



Lamont-Bysiewicz Transition Policy Committee Reporting Template

Committee Name: Women

Co-Chairs: Marilyn Moore and Karen Jarmoc

Community College Tuition Policy

- 1. How do you propose the Lamont Administration should prioritize the policy goals in this area, and on what timeframe?** CT should incentivize college completion for a greater number of women in the state. Over half of CT community college students are women, where completion rates are as low as 12%. Finding ways to financially incentivize students to complete can help increase completion rates and improve attainment for students. Concepts that have been discussed in CT and other states include free college tuition, guaranteeing a flat tuition rate for the duration of a degree; refunding percentage of students' educational costs upon graduation; offering the last semester of students' education free.
- 2. Which goals are achievable in the first 100 days of the Administration?**
All of the above proposals would take years to roll out, however funding can be allocated for these initiatives in the first budget released within the first 100 days.
- 3. Which goals will require legislation to move forward? Which items can be advanced through the actions of the Administration alone? What is the fiscal impact of these legislative or executive actions?**
No legislation is required for most of the initiatives above, however, rollout of a statewide Promise program may need some technical changes. All of the above will require significant additional resources to implement. A CSCU staff report estimates that \$48M is needed just to hold tuition flat for the next biennium.
- 4. Are there specific challenges you can identify with regard to achieving the Lamont Administration's goals, and how would you suggest to address those?** Finding the money to invest in these programs will be the biggest challenge. Lobbying to include the CSUs, UCONN, or private colleges in these initiatives should be expected.
- 5. How will implementation of policy in this area create jobs and spur economic growth?** Promoting completion will lead to quicker entrance into the workforce for graduates with a greater capacity to contribute to the state's productivity and tax revenue. This will leave fewer students with partially completed degrees.
- 6. Are there opportunities for cost savings for CT state government in the context of implementing this policy?** The costs of education to the state increases as students stop and start their degrees. Additional time to completion increases cost and puts strain on critical student supports. State investments in both Roberta Willis Scholarships funds and supports at the institutional level are lost for every student who doesn't complete. Can reduce the dependency on state services for students who don't complete. The increased earning potential for the students who complete under this program will leader to greater income tax receipts, increased personal buying power, and increased economic growth for the state.
- 7. What examples of success from other states, countries, or the private sector in this policy area should the Administration study?** Other states are exploring ways to increase the affordability of higher education, our neighbors in Rhode Island and New York have all experimented with free college concepts. Look at the Promise programs in New Haven and Hartford, and the initial work OPM did a few years ago in getting

stakeholders together for talks of a statewide promise program. Last year the General Assembly worked on free college concept called Free to Start, there are a number of associated OLR and OFA reports which looked more in-depth at potential for free college concepts in CT.

8. Are there any other issues/considerations you would like to highlight with regard to this policy area?

The Board of Regents for Higher Education makes tuition and fee decisions for the CSU colleges and universities, coordination with them will be essential in ensuring that any policy or funding initiatives are met with supporting changes in tuition or fee policies.