

**House Committee on Education and the Workforce  
Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training  
January 28, 2014**

**“Keeping College Within Reach: Sharing Best Practices for Serving Low-Income and First Generation Students”**

**Witness: Dr. James A. Anderson, Chancellor, Fayetteville State University**

Madam Chair, Ranking Member Hinojosa, and distinguished members of this panel, on behalf of the students, staff and faculty of Fayetteville State University, thank you for this opportunity.

My testimony today will:

1. Provide an overview of the state of the campus when I arrived in 2008, including the type of student we serve, their challenges, and the turnaround efforts implemented by my team;
2. Define procedures, protocol and programs now in place to assist with those challenges;
3. Outline how data analysis is used to guide improvement efforts;
4. Share financial literacy programs aimed at discouraging over-indebtedness for college expenses, and
5. Describe current and future federal efforts through HEA that detract from and strengthen our efforts

Fayetteville State University (FSU) is a comprehensive, regional constituent institution of the University of North Carolina. Founded in 1867 to prepare teachers for the children of recently-freed slaves, the core aspect of FSU’s mission is to “... promote the educational, social, cultural, and economic transformation of southeastern North Carolina and beyond.” The institution continues to serve its original purpose and mission to provide quality education to underserved populations. The student population demographic is 66% African-American, 5% Hispanic, 75% Pell eligible, and 20% military-affiliated (the highest percentage of students (of total enrollment) in the UNC system). In addition, nearly half (49.2%) are adult learners and 95% of our students are in-state most of whom come from the region which is largely rural.

**Student Success Initiatives**

The five-year period from 2008 to 2013, beginning with my tenure as Chancellor, has been marked by improvements in many areas: budget management, planning and assessment, student success and achievement, and fund raising. Building upon the university’s longstanding commitment to student success, we established an institutional culture characterized by academic challenge and support, that is, one in which students are challenged to meet high expectations and are provided academic support programs to help them meet these expectations. The institutional transformation has positioned the university so that it can thrive and provides a

useful model for other institutions as the nation strives to increase the number of adults with baccalaureate degrees.

Student success and achievement initiatives included increasing admission standards, policy changes, strengthened academic support and advisement, and implementation of support programs for underrepresented groups, consistent data analysis.

### Revision of the Academic Progression and Class Withdrawal Policies

FSU's progression and course withdrawal policies were inconsistent with requirements for subsequent degree completion. As a consequence, two revisions were proposed and approved shortly after I assumed leadership. These revisions included the following:

- Require all students to maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 each semester to remain in good standing, whereas previously a 2.0 GPA was not required for students with fewer than 60 credits.
- Limit no-penalty class withdrawals to five, as opposed to the previously unlimited withdrawals.

### Strengthened Academic Support

A revised early-alert system was incorporated into the student information system, the new procedure permits faculty, beginning in the second week of the semester, to put in "interim grades" for non-attendance, excessive class absences, or failing grades. At mid-semester, faculty members are asked to assign grades to all students and to suggest, through a subsequent survey, strategies for improvement for students with midterm grades of D or F. All grades and comments entered into the system are conveyed by email to the student and advisor by means of a communications software system. FSU's Early Alert System has become a model for the University of North Carolina system, which is requiring all campuses to have an Early Warning System in place by fall 2014.

Academic support for first-year students was increased with the implementation of a plan for all students to participate in a learning community, each of which includes requirements for academic support. Expanded Supplemental Instruction resources were deployed with a special emphasis on classes with traditionally-high rates of failure. Increased opportunities for tutoring were made available especially for students in STEM disciplines.

### Improved Academic Advisement

A survey of student satisfaction with academic advisement had been administered for several years prior to 2008, but very little action was taken based on the results of these surveys. Beginning in 2008, departments were required to include their Advisement Survey results in the

Departmental Operational Plan and to include strategies for improvement. In fall 2008, FSU re-instituted mandatory advisement for registration. For several years, students had been advised but not required to communicate with an advisor before registration. Optional advisement facilitated registration, but it also led to problematic choices in course selection that had the potential to delay progression toward graduation. By requiring students to get from their assigned advisor a code needed to register each term, FSU attempted to minimize such problems and reduce time to degree. At the same time, FSU stepped up expectations and training for faculty advisors to ensure that they would be knowledgeable and available. Despite fears that mandatory advisement would be unpopular, the first Advisement Survey after mandatory advisement was implemented showed a dramatic increase in student satisfaction with advisement. To emphasize the importance of advisement, the department with the highest ratings on the annual Advisement Survey is publicly recognized at Commencement. An electronic degree audit system was implemented; workshops for faculty and students were conducted to ensure widespread awareness and usage. Through collaborations with the Division of Student Affairs, the career planning component of the First-Year Seminar was strengthened to guide degree planning. All freshmen in the first year seminars are required to take the Strong Interest Inventory.

#### Support Programs for Underrepresented Populations

In view of the low retention and graduate rates of underrepresented male students nationally, especially minority male students, FSU initiated programs to provide intensive support for males. The MILE (Males in Leadership and Excellence) and B3 (Boosting Bronco Brothers) include intrusive advisement, tutoring, motivational speakers, and service-learning projects, all of which help participants achieve the high academic expectations of the university. The positive impact of these programs on male student retention pointed to the need for comparable programs for female students, which FSU initiated in fall 2013. For the 2011-12 school year students from the Bronco MILE program were retained at a higher rate (84%) than other male students not in the program (66%).

#### Consistent Data Analysis

Data analysis has led to important revisions of FSU's progression standards and improvement in academic support. Methods to better collect and use institutional data to strengthen student access and success programs, which has, indeed, driven institutional improvement and transparency are: 1) the Foundations of Excellence self-study, 2) Retention Data Dashboard, and 3) Continuous Improvement Report (CIR). Implemented in 2010, the CIR evaluates each academic department on eight important metrics that focus on student learning, academic support, and operational efficiency. The metrics that focus on student success include student retention and graduation rates by department, student satisfaction with advisement, student ratings of instruction, and assessments of student learning. Departments are awarded Continuous Improvement Points for improvement on these metrics and the points are used to award

additional funds. The additional funding provides an incentive for faculty and department chairs to take actions to improve these ratings.

The institutional transformation that has resulted from these efforts is evident in multiple assessment results.

*Enrollment and Graduates*

One of the most important indicators of the impact of the revisions of the policies and improvement of academic support is in the fact that the number of graduates increased even as enrollment declined.

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Enrollment (Headcount)	6,692	6,217	6,283	5,781	5,930	6,060	6,160
Graduates #	948	927	1,039	1,025	1,151	1,119	NA

*Percent of students with GPAs 2.0 or higher*

Another important indicator of the transformation of FSU’s academic culture has been the steady increase in the percentage of undergraduates with GPAs of 2.0 or above. Since students may be on probation for one semester with a GPA below 2.0 and since some students with GPAs below 2.0 will successfully appeal their suspension, some enrolled students will have GPAs below 2.0. Yet, as the chart below indicates, in fall 2007, prior to the implementation of any new policies, approximately one in five undergraduates had a GPA below 2.0. By 2013, the percentage had been cut in half, with just under one in ten with a GPA below 2.0. This shift in academic status of enrolled students has helped strengthen the overall academic culture at FSU.

	fall 2007	fall 2008	fall 2009	fall 2010	fall 2011	fall 2012	fall 2013
% 2.0+ GPA	80.3%	85.8%	85.5%	85.9%	87.7%	89.1%	90.9%

One important example of the impact of the new policies on academic culture has been on university-sponsored travel for student groups such as athletics teams, the band and choir, and other student groups. Students are not permitted to participate in university-sponsored travel if they have GPAs below 2.0. All faculty advisors of student groups must submit documentation that all participants in anticipated travel have GPAs above 2.0. This requirement serves as a forceful reminder to advisors and student groups of the necessity of remaining in good academic standing.

*Degree Completion Rates*

The following measures show that the higher expectations reflected in the revised policies and the academic support initiatives have contributed to improvements in degree completion rates.

- Four-year graduation rate: The first-time student cohort who entered FSU in fall 2005 had a four-year graduation rate of 9.3%, the lowest ever at FSU. The four-year rate improved to 11.3% for both the 2006 and 2007 cohorts, but improved to 17.1% and 16.4% for the 2008 and 2009 cohorts, respectively, the cohorts affected most fully by the new policies. These cohorts are on track to achieve continuous improvements in the six-year graduation rates.
- Transfer student persistence – Since 2008, the number of undergraduate students transferring into FSU has exceeded the number of new first-time students. Hence, transfer student persistence – the year-to-year percentage of transfer students who either earn degrees or re-enroll in the subsequent fall semester – is an important measure of institutional effectiveness for FSU. In the past three years, transfer student persistence has increased from 70.8% to 76.6%. The combination of higher academic expectations and increased support has had a positive impact on the success of this all-important group of students at FSU.
- Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC) graduates –Approximately 150 students transfer each year to FSU from its partner institution, Fayetteville Technical Community College. The increase in the number of these students earning degrees at FSU is another indicator of the effectiveness of the policy revisions and improvements in academic support. From 52 graduates in 2006-07, the number of graduates has increased to 89, 104, 112,157,165, and 195 for each of the following years, respectively.
- Undergraduate degree efficiency –This metric refers to the number of undergraduate degrees conferred per 100 FTE. The degree efficiency rate has improved from 15.4% in 2007 to 19.7%in 2013.

### *Cost per degree*

In the wake of the budget crisis, the UNC General Administration has given more careful scrutiny to the educational and related (E&R) expenses for each degree conferred. In 2006-07, the E&R cost per degree was \$76,747 compared to the average for all UNC institutions of \$75,688. By 2011-12 (the last year for which data are available), the cost per degree at FSU had dropped to \$59,370, which is lower than both the UNC average of \$66,540 and the average for FSU's peer institutions of \$62,547. The reduction in the cost per degree is an especially important accomplishment in view of the ongoing discussion of the viability and value of HBCUs. This outcome is primarily due to increased reliance on strategic planning in the allocation of resources.

### **Support Programs for Underrepresented Students**

In addition to the afore-mentioned initiatives, these additional programs have improved access and success for underserved populations at FSU: (1) Faculty Development; (2) Collegiate Learning Assessment; (3) CHEER Scholars Program; (4) Learning Communities; (5) Student Fairs for Selecting Majors; (6) Academic Support—Learning Center, Supplemental Instruction; (7) the Male Initiative; and (8) Pre-College Outreach.

## Faculty Development

One of the most important components of FSU's efforts to promote student success has been its Faculty Development programs. In addition to ongoing workshops and webinars that help faculty improve instruction and assessment, FSU has three faculty "pathways" for faculty development and offers a semester-long seminar specifically for new faculty, though continuing faculty have also participated. The Information Literacy Fellows (ILF) pathway enables faculty to work with a FSU librarian to revise their courses to integrate the latest information technology into instruction and assessment. The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) pathway assists faculty in developing writing assignments and assessment tools that promote learning in the discipline AND effective writing. The Collegiate Learning Assessment at the University (CLAU) helps faculty and Student Affairs professionals develop CLA like assessments and pedagogy that focus on critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and writing, and decision making. Based on Dee Fink's model for integrated course design that promotes significant learning, the semester-long Faculty Development Seminar enables faculty to design new courses or revise existing courses with learning goals have long-term impact on students' lives and learning, forward-looking assessments that help students "do" the discipline rather than just talk about it, and active and engaging teaching-learning activities. Both the Chancellor and Provost serve as instructors in the faculty development seminars.

## Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)

The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) is a standardized assessment of critical thinking and writing skills that was introduced as an alternative to existing assessments of general education outcomes. Unlike other assessments, which rely on multiple-choice questions, the CLA focuses on real-world applications of skills requiring critical reading and writing skills. By testing all entering freshmen and eligible graduating seniors, the CLA allows institutions to measure the growth in skills over these students' undergraduate careers. (Note: Average freshman class size is 600+ students.)

At the conclusion of a four-year longitudinal study in 2012, FSU students scored well above expected, placing FSU in the top 10% nationally of schools participating in the study.

## CHEER Scholars Program (Creating Higher Expectations for Educational Readiness)

The CHEER Scholars Program, which began in 2002, is a residential summer bridge for incoming freshmen who do not fully meet FSU's admission standards. Serving 20% to 25% of FSU's first-year students each year, the program provides college access to students who perform poorly on standardized tests. Studies indicate that high school GPA is a strong predictor of college success, while standardized tests (SAT and ACT) are poor predictors, yet those tests continue to be the cause of denying college admission to good students. From 2008-2012, over 99% of CHEER participants (549 out of 554), all of whom were denied full admission due to

standardized test scores, earned a C or better in both summer courses, allowing full-time enrollment in the fall.

Students are placed into one of eight learning communities of approximately 20 students. On weekdays, students attend math and English class for two hours each in the morning. After lunch, they attend math and English lab time, supervised by their instructors. After a short break and dinner, they attend required math and English academic support sessions, built on the Supplemental Instruction (SI) model of active learning. Curfew is at 11:00. On the weekends, students participate in a number of co-curricular programs intended to promote their social integration into campus life, expand their understanding of and appreciation for diversity, and provide necessary resources for their success at the university for the fall semester.

CHEER students have been retained at average of 7% higher rate than non-CHEER over past three years (80.16% for CHEER 09, 10, 11 versus 73.10% for non-CHEER 09,10,11) and CHEER students graduate at a rate 11% higher than non-CHEER students (30 out of 108 for CHEER 2008 cohort versus 78 out of 471 for non-CHEER 2008 cohort).

CHEER students begin fall semester with a sense of purpose and momentum, and they jump into leadership roles in athletics, the arts, Student Government, and academics. From our previous three CHEER classes, for example, we have had a Freshman Class President, SGA Senator, Mr. Freshman, Mr. Sophomore, Mr. FSU, and several Resident Assistants. Their positive motivation sets a standard for incoming freshmen, modeling the campus engagement that we hope all students will develop.

### Learning Communities

Learning communities are sets of linked courses, usually exploring a common theme. Instructors in learning communities work together to develop the theme and coordinate the course content. Students enroll in all of the courses linked through the learning community. By linking together students, faculty, and courses, learning communities create more opportunities for enrichment, interaction, and exploration. For the last two decades the research on learning communities indicates that when they are structured effectively they almost always have a positive impact. Since 2009, nearly 80% of entering freshmen have participated in learning communities each year. Learning community participants at FSU have higher GPA's than students who are not in learning communities (2.5 to 2.04 in fall 2012) and return for the second year at a higher rate than students who are not in learning communities (75.4% to 60%).

### Student Fairs for Selecting Majors/Use of Strong Interest Inventory

FSU is committed to helping students identify and prepare for career paths early in their undergraduate careers and does so through two programs--use of the Strong Interest Inventory and annual Major Selection Fairs.

The Strong Interest Inventory is a career interest survey widely used on campuses across the United States that puts self-discovery into the hands of students seeking career direction. The Division of Student Affairs, in collaboration with Academic Affairs, is using this tool to assist students in making evidenced-based decisions regarding career aspirations. FSU began in Fall 2011 to administer the Strong to all entering freshmen. Upon completion, these students will

have the opportunity to receive one-on-one and group evaluations of the assessment in coordination with their freshmen orientation course and in preparation for the annual Majors Fair sponsored by University College. Students are expected to use the results of the assessment to assist them in making evidenced-based decisions and choosing an academic major.

For 2011-2012, entering freshmen who took the Strong Interest Inventory had virtually identical SAT scores to those who did not (858 vs. 866). However, of students who took the Strong, 45% had declared a major by the end of the first year, vs. 26% of those who had not. Students who took the Strong were also more likely to be in good academic standing at the end of the first year (77.4% vs. 55.7%).

#### Academic Support—Learning Center, Supplemental Instruction

Before 2004, FSU had no paid peer tutors. In that year, the Provost committed funds to renovate academic support labs into a Learning Center and to train and hire peer tutors in math and writing. University College created three staff positions to coordinate academic support in math, writing, and reading. In addition, FSU initiated Supplemental Instruction, a program of academic support in which trained peer leaders work with instructors and students to improve student learning. In 2012-13, more than 1,200 students used the Writing Center, the Mathematics Lab, and Supplemental Instruction each semester. The average grade of students who used these resources was 2.73 in the course in which support was provided versus 2.13 for those who did not use the resources.

Since 2004, the availability, quality, and use of academic support have all increased steadily. Academic support programs served over 1,507 students in Fall 2012, compared with 808 in Fall 2004, despite the fact that overall university enrollment has remained about the same and the size of the freshman class has actually decreased. FSU has invested in peer tutor training through nationally recognized programs such as the International Center for Supplemental Instruction, the College Reading and Learning Association and the National Tutor Association.

#### The Male Initiative

On average, during the period of 2005 to 2010, male students have accounted for 36% of first-time, first-year students in contrast to females. The average rate at which males persisted to graduation during such periods and for which four-year data were available was 10%, demonstrating FSU attracted a small proportion of men and, more troubling, graduated them at lower rates. Because most academic performance measures showed that males were underperforming, FSU was intentional about initiating a set of student success interventions for male students, starting in spring 2012, with a unique “Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Retention and Male Initiative” (AVC) position. A Coordinator for Academic Resources, Supplemental Instructor, Program Associate, and a cadre of peer tutors and mentors augment the senior-level Academic Affairs position.

FSU’s male initiatives—the “Male Initiative on Leadership and Excellence” (MILE) and the “Boosting Bronco Brothers Transition to FSU Initiative” (B3)—take advantage of over \$400,000 in Title III funds to develop targeted student success initiatives and practices. Taken together, the

MILE and B3 serve 205 males, which represents 18.4% of the target group of first-time male freshmen (1,114) or 12.3% of the total male student population at FSU (1,667).

In its initial year, the initiatives helped increase the fall-to-fall retention of males from 67% in 2010 to 74% in 2011, a seven percentage point increase. As was stated earlier, males who participate in the BRONCO MILE program were retained at a significantly higher rate (84%) than non participants (66%). In addition to its emphasis on academic success, the University's male initiatives now focuses on financial literacy—a desired institutional outcome—through a new summer course entitled “Black Men Banking on Their Future,” a hybrid-type course, which has a field study component on Wall Street in New York City, NY. FSU's male initiatives helped attract a College Access Challenge Grant from the University of North Carolina General Administration (system office)—only one of five institutions to receive the grant for the purpose of strengthening male mentoring.

### Pre-College Outreach

The Office of College Access Programs provides a broad range of high-quality college preparatory services annually to an average of 3,000 youth low-income/first-generation students, their parents and professional development services for educators who teach at Title I Schools. The Office includes national youth programs Gaining Early Awareness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), Talent Search, Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math & Science and 21st Century Community Learning Centers. In addition, AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers In Service to America), an anti-poverty program, is housed in the Office of College Access Programs to provide capacity building for mobilizing local resources to achieve sustainable solutions. Ninety percent (90%) of the students are of color with graduation rates of 91% and college placement rates of 75%.

### Early College High Schools

Early college high schools, typically located on college campuses, allow students to take college-level classes while they are still in high school and they can earn up to 60 hours of college credits. These schools often recruit first-generation, low-income, and other underrepresented populations, and the purpose of these high schools is to increase access to college for such populations.

FSU was one of the first in the State of North Carolina to work with the local school district, Cumberland County Schools (CCS), to establish Cross Creek Early College High School (CCECHS) in 2005. FSU provided physical space and worked closely with CCECHS and CCS officials to resolve the many administrative challenges of this innovative collaborative institution. FSU provided 11 faculty to teach special sections of introductory college classes for CCECHS sophomores, who then transitioned to taking regular college classes with other FSU students. To assist CCECHS students in their transition to college, FSU incorporated CCECHS juniors into the Freshman Seminar and created an Early College Liaison to track students and manage their progress. CCECHS has become a state leader in the early college high school movement. Its students have had one of the highest success rates in both high school and college classes. The CCECHS has consistently ranked as one of the top high schools in the state.

The success of CCCECHS, along with the growing importance of globalization in both the high school and college curricula, led to the establishment of Cumberland International Early College High School (CIECHS) in 2011. CIECHS moved to the FSU campus in Fall 2012. CIECHS, which also recruits from underrepresented populations, focuses on international studies and foreign language instruction. FSU's mission to produce global citizens, along with its core learning outcome of global literacy, made it a natural partner for this early college high school. CIECHS students take language and other global courses from FSU faculty and benefit from FSU's strong cadre of Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants.

To ensure that the opportunity created by the early college high schools does not end when they become full-time college students, FSU has invested in scholarships for early college high school graduates. Recognizing that despite their proven record of success in college classes, early college high school graduates face their own unique challenges transitioning to the post-high-school world, FSU provides continued advisement and support for these students through academic departments and through its University College.

In fall 2013, FSU extended its support for early college high school students with two scholarship programs. The Robert H. Short Scholarship, which is open to graduates of both early colleges on the FSU campus, pays all college expenses for up to three years. The "debt free" college degree scholarship is open to graduates of a North Carolina early college high school with a GPA of 2.75 or higher. These students are eligible for a two year scholarship that pays the difference between all grants and the direct cost of attendance. Both scholarship programs enable these students—which are typically first-generation students from low-income families—to complete a college degree without any debt for loans.

All of these programs have required a strong financial commitment from the University via reallocation of existing resources and grants from our historical funders. The CHEER summer bridge program and the certain aspects of the male initiative (i.e., a matriculation from North Carolina community colleges to UNC institutions) received subsidy grants from the University of North Carolina General Administration (system office). The First-Year Experience received Title III funds granted to FSU in the early years of establishing this program. Subsequently, FSU absorbed all costs to support the First-Year Experience and has since expanded the program to have a Second-Year component in the FSU University College. Title III funds continue for related academic support programs in the University College as well as for the male initiative.

As a result of these rigorous and intrusive efforts FSU has earned a number of national awards including: the HIP (High Impact Practice Award) from the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE) Retention Award, designation as a DEEP ("Documenting Effective Educational Practices") high-performing institution, a designation that has helped position the university as a national leader on creating robust opportunities for student success. The DEEP study was a two-year research investigation of 20 colleges and universities with higher-than-predicted graduation rates and also scores on five clusters or "benchmarks" of effective educational practice.

### **Financial Aid Counseling**

Financial Aid education begins prior to enrollment with the FIRST STEPS program. Financial Aid education begins prior to enrollment with the FIRST STEPS program. FIRST STEPS is a program that helps prospective first-time students and their families take the first steps toward success at FSU, to include placement testing, advisement, registration, and financial aid counseling. During the financial aid counseling, students and families discuss decision-making related to financing their college education, including instruction on debt-burden, financial literacy, and true cost of education.

Once enrolled the priority order of financial aid packaging is always free money (grants, scholarships); loans are packaged last as needed up to one's cost of attendance. Where loans are offered, students must go online to accept and if a new borrower (entrance counseling has to be completed) before funds will disburse. FSU's School of Business & Economics developed a core course called Financial Literacy-(FINC 100). This course, designed to provide students with some of the skills and knowledge that they need to manage their finances and be informed consumers by examining basic financial terms and concepts. Topics covered include savings, credit and debt; budgeting; student loans; credit cards; insurance; buying a car; your first house, etc. Students can use this course to satisfy the "Life Skills" core requirement under the University's core curriculum.

New initiatives in planning for academic year 2014-15 are: in person loan counseling sessions (schools did this before automation), and hiring of a Default Manager (many schools are going this route with the new default guidelines).

### **Issues to Consider During HEA Reauthorization**

In the next reauthorization, federal higher education policies should focus on discontinuing needless regulations and duplicative reporting requirements, enhancing access to and success in postsecondary education and closing achievement and college attainment gaps. We ask you to consider the following:

- Title IV
  - Congress should re-engineer the entire financial aid platform and "start from scratch," to quote Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN). The financial aid application process should require the student to input *basic* personal information that triggers a pre-filled application using data that the federal government already possesses. Further, aid eligibility can be made using key data from the IRS or other government agencies. Implement a feature on the FAFSA before submission that will alert the student about their current loan obligation and create a comment on the FAFSA informing the student where they can view this information in the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS).
  - Existing financial aid grant programs should be consolidated into one federal grant program: a new and improved Pell grant and simple Pell Grant look up tables should be provided to enable parents and students to predict their Pell award levels well in

advance of applying to college. Because we recognize one size does not fit all, when students and parents examine and compare the sticker price for college, they should be offered several options for time to degree.

- Federal student loan programs should be consolidated into a single loan program with no distinctions between borrowers **and** all loan repayment options should be extended to 25 years-allow students a more affordable monthly repayment thus preventing loan default.

- Title III- Part B

During the 2008 Reauthorization process, the creation of the PBI designation included a number of new initiatives that were not transferred to the pre-existing HBCU designation. They include:

- Permitting grant funds paid to HBCUs to be expended and used within ten years following the date the grant was awarded or at least permit the funds to be obligated during the —carry over period. This change would align with the wording of this section with its current application to PBIs. Under current law, funds that are obligated during the first five years may be expended during a second five-year period. The HBCU Coalition requests that HBCUs be permitted to obligate funds during the second five-year period, which is considered the carry over period. This change would be consistent with the carry over duration language for PBIs.
- Permitting Title III B funds to be used for distance education by authorizing use for creating or improving facilities for internet or other distance learning academic instruction capabilities, including the purchase or rental of telecommunications technology equipment or services. Under current law, there is no authorized use of Title III B funds for distance learning for HBCUs; although current law permits this use of funds for Tribal Colleges, PBIs and HSIs.
- Permitting funds to be used to assist students to move through core courses in the tutoring and advising area; and to improve academic success by using innovative and customized instructional courses designed to help retain students and move them rapidly thorough core courses. Under current law, there is no authorized use of Title III B funds for these purposes; although current law allows most of these uses of funds for HSIs and PBIs.

Finally, since the collection of and analysis of data is critical to serving these student, these funds should be used to develop and implement analytic and assessment centers on HBCU campuses to monitor student success and progress, to create appropriate metrics and indicators, and to assure accountability through systematic data generation.