State System News Highlights

What pushed Pennsylvania’s public universities to the brink of collapse
Tuesday, May 2, 2017
Walk around Cheyney University at 10 a.m. on a Wednesday, and you’d think the campus in Chester County is closed. The lone sounds come from maintenance workers cutting the grass, long overdue for a mow. Nobody is walking around the quad, and even the student union is sleepy. It’s vacant except for one bookstore employee who, after asking what I’m doing, asks to see my business card and recommends I get permission from someone in the media relations office. The sight is about what you’d expect to see at a proud college — the nation’s first HBCU — that just needed an $8 million line of credit and has numerous other financial problems. And though its plight is among the worst of any university in the state, most of its 13 peers in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education are feeling the squeeze (universities like East Stroudsburg, Kutztown, Clarion and Millersville). With the PASSHE saying it can’t afford to continue existing much longer in its current state, the governing body has undergone an intensive study of its universities that is supposed to be completed this summer, and closures and mergers are rumored possibilities.
By Mark Dent, BillyPenn

Scarnati puts support behind Mansfield U.
Monday, May 1, 2017
Reports of dropping enrollments and financial struggles foretold Mansfield University’s possible closure, but promises that the doors will remain open and support from a local legislator put renewed hope in the university’s future.
By Anne Reiner, The (Williamsport) Sun-Gazette

Scarnati a leading advocate for Mansfield
Monday, May 1, 2017
Sen. Joe Scarnati (R-Brockway) emphasized his continued support for ensuring the future success of Mansfield University this week. Scarnati said he has been actively engaged in conversations with university President Fran Hendricks, PASSHE Chancellor Frank Brogan, and Mansfield students, trustees, alumni and faculty regarding the challenges facing the university.
The (Lock Haven) Express

WCU’s business school earns reaccreditation
Tuesday, April 25, 2017
West Chester University’s School of Business has earned reaccreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International, or AACSB, a quality standard in business education recognized around the world.
The (West Chester) Daily Local News

A new push to keep students at Ursinus
Monday, May 1, 2017
Stevenah Gardner was struggling with her freshman chemistry course at Ursinus College, with good reason. The chemistry teacher she had in high school was absent most of the year. It’s the kind of thing that could have upended the freshman experience for the 19-year-old biology major from Bowie, Md. But Gardner sought help at the college’s recently opened Ursinus Institute for Student Success, designed to help students resolve academic, social, or personal issues and stay in school.
By Susan Snyder, The Philadelphia Inquirer
Pennsylvania Sees Biggest Budget Shortfall Since Recession
Tuesday, May 2, 2017
Pennsylvania state government is heading into the 2017 budget season with its biggest revenue shortfall since the recession, leaving budget makers to address an unexpectedly large budget gap with just nine weeks left in the fiscal year.

By Marc Levy, The Associated Press

Articles from subscription only sites

Public Regional Colleges Never Die. Can They Be Saved?
You don’t need a Ph.D. to understand the math that spells trouble for public higher education in many states. Typically, the number of high-school graduates is projected to decline by X percent in the coming decade, and state support has dropped by Y million dollars since the recession with little sign of ever rising again. Meanwhile, the number of four-year regional comprehensive universities remains constant, an inflexible denominator. The numbers are plain, but solutions remain elusive. Comprehensives are the workhorses of a public higher-education system, awarding the bulk of bachelor’s degrees and providing educational opportunities in all corners of a state. But certain corners of many states are home to institutions that have been hemorrhaging students and struggling to balance their budgets. Pennsylvania is one of those states. Nine of the 14 institutions in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, known as Passhe, have suffered double-digit percentage drops in fall enrollment since 2009...

Kutztown University walk raises suicide awareness
Kutztown University Clinical Services hosted the third annual Out of the Darkness Walk for suicide awareness and prevention on Sunday. The walk took place on campus. Hundreds of people participated. Proceeds...

KU students join fight against children cancer
Goal posts took on a new meaning Thursday evening for Andrew Garbarino, a Kutztown University Golden Bears tight end. Instead of snagging a pass...

Up front: Our 4th annual economic outlook issue
For many industries, economic recovery has been plodding and uncertain, particularly with construction, with new housing starts in the county at perilously low levels. Dr. M. Halim Dalgin and Dr. Abdulwahab Sraiheen, associate professors in the business department at Kutztown University, and Dr. Ernie Post, director of the Kutztown Small Business Development Center, have carefully analyzed economic data to compile...

KU's Morgan drafted by Bears in fifth round
Kutztown University's Jordan Morgan has been a Golden Bear since 2012, his freshman year in college. Turns out he'll be a Bear at the next level as...