

Cheyney University Task Forces approves 'conceptual framework' for new business model

***Plan will be sent to Board of Governors for further
discussion***

Cheyney – The Cheyney University Task Force today unanimously approved a “conceptual framework” for a new business model for the university, including the proposed creation of an “Institute for the Contemporary African-American Experience” within the university.

The framework will be presented to the Board of Governors of Pennsylvania’s State System of Higher Education for further discussion. It builds on the history of Cheyney University as America’s first Historically Black University.

The taskforce in a presentation at a public meeting held at the university stated the need to “create an environment for student success” at the university. The model calls for mechanisms to promote student success such as block scheduling of general education, career and professional roadmaps and intrusive advising. The framework also calls for each student to have a “student success coach” to provide support from matriculation, through graduation, and to emergence with a career plan.

Ultimately, the task force affirmed that the university will be responsible for deciding the critical details of its future path within this framework. That path must also include the university’s ability to maintain fiscal stability. Cheyney University in recent years has had to rely on multiple lines of credit totaling more than \$30 million from the State System to meet its operating costs.

Based on the framework to be presented to the Board of Governors, the university must align its finances with the personnel and facilities needs of the new model; address key expense drivers, including unnecessary campus facilities; enhance private fundraising; and study the possibility of selling or leasing unused property.

An analysis is being done to determine the appropriate size of the university so that it is able to operate in a viable manner. The State System’s recent supply/demand gap analysis will be utilized to help the university identify the appropriate set of academic programs that would help best assure the university’s long-term success.

The proposed applied research institute would concentrate on the study and impact of contemporary issues around race, ethnicity and diversity in American society. Initially, the institute would require external funding to “jumpstart” its potential success.

“There will be clear alignment among the academic programs, general education and the development of an institute focused on contemporary issues of social and economic justice,” the task force said.

The task force will now finalize a written report for delivery to the Board of Governors this month. The university will work through local shared governance processes to develop a strategy for implementation, some of which could begin as early as 2017-18. Input was sought from students, faculty, staff, alumni, union leaders, elected officials, and others during the process.

The task force is co-chaired by Robert Bogle, chair of Cheyney University's Council of Trustees, and Aaron A. Walton, vice chair of the State System's Board of Governors. Other task force members are Board of Governors Chair Cynthia Shapira, Board Vice Chair David Maser and Board member Rep. Matt Baker; Cheyney trustees state Sen. Vincent Hughes and Samuel Patterson; Gov. Wolf's Secretary of Policy and Planning Sarah Galbally; and state Rep. Jordan Harris.

Cheyney University is one of 14 universities that comprise Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education. The State System is the largest provider of higher education in the Commonwealth, enrolling more than 100,000 degree-seeking students and thousands more in certificate and other career-development programs. Collectively, the universities offer more than 2,300 degree and certificate programs in more than 530 academic areas. Nearly 520,000 State System university alumni live in Pennsylvania.

The State System universities are Bloomsburg, California, Cheyney, Clarion, East Stroudsburg, Edinboro, Indiana, Kutztown, Lock Haven, Mansfield, Millersville, Shippensburg, Slippery Rock and West Chester Universities of Pennsylvania. The universities also operate branch campuses in Oil City (Clarion), Freeport and Punxsutawney (IUP), and Clearfield (Lock Haven), and offer classes and programs at several regional centers, including the Dixon University Center in Harrisburg and in Center City in Philadelphia.