

3-11-2002

News & Views, 2002-03-11

Office of Public Affairs

Follow this and additional works at: http://opus.govst.edu/news_views

Recommended Citation

Governors State University Office of Public Affairs, News & Views (2002, March 11). http://opus.govst.edu/news_views/6

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the University Newsletters at OPUS Open Portal to University Scholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in News & Views by an authorized administrator of OPUS Open Portal to University Scholarship. For more information, please contact opus@govst.edu.

News & Views

Governors State University

"The true secret of giving advice is to be perfectly indifferent whether it is taken or not, and never persist in trying to set people right."

...Hannah W. Smith

(Suggested by Blondia Jasper)

March 11 – 15, 2002

Published by the Office of Public Affairs

The Good News: Only 112 Days to Go Before Fiscal Year 2002 Is Over

In order to break even for fiscal year 2002, the university must hold spending under budgeted levels by about \$750,000 over the next three-and-one-half months, according to Jeff Slovak, associate director of planning. The President's Cabinet and the Administrative Group are reviewing possible new spending controls to assure that Governors State will meet the financial target. "It's difficult, but not a crisis," President Stu Fagan told the Administrative Group on March 6. "If we're disciplined and prudent, we can keep spending \$750,000 below budget without compromising our core mission. At the same time, we will invest in marketing to drive enrollment and our income stream, and we'll continue to make modest investments in some initiatives in our strategic plan. I don't believe layoffs or furloughs will be necessary this year." He added, "You may be reading about layoffs at other state universities. The difference between them and us is that they did not act as quickly as we did to deal with the state mandated cuts. For the past few years, we've been holding spending under budgeted levels. We can do it again."

The Bad News: Outlook for Fiscal Year 2003 Still Murky

The university got no clear answers about the budget for fiscal year 2003 when President Fagan visited Springfield to testify before the Illinois House Appropriations Committee last week. There was great uncertainty, even at the Illinois Board of Higher Education, about the Governor's proposals for higher education. And, of course, the Legislature has yet to act on any budget proposals. However, Jeff Slovak has analyzed the information available from the State Budget Office, IBHE, and other sources. He projects that the State's direct appropriation to Governors State for fiscal year 2003 will be down 3.29 percent, a decline of \$922,200. In addition, Governors State will be asked to pay back to the state \$655,800 for health insurance costs, the same amount the university was asked to pay back in fiscal year 2002. He projects total State support in fiscal 2003 will be about \$1.6 million less than in fiscal 2002. Slovak also anticipates the university may incur \$950,000 in sick, vacation, and retirement payouts in the upcoming fiscal year. In fiscal year 2002, year to date, they amounted to about \$890,000. "It's an understatement to say the situation is fluid," said President Fagan. "But the sad fact is that the State doesn't have a good handle on its financial situation, and until the State knows more, higher education and all the State agencies are going to be in limbo." Fagan is scheduled to testify before the Senate Appropriations Committee on April 8.

When the Going Gets Tough, You Know the Rest....

"We need to find new ways to keep our university moving forward," President Fagan told the Administrative Group on March 6. He reported on major initiatives the university has undertaken with foundations and the local government to provide funding for programs, including the Family Development Center and early childhood programs. And he said that on April 3, he will lead a team of trustees, faculty, students, staff, and foundation board members to lobby senators and representatives in Springfield. There will be a training session before the group takes off to identify the issues Governors State wants to address and to explain the best way to

express the university's position on those issues. If you would like to be part of this effort, call Linda Kuester on Ext. 4130 or e-mail her at: l-kuest@govst.edu

More Good News (about time)

Jeff Slovak projects that the income fund, principally from tuition, will increase nearly four percent or \$455,000 in fiscal year 2003. That helps offset some of the reduction in direct State support. The signs are positive. The Masters of Social Work program will be admitting students, which could add as many as 370 credit hours if all slots are filled. Immediately following a decision on accreditation, the Physical Therapy program will also be accepting students for the Fall Trimester. "We are getting the word out," said Chuck Connolly, Interim Executive Director of Marketing and Communications, "not just by expanding our advertising program and changing the tone of our ads, but by working with each college and BOG to offer our management and financial resources to their target marketing programs." Larry Polselli, Executive Director, Enrollment Services, reports that the more aggressive marketing programs, along with the new programs to build closer relationships with partner community colleges are paying off. "Last year, we had 400 people at our Open House," he said. "For the Open House scheduled for March 16, we already have 380 confirmations." With the momentum building, Poselli and Connolly believe that it's possible the increase in the income fund could be greater than four percent.

Trust Me, It Works

For those students without social security numbers, primarily the international community, we have always issued temporary numbers. (You may have noticed some students whose social security numbers begin with "000".) Just recently we've been experiencing problems with some of these temporary numbers and actual CARS ID numbers. The staff in Information Technology Services is working on a long-range solution. However, for the present time, we have slightly modified these students' social security numbers. Notification is being sent to about a dozen currently enrolled students, as well as their faculty advisors, of the modified numbers. You can access those with temporary social security number through CARS using their actual CARS ID numbers or querying by name. Should you have any questions, call extension 4512.

People, Get Ready. The Freedom Train Is Boarding!

Across the country, interest in discovering the history of the Underground Railroad has exploded. Illinois has a potentially rich history of African Americans and whites working together to assist fugitive slaves in their bids for freedom in the mid-nineteenth century. To gather this information, the Illinois Underground Railroad Association will host a two-day conference, "The Gathering", on Friday, March 15th and Saturday, March 16th 2002, to bring together individuals and organizations working on and interested in the Underground Railroad in Illinois. Governors State is a co-sponsor of the event. To register, call Ext. 5154.

Free Tuition...You Can't Beat It

Tuition is free for qualified GSU employees and their immediate family members. Take advantage of the opportunity. On Saturday, March 16, 2002, from 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Governors State will open the window of opportunity for individuals who want to pursue a bachelors or masters degree. The GSU Admissions Open House will feature information sessions, onsite registration for the Spring/Summer trimesters, lunch, tours and a gift of a compact disc holder to the first 400 people attending. A palm pilot personal desk assistant will also be presented as a door prize. This could be the start of something very good. Call Ext. 4490 for more information.