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GSU View

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## GSU View, 2011-10-17

Office of Public Affairs

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## News and Events

### **Board of Trustees October Meeting Recap**

GSU's Board of Trustees, Friday, endorsed a plan to admit freshman and sophomore students to the university for the first time.

In a unanimous vote, Trustees approved a resolution supporting the introduction of a lower-division program at GSU, the only Illinois public university where coursework begins at the junior level. The resolution will be forwarded to the Illinois Board of Higher Education, which must approve the admission of freshmen and sophomores.

President Maimon said the lower-division plan has won near-universal support, both on and off campus. "Everyone is saying that this is the next logical step for GSU to take," she noted. "They are saying, 'It's about time.'"

The plan has also been endorsed by GSU's Faculty Senate, Student Senate, Civil Service Senate, and Alumni Board. Dr. Maimon said the presidents of all six of GSU's community college partners in the Dual Degree Program are supporting the initiative. In a letter sent to the IBHE, Dr. Eric Radtke, President of Prairie State College, stated "I am confident that Governors State will become a stronger institution, and we look forward to continuing our long history of partnership and collaboration in service to our students and community."

At Friday's meeting, Student Trustee Jada Nettle asked how much it will cost to implement the lower division program. Provost Terry Allison said admitting freshmen and sophomores will pay for itself, and actually adds to GSU's bottom line. The lower division plan calls for admitting 270 freshmen in the first year; after a few years there will probably be about 1,000 lower division students on campus, Allison added.

In other business, Trustees – who met Friday at the Family Development Center – briefly moved outdoors for a ribbon-cutting ceremony for university's newly-installed wind turbine.

Dr. Maimon pointed out that the wind turbine is supplying green energy to the Family Development Center. "Children at the Center are learning an important lesson about the environment," she said. Dr. Maimon praised Trustee Lois Mayer for her leadership in bringing the wind turbine to campus, and Susan Rakstang, former Associate Vice President for Facilities and Design Management, for "always keeping us operationally focused on the environment."

During her report, Dr. Maimon said a "new era" at GSU starts Tuesday with the groundbreaking for the \$22.9 million renovation of the university's science facilities in E and F buildings.

In a related matter, Dr. Gebe Ejigu, Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff, announced that contracts have been awarded for the renovation of science labs in F building. Total contracts for the construction work, funded by a National Science Foundation grant, come to \$2,626,755.

Dr. Rashidah Muhammad attended her first Board of Trustees meeting as President of the Faculty Senate. In her remarks, she applauded Dr. Maimon and the administration for the lower-division plan, physical improvements on campus, and other recent initiatives. Dr. Muhammad said higher education is rapidly changing and GSU needs to be at the forefront of progress.

"You might not like hip hop but you can't be stuck in the '60s, or back in the days of the Electric Slide," she said. "You've got to learn a new dance."

The Board of Trustees also approved the operating budget for the 2012 fiscal year. The total proposed budget of \$53.95 million, is 2.9 percent higher than last year's figure. The increase is accounted for by projected increases in tuition revenues as a result of the tuition increase approved by the Board this March. Dr. Ejigu said state support from appropriations has gone down 8.4 percent in the last two years.

For the first time in GSU's history, according to Ejigu, the state is paying for less than half of GSU's budget. That means students, through tuition and fees, are covering more than half of the university budget.

In other business, the Board:

- Approved Professor Emeritus Professor status for Dr. David Curtis.
- Approved the lease of a four-classroom modular building for two years during the renovation of E and F buildings.
- Approved a new lease agreement with Fuller-Krapf Farms, of Manhattan, to manage and operate the university's 330 acres of farmland.
- Approved a collective bargaining agreement with the Illinois Fraternal Order

of Police that covers police officers, sergeants, and telecommunications personnel in the GSU Department of Public Safety.



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