

MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Wednesday, June 20, 2012

9:00 a.m.

Capitol Extension, Room E1.012

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Higher Education was held on Wednesday, June 20, 2012, in the Capitol Extension, Room E1.012, at Austin, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Judith Zaffirini, Chair
Senator Brian Birdwell, Vice Chair
Senator Robert Duncan
Senator Kirk Watson
Senator Royce West

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Joan Huffman
Senator Jeff Wentworth

Senator Judith Zaffirini called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

The Chair recognized the clerk to call roll.

There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

Senator Birdwell moved that the minutes of the April 11, 2012, hearing be approved. The motion was adopted by unanimous consent.

The Chair invited committee members to make opening remarks and to introduce their respective new staff members, if any. Accordingly, Senator Watson introduced Susan Nold.

Senator Zaffirini introduced Isabel Casas, Senate Higher Education Assistant Committee Clerk.

The Chair made opening remarks and explained that the purpose of the hearing was to address interim charges two, three, and five:

Interim Charge Two: *Study and make recommendations regarding more effective means of using technology, including the effectiveness of online learning and online coursework for underprepared students. Examine the cost and funding of online education. Examine how electronic coursework and technology impacts students with disabilities, and make recommendations to ensure all students have access to electronic materials and courses. Review and make recommendations concerning statewide or inter-system cooperation for blended and online learning.*

Interim Charge Three: *Study developmental education programs in public higher education institutions. Include a demographic analysis of students who require developmental education, and identify alternative means of assessing the need for developmental education, the effectiveness of delivery of developmental education programs, and the role of P-16 councils in addressing solutions for better preparing students for higher education. Review alternative means of offering and financing developmental education courses and identify potential cost savings.*

Interim Charge Five: *Study and make recommendations regarding academic and non-academic barriers to non-traditional students, including students with disabilities. Focus on ways to restructure course and program delivery, student support services, financial barriers, and remediation and academic advising. Study and make recommendations to reduce time-to-degree, incentivize on-time graduation, and increase graduation rates to meet the goals of Closing the Gaps by 2015 and beyond.*

The following invited witness testified regarding technology, developmental education, and student success:

- a. Raymund Paredes, PhD, Commissioner, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

The following invited witnesses testified regarding technology:

Panel 1: *Study and make recommendations regarding more effective means of using technology, including the effectiveness of online learning and online coursework for underprepared students.*

- a. Mark Milliron, PhD, Chancellor, Western Governors University – Texas
- b. C. Sidney Burrus, PhD, Professor Emeritus of Engineering and Senior Strategist for Connexions, Rice University

Panel 2: *Examine the cost and funding of online education. Examine how electronic coursework and technology impacts students with disabilities, and make recommendations to ensure all students have access to electronic materials and courses. Review and make recommendations concerning statewide or inter-system cooperation for blended and online learning.*

- a. David Gardner, PhD, Deputy Commissioner for Academic Planning and Policy, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- b. James D. Spaniolo, JD, MPA, President, The University of Texas at Arlington
- c. Darcy Hardy, PhD, Former President, U.S. Distance Learning Association and Former Appointee to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for the Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor
- d. Paula Nichols, EdD, Executive Director of Distance Learning, Lamar University

The following invited witnesses testified regarding developmental education:

Panel 1: *Study developmental education programs in public higher education institutions. Include a demographic analysis of students who require developmental education and make recommendations concerning effective delivery of developmental education.*

- a. Suzanne Morales-Vale, PhD, Director of Developmental Education, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- b. Cynthia Ferrell, PhD, Director, Texas Developmental Education Initiative State Policy Team

Panel 2: *Identify and make recommendations regarding alternative means of assessing the need for developmental education, the effectiveness of delivery of developmental education programs, and the role of P-16 councils in addressing solutions for better preparing students for higher education. Review and make recommendations regarding alternative means of offering and financing developmental education courses and identify potential cost savings.*

- a. Bill Holda, EdD, President, Kilgore College
- b. Selina Vásquez Mireles, PhD, Professor, Department of Mathematics and Doctoral Program in Developmental Education, Texas State University—San Marcos
- c. John Fitzpatrick, State P-16 Council Member and Executive Director, Educate Texas

The following invited witnesses testified regarding student success:

Panel 1: Study and make recommendations regarding academic and non-academic barriers to non-traditional students, including students with disabilities. Focus on ways to restructure course and program delivery, student support services, financial barriers, and academic advising.

- a. Steven H. Tallant, PhD, President, Texas A&M University—Kingsville
- b. Shaniqua Johnson, Texas A&M University College Advisor, Nimitz High School, Advise TX College Advising Corps
- c. Rudy Becerra, 2010 Alumnus and Former Disability Consultant, Office of Disability Services, Stephen F. Austin State University

Panel 2: Study and make recommendations to reduce time-to-degree, incentivize on-time graduation, and increase graduation rates to meet the goals of Closing the Gaps by 2015 and beyond.

- a. Guy Bailey, PhD, President, Texas Tech University
- b. Havidan Rodriguez, PhD, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, The University of Texas—Pan American
- c. Byron McClenney, EdD, Director of Student Success Initiatives, Community College Leadership Program, The University of Texas at Austin and National Director of Coaching for Achieving the Dream

At 1:38 p.m. the Chair closed invited testimony and opened the floor for public testimony.

Names of witnesses who provided public testimony are shown on the attached list. The Chair closed public testimony at 1:54 p.m.

There being no further business, at 1:54 p.m., Senator Zaffirini announced that the Committee would stand recessed, subject to the call of the chair.

Senator Judith Zaffirini, Chair

Isabel Casas, Assistant Clerk