

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCE
STUDY COMMISSION

Panel's first meeting set today

By PAUL WOOD

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CHICAGO — A panel to study higher-education finance in Illinois and recommend options for the General Assembly has its first meeting today.

The Higher Education Finance Study Commission is made up of legislators, academic finance experts and a cross-section of education, business, labor and nonprofit leaders. The meeting is being held at the **University of Illinois at Chicago** Student Center.

The commission was created by Senate Joint Resolution 88, sponsored by state Sen. Ed Maloney, D-Chicago, and state Rep. Fred Crespo, D-Hoffman Estates, both of whom will serve on the panel.

Two Urbana campus veterans, Walter McMahon, an economics professor emeritus at the UI, and Steve Rugg, former chief financial officer, are part of the group.

McMahon said Monday that he believes higher education is underfunded nationwide, but especially in this state, and he will bring the social value of education to the discussion.

"The charge of the commission is to look at financing, but there is also a narrower focus of trying to increase completion rates, which are a problem nationwide, not so much at the UI, where the rate is close to 83 percent," McMahon said.

McMahon said he will stress the social value of education, from the elementary school level to post-graduate, in increasing health knowledge, salaries and other measures of the quality of life.

"We need to have financial incentives for (completing) higher education," he said.

McMahon is the author of "Higher Learning, Greater Good: The Private and Social Benefits of Higher Education," published by Johns Hopkins University Press.

McMahon's research suggests a college degree can bring job opportunities, higher earnings and better health, as well as promoting democracy and sustainable growth and reducing crime and welfare and prison costs.

"Illinois has a rather terrible record of investing in education; we're very low among the states. As a result, we have a large skill deficit, which is part of the reason middle-class earnings have not been rising since the 1980," McMahon said.

Jane Wellman, the executive director of the Delta Cost Project and a national expert on college funding and productivity, will be featured at the commission's first meeting.

The commission will also:

— Evaluate funding for Illinois higher education and compare it to peer states and institutions around the nation.

— Develop a funding strategy that connects state appropriations, tuition policies and need-based student aid.

Please see **STUDY, B-2**

(cont.)

STUDY

Continued from B-1

—Consider alternative funding mechanisms to advance the goals of the Illinois Public Agenda, including improved

student retention, program completion and graduation.

The finance study will be conducted over the course of five meetings during the summer and fall.

Other commission members include Al Bowman, president of Illinois State

University, and Terry Bruce, chancellor of Illinois Eastern Community Colleges; Illinois Board of Higher Education members Jay Bergman and Father John Minogue; and Sue Morris, vice chairwoman of the Illinois Community College Board.

Hide photos

The Journal Gazette

Published: July 27, 2010 3:00 a.m.

Despite disability law, barriers still there

Frank Gray

Around the country Monday, people marked the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a law that was supposed to literally remove hurdles and open doors for people with disabilities and give them opportunities both on the job and off.

Advocates give poor grades to America's accommodation of people with disabilities, who number about 34,000 in Allen County alone, according to the 2008 American Community Survey.

But stories of people's struggles to have the same opportunities as everyone else reminded me of another story, centered on a man named Tim Nugent, who faced the same problems more than 60 years ago.



Jak Wonderly | The Journal Gazette

John Guingrich of Government Solutions speaks at the A. Ross Adair Federal Building on Monday, the 20th anniversary of the disabilities law.

Nugent was a young graduate student in 1949 when he helped launch a program at the **University of Illinois** rehabilitating people who were paralyzed. It has been years since I've spoken to Nugent, but I remember some of the stories he told me, of finding a man who had been paralyzed in a diving accident at 15 or so, who had spent years since literally lying in bed at home. It was invisible people like this, people isolated at home or relegated to institutions, whom he attracted to his program and taught how to be self-sufficient.

Among the programs he helped start was wheelchair basketball as a way of showing that people with disabilities, people with legs paralyzed by polio or spinal injuries, could play sports, too.

I remember how he said he'd advised one student, who was brilliant and had earned a degree but who was convinced he could never get a job because he was in a wheelchair, to put on his résumé that he had played college basketball. He had. He'd played for the University of Illinois. It's just that he played wheelchair basketball. Nugent said it worked.

The program went on to produce many successes, and its participants went on to become politicians, advertising executives, businessmen and even doctors.

I couldn't help but think, people have been tackling these issues for a long, long time, and accomplishing amazing things – people including Nugent, a virtual unknown whose name is probably remembered by only a few of the original surviving wheelchair basketball players.

After a news conference in Fort Wayne marking the anniversary of the ADA, I spoke to David Nelson, president and CEO of the League for the Blind and Disabled, about Nugent and others who decades ago tackled the problems faced by people with disabilities.

Yes, Nelson acknowledged, there were people who had great victories and helped people find jobs and show others in the workplace that someone with a disability can do the job.

But programs like Nugent's couldn't overcome systemwide problems that still exist.

"It wasn't long ago that you didn't see people with disabilities in public," Nelson said. They were stuck at home, and venturing out involved confronting obstacles. Nelson told the story of a friend in a wheelchair who was approached by a woman at a mall. The woman slapped him and said she was with her children and that they didn't need to see people like him. That was only 20 years ago.

Yes, Nelson said, that was the extreme, but it happened.

People with disabilities are always the last hired when times are good and the first out when the economy sours, Nelson said. Unemployment among their ranks is about 65 percent right now, he said.

There are lots of reasons, Nelson said. Businesses don't know how to accommodate employees with disabilities because they haven't been exposed to such people in the workplace and witnessed that they can be as capable as anyone else.

Businesses are also afraid, he said. They fear insurance costs will go up if they hire an employee with a disability, or that they will be sued if they hire such a person and it doesn't work out.

And there is still some blatant discrimination, he said.

But there are great success stories, too, and touting those is perhaps the best way to drive home the message that people with disabilities can be more accomplished and productive than some people ever imagined.

Frank Gray has held positions as reporter and editor at The Journal Gazette since 1982 and has been writing a column on local topics since 1998. His column is published on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. He can be reached by phone at 461-8376, by fax at 461-8893, or by email at fgray@jg.net.

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Are we ready?

By James Lee Witt and Admiral James M. Loy | Posted: Tuesday, July 27, 2010 12:00 am

A recent study by the **University of Illinois** found that a replay of the New Madrid earthquakes of the 1800s would have a devastating impact in the Midwest; an impact that would dwarf the catastrophic damages of any natural disaster this nation has ever experienced.

The threat is very real and if ever there was a time for a Homeowners' Defense Act, the time is now.

In recent months, the Midwest has been the site of several small, but significant, earthquakes of magnitudes in the range of 5.0 on the Richter scale. The recent report looked at what would happen if the region were hit with earthquakes of a 7.7 magnitude along the New Madrid fault. The results are terrifying.

The report suggests that such an earthquake would render 7 million people homeless, would damage 715,000 buildings and would have a \$300 billion economic impact.

The human toll would be enormous, and the economic toll would be paralyzing.

Because St. Louis and Memphis are in such close proximity to the New Madrid fault, those important cities would suffer the most damage. But, the impact would be felt throughout at least eight Midwest states including Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee. Many of these states rely on the Mississippi River and its ports for commerce.

Similar earthquakes struck the region in 1811 and 1812. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, they were equal to the San Francisco earthquake in force and, had the Richter Scale existed, would have exceeded 7.0 in magnitude.

Those earthquakes changed the course of the Mississippi River, formed new lakes and damaged structures as far away as Cincinnati. Their shock waves covered more than a million square miles, from Mississippi to Michigan, from Pennsylvania to Nebraska. Landslides and extensive subsidence occurred in an area that today would stretch from Cairo, Ill., to Memphis.

Damage was limited because those earthquakes struck when the region was a vast wilderness, a part of the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase.

Today, millions of American families make their homes right on top of the New Madrid fault. Mid-America cities like Nashville, St. Louis, Memphis and Little Rock would all suffer were we to experience a replay of the New Madrid earthquakes. Because the area is host to countless natural gas lines and other critical national infrastructure, the entire country would suffer from the collateral damage.

Preparing for the physical and human costs of a massive earthquake will require better building codes and smarter planning. Unlike California, where earthquake awareness is a way of life, the same has not been historically true in much of the heartland.

Fortunately, earthquake education recently has been mandated in some Mississippi Valley states, the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program has expanded its efforts in the area, and most states in the earthquake zone have adopted better building codes.

Those codes only apply to new buildings, and cover only a fraction of structures in the area of the New Madrid fault line. Most of the existing homes, schools and commercial buildings have not been designed to withstand the stress of earthquakes, so enormous destruction could be expected when the next tremors roll.

The economic devastation and the potential for the largest financial bailout in the nation's history could be avoided if we take steps now to pre-fund for the natural catastrophe we know might come.

What is needed is a privately funded public partnership that helps to pre-fund the financial costs of a large-scale natural

catastrophe. Such a program would facilitate the risk participation of the private sector, expand the availability and sustainability of the catastrophic insurance system, and provide potent incentives for residential property owners to undertake catastrophe loss mitigation efforts. This approach should add capacity to the private insurance market and lower consumer costs. From an economic perspective, such an alliance of public and private resources is the optimal manner to address the inefficiencies that plague the present system of federal disaster relief.

Legislation to accomplish these goals was reported from the House Financial Services Committee at the end of April. The bill, The Homeowners' Defense Act HR 2555, has bipartisan support and was endorsed by President Obama when he was seeking the presidency. The entire House of Representatives may vote on the bill in to coming weeks.

With hope, it will be enacted before the next earthquake strikes.

James Lee Witt and James M. Loy co-chair ProtectingAmerica.org. Witt is a former director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Loy is a former Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard and former deputy secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

CASE STUDY: Wage freezes, staff cuts and expanding class sizes

In the academic year that finished last month, introductory courses in psychology at the **University of Illinois at Chicago** had 300 students per lecture. When the new semester begins next month, the same class will have 450 students, writes **Hal Weitzman**.

The congested psychology classes are a striking example of how Illinois' budget woes are having a tangible effect on the state's residents. Gary Raney, head of UIC's psychology department, said the school had to offer two rather than three classes as part of efforts to bridge the lack of funding from the cash-strapped state.

As a public institution, the university depends on the state for its funding. However, not only did education account for a large share of the \$1.4bn (€1bn, £900m) in cuts that the state made in its last financial year, but Illinois is also behind on paying its bills: it still owes the University of Illinois \$279m of the \$743m it was due to have handed over for the financial year that ended last month, on top of the \$45m it owes for the current year.

Students are suffering, says Prof Raney. Salary freezes mean he is losing academic staff to other institutions, while he cannot replace those who retire. As well as expanding class sizes, he has been forced to cancel three courses for next semester.

"We have about 55 students for every member of faculty, compared to 25 in the broader college of liberal arts and sciences," he says. "How much attention can we actually give to individual students?"

Prof Raney says UIC receives a lot of money from external grants but, as staff numbers dwindle and teaching workloads increase, the university's research status is suffering, putting outside funding at risk. "We're trapped in a vicious cycle," he says.

Prof Raney has little confidence the state will get to grips with its financial situation, and he worries about how UIC will handle the pressure. "We physically can't increase class sizes any further," he says. "Our classes are now as big as the largest teaching space in the university."

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Professor controversy is deeply disturbing

Recent news reports about Professor Kenneth Howell are quite disturbing.

The reports concern the dismissal of an adjunct faculty member, Kenneth Howell, for teaching the Catholic Church's position on homosexuality.

What can be meant by freedom of thought if such retribution faces teachers? Do we avoid courses on the Ku Klux Klan because the idea of racism offends some or on Hinduism because being reborn as an insect offends some or on Judaism because being chosen offends some?

Our joy at noting the appointment of the committee to review Howell's dismissal is exceeded only by our amazement that such an action was needed at all. It is important that the **University of Illinois** act immediately to clarify the facts and to redress any injustice.

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Champaign
MOBIN SHORISH.
Urbana

'DISHONESTY' IN TRIB SALE

Media giant's managers failed to act 'forthrightly,' Bankruptcy Court examiner concludes

BY DAVID ROEDER

Business Reporter

An examiner probing Sam Zell's buyout of Tribune Co. in late 2007 has found evidence of "dishonesty" in the deal's latter stages, a conclusion that could throw the company's 20-month-old bankruptcy case into turmoil.

Kenneth Klee, appointed by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court to review the Tribune deal, said in a report submitted late Monday that fraud may have occurred in late 2007. That's when Chicago-based Tribune finalized \$3.6 billion in financing to complete the \$8.2 billion acquisition that came overwhelmingly from debt.

Klee, a Los Angeles attorney and law professor, pointed no finger at Zell, Tribune's chairman. Instead, he concentrated on presentations of Tribune managers and an outside advisory firm, Valuation Research Corp., in preparing financial reports that Klee said did not reflect the media company's deteriorating fiscal state.

He concluded that it is "some-what likely that a court would conclude" fraud took place. Tribune managers "did not act forthrightly in procuring the solvency opinion issued by VRC," Klee found, adding that "the procurement of the solvency opinion was marred by dishonesty and lack of candor about the role played by Morgan Stanley in connection with VRC's solvency opinion and on the question of Tribune's solvency generally."

Klee noted a pattern in December 2007 "in which Tribune used Morgan Stanley's imprimatur to bolster VRC's solvency opinion and push [the deal] over the goal line, without authorization from Morgan Stanley."

The opinion could provide ammunition for holders of unsecured debt to challenge a reorganization plan that would leave them with no stake in the company. It also could cause more delays and creditor infighting in the case before U.S.



Tribune Co. owns the Chicago Tribune, seven other newspapers and 24 TV stations. | AL PODGORSKI-SUN-TIMES

Tribune files proposal to scale back management bonuses

Tribune Co. filed a proposal to scale back a management bonus plan that drew criticism from debtholders and unions at the company. The new plan leaves unchanged the maximum that could be paid in bonuses — \$42.9 million — but raises performance targets to qualify for the money.

The old proposal set a target of \$635 million in operating cash flow for a year. The new one raises the target to \$685 million.

Bankruptcy Judge Kevin Carey.

Tribune's main lenders, holding more than \$10 billion in debt, include JPMorgan Chase & Co., Bank of America Corp., Citigroup Inc. and buyout specialists Angelo Gordon & Co. A proposed Tribune reorganization would divide 91 percent control of the company among those lenders.

But Klee specifically absolved the

Reduced bonuses, totaling \$16.5 million and about half the level of the original plan, would be paid if the company reaches \$500 million in operating cash flow.

The company's most recent financial reports, filed with U.S. bankruptcy court, indicate it is short of bonus thresholds. For a two-month period from late March to late May, for example, it reported about \$50 million from operating cash flow.

Tribune said its unsecured cred-

itors committee and the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild, objectors to the earlier bonus plan, support the new one. The company said it will seek approval of the plan at a hearing Aug. 9.

Company spokesman Gary Weitman said the Tribune has devised "a reasonable and conservative method of incentivizing and rewarding participants in the plan."

itors committee and the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild, objectors to the earlier bonus plan, support the new one. The company said it will seek approval of the plan at a hearing Aug. 9.

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David Roeder

ciary duties."

His summary did not get into names, but a list of his interviews in the report showed sessions with current and former Tribune officers, including Zell, former Chairman Dennis FitzSimons; former Senior Vice President of Finance Donald Grenesko and current Executive Vice President Nils Larsen. Grenesko and Larsen got followup

interviews.

In a statement, Tribune spokesman Gary Weitman said the report is "a lengthy document and we will defer comment until we've had the opportunity to review it." A Zell spokeswoman had no immediate comment on the contents other than to note his "participation in lengthy interviews" with the examiner.

Klee filed a report of about 600 pages, although additional portions were blacked out because of ongoing disputes with creditor groups over immediate public disclosure. His summary of his findings was published in full.

His entire report, which Klee has been working on since April, is believed to run more than 1,000 pages, and have more than 1,000 exhibits. Zell took the Tribune into Chapter 11 one year after his sale closed, asserting that he could not have foreseen a historic decline in advertising.

Tribune owns the Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles Times and six other major newspapers, plus 23 television stations and WGN radio and television. A billionaire from real estate and strategic buyouts, Zell put up just \$315 million in cash to control the company and installed an employee stock ownership plan as the majority owner.

The sale has led to investigations by the U.S. Labor Department and the Internal Revenue Service, but no charges have been filed.

As with everything else in the complex bankruptcy, how much of the Klee report to release publicly was open to wrangling. Klee told the court on Friday that he was struggling with creditor demands to keep portions confidential until Carey can rule otherwise.

In response, Tribune on Monday asked Carey to order that the report be fully available. Anything less, the Tribune Co. said, could delay hearings on its proposed reorganization that are scheduled to begin Aug. 30.

The company hopes to emerge from bankruptcy late this year.



Views

Teaching With Blogs

July 27, 2010

By Lanny Arvan

"It is my impression that no one really likes the new. We are afraid of it. It is not only as Dostoevsky put it that 'taking a new step, uttering a new word is what people fear most.' Even in slight things the experience of the new is rarely without some stirring of foreboding."

--Eric Hoffer, *Between The Devil And The Dragon*

I tried the new in fall 2009, teaching with student blogs, (look in sidebar and scroll down) out in the open where anyone who wanted to could see what the students were producing. The blogging wasn't new for me. I'd been doing that for almost five years. Having students blog was a different matter. I had no experience in getting them to overcome their anxieties, relaxing in writing online, learning to trust one another that way. Normally I believe what's good for the goose is good for the gander. If I could blog comfortably and get something from that, so could they. On reflection, however, I was very gentle with myself when I started to blog. As an experiment to prove to myself whether I could do it, for three full weeks I made at least one post a day, 500 to 600 words, a couple of times 1,100 to 1,200 words. I didn't tell a soul I was doing this. There was no pressure on me to keep it up. It was out in the open, yet nobody seemed to be watching. After those three weeks I felt ready. In the teaching, however, at best I could ask the students to blog once a week. I gave the students weekly prompts on the readings or to follow up on class discussion. (See the class calendar for fall 2009. The prompts are in the Friday afternoon entries.) If I let them blog quietly to get comfortable as I had done, the entire semester would expire before they were ready to go public. There seemed no alternative but to have them plunge in.

The uncertainty about how best to assist the students once they had taken the plunge created an important symmetry between the students and me; we both were to learn about how to do this well, often by first doing it less well. Though it was an inadvertent consequence, of all my teaching over the past 30 years I believe this course came closest to emulating the *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* by Chickering and Gamson. I learned to comment on the student posts, not with some pre-thought-through response based on what I anticipated they'd write, but rather to react to where they appeared to be in their own thinking. (This post provides a typical example. The student introduced time management as a theme. My comment aimed to make her think more about time management.) As natural as that is to do in ordinary conversation, I had never done it before when evaluating student work. Indeed, I didn't think of these comments as evaluation at all. I thought of them as response. In the normal course of my non-teaching work I respond to colleagues all the time and they respond to me. This form of online interaction in the class made it more like the rest of my interactions at work.

Most of the students were quite awkward in their initial blogging. Good students all, the class was a seminar on "Designing for Effective Change" for the Honors Program, but lacking experience in this sort of approach to instruction, the students wrote to their conception of what I wanted to hear from them. I can't imagine a more constipated mindset for producing interesting prose. For this class there was a need for them to unlearn much of their approach which had been finely tuned and was quite successful in their other classes. They needed to take more responsibility for their choices. While I gave them a prompt each week on which to write, I also gave them the freedom to choose their own topic so long as they could create a tie to the course themes. Upon reading much of the early writing, I admonished many of them to "please themselves" in the writing. I informed them that they could not possibly please other readers if they didn't first please themselves. It was a message they were not used to hearing. So it took a while for them to believe it was true. In several instances they tried it out only after being frustrating with the results from their usual approach. This, as Ken Bain teaches us, is how students learn on a fundamental level.

I'm crustier now than I was as a younger faculty member. Nonetheless, I find it difficult to deal with the emotion that underlies giving feedback to students when that feedback is less than entirely complimentary to them. Yet given their awkward early attempts at writing posts that's exactly what honest response demanded. It's here where having the postings and the comments out in the open so all can see is so important, before the class has become a community, before the students have made up their minds about what they think about this blogging stuff. Though both the writing and the response are highly subjective, of necessity, it is equally important for the process to be fair. How can a student who receives critical comments judge those comments to be fitting and appropriate, rather than an example of the insensitive instructor picking on the hapless student? Perhaps a very mature student can discern this even-handedly from the comments themselves and a self-critique of the original post. I believe most students benefit by reading the posts of their classmates, making their own judgments about those writings and then seeing the instructor's comments, finally making a subsequent determination as to whether those comments seem appropriate and helpful for the student in reconsidering the writing.

A positive feedback loop can be created by this process. The commenting, more than any other activity the instructor engages in, demonstrates the instructor's commitment to the course and to the students. In turn the students, learning to appreciate the value of the comments, start to push themselves in the writing. Their learning is encouraged this way. Further, since the blogging is not a competition between the students and their classmates, those who like getting comments begin to comment on the posts of other students. The elements of the community that the class can become are found in this activity.

Since on a daily basis I use blogs and blog readers in my regular work, one of the original reasons for me taking this approach rather than use the campus learning management system was simply that I thought it would be more convenient for me. Also, given my job as a learning technology administrator, I went into the course with some thought that I might showcase the work afterward. Openness is clearly better for that. However in retrospect neither of these is primary. The main reason to be open is to set a good tone for the class. We want ideas to emerge and not remain concealed.

Yet there remains one troubling element: student privacy. Is open blogging this way consistent with FERPA? As best as I've been able to determine, it is as long as students "opt in." (I did give students the alternatives of writing in the class LMS site or writing in the class wiki site. No student opted for those.) My experience suggests, however, that is not quite sufficient. If most students opt in, peer pressure may drive others to opt in as well. More importantly, however, students choose to opt in when they are largely ignorant of the consequences. Might they feel regret after they better understand what the blogging is all about?

Based on my discussion with the students on this point, essentially all their reservations about blogging would have been eliminated were they to have blogged under aliases. One of my students figured that out on her own, for self-protection. A few others took out any mention of their name on their blogs partway into the class. I've been thinking of the next class I will teach and how I'll adopt aliases in that setting. My current plan is to assign aliases generated by concatenating the names of famous economists (I teach microeconomics) with the course rubric and number. Then in the bio section of their blogs I'll have the students post a little about the economists who are their namesakes. The actual aliases will be a little long and clunky this way, but in the colloquial way students are apt to communicate with each other, I'm sure they'll embrace shorter forms. And this way they'll become acquainted with some of the giants in the field, not a bad byproduct from satisfying their privacy need. I had briefly considered using something considerably shorter, say a number. But that conjured up thoughts of *The Prisoner* and that's not the ambiance I'm trying to create for the course.

I wonder if partway into the semester, after having established some confidence with the blogging, students might choose to reveal their true identities. I'm curious to find out.

Lanny Arvan is CIO and associate dean for e-learning at the College of Business of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

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News

Getting to Know the CFO

July 27, 2010

SAN FRANCISCO – The ever-growing population of college chief financial officers is dominated by well-educated, middle-aged white men who clash with deans and never feel they have enough money for their institutions, according to a survey released today by the National Association of College and University Business Officers ([NACUBO](#)).

NACUBO's 2010 Profile of Higher Education Chief Business and Financial Officers provides a window into the make-up of university officials who have become increasingly influential in the administrative ranks. The typical CFO is 55 years old, married with children and most commonly – 48 percent – holds an M.B.A. Respondents were 90 percent white, and two-thirds were men.

"We are basically a white profession," said Lucie Lapovsky, principal at Lapovsky Consulting and a former CFO who went on to become president of Mercy College.

The survey, which drew upon 974 responses or 32 percent of those polled, revealed that CFOs are generally happy in their jobs. Of those surveyed, 90 percent said they were at least satisfied in their current positions. But the pressures of the job are also manifest in the data. Asked for their two chief sources of frustration, about 43 percent selected "never having enough money." The second most common frustration CFOs share is the "belief by others that you are infinitely accessible." Moreover, about one-third cited relationships with deans – often the chief advocates for a greater share of resources – as their most troubling.

"They're trying to balance the interests of a lot of different departments on campus," said Kenneth Redd, director of research and policy analysis at NACUBO. "That does lead to tension; there's no doubt about it. That's clearly what our survey suggests."

The final responses to the survey were submitted in mid-February. Nearly half of the participants hold positions at small institutions – primarily four-year private colleges with enrollments below 4,000. The survey also captured some CFOs at community colleges, where CFOs are more likely to be women. Just 21 percent of chief business officers at comprehensive universities are women, compared with 42 percent at community colleges. Overall, 32 percent of CFOs are women – still a higher proportion than is the case at Fortune 500 companies, where just 12 percent of CFOs are women.

Annette Parker, vice president and treasurer at Dickinson College, said she's never had the sense that CFO jobs were closed off to women.

"I have personally never felt there was a glass ceiling in higher education," said Parker, who participated in the survey. "I think there have been a lot of opportunities for me. I find higher education very open, and there are a lot of women who move into positions of responsibility in higher education finance."

Parker took a somewhat circuitous path to becoming a CFO. She graduated from Dickinson in 1973 with a major in art and art history. She then worked on a family farm with her husband – a period she describes as marked by "Birkenstocks and peasant skirts." But Parker later cut her teeth in finance as many CFOs do: she went on to get an M.B.A. in accounting, and – like 15 percent of CFOs – worked in government finance for a time. She also has some experience as a faculty member, having taught accounting at Wilson College.

Like 33 percent of her counterparts, Parker was a controller before moving into her current role. While 38 percent have been in their

current positions for fewer than four years, Parker took on her current role in an interim capacity in 1998 and became the permanent CFO the following year.

"I know this place; I grew up here, and because I really believe in the mission being focused on the academic experience, the dean, the provost and I get along beautifully," she said.

Relationships between CFOs and provosts are critical, Lapovsky told attendees of NACUBO's annual meeting Monday.

"When it's working well, it can be wonderful," she said. "And when it's not, it's a real problem."

Parker's long history in higher education is not uncommon for CFOs, despite stereotypes that suggest many are number crunchers with little facility in the ways of academe. Indeed, 60 percent have spent half their careers in higher education.

For the most part, CFOs also feel adequately compensated. Only about one quarter say they need a higher salary. While the survey does not report average salaries, a 2007 study conducted by the Witt/Kieffer search firm found that fewer than half earn more than \$150,000. The most recent data from the **College and University Professional Association for Human Resources** indicated that CFO median salaries are \$187,160 at doctoral institutions, \$130,000 at master's institutions, \$113,925 at baccalaureate institutions, and \$106,759 at community colleges.

While only 17 percent of CFOs surveyed by NACUBO expressed frustration with faculty, those relationships take work. So says Bob Keasler, the senior vice president for operations and finance at Wofford College, who sees faculty relations as a key part of his job.

"I'm not sure that [most] CFOs take the time to meet and talk to a lot of faculty," he said. "I've done this for 20 years or more. I eat lunch where the faculty eat lunch, and I sit with faculty, and I do that so they can ask me questions."

Keasler was a zoology major with a chemistry minor before trying his hand at a small business that didn't work out. He then earned a master's degree in accounting, and – like 38 percent of CFOs – he now holds a certified public accountant credential. Keasler said his career in higher education was natural, since he still enjoys talking shop with professors in areas as diverse as economics and literature.

"I told my wife my dream job would be to have someone pay me to go to college," he said.

It's not all so grand, he concedes. As resources diminish, the CFO is often the purveyor of bad news.

"The tough part for us is we have to be the people willing to say no," Keasler said.

As the survey suggests, deans are the administrators who are often on the receiving end of that tough news. But that's as it should be, Keasler said.

"It's a dean's job to lobby for his area, and that's one of the things I tell new people in this business is to expect that and to be glad when you have a dean who's passionate about what they do and passionate about their programs," he said. "If you don't have one like that, then worry. They might not be much trouble, but that's not a good sign."

— Jack Stripling

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