Update from Frank T. Brogan, Chancellor
November 4, 2010

We have just concluded the November Board of Governors meeting, and I wanted to highlight a few things for those who were unable to attend in-person or monitor the meeting online. The past few months, in particular, we have been working to secure, confirm and update important data points about our System. While we continue to update the standard, recurring data points that the Board of Governors consistently uses in reporting efforts and policy formulation, we are also incorporating other data, which were previously unknown or unconfirmed — providing terrific, new context to our work and the System’s performance measurements.

While numbers never tell the entire story in some cases, most raw data points do indeed tell ours. Consider, for instance:

- The public university system in the United States with the largest headcount enrollment in the fall of 2009 was the California State University System (more than 431,000), and the second-largest was the State University System of Florida, with 302,957.
- The state with the largest headcount enrollment in public four-year institutions in the fall of 2009 was California (with the California State University System and the University of California combined), at 654,465. Texas was second (540,972 in four university systems), and New York was third (390,415 with two university systems). Florida was fourth – with our 302,957 in the State University System.

Both of these data points are according to the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System — the national central data source.

In the weeks ahead, we will be collecting a virtual smorgasbord of data — all with essential context — and updating the Board of Governors web site in order to highlight more of these “Quick Facts.” It is our intention to have this inventory accessible to all of our stakeholders (Legislators, Board members, Trustees, University and System personnel, etc.) in order to better communicate our mission and vital corresponding context.
Highlighting this topic in this rendition of the “Chancellor’s Update” is timely, as it strongly correlates to the importance of the upcoming appointments that the Board of Governors will make to the Boards of Trustees of our 11 universities.

There is a wide berth – and an appropriate one – of local decision-making at each university. The Trustees that the Board will appoint will continue to be comprised of individuals who are committed to the success of their respective universities while actively helping the State University System move ahead, as a whole. This will ensure not only the best use and greatest leveraging of the state’s tax dollars and finite resources, but will also advance the fact that a degree from anywhere in the State University System is credible, worthy, pronounced and highly competitive. Bottom line: Good data help both University-level and System-level decision-making.

Here are a few excerpts from a Tallahassee Democrat newspaper editorial that ran a few days ago, which makes the case clearly and concisely about the critical role for the 11 Boards of Trustees. On behalf of Chair Ava L. Parker and the entire Board of Governors and Trusting Nominating Committee Chair Mori Hosseini, I urge you to personally encourage eligible candidates to submit their applications for the Boards of Trustees before the submission deadline on November 15.

“Our Opinion: Be a trustee – it’s a big job and a chance to give back

… The Board of Governors, which oversees all public universities in the state of Florida, is seeking candidates for its appointments to the Boards of Trustees of all 11 universities, including our two right here in Tallahassee. … Trustees serve five-year terms, which are staggered. And a trustee’s duties are serious ones.

The trustees choose the university president…. They work to implement and evaluate educational programs, they approve the budget, and they have sole responsibility for the university’s master plan. They also set graduate tuition and… approve the undergraduate tuition differential. …

… ‘The Florida Board of Governors would like leaders from all sectors and all backgrounds to apply for these trustee positions, individuals who will support the university they serve and who also will support the goals and priorities of the State University System of Florida,’ said Morteza ‘Mori’ Hosseini, chair of the Trustee Nominating Committee.

Interested? The deadline for applying is Nov. 15 at 5 p.m., so there’s not a lot of time to waste. Go to http://www.flbog.edu/aboutsus/vacancies.php for details.
… if you feel a need to give back to the universities, which do so much to develop the minds of our young people and drive the economic engines of this state’s future, there is no better way.

Send in your application. And if you’re chosen and confirmed by the state Senate, may your term be rewarding for both you and our state.”

Oh, by the way, here is one data factoid of interest with regard to appointments: This is the largest number of appointments (23) since the Board of Governors came into existence. The next-highest number of slots open at one time (21) occurred last year.

Finally, I want to thank Chair Parker for participating in the opening session of the Higher Education Coordinating Council, which held its organizational meeting recently in Tallahassee last week. The advisory panel will hold another meeting likely in January. Co-chairs have been elected, and we owe a debt of thanks to Marshall Criser, III, and Jon Moyle, Sr., the business member appointees from the House Speaker and Senate President, for taking on leadership of the Council. For more, see www.floridahighereducation.org.

Thank you for your leadership and support of the State University System of Florida.