

**Communications Committee  
Ohio Board of Regents  
Minutes of the Meeting of April 18, 2002**

The meeting of the Communications Committee was held at Hiram College in Hiram, Ohio. In attendance were the following:

Ohio Board of Regents members:

Gerald M. Miller  
Edmund J. Adams  
Tally Krum

Ohio Board of Regents staff:

|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Rod Chu           | Deborah Gavlik  |
| Rob Sheehan       | Neal McNally    |
| Jane Fullerton    | Randall Edwards |
| Yavonne Stertzner | Garry Walters   |

Guests:

Tim Bryan, Hiram College  
Tracey Young, AICUO

The meeting was called to order by Regent Miller. The minutes of the January 2002 Committee meeting were approved without objection.

**Government Relations**

Deborah Gavlik, director of governmental relations and budgets, presented the latest version of *The Issue*, which featured Endowments at Ohio's Colleges and Universities as its topic. The newsletter explained that endowments shouldn't be considered for offsetting tuition increases because much of them are funds restricted by their donors, they are intended for use toward permanent improvements, and some institutions have significant endowments, while others do not.

Ms. Gavlik shared some information on the subject of committees on higher education in the legislature. She stated that 15 states have higher education committees within their legislative bodies.

Ms. Gavlik updated the board on the status of the agency's legislative web page. She stated that it was online and available with links to the Ohio General Assembly, U.S. Congress, Regents' testimonies, Ohio profile data, and archived editions of *The Issue*.

Ms. Gavlik presented an update on the condition of the state budget. She discussed the extent of the deficit, and briefly outlined the Governor's proposal to address the shortfall. As of yet, no specific details to address the shortfall have emerged from the legislature.

Ms. Gavlik shared a report on recession and higher education, titled “Coping with Recession: Public Policy, Economic Downturns and Higher Education” from the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. The report discussed current conditions in comparison to the recession of the early 1990s.

### **Communications**

Jamie Abel, assistant director of communications, reported on the most significant media topics from the last month: OSU President Kirwan’s departure, a Cleveland Plain Dealer series on research and commercialization, and statewide curriculum standards on science and social studies.

Mr. Abel indicated that several suggestions from earlier meetings were implemented in the weekly electronic newsletter, Ohio Higher Education Update, including a modified table of contents that now features topic labels.

Mr. Abel recognized the valuable addition of Randall Edwards to the OBR communications staff, upgrading the effectiveness of that area.

### **Outreach**

Garry Walters, vice chancellor, updated the board on the progress of the Knowledge Economy Awareness Initiative. He explained that focus groups have been conducted and a pilot region was in the start-up stage. He reported that the four-stage plan had been modified to include Town Hall Meetings to serve as an action step following the first-stage presentations. He stated that the staff is involved in refining a frequently-asked-questions database and that presentation training involved a professional trainer at Kent State University and a videotape of the presentation to be distributed to speakers.