

**COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY
RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDED ACTIONS AND ISSUES
2013 GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION
FEBRUARY 2013**

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Add the following language:

Provided that the appropriation herein for the University System of Maryland institutions made for the purpose of current services costs shall be reduced by \$10,000,000.

Further provided that the appropriation herein for the University System of Maryland institutions shall be reduced by \$8,000,000.

Response: The University disagrees with both recommendations to reduce appropriations to University System of Maryland institutions. A cut of this magnitude would impede severely our efforts to provide support to our students, faculty, and academic programs and would severely limit our efforts to fund initiatives that are critical to enhancing our ability to improve student success as it relates to student retention and graduation. The DLS recommendation to reduce the allowance will mean further erosion in access and student success as well as slow any movement in Coppin State University's, USM, and State strategic goals.

Add the following language:

It is the intent of the General Assembly that the 2013 Special Review Committee for Coppin State University should review the appropriateness of programs, personnel, and spending on intercollegiate athletics and should issue recommendations for athletics in addition to its original charge.

Response: The University concurs and this issue is being addressed. It is our understanding that the work of the Special Review Committee includes a review of the ICA program. The scope of the work of the committee includes:

"...a comprehensive assessment of the CSU mission and vision statements, its strategic plan, and the processes by which the university attempts to realize the goals and aspirations defined by those documents. The Special Committee is asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses in CSU's administrative and operational infrastructure, the scope and delivery of its academic programming, the quality of its student support services, the impact of its community outreach programs, the efficacy of its fiscal management, the effectiveness of its institutional advancement operations, and the role CSU's athletics program plays in fulfilling the institution's mission. "

Adopt the following narrative:

Coppin Special Review Action Plan: The committees request that Coppin State University (CSU) submit the 2013 Special Review Committee's final report as well as a follow-up report detailing how CSU will fulfill the recommendations of the Special Review Committee. CSU's response should include a timeline and accountability measures for the institution to follow and especially highlight actions that can be accomplished within the current services budget and within the next two fiscal years.

Information Request: 2013 CSU Special Review Committee Response

Authors: Coppin State University, USM Board of Regents

Due Date: August 1, 2013

Response: Coppin State University concurs with this recommendation.

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

Graduation Rates Remain Very Low

Page 7 - The President should comment on why CSU significantly underperforms in comparison to its peers who were statistically chosen for having many similar institutional characteristics.

The University continues to implement a number of initiatives specifically targeting retention and graduation of students. Like other Historically Black Colleges and Universities, CSU has the challenge of educating first-generation students. For example, CSU has formed a university-wide taskforce (Taskforce on Enrollment and Student Success) to examine retention across all schools and programs and study ways to increase our cohort success rates. This taskforce has four subcommittees: cohort services, campus operations, research and assessment and planning and evaluation, to broadly examine issues with retention. Other initiatives include intrusive advising, the formation of First-Year Experience (FYE)/University College-provides a structured college experience for the first year on campus, FMI (Freshman Male Initiative)-which specifically targets the support and mentoring of men on campus, and the Summer Academic Success Academy (SASA) which is an intensive summer program. The SASA curriculum is focused on increasing mathematics, technology, reading, and study skills.

It is also important to note that the standard definition of graduation only includes the graduation rate for first-time, full-time degree seeking students and excludes the success rate for transfer students. Each year, CSU welcomes approximately 200 new transfer students from Maryland's community colleges. In general, students who transfer to CSU perform significantly better than new freshman. The transfers who were admitted to CSU as sophomores, juniors, or seniors graduate near USM's transfer graduation average of 50 percent. For example, 40 percent of students who transferred to CSU in 2008 received a bachelor's degree within four years. When

the success of CSU's transfer students are included within a calculation of our six-year graduation rate, the overall graduation rate for CSU increases approximately 12 percent. Because of the success of transfer students, the University has actively increased efforts to attract and recruit community college transfer students.

Page 11 - The President should comment on why degrees from CSU cost twice as much as degrees from peer institutions.

The University attributes the increase in spending per degree to the increased State investment in the institution in the form of capital projects. The cost of maintaining and operating these new facilities coupled with a decrease in the number of degrees awarded results in CSU's degree cost exceeding its peer institutions. As the University increases the number of degrees awarded, the ratio of Educational and Related Expenditures per Degree completed will return to our peer norms.

Proposed Budget

Page 13 - The President should comment on why CSU is one of only two USM institutions not receiving funds for Academic Transformation efforts, such as course redesign.

The University has received funds for course redesign over the past few years from the University System of Maryland (USM). Courses in English, mathematics, and psychology have been redesigned however; the University did not submit a proposal for the current cohort of Course Redesign. USM included CSU in a grant proposal to the Abell Foundation for a new initiative for this coming summer. This proposal is still under review by the Foundation. CSU has an innovative initiative underway with Pearson Learning to develop a new online undergraduate business program. The University is seeking, as part of the Governor's 2014 budget, funds to support redesign efforts. Plans are in progress to redesign courses such as CHEM 307 and CHEM 308 (Organic Chemistry). The University will continue to support the redesign of PSYC 201, an introductory General Education course, and the proposed course redesign of an Integrative Learning Model of Biology 101 & Math 103.

Page 13 - The President should comment on achievable goals for rebuilding State-supported fund balance in coming fiscal years and what specific facilities maintenance has been deferred because of the lack of fund balance.

The University will utilize recommendations from the Special Review Committee to realign and right size staff, operations and academic programs to ensure fiscal sustainability. Achievable goals include energy savings, more efficient use of space, building partnerships with the community colleges, municipalities and business entities and implementing programs that will generate revenue. In building the University's budget, 1% of the tuition and fees revenue will be allocated to increase the University's fund balance on an annual basis. This action is set to begin with FY 2013. The current facilities maintenance projects that have been deferred, which are estimated at approximately \$2.9 million include: a Central Utility Plant upgrade, restroom upgrades for ADA compliance, repainting of exterior masonry on two buildings, entrance

enhancement revolving doors for ADA compliance, outdoor irrigation enhancements, and other major projects.

Institutional Aid and Pell Awards

Page 17 - The President should comment on the progress made toward identifying students affected by the unspent fiscal 2011 financial aid, what funds and processes will be used to disburse aid to students affected, and the timeline for rectifying the mistake.

The University implemented a series of steps to identify students who were 'harmed' by the University's action of not distributing all of the institutional need-based financial aid during FY 2011. Students were identified as being 'harmed' as those who met the standard criteria for institutional need-based financial aid. To meet the standard criteria for institutional need-based financial aid, students had to have been an undergraduate student during the 2010 to 2011 academic year and attended full-time; Maryland residents; in good academic standing; eligible for Pell Grant in FY 2011; submitted a financial aid application by Fall 2010; had not received SEOG; and had entered into a student loan agreement. Based on these criteria, over 762 students were identified as potentially 'harmed'. These students were notified and after further review of these accounts, the University determined that approximately 227 students were impacted by this issue. By the end of March, the University will satisfy its obligation by implementing the following steps depending on the enrollment and account status of the student: 1) for students who are still enrolled, CSU will adjust (i.e., offset) their spring 2013 tuition charges; 2) for those students who are no longer enrolled and whose accounts may have been sent to collections, the University will adjust the amount that was sent to collections (i.e., offset their bills); 3) for those students who are no longer enrolled or who have graduated, the University will send these students a refund.

Page 20 - The President should comment on why Parent PLUS loans are high across all EFC categories and how CSU can assist students who miss the Pell cutoff. The President should also comment on what CSU is doing to increase financial aid literacy and responsible borrowing among new students, such as encouraging students to max out federal loans before taking out private loans.

To cover the full cost of attending the University, students who are enrolled full-time and living on campus are relying more on Parent PLUS loans for additional financial assistance. For most undergraduate borrows, the amount of students can borrow for their education is capped at between \$5,500 and \$7,500 per year in federal Stafford loans. Parent PLUS loans tend to have more favorable terms than Private/Alternative Loans including a low fixed interest rate and flexibility in re-payment. The University will develop and implement strategies to educate students and their families about student loans and providing financial literacy workshops.

Operating Budget Deficit and Leadership Turnover

Page 21 - The President should comment on any further actions that CSU has taken to balance the fiscal 2013 budget and if CSU expects enrollment and tuition revenue to increase in the near future.

The University has reduced personnel, frozen vacant positions, limited operating expenses, and deferred projects. As vacancies occur, CSU has re-distributed workload. For FY 2014, we expect enrollment growth to remain flat but will receive a 3% increase in tuition revenue.

Leadership Turnover

Page 21 - The Chancellor should comment on the timeline for searching for and hiring a new President for CSU.

The USM Board of Regents believes that the change in leadership at Coppin State University (CSU) provided an opportunity to conduct a comprehensive review of CSU and develop strategies to increase student retention and graduation rates, improve administrative operations and financial stability, and build a culture focused on success. The committee is expected to complete their review in May and submit their report to the BOR at their June meeting. The BOR will make a decision regarding the timeline for searching for and hiring a new President for CSU after they have had an opportunity to review and discuss the findings in the report.

Page 22 - The Chancellor should comment on how this committee will differ from the 2011 Ten Year Review Committee, which set comprehensive goals for CSU only two years ago.

The 2011 Ten Year Review Committee was charged to conduct an assessment of the implementation of the recommendations from the 2001 Independent Study Team on the Revitalization of Coppin State College. The CSU Special Review Committee has a very different focus. The committee was established in response to the BOR's ongoing concerns related to the underperformance of CSU with regard to the retention and graduation rates for first-time, full-time students. Even though USM established an initiative to close student achievement gaps a number of years ago, CSU has not improved the graduation rates for these students. This review and subsequent recommendations are being done in an effort to address any systemic issues at CSU while building on the University's strengths to set the institution on a path to maximize student success.

Page 22 - The Chancellor should also comment on what has been learned from the first committee hearing with the campus community conducted on January 28, 2013.

The CSU Special Review Committee held the first of three public hearings on January 28, 2013. This hearing was limited to CSU faculty, staff, students, alumni, members of the board of visitors, and members of the foundation board. A total of 20 individuals testified at the hearing, including CSU students, staff, faculty, alumni and members of the board of visitors and foundation board. Topics covered at the hearing were wide-ranging and included: academic programs to address workforce issues, STEM programs, academic transformation initiatives to enhance effectiveness of instruction, current enrollment and institutional capacity, shared governance, improvement in retention and graduation rates, improvement in fundraising, creation of a strong sponsored grants office, governance and leadership structures, student financial aid, both need-based and merit, student support services, activities and safety, marketing plan and media presence, community relationships, coalition lawsuit and funding of

HBI, support for academic programs, culture of accountability, program to enhance enrollment of international students and development of a strong online program for management science program.

Intercollegiate Athletics Deficit

Page 24 - The President should comment on the timeline for paying off CSU's ICA debt and why ICA revenue has not increased since fiscal 2009. The President should also comment on how the institution plans to pay off this debt without direct State support.

In May 2010, the University put forward a plan to eliminate its substantial yearly ICA deficit by FY 2013. This year ICA has a balanced budget. Once this structural balance was achieved, the next step was to address the accumulated deficit. Because of the size of the deficit, and the relatively small ICA budget, Athletics will have to rely on some contributions from outside donors. The Vice President for Institutional Advancement is working with the Athletic Director on this plan.

Page 24 - ICA was not addressed in either the 2001 Revitalization Report or 2011 Ten Year Review and is not explicitly mentioned in the charge of the 2013 Special Review Committee. Given the long-term nature of the ICA debt, the President should comment on whether ICA should be reviewed by the new Special Committee. DLS recommends that the 2013 Special Review Committee for Coppin State University report on CSU's athletics program.

It is our understanding that the work of the Special Review Committee includes a review of the ICA program. The scope of the work of the committee includes:

"...a comprehensive assessment of the CSU mission and vision statements, its strategic plan, and the processes by which the university attempts to realize the goals and aspirations defined by those documents. The Special Committee is asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses in CSU's administrative and operational infrastructure, the scope and delivery of its academic programming, the quality of its student support services, the impact of its community outreach programs, the efficacy of its fiscal management, the effectiveness of its institutional advancement operations, and the role CSU's athletics program plays in fulfilling the institution's mission. "

NCAA Grant

Page 24 - The President should comment on how CSU will put up the \$450,000 in matching or in-kind funds for this grant in fiscal 2014 given its ICA and operating budget deficit. The President should also explain why, given student athletes' academic success versus the general student body, this grant is a priority for the institution.

The NCAA grant is an educational grant of \$900,000 provided to the University in \$300,000 yearly increments. The match in year one is \$75,000 and it includes the University's in-kind contributions for facilities, salaries of personnel. While it will be used directly for our student athletes, the value of the grant to the university is to test concepts that have the potential to be transferable to the student body as a whole. Our student athletes have a profile that is similar in many respects to the overall student body — yet they persist and graduate at significantly higher rates. This seemed an ideal opportunity to study, and plan for, the transference of best practices in ICA to the rest of our students. The Board of Regents, the University System of Maryland, the Foundation Board and our Board of Visitors have all encouraged the University to research what works for student retention and graduation in ICA and to transfer applicable practices to the larger student body.

Access and Success Funding Data

Page 28 - The President should comment on why, given that SASA is free to attend, it was significantly under-enrolled in summer 2012. The President should also comment on why SASA students' completion rates are still low, despite the SASA support network.

Our goal is to have 250 students participate in this summer bridge program. To achieve this goal, we have made changes for Summer 2013 such as delaying the start for the program to late June so that it does not conflict with high school graduation for eligible students; engaging in more outreach to students and their families about the benefit of participating in this program; and improving the overall communications to students eligible to participate in the program. Given the nature of our student population, many students may apply to participate in the program yet family obligations or summer employment may conflict and inhibit their ability to participate.

SASA has been in existence for three years and although we continue to adjust aspects of the program, data suggests that this program is having positive effects on credit accumulation during the first-year, first-year GPA and second year retention. For example, for Fall 2011, while the retention rates for the overall student population was 61 percent, SASA participants were retained at a rate of 67 percent. Since CSU engages and involves students in multiple programs, it is difficult to determine the impact of any one program alone. However, as with many best practices utilized by higher educational institutions nationwide, the University's results support the continued development of a comprehensive approach to retention planning.

Page 28 - The President should comment on why CSU spends so much of its A&S funding on SASA rather than initiatives that may boost retention and success rates for mature freshmen, adult learners, and part-time students, given that only about 15% of CSU's students are direct-from-high-school, full-time freshmen.

The University is examining a more comprehensive approach to boosting retention and graduation rates, along with funding SASA, a more targeted program that addresses first-time full-time degree seeking students. While boosting completion rates for larger population of students is important, our most immediate challenge and priority is to increase graduation rates for first-time full-time degree seeking students. Effective services directed at that targeted population, with adequate funding can be extended to a larger group in the future. Currently, the university has taken creative steps to increase completion rates for mature freshmen, adult learners, and part-time students by developing targeted cohort strategies that include priority funding of debt relief, increased advising and course alignment, increase interaction with each class (sophomore, juniors, and seniors).

Page 28 - The President should comment on what CSU will do to ensure that it meets MHEC's requirements for any JCR requirement on fiscal 2013 outcomes, given that CSU has not submitted satisfactory reports to MHEC for two of the past three JCR requests on A&S funding, which represents three of the past four years of A&S funded projects.

The University is open to meeting with MHEC and other coordinators of the JCR report to discuss ways to meet the satisfactory requirements for reporting the 2013 fiscal indicators. The university will implement a data integrity workgroup comprised of staff from financial aid and institutional research with IT providing consultation as necessary that will meet periodically and develop a consistent method to uncover and correct any inconsistencies in data and to make sure that we are complying with state data requests.

USM Hagerstown

Page 29 - The President should comment on what other degree programs may expand to Hagerstown or Shady Grove and how such programs are selected.

Currently, no plans are underway to offer additional programs at Hagerstown. Current Hagerstown offerings resulted from analyses conducted by Coppin's Curriculum Committee and the Hagerstown Governing Council. Additional data were collected from the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, which informed the campus on the need and demand for the programs. In the future, the University plans to offer Health Information Management (HIM) at USM Shady Grove. The program will assist the University in meeting its diversity initiatives and goals related to educational access.

Page 29 - The President should comment on whether CSU can bear the risk if an expanded program cannot sustain itself through tuition revenue alone, given CSU's limited fund balance and enrollment shortfalls on the main campus.

The University is reviewing its current inventory of academic programs. As part of its recent strategic planning process, the Division of Academic Affairs has completed a draft plan, which calls for the review of all University majors. The campus deans are reviewing performance indicators and identifying low performing programs for removal from the campus' program inventory. Deans have also been charged with identifying programs that should be enhanced based upon positive productivity results. Additionally, all programs that have been introduced since 2001 are being reviewed for sustainability or mission centrality. All majors that cannot be sustained because of low enrollment or other productivity factors will be phased out during fiscal years 2014, 2015, and forward.

On-line Classes

Page 29 - The President should comment on enrollment goals for the online program and when and what other online degree programs may follow.

The School of Business launched the University's first online degree program in Management beginning fall 2012. Enrollment is expected to increase in fall 2013 to 75 students. Given the core curricula for all business degree programs at the University, it would be easy to introduce an additional online degree program in Marketing in the near future since all core business courses and General Education requirements would have been developed. Concerned about quality in online instruction, nearly 80% of the existing Business School faculty have been trained and certified as online instructors through the Sloan-C certification process. Additionally, online courses developed by the institution are reviewed by *Quality Matters*; an external agency that certifies online courses for appropriate content delivery and curriculum design. To avoid the proliferation of online majors of questionable quality, the University will ensure that all future online programs will be staffed by faculty with the appropriate certifications.