Update from Frank T. Brogan, Chancellor
September 8, 2010

The good news? We are in an official four-day work week after the state holiday.

The bad news? Many of our fellow Floridians want to work and can't find a job.

As we monitor this ongoing economic stalemate closely, and find ways to address it from an academic perspective, reports abound that send the clear signal that we need to brace for more of the same. One important metric to monitor is Florida’s “underemployment” rate, which tracks those who are not working enough hours or who have given up looking for work. That segment alone has more than doubled in recent years. It’s a stark reality that belies our continual focus on just unemployment.

Meanwhile, I’m intrigued by the “Aftershock.” That’s the name of a new book regarding the potential double-dip recession – but they outline something far worse. After we’ve seen “the popping of the housing bubble, the collapse of private debt bubble, the fall of the stock market bubble, the decline of consumer spending, and the widespread pain” on the economy, the impending “aftershock” includes the “Dollar Bubble and the Government Debt Bubble,” say the authors. After some discussion, the authors point to the resulting necessities of health care, **education**, and government services (emphasis mine) as the way to recover stronger and faster, although it will take time regardless.

It doesn’t take an economist to know that we, as a System, must gird ourselves with all the reasoned data and strategic planning possible in preparation for the next fiscal cycle and beyond. That approach is already under way with several projects that have exceptionally strong leadership support from the Board of Governors – including the System-wide academic inventory that the Council of Academic Vice Presidents is working on. In fact, Governor Duncan and I had a good meeting last week with the Provosts to discuss opportunities to streamline academic delivery across the System.

I am sure you will agree, these issues are broad and complex. We are gratified that many leaders in the Legislature are beginning to recognize the transformative power of our universities, and both candidates for Governor see
the intrinsic link between the economy, jobs and higher education and...even better, they are talking about it.

**Higher Education Coordinating Council Meeting Set**

The Council’s first, organizational meeting is slated for October 26 in Tallahassee (details to follow). The Council’s work and potential recommendations to the Board of Governors, State Board of Education and the Legislature could offer incredible opportunities for greater synergy within all sectors of higher education in Florida. While many readers will remember several efforts in the past 25 years that could be called “similar,” I believe the dynamics of late have so captivationally changed as to truly warrant this fresh look — within, across, up and down.

As indicated in the statutory language below, you can see that the charge is both smart and timely. The House and Senate appointments have been made (Marshall Crisher, III, and Jon Moyle, Sr., respectively), so we are ready to commence our work. Both of these individuals are no strangers to these issues and have spent untold hours of their own time in service to these issues, and do so once again.

1004.015 (1) The Higher Education Coordinating Council is created for the purposes of identifying unmet needs and facilitating solutions to disputes regarding the creation of new degree programs and the establishment of new institutes, campuses, or centers.

(2) Members of the council shall include: (a) The Commissioner of Education; (b) The Chancellor of the State University System; (c) The Chancellor of the Florida College System; (d) The executive director of the Commission for Independent Education; (e) The president of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida; and (f) Two representatives of the business community, one appointed by the President of the Senate and one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, who are committed to developing and enhancing world class workforce infrastructure necessary for Florida’s citizens to compete and prosper in the ever-changing economy of the 21st century.

(3) The council shall serve as an advisory board to the Legislature, the State Board of Education, and the Board of Governors. Recommendations of the council shall be consistent with the following guiding principles: (a) To achieve within existing resources a seamless academic educational system that fosters an integrated continuum of kindergarten through graduate school education for Florida’s students. (b) To promote consistent education policy across all educational delivery systems, focusing on students. (c) To promote substantially improved articulation across all educational delivery systems. (d) To promote a system that maximizes educational access and allows the opportunity for a high-quality education for all Floridians. (e) To promote a system of coordinated and consistent transfer of credit and data collection for improved accountability purposes between the educational delivery systems.
(4) The Board of Governors shall provide administrative support for the council.

I look forward to the first meeting and to ensuring we can evaluate our delivery of services to the people of Florida. The scope of what we can undertake is fairly open, so I welcome your comments.

If you have questions or comments about the HECC’s activities in the months to come, please contact Diane McCain, Director of External Relations (diane.mccain@flbog.edu or 850-245-9632). While the State University System is charged to staff the Council, we are setting up a separate and independent web site to better represent this collaborative group effort and will alert you when that is available.

**Board of Governors 2011 & 2012 Calendar**
In an effort to better connect with all of the campuses within the State University System, the Board of Governors will rotate the location of its meetings in the coming years. We are mindful of the rising costs of travel, so we have attempted to locate the meetings such that we avoid “high-season” in the more expensive markets. All of the dates below have been confirmed, though some of the locations are still pending as we work with the Universities to confirm space availability.

**2010**

Sept. 15-16 in Jacksonville - University of North Florida

Nov. 3-4 in Gainesville - University of Florida

**2011**

Jan. 19-20 in Pensacola - University of West Florida

Feb. 17 (Conference Call)

Mar. 23-24 in Tallahassee - Florida State University

May 5 (Conference call)

June 22-23 in Tampa - University of South Florida

Sept. 14-15 in Miami – Florida International University

Nov. 9-10 in Boca Raton - Florida Atlantic University
2012

Jan. 18-19 in Jacksonville - University of North Florida

Feb. 16 (Conference Call)

Mar. 21-22 in Tallahassee - Florida A&M University

May 3 (Conference Call)

June 20-21 in Orlando – University of Central Florida

Sept. 12-13 in Fort Myers - Florida Gulf Coast University

Nov. 7-8 in Sarasota – New College of Florida

Thank you for your leadership and participation as partners in the State University System.