
ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON

EQUITABLE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY FUNDING

Survey Review

Representative Carol Ammons, Co-Chair

Survey Background: Purpose

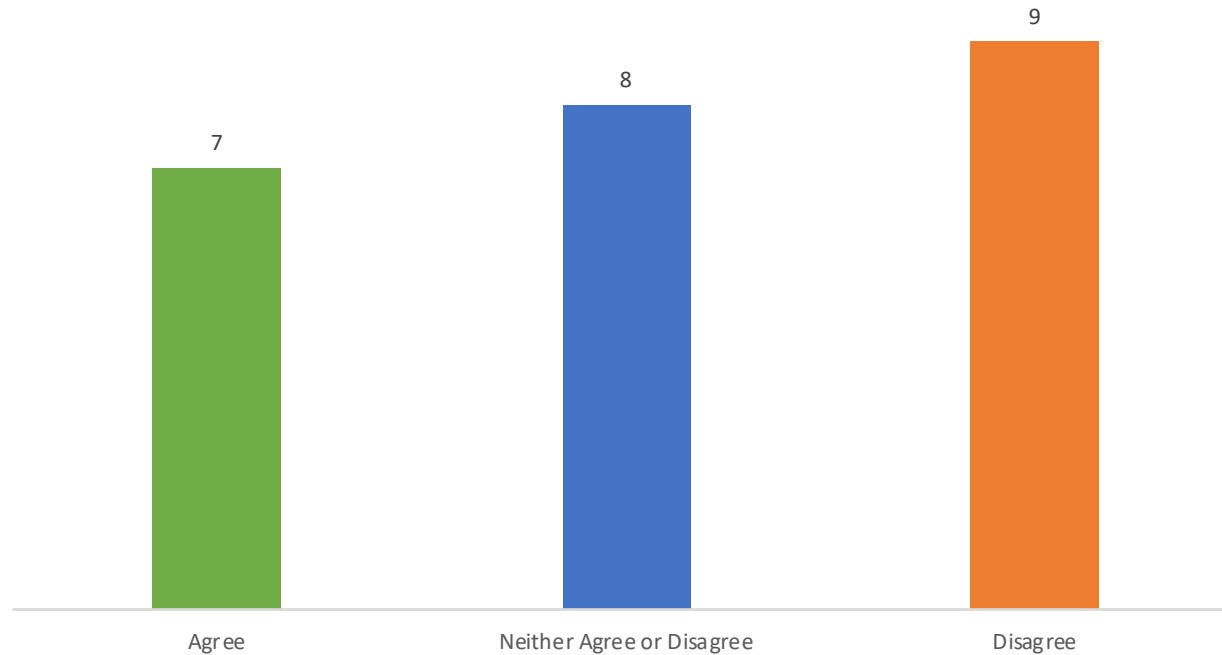
- Gain insights from Commission members on perspectives in context of legislative charge to “**adequately, equitably, and stably** fund public universities in this State and to evaluate existing funding methods.”
- Orient around a more common understanding of these terms for understanding and evaluating Illinois public university finance as the Commission moves forward with its work and recommendations.

Survey Background: Overview

- Advanced three definitions for reaction (agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree) opportunity to comment:
 - Equitable Funding: The state directs resources in a way that accounts for varying levels of resources across institutions and accounts for the needs of different students.
 - Adequate funding: The state provides sufficient funding for institutions to successfully serve students.
 - Stable Funding: Institutions can reliably expect a certain level of funding each year.
- 73% response rate: 24 out of 33 Commission members

Equitable Funding

Equitable funding defined as: “The state directs resources in a way that accounts for varying levels of resources across institutions and accounts for the needs of different students.”



- Respondents were pretty evenly split in their response to the definition.
- Several respondents offered comments to modify or clarify certain components.
- Other respondents offered revised definitions.
- Some provided additional factors that should be considered in the context of this discussion.
- Some who disagreed did so in the context of current Illinois postsecondary finance mechanism and offered comments that reflect the current context and the disconnect from the definition provided.

Equitable Funding: Comments to Clarify Components of Definition

1. Account for needs of different students (6 responses)

- Be explicit/use more specific language
- Include a specific reference to race; place in context of historical inequities
- Low-income, first-gen, rural, communities of color
- Needs of students not served or not served well

2. Account for varying levels of resources (2 responses)

- Funding needs to account for varying revenue streams available to different institutions – such as research, endowments and tuition (including out-of-state)

3. Other modifications (2 responses)

- Mission differentiation/accounting for mission of each institution, including Research, Economic Development and Community
- Clarify/add that it should be resources to serve all students well (goal degree completion), with attention to the varying levels of supports needed for students from different backgrounds.

Equitable Funding: Comments offering a revised definition

- “An equitable funding system provides institutions of higher learning the resources they need to educate the student population they serve at an affordable cost to the students and their families.”
- “The state directs resources in a way that accounts for the varying sizes, levels of resources and requirements across institutions and accounts for the needs of different students.”
- “The state directs resources in a way that restores fairness and balance in funding to account for the needs of different students”

Equitable Funding: Comments on Additional Factors + Current Illinois Context

1. Additional Factors to Consider (4 responses)

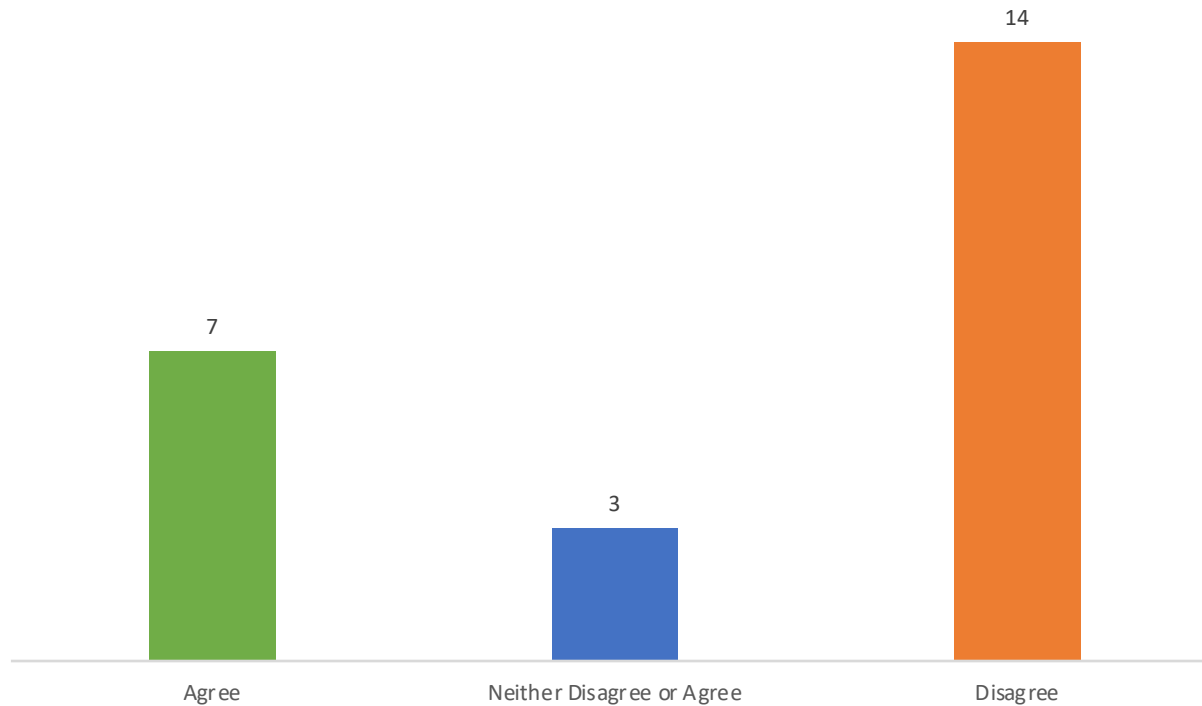
- Total headcount should be used; account for % (concentration) from demographic backgrounds at institution
- No institution should be penalized under new formula
- Consideration for varying programs and programming
- Serving students well should mean degree completion. Equitable funding should be tied to success and the varying resources needed to support success for different students.

2. Current Illinois Context (2 responses)

- Current funding model is a historic artifact
- Across the board increases/decreases perpetuate existing inequities

Adequate Funding

Adequate funding defined as: The state provides sufficient funding for institutions to successfully serve students.



- 58% of respondents **disagreed** with the definition of adequate
- Several of those who disagreed offered comments that noted the disconnect between the definition, the current state context its implications
- Some provided additional factors that should be considered in the context of this discussion, such as access and affordability.
- Others provided modified or alternative definitions

Adequate Funding: Comments to Modify or Clarify

1. Successfully Serve Students (4 responses)

- Change to successfully and comprehensively
- Be clear about the need to successfully serve students of varying academic backgrounds
- Need to define or agree on meaning of “successfully serve”

2. Expand definition (2 responses)

- Funding should include student assistance
- Definition of adequacy should be tied to affordability for all Illinois students

3. Other modifications/considerations (6 responses)

- Adequacy means distributing new funds first to institutions furthest from adequate funding.
- Resources should be sufficient to focus on expanding access/boosting enrollment and the supports for all those with aspirations to attend a four-year university to succeed.
- Need to ensure all institutions are providing equitable access reflective of state’s population
- Funding should include need to support primary research, community engagement and economic development.

Adequate Funding: Comments offering a revised definition

- “The state provides sufficient funding for institutions to successfully serve students and succeed at their mission.”
- “The state provides sufficient funding for institutions whereas it is the expectation that these funds be used to serve student needs.”
- “The state provides sufficient and fair funding for institutions to successfully serve students”
- “The state provides funding to institutions to ensure low-income students have the same educational opportunities and advantages to achieve success.”

Adequate Funding: Comments on Current Context

1. Institutions not adequately funded (4 responses)

- Not supported to maintain facilities or provide students with the services they need to achieve academic success
- Funding to institutions has been lowered in real and nominal terms
- Increases related to retirement and pension contributions are perceived as increases that benefit students

2. Other funding inadequacies (1 response)

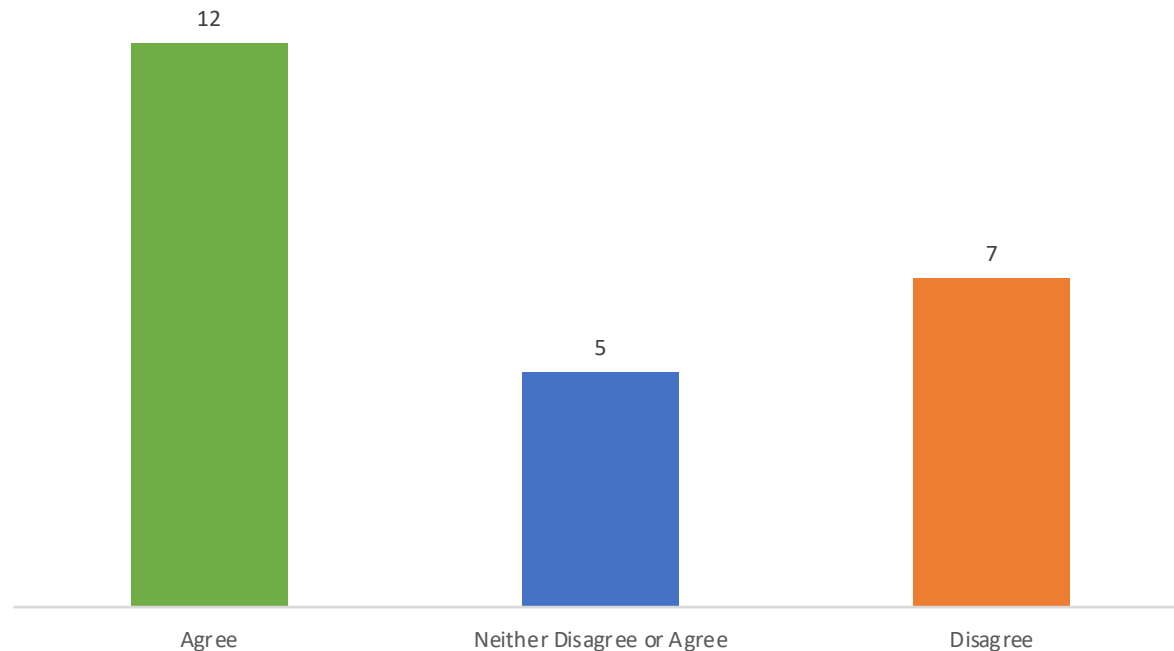
- MAP underfunded: funding doesn't cover all eligible students and grant awards have not kept up with tuition
- Too little funding for graduate programs

3. Implications (2 responses)

- Affordability: decreased state support, underfunded MAP, increased tuition leads to less affordable access, higher debt
- Not enough funding to provide appropriate supports to students: mental health, housing, food
- Decreased access/enrollment: 25,000 fewer undergraduates than 10 years ago
- Low-income/first gen lack access to graduate program pipeline (because of lack of funding)
- Lack of competitive faculty salary/benefits specifically impacts faculty diversity

Stable Funding

Stable funding defined as: Institutions can reliably expect a certain level of funding each year.



- 50% of respondents **agreed** with the definition of stable funding
- Some Respondents offered modifications or revised definitions.
- Some provided additional factors that should be considered in the context of this discussion.
- Several comments were made in context of current Illinois postsecondary finance mechanism and the disconnect from the definition provided.

Stable Funding: Comments to Modify or Clarify

1. Inclusion of students (1 response)

- Add “and students” to expectations for certain level of funding each year

2. Rationale for funding (2 responses)

- Should include an understanding/rationale for how funding decisions are made that can help institutions
- Align to adequate funding. Stable funding can mean expecting same amount each year and be unresponsive to changing needs and conditions.

Stable Funding: Comments offering a revised definition

- “The state will provide institutions a level of funding each year that is adequate to allow them to fulfill their respective research and related missions, and educate and support the students they serve, without having to increase tuition or student fees or reduce personnel levels.”
- “Institutions can reliably expect appropriate funding without major disruptions each year.”
- “Institutions can reliably expect funding that will ensure sustainability and student success.”

Stable Funding: Comments on Current Context

1. Stability not currently reflected (5 responses)

- State appropriations were not consistently or reliably provided (if and when always in question)
- Inconsistency leads to “fend for yourself” approach
- Budget impasses, lack of transparency, lack of commitment means funding is unreliable
- Stable but not reliable: certain level may be expected, but can’t rely on increases that reflect changes in costs/needs

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Discussion

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and IBHE Board Chair John Atkinson, Co-Chair
