

**SHEEO CIO Conference**  
**Welcoming Remarks**

**Chancellor Roderick G. W. Chu**  
**February 7, 2003**

**I. Welcome to Ohio**

- A. I loved Grant Crawford's sharing his chancellor's description of North Dakota as being "a moderate sized city with very long streets"
- B. Having come from my native NYC just 5 years ago, I'll share a description of Ohio I just heard last weekend: "It's a wonderful place to live, but you wouldn't want to visit there"
- C. Given that description, it's heartening that you've come from 25 states to Ohio for this meeting

**II. I'm personally tremendously excited about this meeting**

- A. To explain, I need to tell you a little of my background
- B. I'm not an educator
  - 1. *I have an MBA degree in quantitative analysis – the use of information to make management decisions*
  - 2. *I began my career as a mainframe techie with the consulting practice of Arthur Andersen. (Felt good a few years ago with all the Y2K concerns, I knew I wouldn't be unemployed, since had been a pretty good COBOL programmer.)*

3. *In the 1980s, left Andersen to become tax commissioner of NYS. Last night, heard of experiences of drowning in data, but having no information – certainly true in the NYS tax dept. In 1983 as the new tax commissioner, demanded a PC for my office – found with 25 million tax returns/year, had no information I could process on my PC. So despite my quantitative analysis degree, I had no information to use to make decisions.*
4. *Went back to Andersen Consulting in 1988 and was appointed a SUNY system trustee in 1990*

**C. When the Ohio Board of Regents conducted their search for a new chancellor about 5 ½ years ago, I was asked to interview**

1. *Checked out the Ohio regents on their website*
2. *Learned about a controversy they had been involved with about trying to cutback enrollment at Ohio's many public law schools, given what the Regents felt were mediocre programs at some of them*
  - a) *The Regents were rebuffed by the law schools, who contacted their alumni legislators, judges and justices of the Ohio supreme court*
  - b) *The Regents felt the limitations of being a coordinating rather than a governing board*
  - c) *I told the Regents that I wouldn't have handled the issue the way they did – that they had a tremendous power that they hadn't used: the power of the Bully Pulpit and using it to get the facts out*
  - d) *While the Regents were concerned about the state expending millions of dollars to educate so many lawyers who were not able to pass the bar exam after graduation, I noted that the students themselves were*

spending 3 years of tuition for the same result. The Regents had the power to publicly report the bar passage results of the law schools – good, fair or dismal.

*(1) They didn't have to cut back enrollments at law schools; prospective students, armed with information, would, in a free market, decide not to attend.*

*(2) And that's just what has happened. By gathering and reporting on bar exam passage rates, the Ohio Board of Regents has gotten students to focus on the performance of law schools and those schools have raised their admissions standards and performance*

**D. On being appointed chancellor, I learned that Rich Petrick and his colleagues were in the final year of developing a new Higher Education Information System**

- 1. Last night, Rich told us of having "Tons of data, but no information"*
- 2. While HEI was developed to process data for our cost-based subsidy system, it also provided us with the ability to start generating information*
- 3. We reorganized our Board's committees and formed a Performance Committee – a major new user of information from the system*
- 4. We also sparked new demands for information, working with the Governor and getting him to ask for an annual report of the performance of Ohio's colleges and universities*
- 5. These efforts have been tremendously successful.*

- a) We've been moving from data to generating information.
- b) Now with information, we're moving to generating policy questions and analysis.

**E. Information has become a key driver of power and authority of the Ohio Board of Regents**

**III. Having information about higher education has come “just in time”**

**A. There are new questions emerging about accountability for all involved in higher education**

1. *With the budget crises most of our states are encountering, we are seeing a recurrence of the practices of policy makers blaming the victim. They see the need to invest more in higher education, but don't have the resources, so they say “We WOULD invest more in colleges and universities, if only they would be more concerned about improving their efficiency.” And so on.*
2. *And nationally, with Congress pleased with their finally demanding performance from the K-12 system in their reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act – the No Child Left Behind Act – they are starting to repeat the cries for performance accountability in considering the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act that will be up for debate over the next couple of years. Senator Joe Lieberman is already questioning the woeful college completion rates reported through the Dept. of Education's system*

**B. Higher education is becoming the center of attention because many are seeing that the fundamental changes in the U.S. and global economy from an Industrial Age economy to an Information Age economy demands that we better educate more of our residents**

1. *Here in Ohio, our Governor, Bob Taft, has articulated his vision of Ohio becoming “a leader on the new frontier of Knowledge and Technology.” To become a leader, we will have to dramatically improve our ability to better educate more Ohioans*
2. *The performance of our higher education system – and the information to drive that performance – are the means to achieve our governor’s vision: to improve the quality of life for all Ohioans*

**IV. I’ve touched on just one aspect of the higher education information function. As we heard last night, there are many other vitally important aspects as well:**

- A. Shared campus student records and administrative systems**
- B. Shared procurement**
- C. Library systems**
- D. Distance Education and asynchronous learning**
- E. Networks, shared supercomputing and new grid computing facilities**
- F. Information for prospective students and their families**
- G. Higher education information systems integrated with P-12 systems – and with economic development and labor reporting systems**

**V. All these facets of the information function will be critically important if we are to enable institutions of higher education to educate vastly more of our residents at dramatically lower costs**

- A. Educating many more students at a much lower cost may sound like an impossible goal**

- B. Yet for states like Ohio – which is, in too many ways, such an average state (did you know that you are now in Columbus: the test market capital of the nation, because we're SO average?) – it is a goal we will have to achieve if we are to provide our residents with the knowledge and skills they'll need to survive and prosper in the Knowledge Economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century**
- C. I hope I've explained the teaser I left you with last night: that the information function in state higher education agencies is the most strategically important function, not just for higher education, but for the future of our states**
- D. I wish you a good visit to Ohio and a successful meeting. Our SHEEO agencies and our states are counting on you!**
- E. I'll turn the program over to the team I count on: Harold Horton, Guy Thibodeau, Andy Lechler, Jay Johnson and Stephanie McCann**
- F. Thank you.**