OUTREACH

President Saunders at the Ft. Lauderdale Forum
On Wednesday, February 27, 2013, President Saunders, along with Associate Provost Tony Abbate, and Broward College President David Armstrong attended the Ft. Lauderdale Forum’s Higher Education and “Big Ideas” event. The discussion focused on issues related to Ft. Lauderdale’s “Visioning” process, including the local impact of climate change, urban transit, medical technology, efficient delivery of social services, and urban architecture and planning. President Saunders discussed the University’s Broward based environmental research efforts as well as FAU’s overall economic impact on the region. Through their presentations the presidents demonstrated their institution’s ability to interrelate to the “Big Ideas” generated during the “Visioning” process.

(President Saunders with Broward County Commissioner Chip Lamarca, Broward College President David Armstrong and Forum Moderator Rob Dressler)

WRLN Town Hall on Session 2013

On Monday, February 25, 2013, the Office of University Relations attended WRLN’s Town Hall on Session 2013 at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts. The event, which was attended by over 600 people, featured a panel discussion about the upcoming Legislative Session and the top issues facing our state legislators. The three person panel, which included Sen. Chris Smith (D-Broward), Sen. Jack Latvala (R-Pinellas), and Mary Ellen Klas (Times / Herald’s Tallahassee Bureau Chief), discussed issues ranging from election reform to property insurance. The conversation briefly touched on higher education issues and the panelists highlighted legislative initiatives like the State College System’s $10,000 degree program and the granting of...
in-state tuition for Florida residents who are the children of undocumented immigrants. The panelists expressed optimism about the State’s budget forecast and their ability to compromise on the State’s most pressing issues.

FEDERAL ISSUES
Sequestration
In 2011, Congress passed a law saying that if both political parties couldn’t agree on a plan to reach a goal of $4 trillion in deficit reduction, that roughly a trillion dollars of arbitrary budget cuts would start to take effect this year. In practical terms, defense programs face cuts of 7.9 percent, while non-defense activities are due for cuts of 5.1 percent. Unless Congress acts by March 1, 2013, this series of automatic cuts—called the sequester—will take effect. This week the White House released a state-by-state breakdown outlining the potential impacts of sequestration.

According to the White House, Florida’s higher education student aid and work-study programs would be significantly impacted. Approximately, 6,250 fewer low income students in Florida would receive aid to help them finance the costs of college and around 1,700 fewer students will get work-study jobs that help them pay for college.

In addition to aid programs, the sequester will significantly impact federal research programs. A recent House Democratic Appropriations Committee report says the National Institute of Health (NIH) faces a cut of $1.6 billion as a result of sequestration, which means fewer and smaller research projects aimed at finding treatments and cures for diseases like cancer, diabetes, and Alzheimer’s.

At the National Science Foundation (NSF), the major impact of sequestration will be seen in reductions to the number of new research grants and cooperative agreements awarded in FY 2013. NSF anticipates that the total number of new research grants will be reduced by approximately 1,000.

The sequester, the President’s budget proposal, and the congressional appropriations process will all be discussed in the coming weeks and months. To review the White House’s complete list of the Florida impacts please follow the link below.

-HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COUNCIL (HECC)
HECC Update
The Higher Education Coordinating Council is a statutorily-created body charged with working with Florida’s postsecondary education sectors for the purposes of identifying unmet needs and facilitating

Certification Funding List be used in determining annual performance funding distributions to school districts and Florida College System institutions.

Last Action: 02/28/2013
Referred to Education; Appropriations Subcommittee on Education; Appropriations
solutions to disputes regarding the creation of new degree programs and the establishment of new institutes, campuses, or centers. Its purpose is to serve as an advisory board and make recommendations to the Legislature, the State Board of Education, and the Board of Governors.

On February 8, 2013, the HECC held a meeting at the Florida Virtual Campus in Tallahassee. The meeting’s agenda covered a number of topics, including the creation of a common STEM definition, an online university study update, college and career first goals, and the Florida College System’s response to the Governor’s $10,000 degree program.

In addition to the topics listed above, the Members of the HECC continued to discuss the 2012 Annual Report, which was released in December. The Higher Education Coordinating Council will hold its next meeting on March 25, 2013. To review the Annual Report or the organization’s meeting schedule, please visit their website, which is listed below.

-HECC

COMMITTEE WEEK ROUNDUP
No Committee Meetings This Week
There were no committee meetings or legislative business the week of February 25, 2013 – March 1, 2013.