COMMITTEE WEEK ROUNDUP

SUS Presidents in Tallahassee
On Thursday, February 21, 2013, eight of the State University System (SUS) Presidents traveled to the State Capitol and met with Senate and House Leadership to discuss the System’s legislative and funding priorities for the 2013 Legislative Session. The priorities include the restoration of the $300 million that was removed from the SUS budget in 2012, an increase of $118 million tied to performance metrics, and addressing the Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funding mechanism.

Graduate Medical Education
On Wednesday, February 20, 2013, the House Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee heard a presentation on the Governor’s Graduate Medical Education (GME) funding initiatives included in his FY 2013-2014 budget proposal.

Florida currently ranks 42nd in the United States in regard to residency spots per 100,000 citizens. At present, the State is home to over 3,700 medical residents. However, Florida would have to add 2,700 residency spots just to reach the national average. Governor Scott’s budget proposal seeks to add 700 residency spots and increase transparency and accountability. The Governor’s proposal would achieve these goals by removing the medical education expenses currently embedded in a teaching hospitals daily Medicaid rate and transferring these funds to the Department of Health. The proposal also calls for an additional $27 million dollars of new State funding to support medical education.

The Governor’s proposal would have significant budgetary impacts on some of Florida’s largest teaching hospitals, specifically Jackson Memorial and Shands. The presentation generated a large number of questions from the committee members and this issue will likely come up repeatedly during the Legislative Session.

- Meeting Packet

House Higher Education Committee Bill
On Wednesday, February 20, 2013, the House Higher Education and Workforce Subcommittee presented the

GOING FORWARD

The Legislative Session Begins March 3, 2013
There will be no committee meetings or legislative business the week of February 25, 2013 – March 1, 2013. The Legislative Session will begin on March 3, 2013 and will end on May 3, 2013.

BILLS IN BRIEF

SB 612 – Relating to Health Care Practitioners (Galvano)
Requiring that certain health care practitioners make specified disclosures when presenting themselves as “Doctor” or “Dr.”; providing criminal penalties for violations if there is intent to mislead.

Last Action: 02/07/2013
Referred to Health Policy; Criminal Justice; Appropriations Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice; Appropriations
The draft of a comprehensive higher education committee bill. The legislation proposes numerous changes to the State College and State University Systems. Among the many issues addressed in the legislation are:

- Membership of the Higher Education Coordinating Council (HECC)
- Increases in General Education course requirements
- Creation of a Talent Retention Program to keep middle and high school students in the Florida SUS
- Implementation of the Complete Florida Degree
- Program Developmental Education and college placement testing
- Board of Governors enforcement authority
- Adult education courses
- Residency requirements for tuition purposes
- 4 Year Fixed Tuition Program
- Universities' contracting authority

The University Relations Office will be monitoring this bill over the coming weeks and following the legislation as it moves through the committee process. A searchable copy of the legislation's draft language is located in the Committee’s meeting packet.

-Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Act – SB 1076

On Thursday, February 21, 2013, Senator Legg introduced SB 1076 – the CAPE Act. The new senate bill, which is the brainchild of Senate President Gaetz and Education Chairman Legg, expands the high school level Career and Professional Education programs that were initially passed by the legislature in 2007, and creates programming partnerships between local school districts and higher education institutions. The majority of the bill’s proposed changes apply to school districts and the State College System. However, in regard to the State University System the legislation:

- Revises the requirements that must be included in the strategic plan that the Board of Governors must develop, which includes criteria for the designation of certain baccalaureate degree programs and graduate degree programs as high-demand programs.
- Requires the Chancellor of the State University System to cooperate with the Commissioner of Education to support the operation of programs to encourage talented secondary school students and students of physics or mathematics programs to pursue a postsecondary education at a state university.
- Expands the current State University System performance funding metrics.
The University Relations Office will be monitoring this bill over the coming weeks and following the legislation as it moves through the committee process. A searchable copy of the bill can be found on the Senate’s webpage. -SB 1076

**Florida Retirement System** On February 15, 2013, the results of a Milliman, Inc. actuarial study about the Florida Retirement System (FRS) were delivered to House and Senate leadership and the State Retirement Director. The study analyzed the impact to the Florida Retirement System (FRS) of a legislative proposal that would close the Defined Benefit (DB) Plan to new members and provide mandatory participation in the Defined Contribution (DC) Plan for all new state employees effective January 1, 2014.

House and Senate leaders have expressed concern about future generations having to fund a DB plan in perpetuity. However, the study raises concerns that if future members (of FRS) cannot join the DB plan, the result is a declining DB payroll base on which contributions to fund the DB plan are traditionally made. As a result, this would require increasing contribution rates as a percentage of payroll.

This week, Speaker Weatherford returned the report to Milliman stating that their work was incomplete. The Speaker indicated that the report needed baseline information, illustrating how the pension program would look if it was left open, in order to perform a proper comparison. The actuarial report and the proposed changes to the FRS system will be discussed further as the legislation moves through the committee process.

-Report

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

On Thursday, February 21, 2013, the Board of Governors participated in a conference call where they addressed a number of pending issues. The actions taken by the Board included:

- Approved the nomination of David Marian Thomas to the UF Board of Trustees.
- Approved the motion to direct FSU to initiate the process and transfer the Animation and Digital Arts program back to Tallahassee and to create a teach out plan that will be presented no later than 5/1/13, to BOT and BOG. The motion passed unanimously.
- Approved the following regarding online learning:
  - Use the Strategic Plan’s preeminence metrics to designate the university that would create a separate arm to provide online degree programs of the highest quality, and that funds be requested of the Legislature to support such an effort.
The preeminence metrics would be those passed by the 2012 Legislature and approved by the Board for use in the 2012-2013 university workplans. Further, the selected university would create an innovation and research center to: (1) ensure the State is a leader in the development of cutting-edge technology and instructional design for the online programs, and (2) conduct research that would help strengthen online degree programs and the success of online students.

- Direct the Chancellor to form a system-wide work group that would report back to the Strategic Planning Committee and continue to work with our colleges and universities and the other delivery systems to determine ways in which services and online degree programs, including market-based job analyses, can be better coordinated to ensure State and student needs are being met in a cost-efficient and effective manner.