

## PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

### FEDERAL PRIORITIES

- ◆ Maintain sufficient appropriation levels to support a base funding level of \$4,860 in order to sustain the value of the maximum Pell Grant award.
- ◆ Prioritize funding for the neediest individuals in any Pell program reform effort while striving for minimal impact on average award size and number of recipients.
- ◆ Support pragmatic rules in federal student aid programs that work to protect students, parents and taxpayers.
- ◆ Support legislation requiring student borrowers to pursue all federal financial aid, particularly federal loans, before utilizing private market loans.
- ◆ Support a legislative change to require mandatory institutional certification of private loans issued by lenders.
- ◆ Support the passage and implementation of the DREAM Act.
- ◆ Work to devise more accurate student progress and completion measures that account for the persistence and success of all students, including transfer and part-time students.
- ◆ Encourage federal policymakers to further explore and consider the inclusion of thoughtfully-crafted maintenance of effort (MOE) provisions in future federal higher education bills.
- ◆ Make permanent the American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC).
- ◆ Improve teacher preparation through the strengthening and dedication of federal funds for higher education programs.

### STATE PRIORITIES

- ◆ Increase state operating support for public colleges and universities in order to mitigate tuition increases and maintain college affordability.
- ◆ Support equitable performance funding incentives that promote degree completion, especially among adult and at-risk students.
- ◆ Include state colleges and universities as a partner in statewide economic development efforts.
- ◆ Advocate for states to prioritize and invest in need-based grant programs.

- ◆ Encourage states to provide qualified undocumented students with the ability to enroll in public postsecondary institutions and access to in-state resident tuition rates.
- ◆ Support the development and utilization of comprehensive student-level state longitudinal data systems.
- ◆ Encourage states to align data systems to better recognize and support efforts by institutions and systems participating in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA).
- ◆ Support existing state law and proposed legislation that ban concealed weapons from public college campuses.
- ◆ Include all public four-year institutions in formal state sponsored programs designed to facilitate applied research and development activities.
- ◆ Involve public institutions in the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and align curricula for teacher preparation programs to ensure that students are college- and career-ready.

### 2013 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA ENDORSEMENTS

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)

Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF)

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)

Council for Opportunity in Education (COE)

Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU)

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)

State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO)

AASCU is a Washington-based higher education association of nearly 420 public colleges, universities and systems whose members share a learning- and teaching-centered culture, a historic commitment to underserved student populations and a dedication to research and creativity that advances their regions' economic progress and cultural development.

View the 2013 *Public Policy Agenda*  
in its entirety at [aascu.org/policy/public-policy/](http://aascu.org/policy/public-policy/)

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## PUBLIC POLICY PRINCIPLES

AASCU's *Public Policy Agenda* is rooted in an uncompromising commitment to opportunity for the nation's students and expressed through the following core principles:

- ◆ **Higher education is a common good that provides significant benefits to individuals and society as a whole.** While the personal gains from higher education are widely acknowledged, the societal benefits are even more significant and lasting, thus warranting continued public investment. These include tangible returns through economic productivity and increased tax revenues, but even more fundamentally, through the promotion of an enlightened citizenry and greater social cohesion and inclusion.
- ◆ **America's public higher education system stands as an embodiment of the nation's democratic ideals.** State colleges and universities accomplish this by promoting broad access to education for all students, regardless of socioeconomic background, thus transforming society and setting a global standard. Amid fundamental changes in the state-campus relationship, this principle must not be compromised.
- ◆ **State colleges and universities are committed to delivering America's promise** through quality undergraduate and graduate programs that reflect responsible stewardship of the public investment; meaningful engagement of the social and economic issues facing their states, regions and communities; and the promotion of global awareness, understanding and competitiveness.
- ◆ **No American should be denied the opportunity to pursue higher education for lack of financial resources.** Affordable public sector tuition and need-based federal aid are the two requisite ingredients for realizing this ideal.

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# 2013

## PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA PRINCIPLES & PRIORITIES

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American Association of State  
Colleges and Universities

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am pleased to present the American Association of State Colleges and Universities' *2013 Public Policy Agenda*. This annual statement of policy principles and positions guides the association's advocacy on current and developing issues at the federal and state levels.



The 2012 elections are behind us, but the focus on improving higher education remains. State and federal policymakers will continue the theme of protecting taxpayer dollars through the use of performance-based funding at the state level and the pursuit of stricter regulation at the federal level. Complicating these efforts will be state and federal legislators' attention to creating a more affordable and outcomes-driven system of higher education as scarce dollars force an additional justification for prioritizing higher education's needs.

Driving these efforts is the need for more accurate and informative data for the consumer, requiring strengthened federal and state data systems. The higher education community will have to focus on developing relevant and accurate metrics to provide a more complete picture of student success.

The 113<sup>th</sup> Congress is faced with reauthorizing nearly every major education bill—the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Higher Education Act (HEA), the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Some, or none, of these will be finalized over the next year; however, federal lawmakers need to recognize the interdependence of each. Partnerships

and strengthened collaboration that covers the P-20 educational continuum should be encouraged. Overarching all of this will be providing for the long-term sustainability of the Pell Grant Program.

Given President Obama's statement that postsecondary education should not be a luxury, it is imperative that education is viewed as a P-20 continuum. As such, AASCU calls on policymakers at all levels to honor their commitment to students and families. Prioritizing education as an investment in America's future and continued economic growth and prosperity is a quintessential prerequisite to realizing our nation's collective investment. Working together will ensure that the doors of opportunity will remain open for all.

The *2013 Public Policy Agenda* is intended to serve as a point of reference for AASCU members and other interested organizations, as well as federal and state policymakers. The association and its members stand ready to do their part to ensure that higher education is worthy of the public's trust and aspiration.

Sincerely,

*Muriel A. Howard*  
Muriel A. Howard

# AASCU's MEMBERS

While all AASCU institutions work towards Delivering America's Promise, each school's mission, size, location and focus is different. The estimated size of AASCU schools in Fall 2011 ranges from 845 students at the New College of Florida to 58,465 at the University of Central Florida. The estimated average population size is 10,372. Approximately 40 percent of AASCU schools are located in cities, another 45 percent in rural areas and towns, and 15 percent in suburbs.

In the 2010-11 academic year\*, member institutions awarded more than 550,000 baccalaureate degrees. This includes close to 49 percent of bachelor's degrees in education, and approximately 35 percent of bachelor's degrees in health professions (see Table). These 550,000-plus degrees represent approximately 55 percent of all bachelor's degrees granted at public colleges and universities in the United States in 2010-11. In addition, member institutions awarded over 35,000 associate degrees and sub-baccalaureate certificates.

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\*Note: Most recent data available. All enrollment and degree data are from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Data Systems (IPEDS), Institutional Characteristics, Completions, and Enrollments.

| Bachelor's Degrees Conferred at AASCU Institutions, as a Percent of U.S. Total, 2010-2011 |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Selected Majors   | Percent of U.S. Total |
| Agriculture   | 23.6%                 |
| Computer and Information Sciences   | 26.5%                 |
| Education   | 48.5%                 |
| Foreign Languages   | 25.7%                 |
| English   | 38.3%                 |
| Mathematics and Statistics  | 9.8%                  |
| Health Professions  | 35.2%                 |
| Business  | 32.6%                 |

# AASCU's STUDENTS

Nearly 4 million students attend AASCU institutions (as of Fall 2011), representing nearly half of all students at public four-year institutions and approximately 29 percent of all students attending four-year colleges and universities.

AASCU campuses educate a diverse group of students, including those traditionally underrepresented on college campuses. Sixty-two AASCU schools have minority students comprising at least half of their student population. AASCU also represents 38 Historically Black Colleges and Universities and approximately 35 Hispanic Serving Institutions.

Among all public four-year institutions, AASCU schools educated approximately 51 percent of all minority students in Fall 2011. This includes approximately 64 percent of all African-American students, 47 percent of all Hispanic students, 49 percent of all Native American and Alaskan Native students, and 37 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander students.

Following an ongoing nationwide trend of women outnumbering men on many campuses, women comprise approximately 57 percent of all AASCU students. Full-time students make up approximately 71 percent of all AASCU students, compared to part-time students (approximately 29 percent).

While the majority of AASCU students are full-time and in their teens and 20s, our members are charged with educating many nontraditional students. More than 1.2 million students enrolled at AASCU institutions in Fall 2010 were 25 or over. When looking at all public four-year institutions, AASCU educated 52 percent of all part-time students as of Fall 2011.