

AN ACTION AGENDA FOR HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS

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I appreciate this opportunity to talk to you today about an important set of action commitments that presidents and chancellors have been asked to incorporate in their roles and responsibilities as we enter a new century and the environmental circumstances that mandate an action agenda for all higher education leaders, including arts and sciences deans. This work being done by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) addresses how our institutions will need to deal with the barriers to change as we reinforce our learner-centered mission, ensuring that our colleges and universities remain the springboards from which citizens are able to grasp the American dream.

As I review trends and issues, and a set of prescriptions which follow from them, I am indebted to presidential colleagues who have engaged in this structured conversation as members of an "Action Agenda Task Force" which I chaired, to AASCU staff who supported us and to other presidents who have written about or chaired groups relevant to these topics, from whom I have drawn liberally. The summary document which emerged from the first stage of this project is being made available to you; its key recommendations are part of my talk today ("A Commitment to Students, Community and Society: An Action Agenda for the Nation's Public Four-Year Comprehensive Colleges and Universities"). We have also published a compendium of best campus practices in the four key action areas that I will discuss (Commitment and Success: A Compendium of Best Practices at AASCU Institutions"), and I am currently engaged in additional activities to implement and extend various features of this agenda as a Senior Fellow at AASCU.

ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

The big change-drivers in our environment which are challenging colleges and universities, and which have motivated institutional leaders to develop an action-oriented agenda, cluster in three categories (see AASCU, "Public Higher Education and the Public Good").

Demographic Change

There are obviously profound demographic shifts occurring in our environment which provide a great variety of challenges and opportunities. These include the following:

- A population growing to nearly 400 million over the next half century.
- Projections indicating that 4 million more higher education students will be enrolled in 2015 compared to 1995.
- Dramatic ethnic and racial shifts, with whites comprising just about half of the population in roughly one-quarter century.
- More first-generation students entering the system, especially those more likely to be economically and educationally underprivileged.

Economic Change

- The emergence and growth of an information-age economy, where knowledge and ideas are the currency, rather than natural resources, is placing higher education in the driver's seat of the new economy, heightening both its centrality and visibility, as well as its exposure to competitive challenges and shortcomings, and increased demands for public accountability.
- Generally speaking, about 20% of our economic growth has been attributed to education.
- In this new, global economy we know that professionals and managers who are able to act independently and flexibly, to grasp new ideas, and to work constructively with others will be in high demand. These and related skills and abilities are, of course, those that have given liberal arts graduates an edge historically.

Technological Change

During a recent invited roundtable of CEO's hosted by the Aspen Institute and sponsored by Coopers and Lybrand, we developed a consensus on key technology-related trends that are driving change in higher education:

- The market for learning is increasing rapidly and a huge population of new learners, by the millions, will both expand our markets and entice new competition.
- "Buyers" are more demanding, with students of great diversity demanding flexible, targeted, customized, just-in-time learning.
- Technology is creating powerful substitutes for traditional products like the lecture and campus-based instruction, and competition from non-traditional competitors is increasing. In fact, we looked at research indicating that the creation of only 25 courses using instructional software and/or distance education would serve an estimated 80% of total undergraduate enrollments in core courses - - your bread and butter! Look out for Bill Gates!
- Market entry is becoming relatively easy, as federal aid policy over time will support less traditional learners, and the barriers to entry are being lowered - - bricks and mortar are no longer as necessary, as is the case with full-time faculty in this new marketplace where non-traditional competitors will give us a run for the money.

At AASCU we have recognized that this is the "stuff" of transformation. Computer-assisted learning, distance education, multimedia, the Internet, and other new learning technologies are transforming the way knowledge is created, packaged, delivered, accessed, analyzed and measured. And they are accompanied by down- side risks of traditional concern to many, especially those in the arts and sciences - - depersonalization and the separation of teacher and learner in time and space; standardization and uniformity as opposed to flexibility and variety; even fears of a "false economy" where cost savings may be primarily illusory; and chances that high technology and high access may include pedagogically inferior strategies.

LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE: AN ACTION AGENDA

It is in this context of demographic, economic and technological change - - and in the realities of heightened national importance and scrutiny for higher education - - that a task force of university presidents entered into a dialogue about institutional transformation, and especially, what chancellors and presidents **should** be doing as a result of these fundamental shifts as we enter a new millennium. We believed strongly that while an understanding of change was important for our colleagues, we needed to forge a more prescriptive consensus about the "shoulds" and "oughts" shaping our behavior. This movement to a more normative level is a sensitive matter and one rarely taken, yet it became clear to us that time was running out and that institutions had to quickly assess, revise and redirect in order to meet these new demands. This requires a focus on leadership for change and a commitment to action to ensure that higher education is responsive to those we serve and to the nation it supports.

Our colleges and universities are both steeped in tradition and on the cutting edge of change. They were created to serve and to adapt, yet the challenges to change and the barriers to success at times seem almost daunting in an era of revolutionary developments in the information age and profound societal change. We thought these challenges and opportunities were best addressed by focusing on our core mission - - our strengths; what we do best. Our institutions were created to provide increasing numbers of students with an opportunity to learn, to better themselves as individuals, to improve society through their knowledge and to take responsibility in their communities.

Despite our growth and success, we believed there is a need for an "Action Agenda" for our sector, which is public colleges and universities, yet one which also has relevance to many in the independent sector who are buffeted by change as well. And while it is a CEO agenda, the agenda must involve all in the university community - - teachers and learners alike. It is relevant to much of what you do, and must do, as arts and sciences deans as you support change leadership and govern colleges central to our mission. This agenda document was developed to formalize our commitment to be responsive to our students, our communities and the needs of our nation.

The Action Agenda calls on presidents and chancellors to ensure that their institutions remain accessible and affordable, to communicate their vision and their success, and to recommit to a mission to help students succeed, to support them in a learning environment that best meets their needs, and to prepare them for both the work force and the world.

The agenda addresses how we will need to treat the barriers to change and reinforce our learner-centeredness. It calls for a focus on what we do best. And it does so by looking at four core areas where action is needed or where college and university presidents should articulate what they are doing. These are **quality assurance, public engagement, access and inclusion**, and

communication and advocacy. Although the intricacies of change and the details of higher education policy will emerge over time, the underlying principles represented by these four core areas remain clear.

Quality Assurance

The "quality assurance" mandate reflects a dual commitment to **quality and accountability**. The principle of academic quality ensures that public colleges and universities have intellectual breadth and depth that promote intellectual inquiry and maintain excellence in teaching. The principle of accountability ensures the responsible, productive and cost-effective use of public funds by colleges and universities and public disclosure of the level of access, student success and program quality achieved through the expenditure of public monies.

I believe this quality assurance mandate is the most challenging of the four I will discuss, that its importance and relevance is growing, that it is the most complex and often the least understood, and an area of special relevance to the arts and sciences. Popular opinion simplistically ties institutional quality to the quality of incoming students, which is very much a reflection of socioeconomic status. It is like saying "the richer the students, the better the university!" As we argue in our association's "public good" policy statement, it is far better to use evaluative criteria which reflect the standards that make the most selective institutions desirable in the first place. These include:

- A clear and consistent mission and intellectually rigorous educational goals.
- A curriculum that provides students with the skills, general education and specific learning they need for their future lives and careers.
- A highly qualified faculty with a commitment and opportunity for intellectual interaction with the students they teach.
- Student support services that offer all students a reasonable opportunity to succeed.
- Learning resources and facilities adequate to sustain the educational program.

Despite the need for efficiency and cost cutting, public colleges and universities have to maintain the quality of their "product." This definition of quality has been expanded to include criteria much like that in the private sector, such as the adoption of maxims of customer service and convenience. In addition to a clear mission statement that defines the institution's educational goals, components that ensure academic quality include a curriculum that supports the needs of the marketplace and sustains the whole person, the promotion of intellectual and social inquiry, and the maintenance of excellence in teaching and learning. Assuring quality, however, also includes collecting data and making the information about the institution available.

What commitments must presidents and chancellors make to establish an appropriate climate and resources in support of quality assurance? They should:

- Set clear, consistent and intellectually rigorous learner-centered educational goals at the institution.
- Create a culture of innovation and creativity by rewarding risk-taking and supporting professional development.
- Build campus communities that integrate work and learning, service and reflection.
- Support an awareness of and the need to effectively address different learning styles within the classroom and through services to students.
- Find solutions to keep students studying, learning and moving ahead.
- Be future-oriented and insist that the institutions recognize the importance of global interdependence and the need for cross-cultural competence.
- Implement professional development programs for faculty and staff to facilitate the use of technology in the classroom and to ensure that faculty are responsive to the use of appropriate technology.
- Integrate international education into the whole curriculum, realizing that the preparation of students for the global marketplace spans not only disciplines but nations and cultures as well.
- Ensure that technology is used not only to enrich and further learning, but also to further communication.
- Attract a highly qualified faculty who are committed to the educational enterprise and who value the opportunity for intellectual interaction with the students they teach.
- Provide student services that offer all students a reasonable opportunity to succeed and cultivate leadership and responsibility.
- Allocate resources to expand the availability of technology on campus so that all students have access to information beyond the boundaries of the campus and are comfortable accessing information electronically.
- Use technology to share instructors, courseware and resources.
- Develop partnerships to share the cost of purchasing services, equipment and supplies and outsource when

possible.

These commitments have special relevance to the arts and sciences and require action by deans. You have a traditional leadership role to ensure intellectual rigor, learner-centeredness, global knowledge, effective learning communities, qualified and committed faculty, curricular and instructional innovation, the removal of false barriers to student success, and a quality core curriculum.

The "assurance" and accountability side of the quality mandate is a leading issue for all stakeholders in higher education, especially in the public sector. Between governors, legislators, systems and boards, the majority of campuses report increasing state involvement and new mandates regarding assessments, outcome measures, performance funding and institutional report cards, or some combination. By 1995, a full third of the states had some form of performance-based budgeting which linked budget to specific outcomes, such as student retention measures, test results or cost-savings measures.

Arts and sciences deans have been living in this management and efficiency accountability environment for much of this decade, yet the measures might often have seemed remote, such as **institutional** graduation rates or **institutional** administrative costs. Now you are more likely to be directly involved in several ways.

Our "Action Agenda" commits presidents and chancellors to:

- Look for new ways to measure quality and productivity.
- Promote the disclosure of the level of access, student success, program quality, and institutional financial and performance information.
- Promote campus-wide awareness of the importance of public accountability.
- Support and use uniform accountability reporting to get information to the public and policymakers.

As CEO's implement this agenda, there must be campus-based leadership for accountability that will require deep involvement by faculty and deans - - reflecting our commitment to peer review and self-regulation, rather than the imposition of a ministry of education and some set of externally imposed factors.

The demand for accountability is also being ratcheted up and further defined to directly affect arts and sciences deans. I cite two examples on the immediate public agenda which require your attention, and about which you already have some familiarity. They are topics of national and institutional significance that will buffet you unless you can refine their elements, endorse their principles and become proactive to see them through. They are "wake up calls" and both reflect the fact that public sentiment about higher education must be taken into account more than ever before by the arts and sciences as you strive to more vigorously address the common good.

The first is in the area of teacher education, with an indirect twist that will impact colleges of arts and sciences. The higher education amendments of 1998 mandated the development of institutional report cards for all institutions that prepare teachers. The Department of Education is now formulating rules and regulations about specific procedures to be used for this new form of public accountability and AASCU has been heavily involved in commenting on a draft manual prepared by NCES. The arts and sciences will be right in the middle of this since each university will report to their states, and in turn to the federal government, institutional report card measures that reflect the subject matter areas of teacher preparation. The most likely scenario is the use of existing licensure and teacher preparation, competency and exit test scores that are found in the various states. These discipline-oriented measures will have ramifications far beyond colleges of education. In Texas, for example, the state Higher Education Coordinating Board has been delaying approval of some new degree proposals from institutions with low teacher exit test scores generally, and have denied programs in arts and sciences majors where test scores of education students have been low in that subject matter area. This is where you will have a real test of your collaborative activities with colleges of education over the last decade through Project 30.

The second area of newer forms of accountability that need your attention relates to student engagement and learning. For years, many of us, from the elite institutions to those with open enrollment, have been critical of some of the mindless and indirect "report card" measures employed for commercial purposes by the popular press, especially U.S. News and World Report. We have argued that they reflect historical circumstances and inputs, or resources and reputation, not learning or the "value added" component of a college education. Now a serious effort has emerged to measure the extent to which institutions use "good practices" that encourage learning, with leadership from the Pew Charitable Trusts and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). Drawing from a variety of existing student surveys, a National Survey of Student Engagement has been developed and piloted at 12 institutions last spring and 65 others this fall. Over the next three years it will be

administered directly to undergraduates at 750 colleges and universities, from which national benchmarks will be developed for different types of institutions. Although the current plan is to not release findings by institution, there will understandably be increased public pressure to do so over time. Some believe that those who currently do well in U. S. News rankings will have the least to gain from this new effort. Since the arts and sciences and the learning culture we espouse in colleges of liberal arts are captured by many of these new "engagement" measures, you will have an opportunity to shine, unless it has simply been rhetoric. In any case, be alert to the need for your leadership in this part of the quality assurance agenda as students report on how often they worked with faculty on a research project, talked to them about their career plans, worked with other students outside of class, employed synthesizing and organizing skills and theories and concepts as opposed to rote memorization, or were offered support they needed to help them succeed.

Public Engagement

The second major "Action Agenda" area we identified for university leaders is that of public engagement. A variety of environmental and historical circumstances took us to this point quickly.

- Public service is obviously a distinguishing characteristic of American higher education, in comparison to our sister institutions in Europe who were still debating the legitimacy of community interaction a century after the Morrill Act. Our public institutions, in particular, have an increasingly rich tradition of outreach to the schools, service to business and industry, collaborations with cultural, social and educational agencies and organizations, and intellectual and artistic offerings which improve the quality of life. Although the costs of such interactions are often under-estimated or misunderstood, there is a strong consensus that higher education is an important community and economic development force, and that our external stakeholders value, and even demand, such interactions. By their standards, many universities are still ivory towers.
- As states disinvest in our public colleges and universities, as federal budgetary pressures threaten research funding for all institutions, and as the traditional academic job market in some of the disciplines, especially in the arts and sciences, narrows, public pressures are driving us to new sources of funds, new collaborative ventures and partnerships, and new markets.
- There is also growing recognition that education should foster an enlightened citizenry and contribute to greater social cohesion and stability. There is a clearer need in today's environment to use the classroom and campus experience to promote citizenship and ethical choices. The students educated at our colleges and universities will be the leaders in the coming century and must be prepared to shape the future. This is an especially important challenge for liberal arts leaders, where citizenship education has been a central rationale, but too often one not converted to action. There is a sense that this has reached a crises level in the nation. A recent report by the National Association of Secretaries of State found that less than 15% of college-age youth voted in the last national election and that high cynicism, distrust, apathy and general disengagement in civic affairs characterizes our youth.

Major responses to this challenge are now emerging that are worthy of your attention. Last winter a collection of associations, driven largely by the work of the Campus Compact, issued the "Wingspread Declaration on Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University." It focuses on better preparing students for responsible citizenship in a diverse democracy and engaging and rewarding faculty in civic education and in the development and utilization of knowledge for the improvement of society. It was followed this summer by a Compact "Presidents' Fourth of July Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education" which called for teaching the skills of democracy and enabling students to make important connections between their growing interest in community service and the civic involvement and responsibilities that are essential to citizenship. From this they proceeded to develop a "Campus Assessment of Civic Responsibility" in the form of a questionnaire to determine how well the curriculum helps students develop civic competencies, whether co-curricular activities provide sufficient opportunity for civic engagement, the quality of civil argument among students, how well the faculty help to develop a lively public culture, and whether we have faculty personnel practices which recognize those who link courses, research and service to community need. These are very important questions, they have been avoided for years, and they require leadership from arts and sciences deans and their faculties. They are too central to the academic enterprise to leave to student affairs specialists or student clubs that organize efforts to clean up the local park. As we say in AASCU's recent report on "Public Higher Education and the Public Good:" "a liberal education has been defined as embodying two traditions: the public function of educating people for the common good and the private function of advancing individual deliberation and knowledge . . . If a liberal education is to sustain itself amidst the public clamor for more pragmatically oriented programs of study, colleges and universities will need to reaffirm and clarify the civic and personal importance of a liberal education and persuade the public that it is a priority." (p. 70)

A final salient feature of our environment that motivates us in the area of public engagement is the crisis in the schools and

inadequate teacher preparation. I know this is an old theme, but not since "A Nation at Risk" was released a decade and a half ago has there been so much attention and calls for leadership and action in the area. And as I suggested earlier, the arts and sciences will be brought into this picture much more directly, and the expectations for deans are high. At AASCU, the agenda is a familiar one since our public institutions educate over half of all the teachers in the United States. Our institutions have a particular mission to become involved, to improve the communities in which they are located and to ensure effective schools. As a basic principle, we believe that, from kindergarten to college, every child in America should have the kind of teaching needed to help him or her to be successful and take advantage of opportunities to contribute to both the nation's economy and society. This has informed our "public engagement" action agenda, but it also resulted in a special "Call for Teacher Education Reform" issued late last spring. This report emphasized the importance of subject matter disciplines, cooperation among academic disciplines and education faculty, partnerships with the schools, especially in professional development, and how the reform of teacher education programs must occur simultaneously with the reform of the schools they serve. It also called on presidents to make teacher education a top, campus-wide priority and to work for changes in the schools.

In further response to the need for 2.5 million new teachers over the next decade, for higher quality teachers, for enhanced subject matter competency and for appropriate professional standards and career recognition opportunities, just two weeks ago the American Council on Education, representing all sectors, issued a presidential "Action Agenda" on "Transforming the Way Teachers are Taught." It incorporates AASCU's call and asks presidents to move the education of teachers to the center of the institutional agenda, to link it to mission, to engage campus-wide program reviews and independent appraisals, to coordinate faculty efforts between the education and the arts and sciences disciplines, to support research on the education of teachers, to ensure the availability of technology, and to play an active role in shaping public policy.

Although some of these reports related to public engagement were issued after our "Action Agenda," including the independent work on extension and service activities at NASULGC funded by the Kellogg Foundation, the "musts" developed for our presidents captured the breadth of interests reflected by conversations in many quarters. As a consequence, we have asked presidents and chancellors to:

- Recognize, through the curriculum and on-campus activities, multiple opportunities that show students how to be informed and involved citizens and to live productively within communities.
- Advocate for better public schools to send students better prepared for postsecondary opportunity.
- Ensure that the institution serves as a model for a pluralistic and democratic society by fostering a climate of inclusion that is free from bias and discrimination.
- Develop curricula that are relevant to community-building and that are centered on both the student and society.
- Develop ways to stay in touch with the students on their campuses.
- Remain active in their communities and develop formal mechanisms to ensure that the campus is committed and open to community needs.
- Recognize that AASCU institutions, in particular, have a special commitment to bring cultural and arts opportunities to their communities.
- Support faculty and staff in efforts to broker resources to business and industry.
- Support bridge programs between industry and universities and work collaboratively to ensure graduates can contribute to the competitive edge that this country needs to compete in the global economy.
- Work closely with regional school districts and link the preparation of teachers to the needs of the public schools and their communities.
- Recognize the responsibility their institution has to ensure the effective preparation of classroom teachers, teaching them to be effective in the classroom and knowledgeable and available to become involved in public school reform.
- Recognize that teacher education programs must reflect the diversity of our nation's schools and the students they educate, the curricula they teach and the instructional options they offer.
- Develop effective training programs for current teachers and administrators and make those programs accessible and convenient.

Access and Inclusion

I would like to briefly mention the two other "Action Agenda" areas, both of which have relevance to the role of an arts and sciences dean, yet one is a most familiar challenge to you and the other is one that primarily mandates presidential attention.

A fundamental principle of our institutions - - to have available and affordable public colleges and universities for all qualified students seeking access to higher education - - is meeting head-on with the demographic shifts I mentioned earlier. We

are especially concerned at AASCU because of the roughly 4 million new students who will be enrolled in college over the next 15 years, about 80% will attend public institutions. These students will be much more diverse than they are even today and their distribution will be geographically uneven.

Inherent in the access principle are difficult public policy issues which challenge presidents and liberal arts deans alike:

- Will higher education be available; will there be enough spaces to accommodate growth?
- Will it be affordable?
- With the trend to higher admissions standards, will we exclude potentially capable students?
- How much should we compensate for inadequate prior education?
- Can we ensure a diverse and representative student body without special policies?

Our institutions were created to be accessible and affordable and have done a good job of opening doors of opportunity for many first-generation college students, immigrants, and segments of the population who were traditionally underrepresented in higher education. Higher education is the great equalizer, and public, comprehensive colleges and universities must ensure that students receive equal educational opportunities, irrespective of their race and social status. According to the National Commission on National Investment in Higher Education, a growing shortfall in public funding may force the nation's colleges and universities to turn away half the student population by the year 2015. The projected enrollment growth combined with increased costs, inadequate institutional funding and higher tuition could seriously threaten access to educational opportunity.

As a result of these circumstances, we have asked our presidents and chancellors to:

- Advocate for financial aid funding, especially for the neediest students.
- Let students with disabilities know that they can be accommodated and are welcome.
- Ensure that different learning styles are recognized and supported.
- Develop public statements that include the benefits of an education to the community and that recognize that civility, access, inclusion and equity are the goals of a public university.
- Elevate the debate concerning equity in American society.
- Enhance the campus climate for all students by working actively to promote equity in faculty and staff hiring and to support programs and activities which indicate to students that they are important as individuals. Ensure that admissions staff target efforts to recruit and admit students from underrepresented groups.
- Support funding for programs to ensure that at-risk students in all categories are given opportunities to succeed.
- Insist that the outcome standards of their institutions be equal for all students.
- Expand the accessibility of their institutions to all individuals who seek higher education by providing opportunities to learn via community-based or technology-delivered courses.
- Extend services and programs to reach adult and employed students as well as those seeking continuing professional development.
- Strengthen links with community colleges to ensure a seamless educational opportunity from one sector to another.

Communication and Advocacy

A key to our "action agenda" related to quality assurance, public engagement and access and inclusion is the more vigorous role that higher education leaders must play in communication and advocacy. After scanning the environment, assessing our critics and reviewing our own shortcomings as leaders, we were certain that action and implementation were keys to our future success. We asked ourselves why we had not convinced policymakers, reporters and editors, and sometimes even our own boards, that we are doing a stellar job in higher education.

Recent national surveys have shown that the public is misinformed about the cost of public higher education. Recent proposed state and federal legislation mandating additional reporting requirements is an indication that policymakers are misinformed about what public institutions are doing in the areas of cost-cutting and accountability. Federal education policies that target tax savings for middle-income Americans are an indication that lawmakers are misinformed about the need to support access to higher education for the neediest students. Reports from private think tanks, and information found in gubernatorial addresses, political speeches, and media headlines indicate that many people are misinformed and cannot differentiate among the different sectors of higher education. Legal opinions and recent state initiatives have had the effect of limiting the tools institutions can use to admit underrepresented students. This is another indication that there is a need to better articulate institutional goals. Within communities, citizens often see "walls" around colleges and universities that keep them from participating. Clearly, there needs to

be better communication.

I ask you to join with other leaders on your campus to assist your president or chancellor in this challenging set of tasks we have asked of them, to:

- Articulate the economic and cultural contributions public higher education makes to the nation, effectively making the case that it is a common good that both serves the interests of society and provides individual benefits.
- Ensure that accurate and comprehensive information is collected and participate in information campaigns that accurately represent the cost of attending college.
- Ensure that information is collected and articulated on how their institution is cutting costs and supporting efficiency.
- Provide information that would help citizens feel ownership for their publicly supported colleges and universities, showing specific contributions that they make to their quality of life.
- Talk about research and technology in terms the public can understand by relating it to how it affects people.
- Let people know that education opens doors of opportunity.
- Let people know that financial aid is available to help them attend their institution.
- Speak out on behalf of those who have obstacles - - financial or otherwise - - that would keep them from attending their institution.
- Find out what barriers keep people from attending their institution and try to remove them.
- Determine what makes their institution special and different from the other institutions in the state and talk about it.
- Let people know what their faculty are doing and the teaching and learning that is occurring on their campus.
- Take responsibility for building better lines of communication.
- Let businesses know what having a public college or university in their area means for them in terms of resources and employees.
- Open the doors on their campus to the community to reinforce that two-way relationship.
- Engage others to speak on behalf of public higher education.
- Make it a priority to enlist the help of the board of trustees in support of the institution.
- Explain that the primary purpose of state appropriations is to offset the cost of public education and to keep student tuition as low as possible.
- Compile information to convince policymakers that federal financial aid should be funded to guarantee access to higher education, especially in the form of grants to needy students.

With this very robust and challenging agenda on quality assurance, public engagement, access and inclusion, and communication and advocacy on the plate of campus presidents, I encourage you to reflect on the environmental forces and the nature of these challenges, convert them to opportunities for supportive action, anticipate what might be expected of you, and ensure that leadership for change comes from arts and sciences deans and the academic areas we view as central to higher learning.