

# **Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA) Assessment Survey**

## **Questionnaire**

**Center for Survey Research  
Stony Brook University**

PHEEIA Survey  
March 2010

**Invite**

*Subject:* East and West Campus Faculty and all Professional Staff: Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA)

*Message:* Dear colleagues:

The Center for Survey Research at Stony Brook University is currently conducting a short survey on your views of pending legislation: the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act on behalf of the Stony Brook University Senate. This survey will only take five minutes to complete. The findings will contribute to an ongoing debate on the bill and will be distributed widely to state representatives, SUNY officials, UUP, and the news media. Your participation in the survey will ensure that we gather a full range of voices on questions concerning the bill. A response will be of greatest value if obtained no later than Wednesday, March 24.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and your responses will be strictly confidential. If you have any questions about the survey or the procedures, please contact Soraya Zabihi, Director of Operations at the Center for Survey Research, by e-mail at [soraya.zabihi@sunysb.edu](mailto:soraya.zabihi@sunysb.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research subjects, you may contact Ms. Judy Matuk, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, at (631) 632-9036. If you wish to make added comments about the bill, please do so at the end of the survey, or email them to Michael Schwartz at [Michael.Schwarz@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Michael.Schwarz@stonybrook.edu).

Thank you very much for your time. To begin, please click on the link below, which indicates your consent to participate in this survey.

{Survey Location}

Best,

Michael Schwartz  
For the Senate Executive Committee

### **Question Q1**

In this year's budget, Governor Patterson proposed the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA). How much have you heard or read about the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA) or specific provisions in the act?

1. A great deal
2. Some
3. A little
4. Not much
5. Nothing at all
  
6. No response (respondents had the option to skip the question)

### **Question Q2**

How strong are your views on the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA) and its specific provisions?

1. Very strong
2. Somewhat strong
3. Not so strong
4. Not at all strong
5. Don't know / Have not heard enough about it
  
6. No response (respondents had the option to skip the question)

### **Information Screen**

The Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA) has won support from SUNY and CUNY officials but met with opposition from UUP officials (United University Professionals, the faculty and staff union) and some state legislators. The act has several features that constitute a major departure from existing policy. One involves transferring current control of student tuition fees from the State Legislature to the SUNY Board of Trustees, and assures that all tuition increases will be retained at the local campuses (they now are substantially returned to the State and do not benefit SUNY). Another provision of the act allows the SUNY Board of Trustees to authorize higher tuition for the four university centers than for the four year colleges. The act also relaxes state oversight of university partnerships with private business and the leasing of campus land to private entities for educational purposes, while transferring decision-making for many of these initiatives to the local campuses. The SUNY Chancellor, SUNY Board of Trustees, and the State Asset Maximization Review Board must approve all such public-private arrangements.

Those in favor of the bill, including SUNY Chancellor Zimpher, other SUNY officials, and Dr. Stanley, President of Stony Brook University, argue that allowing SUNY trustees to set campus-specific tuition will permit tuition to be raised in regular manageable amounts, emphasize that all tuition funds will go to campuses rather than into general state revenues, and believe that state allocations could not be reduced in response to tuition increases. They argue that low-income students will be protected from tuition increases and current union protections for campus employees would be preserved. In addition, President Stanley projects that raising the tuition at Stony Brook University will allow the university to hire an added 400 faculty and related staff over the next 10 years.

Those opposed to the bill, including UUP officials, argue that the act could result in large tuition increases that will limit many students' access to universities in the SUNY system (since the act protects only the lowest-income students from tuition increases). In addition, UUP officials argue that allowing campuses to collect and manage these higher tuitions will result in the state of New York further cutting back on its financial support of SUNY, effectively eliminating the benefit of any tuition increase. UUP officials also argue that removing current state oversight of public-private partnerships will mean that campus administrations can reverse union contracts and engage in greater outsourcing that relies on non-union labor. UUP is also concerned that differential tuition may increase inequality within the SUNY system. Environmental groups point to the absence in the legislation of rigorous environmental regulation of new public-private campus construction projects.

The next questions concern specific provisions of the PHEEIA act.

### **Question Q3**

How strongly do you support or oppose transferring the power to set SUNY tuition levels and control tuition funds away from the New York state legislature to the SUNY Board of Trustees?

1. Strongly support
2. Somewhat support
3. Somewhat oppose
4. Strongly oppose
5. Don't know / Have not heard enough about it
  
6. No response (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q4**

PHEEIA would allow SUNY campuses to raise their tuition up to 2.5 times the Higher Education Price Index with the approval of the SUNY Board of Trustees. This would translate into a maximum increase of 6-8% or up to roughly \$400 in the coming academic year (2010-2011), with the possibility of similar increases each year for up to ten years. How strongly do you support or oppose allowing the Trustees to set tuition levels?

1. Strongly support
2. Somewhat support
3. Somewhat oppose
4. Strongly oppose
5. Don't know / Have not heard enough about it
  
6. No response (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q5**

How strongly do you support or oppose allowing the SUNY university centers – Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, and Stony Brook -- to charge higher tuition than other SUNY colleges?

1. Strongly support
2. Somewhat support
3. Somewhat oppose
4. Strongly oppose
5. Don't know / Have not heard enough about it
  
6. No response (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q6**

How strongly do you support or oppose relaxing state control to allow individual SUNY campuses to raise income through partnerships with private businesses or by leasing land to local private enterprises for educational purposes?

1. Strongly support
2. Somewhat support
3. Somewhat oppose
4. Strongly oppose
5. Don't know / Have not heard enough about it
  
6. No response (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q7**

Thinking about all of the provisions of the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA) discussed so far, how strongly do you support or oppose it?

1. Strongly support
2. Somewhat support
3. Somewhat oppose
4. Strongly oppose
5. Don't know / Have not heard enough about it
6. No response (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q8**

Which of the following do you think is most likely to occur at Stony Brook University in five years from now if PHEEIA IS NOT PASSED by the New York state legislature?

1. The number of faculty and staff on campus will have increased substantially
2. The number of faculty and staff on campus will have increased modestly
3. The number of faculty and staff will be the same as now
4. The number of faculty and staff on campus will have decreased modestly
5. The number of faculty and staff on campus will have decreased substantially
6. No response (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q9**

Which of the following do you think is most likely to occur at Stony Brook University in five years from now if PHEEIA IS PASSED by the New York state legislature?

1. The number of faculty and staff on campus will have increased substantially
2. The number of faculty and staff on campus will have increased modestly
3. The number of faculty and staff will be the same as now
4. The number of faculty and staff on campus will have decreased modestly
5. The number of faculty and staff on campus will have decreased substantially
6. No response (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q10**

How concerned are you about the level of protection provided in the legislation for UNION workers who are hired through public-private partnerships or subcontracts awarded to non-university business partners on campus?

1. Very concerned
2. Somewhat concerned
3. Not very concerned
4. Not at all concerned
5. Don't know / Have not heard enough about it
6. No answer (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q11**

How concerned are you that the legislation will lead to an increase in NON-UNION workers on campus who might not have the same environmental, health, and safety protections as campus union workers?

1. Very concerned
2. Somewhat concerned
3. Not very concerned
4. Not at all concerned
5. Don't know / Have not heard enough about it
6. No answer (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q12**

How concerned are you about the level of environmental regulation and oversight provided in the legislation for new public-private construction projects on campus?

1. Very concerned
2. Somewhat concerned
3. Not very concerned
4. Not at all concerned
5. Don't know / Have not heard enough about it
6. No answer (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q13**

Do you currently belong to UUP (United University Professionals), the faculty and staff union?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

**Question Q14**

For how many years have you worked at Stony Brook University?  
*[Open-ended question]*

**Question Q15**

Are you:

1. Male
2. Female
3. No response (respondents had the option to skip the question)

**Question Q16**

Please add any other comments about the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA) in the space provided below:

*[Open-ended question]*