



February 1, 2013

## **HIGHER EDUCATION OVERVIEWS WRAP-UP; FOCUS MOVES TO USM AND CAMPUS BUDGETS**

On Wednesday, and again today, leaders of Maryland's post-secondary education community conclude their appearance before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Education and Economic Development and the Senate Budget and Taxation Subcommittee on Education, Business and Administration. Delegate John L. Bohanan, Jr. chairs the House subcommittee and Richard S. Madaleno, Jr. chairs the Senate subcommittee. The Higher Education Overview, as reported last week, is an opportunity to delve into a myriad of issues affecting enrollment, tuition, retention, and a handful of campus- and region-specific items. USM was asked to respond to specific questions and recommendations presented by the Department of Legislative Services (DLS).

Among the larger issues, DLS recommended retaining \$4.8 million in the **Tuition Stabilization Trust Account** in fiscal 2014 to meet its minimum statutory funding levels. The USM opposed the recommended reduction of \$4.8 million provided in the Governor's Allowance because the funds are an essential component of the programmatic funding included in the USM Budget. The funds support STEM enrollment and workforce needs to build the Maryland economy, strengthening the impact of the new UMB-UMCP MPower initiative, and advancing USM's national leadership in academic transformation and college completion initiatives. Moreover, FY 2014 marks the first year USM is slated to receive any programmatic funding in five years. Specifically, our outcomes include: increasing STEM degree production 10% or 700 degrees; expanding the educational, research, and economic impact of MPower (e.g. starting 35 companies per year); doubling the number of students in re-designed courses to 24,000; and enhancing completion initiatives. But without a reciprocal commitment to the Governor's full funding level, USM will be unable to achieve mutual goals.

Chancellor Kirwan also responded to comments about **Massive Open Online Courses** or *MOOCs*. In both written and verbal testimony, the Chancellor explained as universities explore the potential of online education and other new technologies to improve student learning and graduation rates while lowering costs, the University System of Maryland (USM) is partnering with Ithaka S+R on a project to measure how well online learning platforms are working. Ithaka S+R, the recipient of a \$1.4 million grant from the Gates Foundation, is a nationally known higher education research and consulting group. The partnership will seek to accelerate the use of new learning technologies across higher education. The USM will serve as a test bed for online or hybrid courses (those that blend face-to-face instruction with online instruction) in a range of subjects at campuses throughout the System. These promising new teaching technologies can deliver tangible cost savings, from engaging faculty in the most efficient manner to ensuring more students are able to graduate and complete their degree in less time.

The main focus of USM's partnership with Ithaka S+R will be a series of tests of online learning methods. Approximately 5-7 tests will be conducted during the 2013 spring, summer and fall terms. They will mostly be side-by-side evaluations of learning outcomes, comparing traditionally taught sections with hybrid or online-only sections in courses offered for credit. Students of traditionally taught sections and hybrid sections using Coursera and possibly other massive online open courses, or MOOCs, will take common final exams. This methodology will allow the partnership to assess the effectiveness of the different course delivery models. Students also will take surveys at the end of a term to give feedback about their experience in the courses.

The Committee also asked the Chancellor to comment on **enrollment trends** at System institutions. Again, in testimony provided to the committees, Chancellor Kirwan attributed declining enrollment in higher education in Maryland to three coinciding trends:

- The Baby Boom Echo, the period in which large numbers of the children of the Baby Boomers entered college, has largely ended. The result is that the total number of high school graduates has begun to decline. Most importantly, however, the decline is not projected to be long term nor is it projected to be nearly as steep a drop as occurred after the original baby boom. (The total decline is expected to be no more than 10%, which should place us roughly at the same number of graduates as the state produced in 2004-05.)
- During the extended economic downturn and as a result of flat and declining budgets, institutions were focused on maintaining quality and improving the completion opportunities of their current students and were thus cautious in admitting larger first-time freshmen classes. The result is the number of new first-time freshmen has been in decline in the USM since 2008 and has returned to levels typical of the period prior to the Enrollment Funding Initiative. As students from the larger classes have graduated, these smaller classes have resulted in declines, which were only partially compensated for by increased transfer activity.

- UMUC and other universities with significant part-time enrollments have felt the negative effects of the economy. It is a national trend that part-time students stop-out because of downsizing or compensation reductions. With reductions in part-time students, the overall headcounts have declined at some universities.

The committees wanted to understand more completely the reliance on **adjunct faculty**. USM officials explained that, nationally, the number of adjunct faculty has increased considerably across higher education in the last two decades. This trend should not be viewed as entirely negative, adjunct faculty bring real-world skills which enrich the classroom in areas like law and business, and they often advise students as they participate in clinical rotations, internships and student teaching. In the USM, the percentage of nontenure track faculty remains at or below the national average in all instances.

In 2009, the USM led the work of a Legislative Workgroup on the Status of Graduate Assistants and Adjunct Faculty, resulting in an extensive Joint Chairmen's Report that evaluated how adjunct faculty and graduate assistants are appointed, compensated and supported in Maryland's public institutions and made a series of substantive recommendations to improve their status. In response, in 2010 the Board approved a policy that established new a full range of minimum requirements for the appointment, compensation, and conditions of employment for adjunct faculty teaching at USM institutions.

In addition, in 2012 the USM worked to establish a "Meet and Confer" process to enhance the ability of adjunct faculty to communicate their concerns with institution administration and work with those administrators to further improve their status and better integrate adjunct faculty into the USM community.

## **GOVERNOR O'MALLEY DELIVERS STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS**

On Wednesday, Governor O' Malley delivered his State of the State address before a packed House chamber. He touched on almost every vital topic facing the state. The governor displayed three overarching themes throughout his address – innovation, entrepreneurship, and unity.

*"This jobs budget invests to improve public education and to build new schools. It accelerates the transition from chalk and textbooks in our classrooms, to iPads, laptops, smart-boards, and 21st century digital learning tools. And once again, it holds down the cost of college tuition." – Governor O'Malley*

The Governor explained further that, devoid of innovation, the resources for entrepreneurship would be lacking. Therefore he made clear that his vision for Maryland's progress lies within the economic benefits of improving education and resources for the burgeoning workforce. He indicated that one of the major ways we must invest in Maryland jobs is through a drastic change in education, via change in K-12 education, all the way to higher education.

The Governor gave special recognition to several people in the chamber including University of Maryland Professor of Physics Sylvester James (Jim) Gates. Dr. Gates was recently named by President Obama as one of this year's recipients of the National Medal of Science. The National Medal of Science and the National Medal of Technology and Innovation are the highest honors bestowed by the United States Government upon scientists, engineers, and inventors.

## **LEGISLATIVE & BUDGET HEARINGS (FEBRUARY 4 - FEBRUARY 15)**

### **House Bill 52**

#### **University and College Textbooks Tax-Free Periods**

February 5

House Ways & Means

1:30pm

### **House Bill 58**

#### **University and College Textbooks Tax Exemption**

February 5

House Ways & Means

1:30pm

### **House Bill 268**

#### **University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science - Joint Graduate Degree Granting Authority**

February 5

House Appropriations

2:00 p.m.

### **Senate Bill 153**

#### **Academic Credit for Military Education, Training, and Experience**

February 7

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

1:45pm

### **SB 329**

#### **Hiring Preferences for Graduates of Public Institutions of Higher Education**

February 7

Senate Finance

1:00pm

### **SB 341**

#### **Academic Program Action - Repeal of Application Fees**

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

February 13

1:00pm

**HB 400/SB 364**

**Management-Intensive Farming and Grazing**

House Environmental Matters

February 13

1pm

**NEW BILLS**

SB 510; Fully On-Line Distance Education Programs

SB 522/HB 527; Frederick Regional Higher Education Advisory Board

SB 538/HB 560; Public-Private Partnerships

HB 471; Tuition Rates - Veterans

HB 508; Local Stormwater Management Charges - State Property

HB 526; Maryland First Scholarship (2/20 W&M @ 1pm)

HB 553; Program Proposals Review and Objections

HB 557; Student Notification - Financial Information

HB 601; Loan Assistance - Professional Counselors

HB 605; Public-Private Partnerships

**Full Operating Budget Schedule**

Coppin State University

February 6, 2013

1:00 p.m.

House, Appropriations

University System of Maryland Overview

February 6, 2013

1:00 p.m.

House, Appropriations

University System of Maryland Overview

February 7, 2013

1:00 p.m.

Senate, Budget and Taxation

Coppin State University

February 7, 2013

1:00 p.m.

Senate, Budget and Taxation

Bowie State University

February 13, 2013

1:00 p.m.

House, Appropriations

Frostburg State University  
February 13, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
House, Appropriations

Bowie State University  
February 14, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
Senate, Budget and Taxation

Frostburg State University  
February 14, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
Senate, Budget and Taxation

Towson University  
February 21, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
House, Appropriations

University of Maryland Baltimore County  
February 21, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
House, Appropriations

Salisbury University  
February 21, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
House, Appropriations

University of Maryland Eastern Shore  
February 27, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
House, Appropriations

University of Maryland University College  
February 27, 2012  
1:00 p.m.  
House, Appropriations

Salisbury University  
February 28, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
Senate, Budget and Taxation

Frostburg State University  
February 14, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
Senate

Towson University  
February 28, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
Senate

University of Maryland University College  
February 28, 2012  
1:00 p.m.  
Senate, Budget and Taxation

University of Maryland Baltimore County  
March 4, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
Senate, Budget and Taxation

University of Maryland Eastern Shore  
March 4, 2013  
1:00 p.m.  
Senate, Budget and Taxation