

Minutes of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education Meeting

January 9, 2009

Chairman James Polsfut called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm.

Commissioners James Polsfut, Hereford Percy, BJ Scott, Michael Plachy, Happy Haynes, Richard Ramirez, Greg Stevinson, Edward Robinson and Jill Brake were in attendance. Commissioners Patricia Pacey and Larry Beckner attended via conference call. Also in attendance were Advisory Committee Members Senator Gail Schwartz, Representative Randy Fischer, Representative Nancy Todd, Alan Lamborn, Jack Wylie and Phil Fox. Advisory Committee Member Donna Theimer attended via conference call. Senator Rollie Heath, Member of the Senate Education Committee attended as well.

Commissioner Brake moved to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2008 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stevinson and unanimously passed.

Dr. Diana Doyle, Executive Vice President of the Community College of Denver, welcomed the Commission to the Auraria Campus.

Chair Report: Chairman James Polsfut reported that he attended a meeting of the Joint Budget Committee regarding action taken by the Commission at the November 13, 2008 meeting to increase the budget for higher education. The Chairman also reported attending a meeting of the Department's Business Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Robinson moved to appoint Commissioner Hereford Percy as Vice Chairman of the Commission. Commissioner Stevinson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment: Mr. George Walker of Denver spoke to the Commission about the importance of funding for higher education.

Presentation: Dr. Julie Carnahan, Chief Academic Officer, updated the Commission on timelines and the Department's responsibilities under Senate Bill 212.

Dr Carnahan introduced Jason Presley, the Department's new Director of Information and Research.

ACTION ITEMS:

Proposal to Offer a Doctor of Philosophy Degree (Ph.D.) in Applied Developmental Science at Colorado State University – Dr. Julie Carnahan introduced Dr. Lise Youngblade, a faculty member with the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Colorado State University (CSU). Dr. Youngblade described the proposed Ph.D. program and the evidence of need for the program at CSU.

Commissioner Stevinson moved to approve the Ph.D. program. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Robinson and unanimously passed.

Degree Authorization Act - Denver School of Nursing – Heather DeLange, Degree Authorization Officer, presented a request for Full Authorization from the Denver School of Nursing (DSN). DSN is an existing institution operating in Colorado with Probationary Authorization. A successful site visit at DSN by the accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology DSN has been completed, and DSN is now applying for Full Authorization as provided under the Degree Authorization Act.

Commissioner Brake moved to approve full authorization for DSN. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Haynes and unanimously passed.

Re-approval of Colorado State University (CSU) Teacher Preparation Programs – Dr. Ian Macgillivray, Academic Policy Officer for Teacher Education, informed the Commission that the teacher preparation programs at CSU have undergone their five year review and were re-approved by the State Board of Education at its December 10, 2008 meeting. Department staff has determined that the programs meet all statutory performance measures and recommends the Commission re-approve the teacher preparation programs at CSU.

Commissioner Plachy moved to re-approve the programs. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Scott and unanimously passed.

INFORMATION ITEMS

2008-2009 No Child Left Behind, Improving Teacher Quality Grants – Heather DeLange summarized grants distributed by the Department in 2008 under the No Child Left Behind Improving Teacher Quality program.

Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Financial Aid Report – Celina Duran, Financial Aid Administrator, provided the annual Financial Aid Report. Commissioner Pacey asked how the typical debt for a college student has changed over the last two decades relative to inflation. Ms. Duran will present that data at the February 6, 2008 CCHE meeting. Advisory member Jack Wylie asked if Congress intends to put significantly more funding towards federal financial aid. Ms. Duran said that according to the US Department of Education, student loans would remain available and there is likely to be an increase in Pell grants. Commissioner Stevinson asked about the increase in the cost of higher education compared to inflation and other industries. Ms. Duran will research these questions and report back to the Commission.

Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Tuition and Fee Report – Andrew Carlson, Budget and Financial Aid Director, provided the annual Tuition and Fee Report to the Commission. The Department annually collects from each public institution its tuition and fee rates for the fiscal year. The information is then posted on the Department's website and presented to the Commission.

Legislation Update for 2009 General Assembly – John Karakoulakis, Director of Legislative Affairs, advised the Commission that the Department is working with legislators on several bills

for the 2009 session. Department bills include: a shift in the allocation of the Waste Tire Recycling fee to increase funding for the Colorado Higher Education Competitive Research Authority (CHECRA); conforming COF Statute to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals decision; exemption of flight schools from the Division of Private Occupational Schools; and dual enrollment for remediation in 12th grade.

Representative Randy Fischer expressed his concern that Senate Bill 52 (increased funding for the CHECRA) would set a precedent for cannibalizing programs to fund other programs. His preference would be to have a stand-alone bill with an identified funding source.

Proposed Legislation to Establish Colorado State University–Global (CSU-Global) Campus – David Skaggs, Executive Director, informed the Commission that officials at CSU had determined since the Commission’s last meeting that they would seek explicit statutory authorization for CSU-Global.

Rich Schweigert, CEO of CSU-Global, explained that Senator Abel Tapia and Representative Don Marostica are sponsoring the bill. The draft bill follows the role and mission language of other institutions with moderately selective admissions standards. He said CSU-Global anticipates serving primarily older, non-traditional students. CSU-Global has committed not to apply for COF without going through the normal budgeting process. Mr. Schweigert introduced Donna Oliver, a student at CSU-Global, who explained why she came to CSU-Global and how a virtual campus meets her needs.

Commissioner Percy expressed concern that the proposed legislation was too institution specific and said that he would ask legislators to consider legislation that would encompass students state-wide.

Mr. Tony Dyl, Assistant Attorney General, commented on a few aspects of the draft legislation. He said that the legislation, which is fairly broad in scope, would have to make explicit that program approval would be subject to the control of the Commission. He said also that as a stand-alone institution under the Board of Governors, CSU-Global would have to negotiate its own performance contract. And Mr. Dyl noted that he still had questions about the university having moderately selective admission standards while at the same time a relatively high number of graduate programs. He concluded that on-line education will no doubt grow and the state should make sure it is doing it right this first time with CSU-Global.

FY 2009-10 Budget Update – David Skaggs, Executive Director, informed the Commission that the Governor had tasked all executive branch departments with a 2.5% budget reduction in the current fiscal year (Fiscal Year 08-09) and a 10% cut against the November 1, 2008 budget submission for Fiscal Year 09-10. Director Skaggs explained that the day-to-day fluctuations of the budget process make it difficult to give a more definitive presentation. Director Skaggs also noted that the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) and the expiration of Referendum C next year will result in a complicated and potentially problematic situation in terms of the base year funding that would be used as a starting point for future years. He explained that it is necessary not only to get through the current economic crisis, but also to address TABOR so that when the economy starts to improve, the state can take advantage of the economic recovery and avoid the so-called ratchet effect.

Commission members discussed the fact that community college enrollment and graduate education are counter-cyclical, that is, they increase during economic downturns, and how ideally funding and financial aid should be increased to accommodate the greater number of students.

Commission Percy inquired about any rainy day funds the institutions may have. He was informed that for a number of reasons, including the need to keep reserves on hand in order to get good bond rates for capital constructions, institutions do not have large reserves available to fill in for reductions in state support.

Commissioner Stevinson moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Robinson. The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 pm.