

March 12, 2012

Dear colleagues,

With spring break taking place last week, I know that many of you will not have had a chance to review Jack Maynard's memo on affordability issues and proposed policy changes that was distributed on Thursday to the faculty. The memo, which was also shared with the leaders of the Staff Council and the Student Government Association, is available at:

www.indstate.edu/president/docs/maynardletteranddraftrecommendations.pdf.

I would encourage all faculty, staff and students to review the communication and provide feedback on these proposals. As I announced in my fall address, it is our intention to limit future increases in student costs to increases in the Consumer Price Index. The Affordability Task Force appointed in October has been studying this issue for the past several months and its subcommittees have developed numerous recommendations contained in their reports which are posted on the affordability website at www.indstate.edu/affordability.

It is now time to fully consider the first set of recommendations that will go forward for implementation, including those that would require Board of Trustees action at the May 4 meeting. What was distributed is a draft, and your comments and suggestions for improvement are welcome and needed. As indicated in the Provost's letter, he would like to receive feedback on this first round of recommendations no later than April 27, 2012.

It is important that we move quickly and thus the relatively short comment period. To help with the discussions, the Provost and I have arranged for several open meetings for campus input. These open forums will take place:

- Wednesday, March 28, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., HMSU 9th Floor
- Friday, March 30, 10 to 11 a.m., HMSU Dede III
- Thursday, April 5, 1 to 2 p.m., HMSU 9th Floor

We will also meet with the Faculty Senate and others as requested. It is my hope that each faculty, staff, and student will accept this charge and work in partnership with all members to aggressively address affordability.

I recognize that these proposals will generate significant debate. This initial set of recommendations places the issues of individual and, in some cases, corporate faculty independence against the need to balance the costs for our students.

If we are to control costs, there will be a need to offer fewer choices to our students, ultimately in terms of majors and courses, and to allow for less personal choice by individual faculty members with regard

to textbooks and other course materials. There will also be less latitude by the faculty acting as body to define a degree and a major. We have seen political action in this legislative session to limit the number of credits in a bachelor's degree to 120 and to mandate acceptance of a 30-credit transfer core. Other legislation proposed, but not passed this session, would significantly increase the power of the Commission for Higher Education in eliminating low-demand degree programs. It is clear that the institutional freedoms to control all aspects of its curricular offerings are being restrained and that additional legislation is likely if we do not address these issues.

We can blame no one but ourselves in the academy for this political interference. Over the last few decades, we have watched as the cost of a year of college at ISU has grown to \$17,640. That cost has grown at about three times the rate of family income in Indiana. We can try to blame outside forces and the failure of the state to continue to pay its traditional share of the cost of a degree, but ultimately it does not matter why. The State is not going to have the ability to increase its share of the cost; it is more likely that we will continue to see a decrease in the level of support. The state's new strategic plan, "[Reaching Higher, Achieving More](#)," sets an ambitious goal of increasing degree production by 100 percent. Given the cost that will inevitably accompany such a significant enrollment increase at our public institutions, it is unlikely that the state's per student funding will keep pace, let alone increase.

We have the ability *and an ethical responsibility* to maintain and enhance affordability for our students who, by and large, come from families of modest means.

As we look for ways to control costs over the long term, we cannot depend on tactics used in the past like pay and hiring freezes and eliminating travel. They are only useful in the short term and are akin to holding your breath under water. Ultimately you drown or you come to the surface and breathe again, and only if the danger has passed that drove your actions will you have succeeded. The danger of rising costs, government involvement in traditional academy activity coupled with the government's unwillingness/inability to pay, and the limited resources of our students will soon result in declining enrollments, loss of staff, and an erosion of quality if we do not make some fundamental changes to how we do business. In a recent [commentary](#) for "The Chronicle of Higher Education," Professor David Breneman wrote "What we found, as reported in our new book, *Financing American Higher Education in the Era of Globalization*, is that successful policies of earlier eras are no longer relevant, and that if the United States is to remain competitive in a knowledge-based world, we must examine and rethink the attitudes and incentives embedded in our current system."

The proposals, distributed for comment, are modest and by themselves are not sufficient. They do re-enforce the corporate rights of faculty to make decision about course content, textbooks and course material while continuing to give individual faculty members authority in the classroom.

The emphasis and urgency we are placing on this issue is not isolated to ISU or Indiana. The affordability of higher education is being discussed in presidential debates, statehouses and newsrooms around the country. In fact, a fairly balanced look at the issue was presented by a panel of experts who appeared on this morning's NOW with Alex Wagner show on MSNBC. That discussion is available at:

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21134540/vp/46707577#46707577>.

It is my hope that each faculty, staff, and student will accept this charge and work in partnership with all members of our campus community to aggressively address affordability.

Other items I would like to share:

- Our commitment to community engagement has been recognized again this year by the Corporation for National and Community Service and the U.S. Department of Education. ISU is among a select group of colleges and universities from throughout the nation recognized on the 2012 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with distinction. Indiana State has been selected for the Honor Roll every year since it began in 2006, and this is the second time that the university has been recognized with distinction. The President's Honor Roll recognizes higher education institutions that reflect the values of exemplary community service and achieve meaningful outcomes in their communities. By the time the current academic year ends, an estimated 6,600 ISU students will have provided 1.1 million hours of community service. More than 150 community agencies have been served by our students, faculty and staff. Congratulations to the Center for Community Engagement which coordinates many of these efforts along with the many students, faculty and staff who have been involved in helping others. Below are just three current examples of this work:
 - A total of 44 students and eight faculty and staff participated in Alternative Spring Break last week. They traveled to Atlanta, Georgia; Maryville, Tennessee; Haysi, Virginia; and Lexington, Kentucky to do everything from clean-up and beautification projects to working with agencies serving the homeless and others in impoverished situations and helping immigrant children build their English-speaking skills.
 - Indiana State also sent a team of 28 students, faculty and staff to assist with the clean-up efforts in the southern Indiana communities of Henryville and Borden. On Thursday, the group organized food and other supplies that had been donated, cleaned and set-up the dining hall, lodge and dormitories that will be used to accommodate volunteers coming to the area. On Friday, they assisted with clean-up and recovery of a 150-acre farm outside of Borden. Two barns, a house, and mobile home were total losses in the tornado. The group searched the property for household and personal items that could be recovered and tore apart a barn that had collapsed and sorted it into piles of wood and scrap metal.
 - The Red Cross is experiencing a need for assistance due to the recent tornadoes in southern Indiana. The tornadoes destroyed several buildings, forcing the Red Cross to cancel some of their scheduled blood drives. The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life and Student Government Association will be holding an emergency blood drive on March 15 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the South Gym of the Arena. The Red Cross would like to collect at least 50 units of blood that day. Donors must be at least 17 years old and weigh 110 pounds.

- Faculty, staff and students are invited to attend a recital by Brittany Maier at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 13 in University Hall Theater. She will be joined onstage by her mother, Tammy, who will talk about their musical journey and advocacy for music and arts centers for people with special needs. Born four months premature in April 1989, Maier weighed one pound and five ounces. Even though she was diagnosed blind, autistic and mentally disabled, her amazing musical talent surfaced when she began playing Schubert's "Ave Maria" on a toy piano at age 6. Able to duplicate a song after having heard it a few times, she memorized music with no limit to style, instrument or language in which it was recorded. At age 10, after receiving formal music instruction at the University of South Carolina's School of Music, Maier began composing her own original songs. The performance is free and open to the public with a reception afterward in the Atrium of University Hall. Her performance is sponsored by the Bayh College of Education, Blumberg Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, the Office of Communications and Marketing, Union Board and Residence Hall Association.

Come out and root for the men's basketball team as the Sycamores host Robert Morris in the opening round of the CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament at 7:05 p.m. Tuesday night (March 13). Tickets are \$16 for courtside seats, \$11 for lower level seats and \$9 in the upper level. ISU students with valid ID's will get into the contest for only \$2.

GO SYCAMORES!

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Bradley
President