will be our decision, not theirs."

Dealing with the Issues in Springfield

Fagan said he and the other presidents agreed to take the case for higher education directly to the legislature – the same strategy the public universities adopted last year, and a strategy several legislators from both parties have urged the universities to adopt. They will oppose further cuts in appropriations, seek additional funding for salary increases for faculty, oppose limits on annual tuition increases for new incoming students, and seek to maintain control the universities' income funds. "Most important," said Fagan, "if we hope to succeed in Springfield, we have to demonstrate conclusively the nexus between the quality of higher education and the quality and number of good paying jobs in Illinois."

Dealing with the Issues at GSU

Fagan outlined for the trustees three initiatives GSU has undertaken to significantly increase income from sources other than the state. First, strengthen the Foundation. He reported that members of the Foundation Board have recently become more active and involved and that the announcement of a new Vice President for Development was imminent. Second, secure additional grants and Federal earmarks. Over the past 15 months, GSU has received a total of \$3.2 million in grants which, because of timing, represents an income stream of more than \$1 million annually. And thanks to the interventions of Senator Dick Durbin and Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., GSU is receiving \$750,000 in Federal earmarks. Third, increase enrollment. Each one percent increase in credit hours represents approximately \$125,000 in additional income. As of December 12, headcount was up two percent and credit hours were up 3.5 percent. "In the next two weeks, we have ads running in the local press, a direct mail campaign aimed at prospects and stop-outs, e-mail blasts, and a tele-marketing program to try to keep if not increase the gains we've made," Chuck Connolly, executive director of Marketing and Communications said.

Faculty Fast Track

It comes as no surprise to anyone who knows the newly retiring Dr. Mel Muchnik: one day after the retirement party, the Trustees named him Professor Emeritus.

ScholarShip Sails On: Criminal Justice

Dr. Bruce Wilson's book review of *Class, Race, Gender, and Crime: Social Realities of Justice in America*, by Barak, Flavin, and Leighton, was published in *Criminal Justice Review*, vol. 28, no. 1.

From the Archives

From Faze 1, December 18, 1972 (bearing in mind, it was a different time): "TAKE YOUR POT (LUCK) TO LUNCH... Wednesday, December 20, in the Commons. It's a holiday get together sponsored by STUDENT SERVICES with carol singing provided by Blackhawk Jr. High Choir."

From Faze 1, December 10, 1973: THE PHASE 1 CAMPUS...THE CONCEPT...The following is a news release written by JOHN CANNING (COMM) based on the information developed during the planning and ground breaking for Phase 1:

PARK FOREST SOUTH, ILL. – Goals of openness and mix of people and activities evolved into the academic street concept for the new Governors State University's permanent facilities, into which the University will move this winter.

The idea of enclosing the entire academic street, instead of building a traditional campus of connected, but separate buildings, came as a response to both convenience and climate.

The broad student street runs through the center of the building, with Colleges and more specialized areas projecting from it in a variety of interesting configurations.

The western end of the building is assigned to physical recreation and community use. The University core is roughly in the center of the plan and the Colleges of Cultural Studies and Environmental and Applied Sciences occupy the eastern end. The Colleges of Business and Public Service and Human Learning and Development occupy temporary quarters on the third floor of the core area. Phase II construction will extend the academic street and provide space for these Colleges to the west and southeast. The space they now occupy will become available for the expansion of the Learning Resources Center and other core facilities.

Within each College, the commons is the meeting ground where faculty and students come together to talk, study, or observe. The College Dean and College student personnel people are near to the commons where they are readily available to everyone.

Within the open plan there is plenty of opportunity for students and professors to create their own small studies areas by moving furniture and hanging up a sign if necessary. They can identify one of the movable seminar kiosks in the student street, and set it up for their use for whatever period of time is needed.

The relative anarchy of the open spaces occurs within a very ordered, and strongly stated structural system. The basic structural unit is a concrete 'tree' (or assembly of column and beams) which creates the 24-foot planning module. Combined with the 6-foot spaces between trees, a repetitive 30-foot square bay throughout the building is created. Economy is achieved by the repetition of the modular trees. The space between trees is the raceway carrying all mechanical-electrical services throughout the complex. Concealed within the tree branch beams, the lighting system provides indirect illumination to all areas. The system contributes needed flexibility and allows the University to grow in almost any direction in response to need. Flexibility and expansibility have keynoted all of Governors State University's planning. Even the exterior steel walls are bolted on so the 'skin' can be removed when the building is extended in Phase II and rebolted in their new locations. The rhythm and form of the structure is such that it can be added to economically without changing the spirit and character of the architecture.

Architects are Evans Associates of Bloomington, Ill., and Caudill Rowlett Scott.
