

**MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 28, 2024 FREE SPEECH & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Board of Regents Office  
Urbandale, Iowa

**Committee Members**

Greta Rouse (Chair)

Abby Crow (Vice Chair)

Robert Cramer

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Chair Rouse called the meeting to order at 12:40 p.m.

**1. Approval of minutes of the November 15, 2023 Free Speech Committee**

Approved by general consent.

**2. Annual Student Financial Aid Report (Bakula, Buzynski, Olson)**

The three directors of student financial aid presented to the committee and responded to questions from the Board. Special focus was placed on the challenges of the simplified FAFSA rollout and how it is impacting our universities.

Rouse: When you fill out a FAFSA, do you indicate the colleges that you are applying to?

Buzynski: Yes, you can list up to 10 schools at no cost. Contributors have to also go online to release federal tax returns for the FAFSA.

Baker: What's the worst case scenario we are looking at here?

Buzynski: We may see students who would normally go to college become so frustrated with the form that they decide to defer their decision. U. of Iowa enrollment will be fine. It's more from the national perspective. Decisions will be at least 10 weeks late. Offers could be delayed into May and June.

Bakula: I echo the worry that students may opt out of higher education. Regarding our institutions, we are seeing optimistic signs, but we worry about the larger picture. We have been working with our admissions partners in communicating all of this with our families.

Olson: I agree with what has been shared. We shouldn't forget about our current students. Our neediest current students may have trouble understanding how affordable this is.

Lindenmayer: Do you see this as a transitory year? Do you see the changes made to the formula as a positive thing.

Buzynski: We are all hopeful that this is a one year situation. As far the change in the formula, there will be winners and losers compared to past years. One change is that families with multiple students in college lose the benefit that they have in the past. I do think the formula will be revised over time.

Bakula: The simplification process is a good thing.

Olson: I am concerned about how this will impact next year because this could have ripple effects into next year. I'm hopeful that next year goes more smoothly.

Crow: I have a question regarding debt for graduates. Slide four mentioned debt for resident students, do we have data for non-residents?

Buzyński: Yes, that is in the report

Pontius: Unmet need for residents and non-residents is located on page 7 of the report and graduate debt for residents and non-residents is located on page 9.

**Meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.**