On February 9, 2011, Governor Malloy announced his plan to reorganize public higher education in Connecticut, which included a plan to merge the Connecticut State University System, Community/Technical Colleges, and Charter Oak under one Board of Regents. While CSU-AAUP shared many of the same goals as the Governor, CSU-AAUP had many concerns about the proposed bill and actively lobbied against it (read CSU-AAUP’s response to the reorganization).

While we were not successful in preventing the merger, CSU-AAUP was successful in having many of our concerns addressed and changes made to the final bill. For example, the original bill contained language that allowed the Board of Regents to transfer funds from one constituent unit to another. CSU-AAUP argued this would create too much fiscal instability and would make planning impossible and this language is no longer in the bill. In addition, the final bill calls for a Faculty Advisory Committee to the Board of Regents, and there will be two Vice Presidents appointed to the Board, one of whom will serve as liaison to the CSU System and the other, to the Community/Technical Colleges.

CSU-AAUP still believes that the strategic plan for higher education in Connecticut should have been completed before the consolidation was approved. In addition, we believe that there should have been more time for public comment between when the language of the final bill was made available and when the House and Senate voted (which occurred in less than a week).

A summary of the reorganization as approved follows:

- A 19-member Board of Regents (15 voting members, the Commissioners for Education, Economic/Community Development, Labor, and Public Health are ex-officio members) is established, which replaces the Board of Trustees for CSU and the Community/Technical Colleges as well as the Board for State Academic Awards (the oversight body for Charter Oak) and assumes the powers and duties of the eliminated Boards.
- An Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education is established, which replaces the Board of Governors for Higher Education and the Department of Higher Education and assumes the powers and duties of the eliminated Board and Department.
- UConn and its Board of Trustees will remain intact.
- The positions of the Chancellors of CSU and the Community/Technical Colleges are eliminated.
- The Board of Regents will approve new degree programs at CSU, the Community/Technical Colleges, and UConn.
- The Board of Regents will have a president, appointed by the Governor.
- The Board of Regents will name two vice presidents, upon recommendation by its president, to serve as liaisons for CSU and the Community/Technical Colleges, respectively.
A student advisory committee consisting of seventeen students, one from each of the institutions under the Board of Regent’s jurisdiction, is established and the chairman and vice chairman of the committee will serve as voting members of the Board (one must come from CSU and the other from the Community/Technical Colleges).

A seven-member faculty advisory committee is established (three members each from CSU and the Community/Technical Colleges and one from Charter Oak).

Many questions still remain and we continue to be concerned about implementation of the plan. We will continue to monitor the situation and keep you informed. The entire language of the reorganization can be found within the 277 page House Bill 6652.

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