

Illinois Higher Ed
The Friday Memo

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Chairman Guy Alongi
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September 5, 2008

[Buying textbooks is hard on students' checkbooks: Town meeting to discuss remedies](#)

According to a GAO report to Congress, in the last two decades college textbook prices have increased at *twice the rate of inflation*. The costs of textbooks are *increasing at an average of 6 percent per year*, and the average student *pays \$900 – \$1,050 per year on textbooks/supplies*. A recent IBHE report cites that the cost of textbooks as a percentage of tuition is *72 percent at 2-year public institutions*.

Concerned about these increasing costs, the City Colleges of Chicago Student Government Associations are inviting students, faculty, legislators, and other interested parties to discuss tips for saving money as well as seeking measures to reduce high costs at a Town Hall Forum on September 25, at Kennedy-King College Theater in Chicago.

[Higher Education Opportunity Act gets a website at USDOE](#)

On August 14, President Bush signed into law the *Higher Education Opportunity Act* (HEOA), reauthorizing the original *Higher Education Act* (HEA). The legislation covers most of the programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) and Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA). Therefore, OPE has dedicated a new website with information on the Department's implementation of the HEOA. As the Department moves through the implementation process, OPE will be updating the website, so, add it to your "favorites" bookmarks.

[A National Center for Education Statistics special analysis: A closer look at community colleges](#)

This year's special supplement to NCES's "Condition of Education 2008" report provides a profile of the more than 1,000 community colleges in the U.S., analyzes the characteristics of students who entered community college from high schools, and examines the rates of persistence and attainment among community college students in general. It also directly compares public, two-year institutions with public and private four-year colleges and universities. Among high school seniors who enrolled immediately in a postsecondary institution in 2004, 30% enrolled in a community college.

[Paperwork Reduction at IBHE: E-submission process for applications is online](#)

IBHE is moving to an electronic submission process for all public and independent institution applications for new programs or operating and degree-granting authority. The e-submission format is now available on the IBHE website. After November 1, all applications will be required to be submitted

UPCOMING

September

12 Illinois Community College Presidents' Council Meeting, Springfield

12-13 ICCB Student Advisory Committee Meeting, Springfield

12-13 Illinois Community College Trustees Association Meetings, Springfield

19 Illinois Community College Board Meeting, Rend Lake College, Ina

19 Illinois Student Assistance Commission Meeting, Liberty Middle School, Edwardsville

25 [Textbook Affordability Town Hall Forum](#), Chicago

October

6 Public Agenda Task Force, Chicago

7 IBHE Board Meeting, Kennedy-King College, Chicago

using the electronic format. The first step requires each institution to register and to create a log-in identification and password. Questions? Contact Nina Tangman at tangman@ibhe.org

People in the News



[The Rev. Leroy Mitchell](#), director of CHANCE at Northern Illinois University, since June 16, 1980, officially retired August 22, although he has pledged to remain at CHANCE through the fall semester while a search for a new director takes place.

Western Illinois University-Quad Cities Management **[Professor Emeric Solymossy](#)** has been selected as the 2008-2009 Fulbright-Kathryn and Craig Hall Distinguished Chair for Entrepreneurship in Central Europe. According to the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, Solymossy will be teaching graduate and undergraduate courses in entrepreneurship and helping develop entrepreneurship curriculum at Corvinus University in Budapest, Hungary.

Loyola University Chicago's new School of Communication (SOC) has tapped **[Don Wycliff](#)**, long-time editor for the *Chicago Tribune* and former associate vice president of news and information at the University of Notre Dame, to serve a one-year faculty appointment that allows him to teach reporting and editing this fall. Wycliff served as the *Chicago Tribune's* public editor from 2000-2006 and editorial page editor from 1991-2000.

[Robin Mermelstein](#), professor of psychology and clinical professor of community health sciences, has been named director of the University of Illinois at Chicago Institute for Health Research and Policy.

Campus News

[U.S. News and World Report gives UIS top rankings](#)

U.S. News & World Report's 2009 Edition of America's Best Colleges ranks the University of Illinois at Springfield as the best public university - Master's category - in the state of Illinois and the fourth best public university in that category in the entire Midwest.

[CAIT Receives Two Statewide Awards](#)

Western Illinois University's Center for the Application of Information Technologies (CAIT) recently was recognized by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) for its leadership, innovative use of groundbreaking technology and commitment to excellence.

[Professor writes curriculum to enable future teachers to recognize, assist homeless children in their classrooms](#)

One of the Oklahoma City fourth-graders in Maylan Dunn-Kenney's inner-city classroom had spent years living inside her family's car.

[Lewis Celebrates Sixth Consecutive Year of Record Enrollment](#)

Over 660 new undergraduate students, the largest freshmen class in school history, started classes Aug. 25 at Lewis University. Transfer students, adults and graduate students increase the number of "new" Lewis students to more than

1,500. Total university enrollment is quickly approaching 5,500 students, which makes Lewis the 11th largest private university in Illinois.

[MORE CAMPUS NEWS](#)

News from Higher Education

[Durbin draws attention to law, textbook prices](#)

(Springfield State Journal-Register)

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, saying that college textbooks are often “dramatically overpriced,” went to the University of Illinois at Springfield Wednesday to discuss a new law he authored.

[If Kent State Beats Goals, Professors Will Profit](#)

(Chronicle of Higher Education)

Kent State University is trying a new and unusual tactic to improve its status, retention rate, and fund raising—paying cash bonuses to faculty members if the university exceeds its goals in those areas.

[Don't Know Much About History](#)

(The Wall Street Journal)

When Barack Obama accepted the Democratic Party's nomination before an exuberant crowd of 80,000 at Invesco Field last week, pundits were amazed: Look at all of these young people, gathered to watch a political event, of all things. Certainly, this year's election -- necessitating, as it has, an understanding of terms as obscure as "superdelegate" -- has been a great civics lesson for America's youth. Which is good, because they're unlikely to learn about civics anywhere else.

[MORE NEWS FROM HIGHER EDUCATION](#)

Edlines from AASCU

[VT: Higher education budget to be cut](#)

The administration of Gov. James Douglas and state lawmakers have agreed to fill a \$24 million gap in the state's budget in part by cutting higher education funding. Robert Clarke, Vermont State Colleges Chancellor, said, “It just means we are going to charge higher and higher tuition” and continue a long history of underfunding higher education. According to reports, Vermont ranks the lowest on public spending on higher education per full-time equivalent (FTE) student, and lowest in percent of total taxes and lottery revenues going to higher education. *The Barre Montpelier Times Argus*

[US: Colleges make efforts to get students to finish degrees](#)

Colleges throughout the United States are attempting to increase and accelerate graduation rates among college students. According to the College Board, the number of students earning bachelor's degrees within five years has held steady at 52 percent, down from 55 percent in 1988. Colleges are trying to improve the graduation rates by appealing to college sophomores, men and adult dropouts. *USA Today*

[US: Wall of Shame to be implemented](#)

The College Opportunity and Affordability Act, recently signed by President Bush, mandates that the Department of Education publish online those colleges and universities with the highest percentage increase in tuition over the prior three years. In addition, the law will mandate the listing of colleges with the top 5 percent highest tuition. The lists will be made available on July 1, 2011. In response to criticism of higher tuition charges, university officials have cited the need to raise tuition to enhance the quality of education; this need has not often been met with increased financial commitment from state legislatures. Some lawmakers like the idea of predictable tuition rates, but critics maintain that fixed tuition does little to address college affordability. *USA Today*

WA: Students have not signed up for state college scholarship plan

Only about 4,000 out of 56,000 eligible students have signed up for Washington's state-funded college scholarship plan, College Bound Scholarships. The plan is open to any middle-school student in a low-income home or foster care. To be eligible, students must sign up in seventh or eighth grade, maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA throughout high school, and not be convicted of any felonies. In return, the state will pay for up to four years of tuition and books at accredited public, private, community or technical colleges in Washington. The program does not guarantee acceptance into a college and eligibility decisions are made with regard to the family's financial situation at the time of the student's high school graduation. *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

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