



State Council of  
Higher Education for Virginia

# SAC MINUTES

## Student Advisory Committee Minutes January 25, 2008 Meeting

**Members Present:** Luarnie Bermudo (ODU), Cassandra Campbell (substitute from VSU), Laura Castro (JSRCC), Todd Eley (UVA), and Chris Inzirillo (CNU).

**SCHEV Staff Present:** Kathleen Kincheloe and Kirsten Nelson.

Representatives met to discuss in greater detail the three topics of interest to be brought before legislators during the SAC visit, which is planned for February 15, 2008. SAC members who want to participate in the visit will meet at the SCHEV office in Richmond at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, February 15, and walk over to the General Assembly Building together. It is anticipated that members will be through meeting with legislators no later than 11:00 a.m.

As a reminder, SAC members had previously agreed to bring up the following topics during the planned legislative visit:

1. Higher education funding
2. Immigration issues
3. Campus safety

During the January 25 meeting, the participating members agreed to the following Talking Points:

### Higher Education Funding

- Those present agreed that a key message would be to ask legislators to support the 3% faculty salary raise in the Governor's proposed biannual budget.
- SAC members want to remind legislators that it's not only salaries that attract and keep high quality faculty members on campus, but updated classrooms and laboratories, as well. They want legislators to know that students support building projects that renovate or construct new campus facilities.
- Essentially, in this tough budget year, SAC members appreciate anything legislators can do to improve faculty salaries and maintain financial aid program funding.

### Immigration Issues

- Those present are opposed to any legislation that would limit an institution's (or Board of Visitor's) power to determine admissions criteria on the basis of immigration status.
- All Virginia institutions are following federal law, so any undocumented student admitted to a public Virginia college or university is currently paying out-of-state tuition.
- We know that the vast majority of public institutions in Virginia currently have policies in place that prohibit undocumented students from enrolling. Therefore, the BOVs seem to be doing a fine job of determining what works best for their own institutions, taking their unique missions and geographic locations into account.

### SCHEV Proposed Legislation Prohibiting Diploma Mills

- SCHEV has introduced HB766 (Sponsor Tata), which defines "fraudulent academic credentials." The proposed legislation would make it unlawful to operate or advertise a

diploma mill in the Commonwealth or to knowingly use fraudulent academic credentials. SAC would like legislators to support the amended bill.

- Ten states have enacted similar legislation, and SAC members would like Virginia to be the eleventh. Such legislation would make Virginia a less attractive place for purveyors of false diplomas, which devalue the degrees students earn at Commonwealth colleges and universities.