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From: Sherrie Gustas
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2017 2:12 PM
To: employee-announce@daemen.edu
Subject: A Message from President Olson
Attachments: MEMORANDUM Cuom plan Faculty.docx

On behalf of President Olson...

Dear Colleagues,

I am attaching a fact sheet about the Governor's so-called "free tuition" program so that in your discussions with prospective and current students you have some talking points.

I will continue to keep you informed as we know more about the program and its potential impact on Daemen.

Facts About New York's New "Free Tuition" Excelsior Program

The "Free Tuition" Plan is Not Free

The Excelsior plan does not cover room, board, or other fees that will continue to be charged to students who select a SUNY or CUNY school. The cost of these items is \$14,000 or more—considerably higher than charges at Daemen.

Current students from families with incomes well below the threshold set under the state budget are already receiving state and federal aid that makes their tuition essentially zero, so those students the Governor intended to help most won't see a change in their status.

"Free Tuition" May Not be Available to All Eligible Students

The state appropriated only about half of the funds necessary to allow eligible students to obtain the promised tuition benefits; therefore, a lottery is likely to be used to determine which students get the so-called "free tuition" benefit—a lottery that in effect will determine a student's choice of college.

The Excelsior Program Comes with Burdensome Restrictions

(a) Applicants will be required to sign a contract specifying that they must stay in New York for four or five years after graduating, depending on their major. If they don't, their "grant" converts to a burdensome "student loan." This means that a student cannot accept a career opportunity outside of the State of New York upon graduation.

(b) Applicants must maintain a full-time 30 credit hour school year and achieve a yet-to-be-specified grade point average sufficient for on-time graduation or else the "free tuition" benefit will be rescinded.

(c) SUNY and CUNY schools have a history of poor, on-time graduation (currently 49.9% at SUNY and 21.3% at CUNY), so the odds of on-time graduation at a SUNY or CUNY college and students' keeping the "tuition free" support throughout their undergraduate college career are not good. Also, students who work part-time would be hard hit by this full-time requirement in order to sustain the scholarship for four years.

Determining the Program's Implementation Details Could Take Months

At a time when financial aid packages for the Fall, 2017 semester have already been awarded at private institutions, and seats reserved for our students, the state is just now starting to try to determine how to implement the program and could take months to finalize the ground rules for how students can apply and how the approval process will be implemented. Classes could start before the state even knows how to carry out the program.

New York state agencies have poor track records in the timely processing of applications for grants, new higher education programs, and other state benefits, with State bureaucracies unable to process applications efficiently or within a timeline consistent with those expected by applicants. This new program should be no different.

The Public Colleges Do Not Have Sufficient Faculty and Facilities to Accommodate the Anticipated Influx of New Students

An unplanned flood of students at the public colleges will overwhelm the colleges in the absence of a major infusion of new taxpayer dollars to pay for additional faculty and facilities that will be expected and deserved by students under the Excelsior plan.

The State has not provided additional funding for SUNY and CUNY schools to address the requirements for enhanced student “bridge” programs; full time faculty; new classroom and other facilities; or the administrative staff required to efficiently respond to the kind of infusion of new students that may occur.

Classroom sizes will increase beyond the already-overcrowded large classes that are the standard at the public institutions, and the need for more personal attention and support for students cannot possibly keep pace.

Daemen College

Smaller classes, personal and sustained attention to each entering and existing student, and a personal working relationship with faculty—the hallmarks of Daemen College—is what makes an education at Daemen unique. That will not happen at an overcrowded, college with thousands of students and more limited faculty and staff to address student needs.

Over 95% of Daemen students receive financial aid, and the college imposes no burdensome restrictions on your aid. You can choose how many courses you enroll in each semester, work toward graduation at your own pace, and live wherever you choose after graduation—and you will be studying in a safe, nurturing community with academic and career success at its core.

Here’s why a Daemen education continues to be the choice of so many students not only throughout New York but throughout the United States.

- guaranteed classes in your major
- small class size (twelve to one student-to-faculty ratio)
- personalized attention from your advisors and faculty
- the opportunity to earn a Bachelor’s degree in three years and a Master’s degree in one or two more years by taking advantage of our accelerated programs