Arizona Board of Regents
2020 N. Central Avenue
Suite 230
Phoenix, AZ 85004-4593
(602) 229-2500
Fax (602) 229-2555
www.abor.asu.edu

Arizona State University ***Northern Arizona University*** ***University of Arizona***

December 5, 2005

Mr. Stefan Shepherd
Assistant Director
Joint Legislative Budget Committee
1716 West Adams
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Ms. Monica Seymour
Deputy Director
Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Mr. Shepherd and Ms. Seymour:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft joint Strategic Program Area Review (SPAR) report for student financial assistance programs in the Arizona University System.

Letters from each of the University Presidents are enclosed, which address the recommendations and areas specific to their institutions.

As you will see, we agree with your overall recommendations. Specifically, with respect to the JLBC recommendations, we agree with the recommendations for additional reporting and data collection and look forward to working with you to enhance the usefulness of the Student Financial Aid Report.

In regard to the OSPB recommendations, we concur with the recommendation to retain financial aid programs since such programs are key ingredients in enhancing access to and affordability of a university education in Arizona. As you know, in the Board of Regents' budget request, the Board has requested $6.9 million in incremental funding for need-based financial aid. Such funding would provide for a two-to-one match of students' contributions to the Arizona Financial Aid Trust fund.

We also agree with the OSPB recommendations to explore and expand, as appropriate, other opportunities for providing financial assistance for students.

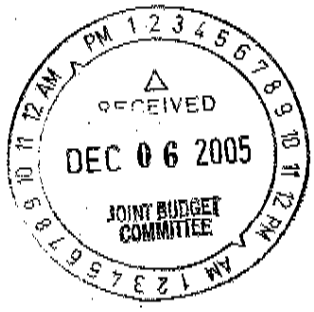
Thank you again for the opportunity to respond to your draft report.

Sincerely,

Joel Sideman

Joel Sideman
Executive Director

Enclosures



Board Members: **President Christina A. Palacios,** Phoenix **Fred T. Boice,** Tucson **Robert B. Bulla,** Scottsdale
Ernest Calderón, Phoenix **Lorraine W. Frank,** Scottsdale **Chris Herstam,** Phoenix
Jack B. Jewett, Tucson **Gary L. Stuart,** Phoenix
Governor Janet Napolitano **Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne**
Student Regents: **Benjamin W. Graff,** UA **Edward Hermes,** ASU
Executive Director: **Joel Sideman**

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

December 5, 2005

Stefan Shepherd
Assistant Director
Joint Legislative Budget Committee
1716 W. Adams
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Monica Seymour
Deputy Director
Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting
Office of the Governor
1700 West Washington, Suite 500
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Mr. Shepherd and Ms. Seymour:

We have reviewed the Student Financial Assistance Joint SPAR report prepared by the JLBC Staff and OSPB. While Arizona State University concurs with the SPAR report, we offer the following comments:

1. The report states that the financial assistance offices focus on economically disadvantaged, minority, and other underrepresented students. ASU assists students from all economic groups who seek assistance in financing their education through both need-based and merit aid.

2. The report recommends that the universities expand their annual financial aid reports for state policy purposes. ASU welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with interested parties in creating an annual financial aid report that meets the needs of all constituencies.

Sincerely,

Michael Crow

Michael M. Crow
President

MMC:rd
/c

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
PO Box 877705, Tempe, AZ 85287-7705
(480) 965-8972 Fax: (480) 965-0865

December 5, 2005

Dear Ms Shepherd and Ms Seymour:

Thank you for the final copy of the Strategic Program Area Review (SPAR) report and recommendations. I appreciate your efforts to evaluate financial aid procedures and policies at the three state universities.

A thorough summary for the legislature of the aid process, procedures, and aid awarded at the universities is of great value in helping to demonstrate the need for support of financial assistance to help Arizona residents attain a higher education. The implication of such a process is to improve financial assistance to Arizona residents attending Arizona's state universities. This is a goal I strongly support.

I agree wholeheartedly with your overall recommendation to improve state funding of financial aid and scholarships for Arizona residents. The findings and recommendations included in the report provide several potential program extensions and the establishment of new programs. We look forward to discussions on the best investments in financial aid for Arizona students. As noted in your report, Arizona falls far behind the average amount of state aid afforded students in other states and the economic consequences to the state are potentially immense.

Your recommendations for outreach are on target. With funding for such projects we could successfully encourage more students to pursue postsecondary education, especially low income and first generation college eligible students.

Finally, I look forward to working with the Arizona Board of Regents, JLBC and OSPB to improve reporting that would help efforts to better understand the nuances of the aid process. Combining enhanced financial aid availability, improved outreach and a more in-depth knowledge of the population we serve can only be positive for higher education.

Thank you again for your thorough report and insightful suggestions.

Sincerely,

John D. Haeger
President

Office of the President

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ARIZONA®
TUCSON ARIZONA

Administration Building
P.O Box 210066
Tucson, AZ 85721-0066
(520) 621-5511
FAX: (520) 621-9323

December 5, 2005

Richard Stavneak, Director
Joint Legislative Budget Committee Staff
STATE OF ARIZONA
1716 West Adams
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Gary Yaquinto, Director
Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting
STATE OF ARIZONA
1700 West Washington, Suite 500
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: The University of Arizona Joint SPAR Report

Gentlemen:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Joint Strategic Program Area Review (SPAR) Report on Student Financial Assistance. I appreciate the effort made to grapple with the complex data and critical issues associated with student financial aid at the Arizona universities. I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) and Office of Strategic Planning and Budget (OSPB) recommendations.

Recommendations – JLBC Staff

We appreciate that JLBC Staff commends us for recent revisions to the Financial Aid Report. These were significant revisions that move us toward having financial aid data that are better for university and ABOR planning purposes and more comparable to national standards that have been recently established. We agree with the recommendation that this report should be expanded and plan to collaborate with the other constituents to continue our development of a Financial Aid Report that best meets statewide needs.

Recommendations – OSPB Staff

Recommendation 1

We support the development of further State investment in financial aid programs.

Recommendation 2

We agree with OSPB recommendations in this area. The UA strongly supports the development of outreach programs and is the recent recipient of a $9.2M GEAR UP grant that will help us achieve state-wide improvements.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide this response.

Sincerely,

Peter Likins
President

PL/slh