



Higher Education Funding in Pennsylvania? We Have a Commission for That.

How is the state currently funding higher education in Pennsylvania? And more importantly, how should the state distribute funds among institutions of higher education? Those are just two of the questions facing the 19 members of the recently-formed Pennsylvania Higher Education Funding Commission.

The Commission was established by the Pennsylvania Legislature as part of Act 70 of 2019. Its mandate includes consulting with education experts, receiving input from interested parties, and holding hearings to allow it to develop a proposed higher education funding formula and to issue recommendations relating to higher education in Pennsylvania. A final report and a set of draft legislation from the Commission is due to be released to the Governor and the General Assembly in May 2022.

Since its inception the Commission has held four public hearings on issues including college affordability, outcomes-based funding, skills needed for jobs in Pennsylvania, and future forms of higher education. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a temporary pause in the Commission's activities; no meetings have been held during the 2021-2022 Legislative Session nor have any new members been appointed to the Commission to replace vacancies. In addition, the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education is going through a reorganization that will impact how the Commission proceeds with their work. So, it is unclear when the Commission will resume activities even though the final report deadline of May 2022 is still in place. AICUP is continuing to monitor the work of the Commission and will alert members to any issues or concerns. Questions on the Commission can be emailed to Nichole Duffy, AICUP Vice President of Government Relations, at duffy@aicup.org