

# APSCUF Update

Proudly representing the 6,000 faculty members and coaches  
at the 14 PA State System of Higher Education universities

July 6, 2010

## President's Message Post-Budget Analysis: Mind the Gap, Board

I have been fortunate in the last dozen years to visit London frequently. One of the funny and interesting and characteristic parts of the "London experience" is riding the subway, the "Tube," where you see polyglot denizens and amazing fashion statements.

And you learn, through frequent repetition, to "mind the gap" – that is, pay attention to the empty space between the car and the platform or you may have an accident.

They remind you over loud-speakers; the Underground corporation has put it on T-shirts and billboards – it is nearly ubiquitous.

As the State Legislature and Governor have now passed the 2010-11 budget, we need the Board of Governors to "mind the gap" – that is, pay attention to the amount of money needed to sustain our universities given the state's shrinking investment.

This year's appropriation is exactly what last year's was: \$444 million from the state, with \$38 million from stimulus. The ARRA legislation mandated the \$444 as our minimum "maintenance of effort" and no one can say we haven't reached for our minimum.



Those numbers are down from a July 2008 appropriation of \$498 million that took a 4% cut in October of '08. It's even down from what we received in 2007-08, which was \$484 million.

Even if this news, which is expected, isn't good – we are receiving less than July '07 money when inflation is up 4%, the Higher Ed Price Index is up 10%, and our student body is up 7% plus this fall's -- it is much better news than many other states are dealing with.

Now it comes time to "mind the gap." Every year the Chancellor's office calculates this gap between budgeted needs submitted by the universities, the current tuition level, and the state appropriation. This year the gap is \$63 million (see <http://www.millersville.edu/>

[services/budget/files/unionbudgetoverview.pdf](#) slide 15).

As you can see from the slide, the Chancellor's office is already presuming a 2% increase in students. That would move us to the 120,000 mark, and, as a reminder, last year we grew by 4% across the state and most of you are aware that demand has not subsided this year. Bloomsburg has already hinted at a 7% increase just based on the freshman class.

The Board of Governors needs to step up and mind the gap when they meet on July 22nd. APSCUF will be talking to leadership to encourage them to do so. In fact, President Ruud from Shippensburg has already publicly come out for an 8 to 10% increase ([http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2010/06/gov\\_ed\\_rendell\\_says\\_case\\_must.html](http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2010/06/gov_ed_rendell_says_case_must.html)). That number seems a bit high – slide 15 above indicates a 7.3% increase "fills the gap."

And 7.3% is \$380 per year.

Last week Temple, supposedly one of our competitors, announced a \$660 per year increase of tu-

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## President's Message (Continued)

ition – almost double what we are advocating ([http://www.philly.com/inquirer/local/20100618\\_Temple\\_to\\_raise\\_tuition\\_5\\_9\\_.html#axzz0rCkqxFsh](http://www.philly.com/inquirer/local/20100618_Temple_to_raise_tuition_5_9_.html#axzz0rCkqxFsh)).

The Board of Governors needs to face their responsibility: five universities have announced financial difficulties and have either laid off people, or have announced their intention to do so. Clearly, the continuation of the “below infla-

tion” tuition increase policy of the past five years, that has generated great PR as the lowest public system tuition increases in the country, would be fiscal mismanagement. You can't keep asking organizations to do “more for less” – the end of that as long-term policy is getting something for nothing.

And we all know what you get for that.

So, we plan on pushing for the

Board to “mind the gap.” We'll be asking for your help in the next two weeks to get this message out.

In the meantime, take a deep sigh of relief as we finally got a budget passed on time, without any more cuts to our appropriation.



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