

Tenth Quadrennial Evaluation Alabama Commission on Higher Education

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Agenda

- Evaluation process
- Higher Education in Alabama
- ACHE assessment
- Recommendations
 - Model 1
 - Model 2
- Recommended next steps

AGB Evaluation Committee

- Ellen Chaffee
- Richard Novak
- Cristin Toutsis

Evaluation Process

- 30 in-person interviews
- 25 phone interviews
- 100 completed surveys
- Document review

Higher Education in Alabama

Enrollment and attainment risk

State demographics

Replacing state funding with tuition revenue

Student debt

Closing disparity gaps

Current strategies are not sustainable

Higher Education in Alabama, cont.

Attainment and the workforce

Typical National Goal: 60-65% with certificate or degree

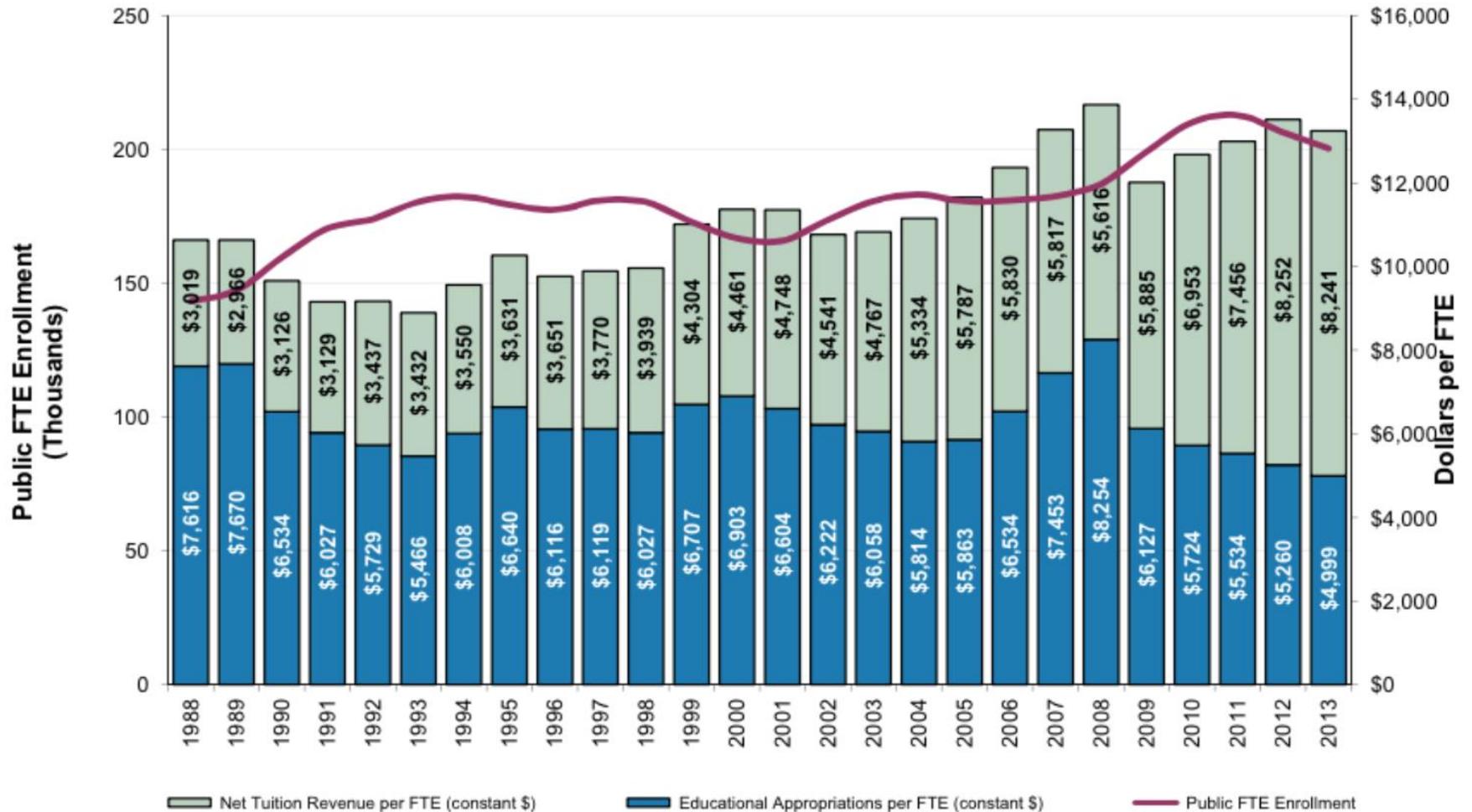
Bachelors in US now: 28.8%; in AL now: 22.6%

AL is 45th, with 15/100 9th graders to Assoc in 3 or Bach in 6

Alabama's high-end industries need more highly educated people.

Chart 1. Enrollment, Appropriations, and Net Tuition Revenue, Alabama 1988-2013

Public FTE Enrollment, Educational Appropriations and Total Educational Revenue per FTE, Alabama -- Fiscal 1988-2013



Note: Constant 2013 dollars adjusted by SHEEO Higher Education Cost Adjustment (HECA). Educational Appropriations include ARRA funds.
 Source: SHEEO

What can ACHE do?

- ACHE's hands are tied, and ACHE's constituencies are aware of that.

47 percent of survey respondents said ACHE performs its duties effectively, 35 percent disagreed

YET: 66-83 percent rated ACHE staff effective or highly effective on every competency indicator

Only 58 percent say ACHE has sufficient authority

42 percent say political impediments hamper ACHE

31 percent say state higher education structure hampers

Recommendations

- Model 1 – Set a few key priorities among recommendations and “drive them home”
- Model 2 – Revise the statute and implement worthy recommendations

Bottom Line, Model #1

- ACHE is performing very well, given statutory duties, resources, and context.
- Those parameters have inhibited ACHE's ability to implement review team recommendations over the years.
- Therefore, the 2015 review team's recommendations strongly echo the last three reviews.

Some ACHE Strengths

- Commissioner/ED relationships
- Staff abilities, responsiveness, outreach
- Commitment to fulfill mandated functions
- Statewide student database
- Program review/approval
- State strategic plan
- Support for regional economic development

Some ACHE Limitations

- Resources are directed to required lower-value functions; unable to re-focus
- Insufficient authority or standing to impact state policy, implement strategic plan
- Limited ability to maximize database value
- Institutional culture of competition
- Lack of institutional support

Model 1 - Themes Still Relevant

- Very challenging leadership and operating environment
- Identify and orchestrate efforts to address key state policy issues
- Provide data and analysis to inform state policy decisions re higher education

Model 1: Role of ACHE

- Reframe the mission from regulatory to policy leadership, frame and inform key policy issues
- Create and enable others to access quality data and analysis to inform decisions
- Lead higher education/P-12 partnership
- Advocate for a well-educated citizenry and workforce, elucidate challenges to be resolved

Model 1: ACHE Operations

- Redesign ACHE agendas, focus on policy leadership and strategic plan progress
- Increase staffing in strategic planning, data/information systems, P-12 alignment
- Eliminate required functions that are not used or appreciated by their intended audience
- Limit regulation of academic programs to a minimum
- Play a convening role for institutional trustees to discuss governance and state issues
- Further develop Commission policies – member qualifications, roles, responsibilities, and the like

Model 1: ACHE Operations, cont.

- Strengthen Commissioner orientation and incorporate such information into every meeting
- Consider meeting longer and/or more frequently to ensure policy discussion and plan review
- Ensure that Commissioners are comfortable in their role, engaged, and effective
- Strengthen constituent engagement with statewide strategic planning, engage institutional strategic initiatives to help with implementation, include progress indicators, and monitor progress regularly

Bottom Line, Model #2

- Alabama would benefit significantly from higher education policy leadership and less competition among institutions.
- Thoughtful, collaborative re-examination of ACHE's roles and responsibilities, with statutory revisions, could greatly benefit the state, institutions, students, and citizens.

Model 2 – Restructure, Reinvigorate

- Through a collaborative, thoughtful process,
- Remove low/no-value functions from the ACHE statute
- Charge ACHE to focus on state policy and higher education data/information

Model 2: Role of ACHE

- Broaden ACHE's role and scope in higher education policy leadership for Alabama
- Consider an incentive and performance funding distribution role
- Reduce and focus ACHE's program regulatory role
- Enhance ACHE's ability to serve a consumer protection and information role with regard to non-Alabama institutions
- Enhance ACHE's ability to serve a convening, educational, and consensus-seeking role among the institutions' governing board members and executive officers

Model 2: ACHE Operations

- Define Commissioner qualifications and shorten term of office

- Remove requirements for

Senate confirmation of the Executive Director,
a Council of Presidents,
facilities budgets and master plans,
institutional consolidated budget recommendations,
a faculty unit record system,
a steering committee on college participation, and
a Postsecondary Education Communication Center.

Conclusion

1. Maintain staffing, supplement number and expertise or retool as needed.
2. If Model 1, select top priority changes, write an internal plan, follow up until complete.
3. If Model 2, design and follow a thoughtful, inclusive, deliberative process.
4. If Model 2, do not revise statute piecemeal.

Discussion

- What kind of recommendations do the Commissioners see as most worthwhile?
- Does the Commission see value in some statutory revisions? Risks?
- How does the Commission wish to follow up on this report?