

Illinois Higher Ed
The Friday Memo

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Busy week for legislators



Facing a deadline for approving Senate bills, the Senate sent a flurry of measures to the House this week. Among them:

- [SB 3222](#) revises the “truth in tuition” law to provide a tuition break to students who go beyond the present four-year tuition guarantee. Under the measure sponsored by Sen. Martin Sandoval, students who take a fifth or sixth year to finish their degree would see a tuition bump to the level of the class that entered the university the year after they enrolled.
- [SB 3654](#) requires the state Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to establish a grant program for emerging technology enterprises. The bill is sponsored by Sen. Michael Frerichs.
- [SB 3699](#) creates a grant program for students who transfer from a community college to a public or private four-year institution. Students who demonstrate financial need and maintain a 3.0 grade point average would be eligible for \$1,000 per year grants at the university, or \$2,000 per year if they study in a STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) field. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Michael Bond, is subject to appropriation.
- [SB 3705](#) expands the successful College and Career Readiness Program to an additional seven community colleges. Under the program, created originally by legislation sponsored by Sen. Ed Maloney, community college faculty work with feeder high schools to ensure that graduates are prepared for the rigor of college coursework.
- [SJR 88](#), also sponsored by Sen. Maloney, creates a Commission on Higher Education Finance Study Commission at the Board of Higher Education to examine the history of state support for higher education, tuition and financial aid policy, best practices from other states to incentivize certificate and degree completion, and alternative funding schemes to advance the goals of the *Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success*.

Meanwhile, the House also was busy passing legislation, including:

- [HR 918](#) directs the IBHE to create a Blue Ribbon Committee on Higher Education Mandates to explore state requirements on public universities and recommend ways to streamline regulations. The resolution is sponsored by Rep. Bob Pritchard.
- [HB 5824](#) amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act to permit a veteran who is eligible for full tuition and fee waiver at a community college or public university to transfer the waiver to a family member. The bill is sponsored by Rep. Mike Bost.

[President sets education priorities](#)

President Obama has proposed a Blueprint for Reform, the rewriting of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act with priorities focused on student achievement, strengthened performance standards, improved teaching and school leadership, greater equity and opportunity, and innovation in the nation’s schools. In announcing his plan, Obama

UPCOMING

March

26 ICCB Meeting, Harry L. Crisp II Community College Center, Springfield

26 ISAC Meeting, Illinois State University, Normal

27-28 IBHE-SAC meeting, Illinois State University

April

6 IBHE Meeting, Harold Washington College, Chicago

noted that “today, more than ever, a world-class education is a prerequisite for success.” He said the nation must “ensure that every student graduates from high school well prepared for college and a career.”

A video of the President discussing the Blueprint is [here](#).

[Lagging Hispanic grad rates undermine Obama attainment goal](#)

A new study from the American Enterprise Institute concludes that improving college graduation rates among Hispanic students must become a national priority. The report states that President Obama's goal of making the U.S. the most educated country in the world “cannot be achieved without increasing the rate at which Hispanic students obtain a college degree.”

Among the study's findings:

- At the average college or university, 51 percent of Hispanic students complete a bachelor's degree in six years compared to 59 percent of white students at those same schools. Even after accounting for the type of students schools admit, Hispanic students graduate at lower rates than their white peers at all levels of admissions selectivity.
- The gaps between white and Hispanic graduation rates are smaller at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). This is not due, however, to higher Hispanic graduation rates at HSIs but to the tendency of these institutions to have below-average white graduation rates. HSIs do about as well as non-HSIs with similar admissions criteria in graduating their Hispanic students.
- Hispanic women graduate at consistently higher rates than Hispanic men and often graduate at the same rate as white men in their schools.

[Credit for prior learning fosters degree completion for adult students](#)

Adult students often bring special obstacles to completing a college degree. Getting into college is only the first hurdle for students who are in the workforce, have family responsibilities, and face affordability and other issues. Supported by the Lumina Foundation, the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning conducted a study of the role of prior learning assessment (PLA) in fostering persistence and degree completion among adult students. The study concluded that students who received credit through prior learning assessment had improved educational outcomes, particularly in graduation rates, than other adult students. The study also found the such students shortened their time to degree, thus making their college experience more affordable.

[Illinois fares well in MHEC faculty salary study](#)

Illinois public colleges and universities ranked high in a comparison of faculty salaries in the states that make up the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC). Salaries for full professors at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign averaged \$129,600 in 2008-09, second only to the University of Michigan (\$142,100) among the MHEC states, including 9 of the 11 Big Ten universities. The study also looked at other faculty ranks at various types of colleges and universities, grouped by Carnegie classification.

[Illinois Farm Bureau offers scholarships to rural nurse practitioners](#)



Illinois Farm Bureau awards \$4,000 scholarships to five Registered Nurses studying to become Nurse Practitioners. The catch? In return, these students make a commitment to serve two years in a rural community. IFB has been offering this scholarship since 1992. If you are a nurse interested in advancing your career and serving the heartland of America, submit an application by May 1, 2010.

People in the News



[John C. Guyon](#), former chancellor at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, died at his home in Carbondale, Wednesday, March 17. He was 78. Guyon led SIUC for nine years, from 1987 to 1996, the second-longest tenure after Delyte W. Morris. Chancellor Samuel Goldman extended condolences on behalf of the University community to Trish Guyon, John's wife, and their children. "John's commitment to improving our University and our region spanned decades," Goldman said. "He guided the University with a steady hand, overseeing growth in enrollment as well as expansion of the campus physically. In all of his roles here, he always was a champion for students, mentoring, guiding and advocating so that they could achieve academic and career success. We all benefited from his passion for helping improve the lives of others."

The American Political Science Association (APSA) has just announced that it is honoring University of Illinois Springfield political science professor [Christopher Z. Mooney](#) by naming a national Ph.D. dissertation award after him. Doctoral candidates worldwide can be nominated for the prize in the category of Best Dissertation in State Politics and Policy.

Campus News

[SIU Med School to Host "Changing the Face of Medicine" Exhibit and Public Programs](#)

Women physicians are the focus of a traveling exhibit opening at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine March 31 – May 12 in the SIU medical library in Springfield. "Changing the Face of Medicine: Celebrating America's Women Physicians" tells the story of how American women who wanted to practice medicine have struggled over the past two centuries to gain access to medical education and to work in the medical specialty they chose.

[NIU counts American Sign Language toward undergraduate foreign language requirement](#)

Deaf professor provides 'bridge into the Deaf world.'

News from Higher Education

[Education Secretary Duncan: ban NCAA teams with low grad rates](#)

(USA TODAY)

WASHINGTON — If U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan had his way, a dozen of the teams in the men's NCAA basketball tournament would not be eligible to play in it, including top-seeded Kentucky.

[Linking education with workforce outcomes](#)

(Inside Higher Ed)

In a new policy brief, the American Association of Community Colleges calls on the federal government to encourage the establishment of state "postsecondary longitudinal data systems" that "capture the workforce outcomes of educational pursuits."

[State cuts are pushing public colleges into peril](#)

(Chronicle of Higher Education)

As the chancellor of Nevada's higher-education system faced yet another round of budget cuts last month, he said he had no reason to make misleading claims that "the sky is falling" on public colleges in his state. The truth, he said, is that it is.

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