

**STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY
FACULTY & STAFF OPINIONS ON THE
PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION EMPOWERMENT
AND INNOVATION ACT (PHEEIA)**

**A Report Prepared by the
Stony Brook University Center for Survey Research
for the
Stony Brook University Senate**

APRIL, 2010

METHODOLOGY

The Stony Brook University (SBU) Senate commissioned the SBU Center for Survey Research to conduct a survey of attitudes towards the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA) among full-time faculty and non-teaching professional (NTP) staff currently belonging to the United University Professions (UUP, also called the 08 Bargaining Unit). The survey was conducted from March 25 to March 31, 2010. Among the 1,508 (1,026 faculty and 448 NTPs) invited to participate, 449 completed the survey (333 faculty and 116 NTPs), resulting in a good response rate of 30%. The response rate was slightly higher among faculty (33%) than staff (26%), and was roughly equivalent between the east and west campuses. Among faculty, response rates were somewhat higher among full (38%) than associate (32%), or assistant professors (29%), but lower among full-time instructors and lecturers (15%). Overall, the survey respondents are broadly representative of the population of full-time faculty and staff in the 08 Bargaining Unit.

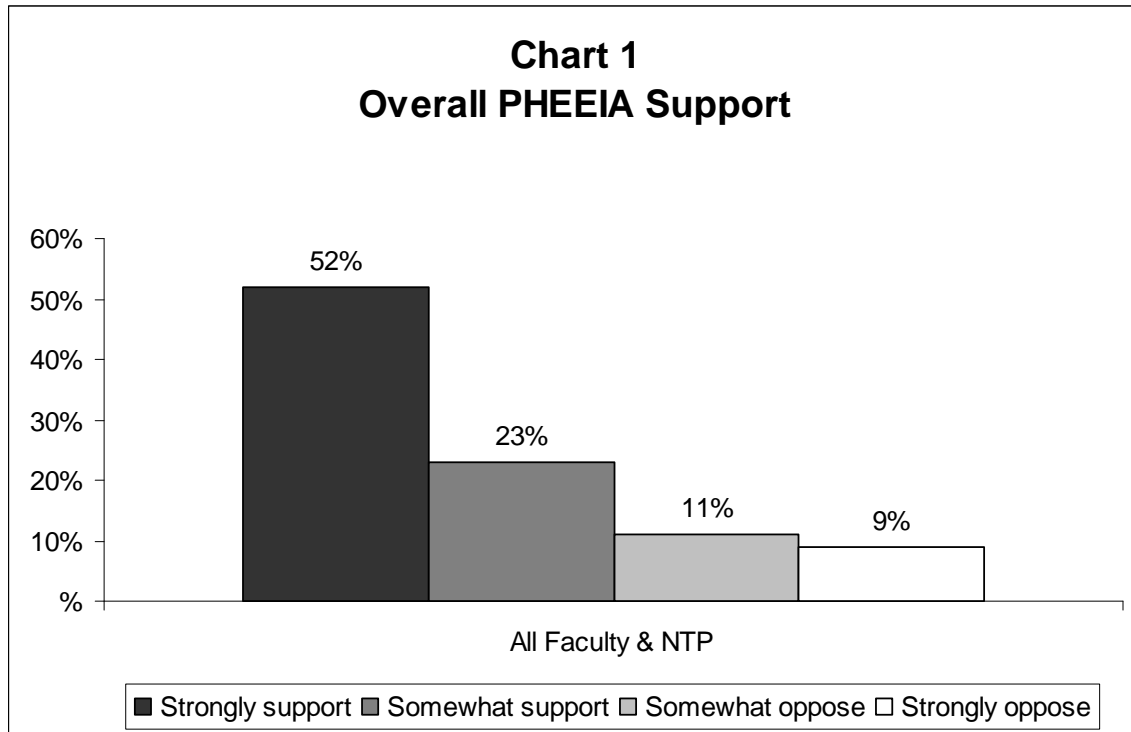
Full-time Faculty and Non-Teaching Professionals in the 08 Bargaining Unit (UUP)		
	<i>Population</i>	<i>Survey Respondents</i>
Faculty	70%	74%
Non-Teaching Professionals (NTP)	30%	26%
East Campus		
West Campus	20%	19%
Southampton	78%	80%
	2%	1%
FACULTY		
Full Professor	40%	47%
Associate Professor	27%	28%
Assistant Professor	21%	20%
FT Lecturer/Instructor	12%	6%

GENERAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHEEIA LEGISLATION

Overall, the faculty and non-teaching professional staff at Stony Brook University is broadly supportive of the PHEEIA legislation. Fully 75% supported the legislation when asked: “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?” Another 20% opposed it and 4% had not heard enough about it to have an opinion. When those with no opinion are excluded, 78% of professional faculty and staff support the legislation and 22% oppose it.

Professional faculty and staff not only support the PHEEIA legislation, but do so strongly. A majority (52%) replied that they “strongly support” the legislation, with an additional 23%

saying they “somewhat support” it. Among the 20% who oppose the legislation, only 9% strongly oppose the bill, and 11% are somewhat opposed to it (Chart 1).

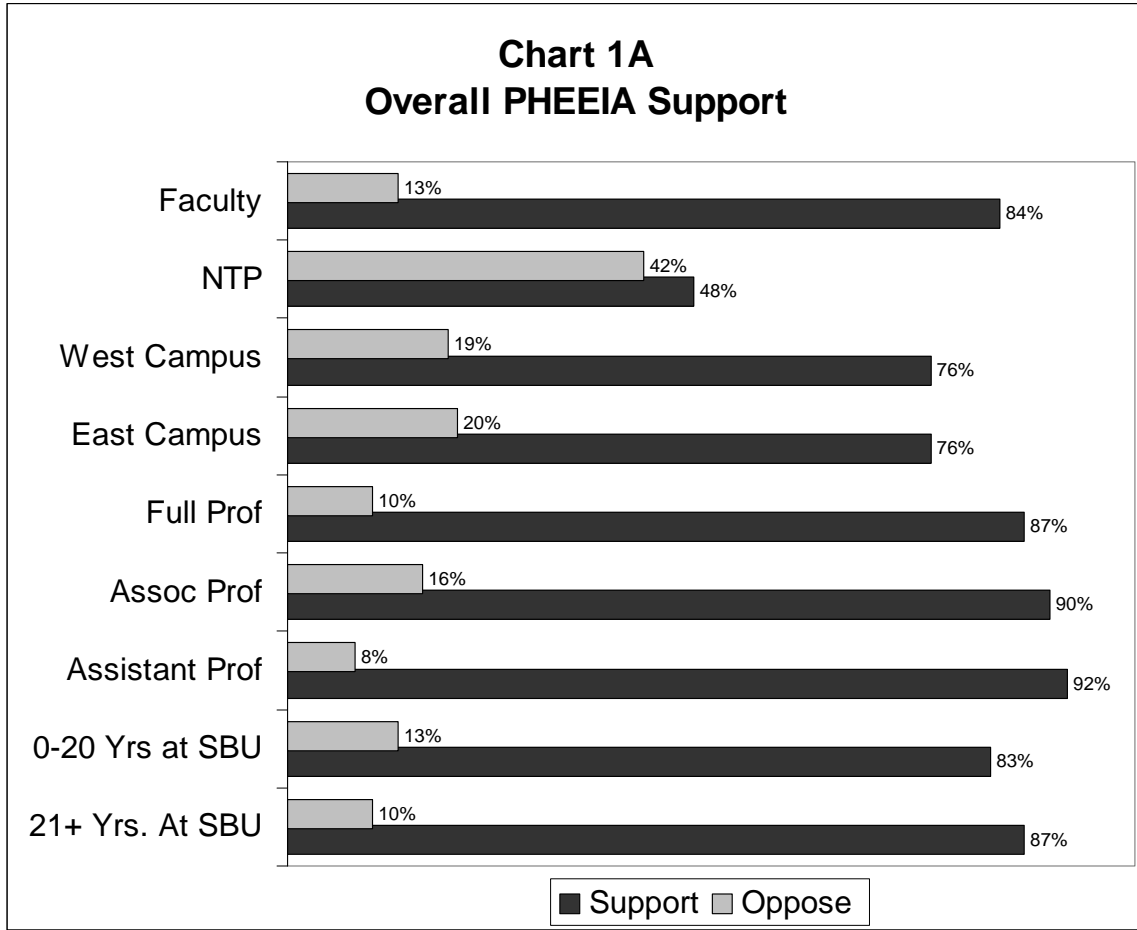


Support for the legislation is distributed evenly across the campus (Chart 1A). Similar majorities registered support for the legislation on the west campus (76%), which houses arts and sciences as well as engineering, and the east campus (76%), which houses the health sciences center. Over 8 in ten (84%) of faculty supported the legislation regardless of seniority (Chart 1A). And levels of support were roughly similar among faculty who had been at the university for 20 years or less (83%) or more than 20 years (87%).

Reasons for faculty and NTP support are articulated more fully in written comments provided as an appendix to this report. One faculty member wrote that the legislation “is critical to our survival as a university” and another commented that “The passage of this bill is essential to the survival of Stony Brook.” Others saw few options other than PHEEIA, with one faculty member writing “While it may have flaws, it is the only proposal on the table that can prevent drastic cuts that will have a negative impact on the quality of the educational experience at Stony Brook.” Other faculty comments expressed outright desperation. One respondent wrote that “If PHEEIA is not passed SBU will sink and I will likely look for a faculty position at another university.”

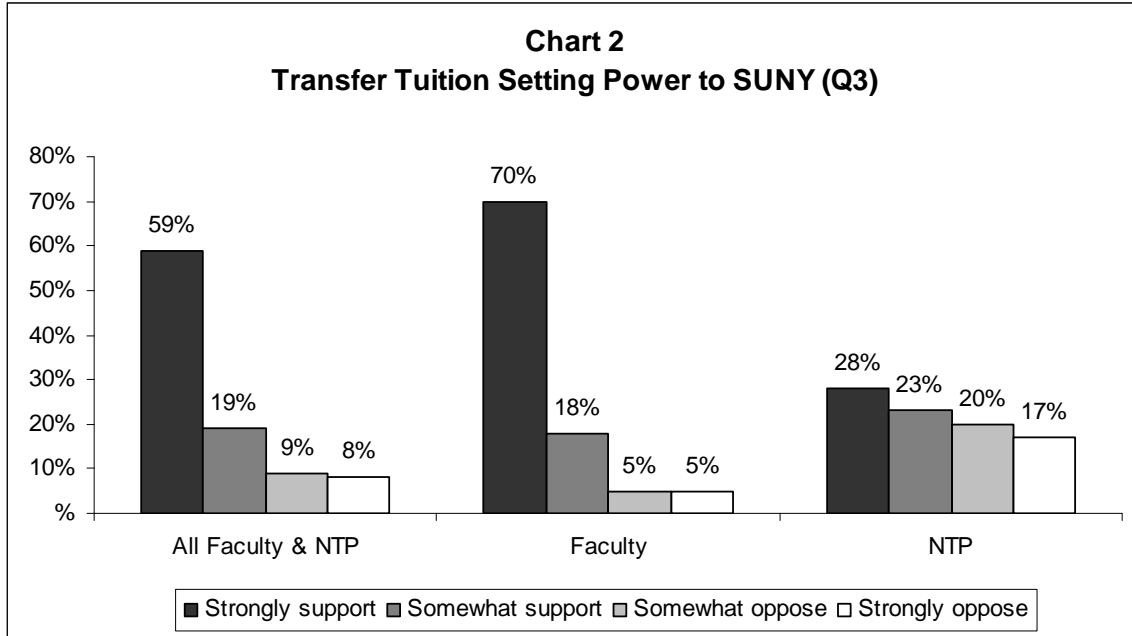
Of those with an opinion on PHEEIA, a majority of faculty (86%) and non-teaching professional staff (53%) supported the legislation. A majority of faculty (84%) and a plurality of staff (48%) support the legislation when those with no opinion are included in the total (roughly 10% of professional staff have not heard enough about the legislation to have an opinion). It is clear, however, that levels of support for PHEEIA are far higher among the faculty than among non-teaching professionals. This difference is also reflected in strength

of support, with almost two thirds (63%) of faculty registering strong support for the legislation as compared to under a fifth (19%) of professional staff (as seen in the frequency tables at the end of this report).

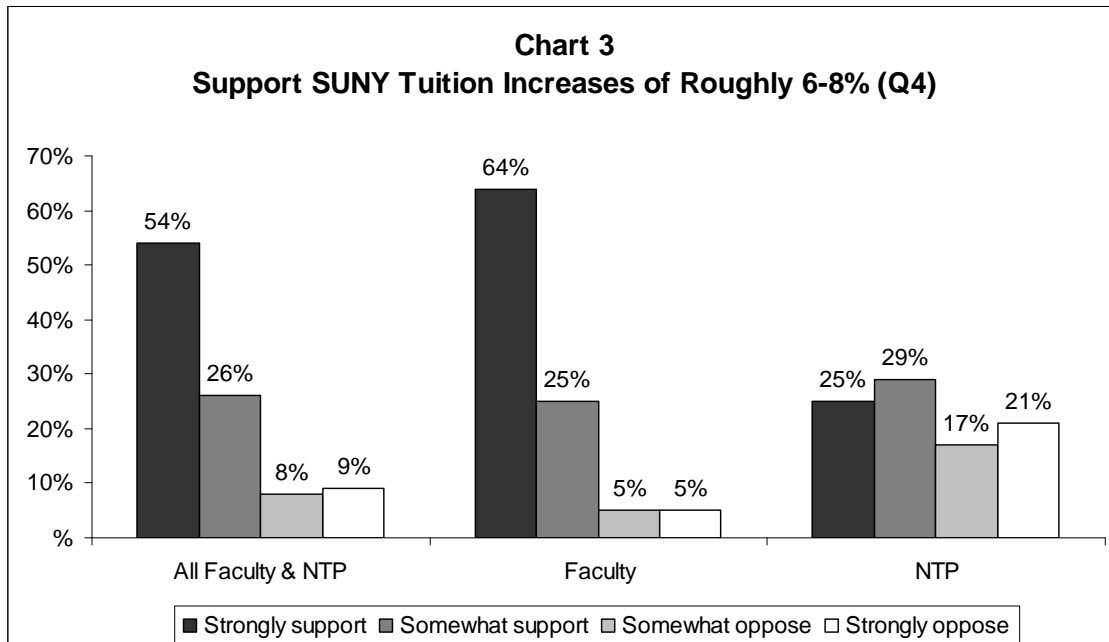


SUPPORT FOR CONSTITUENT PARTS OF THE PHEEIA LEGISLATION

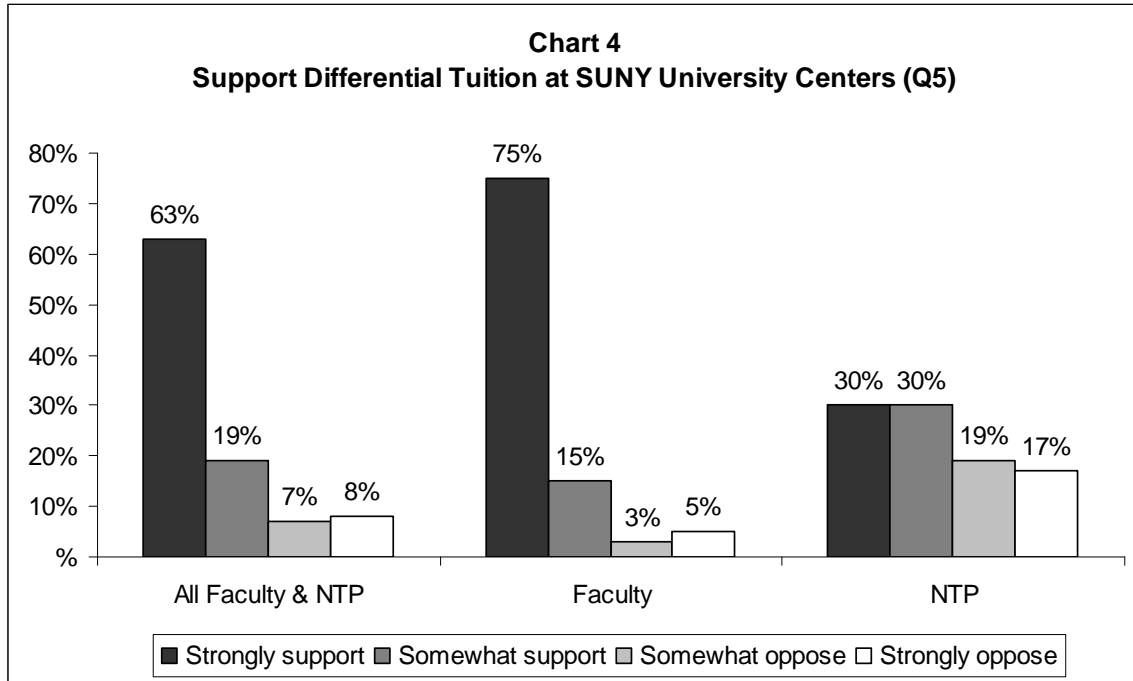
Faculty and professional staff express similar broad support for specific key provisions of the legislation. When asked, almost four-fifths (78%) of Stony Brook faculty and professional staff supported *transferring the power to set tuition from the legislature to the SUNY board of trustees* (Chart 2). Support was strongest among faculty, with almost 90% (88%) supporting this aspect of the legislation, as compared to a bare majority of professional staff (51%). Among those with an opinion on this issue, 90% of faculty and 57% of staff supported transferring the power to set tuition to SUNY.



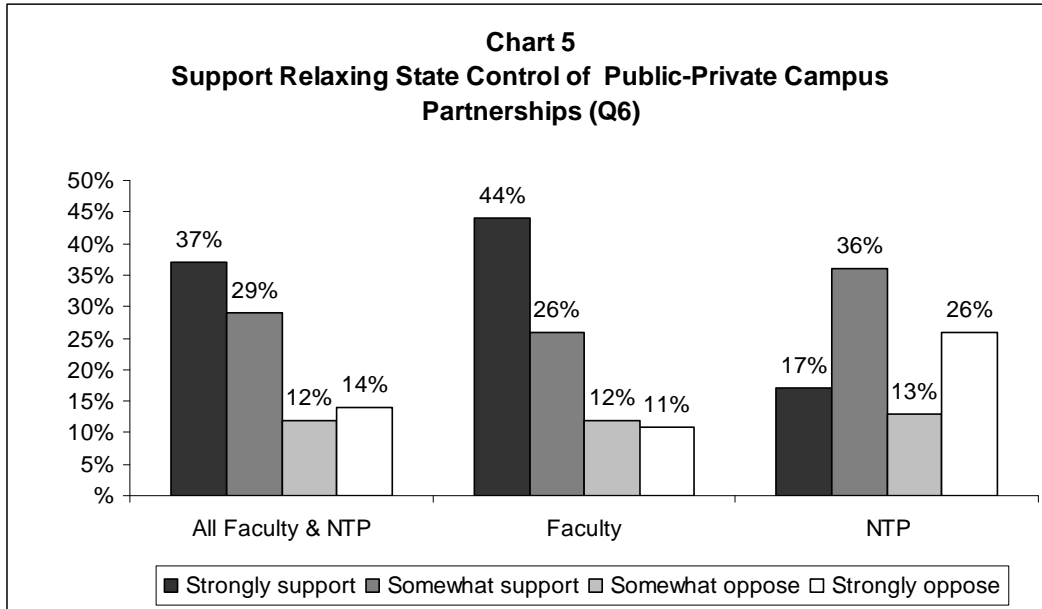
Survey respondents were given information about SUNY’s ability to raise tuition under the PHEEIA legislation. Specifically, they read the following statement: “PHEEIA would allow SUNY campuses to raise their tuition up to 2.5 times the Higher Education Price Index with the approval of the SUNY Board 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.” Support for this provision of the bill was strong, with 80% support overall. Once again, faculty support was even higher, approaching 90% (89%) as compared to a majority among professional staff (54% among all respondents -- or 59% of those with an opinion).



Faculty and professional staff also expressed broad support for allowing for differential (higher) tuition at the four SUNY university centers (including Stony Brook). Fully 82% of the respondents supported this aspect of the legislation (Chart 4), with 90% of faculty and 60% of NTPs registering support.



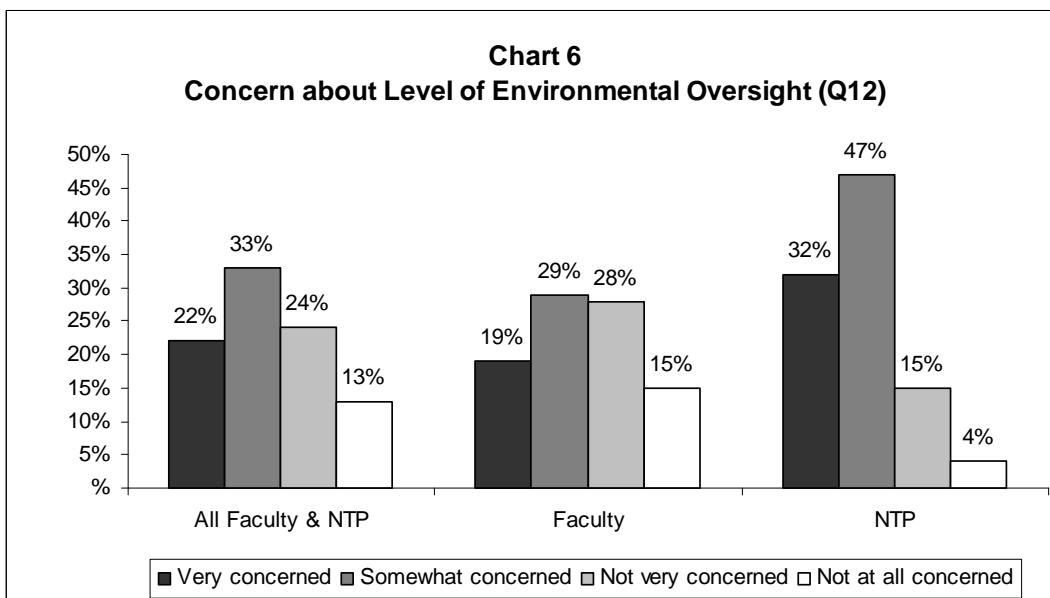
The one provision of PHEEIA that received a somewhat less enthusiastic—but still positive—support from faculty and staff was relaxing state control to allow individual SUNY campuses to raise income through public-private partnerships (PPPs) with private businesses, or by leasing land to local profit-making enterprises for educational purposes. This aspect of the legislation was supported by two-thirds (66%) of faculty and professional staff. Once again, faculty were even more supportive, with 70% expressing support compared to only 53% of NTPs.



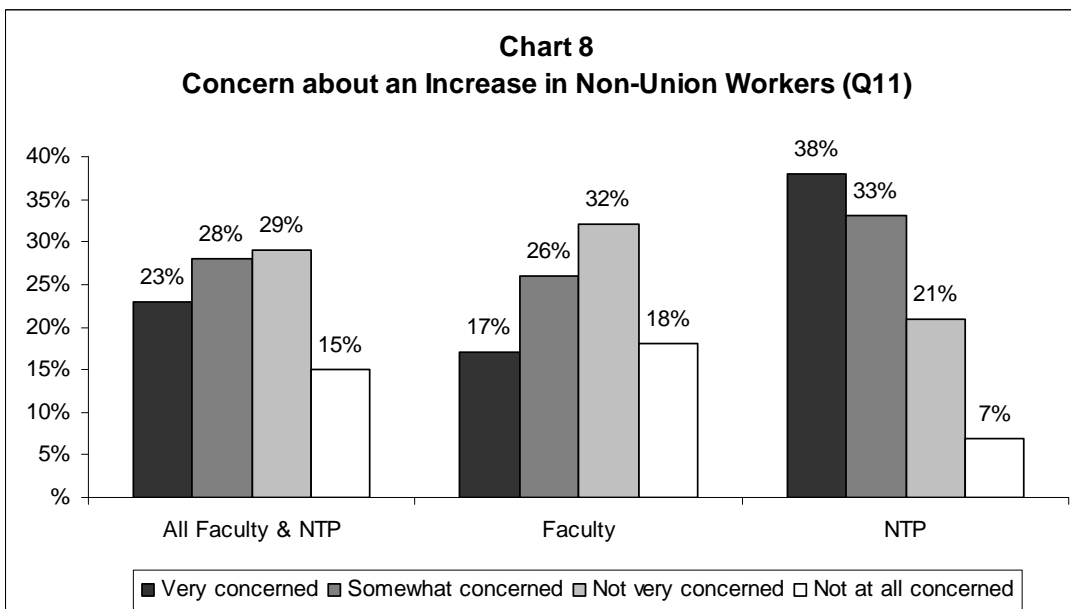
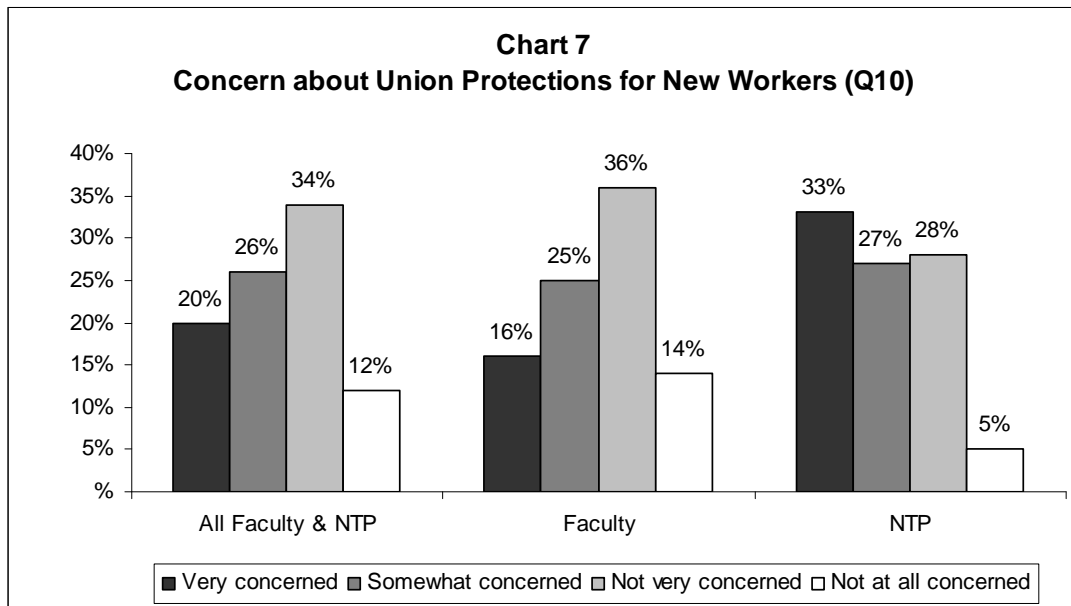
CONCERNS ABOUT THE PHEEIA LEGISLATION

Faculty and staff were asked whether they were concerned about the effects of PHEEIA on labor and environmental regulations. Despite support for the major elements in the PHEEIA plan, SBU professionals registered considerable concern on both counts.

SBU faculty and non-teaching professionals expressed greatest concern about environmental protections in the legislation (Chart 6). A majority of faculty and professional staff (55%) indicated that they were concerned about the level of environmental regulation and oversight for the public-private partnerships authorized by the legislation. This concern was particularly strong among non-teaching professionals, with almost four-fifths (79%) registering concern about this issue.



Stony Brook faculty and NTPs were also concerned that new public-private partnerships authorized by the legislation would weaken union protections for campus workers (Charts 7 and 8). A majority (51%) expressed somewhat or strong concern that these partnerships would result in the hiring of non-union employees; this concern were especially strong among NTPS (71%). In addition, 46% expressed somewhat or strong concern about the level of environmental, health, and safety protection that would be provided to new employees hired through the public-private partnerships. Once again, NTPs expressed greater concern about this (60%) than did faculty (41%).



FACULTY-STAFF DIFFERENCES:

Non-teaching professionals at SBU support PHEEIA and its specific provisions less enthusiastically than do faculty. There is some evidence that their weaker support may

reflect lower levels of knowledge about the legislation. Among NTPs who say they have heard or read a great deal about it, 65% support PHEEIA compared to 43% of those who have heard or read little or nothing about the legislation.

These hesitations may also reflect concerns that PHEEIA would weaken union protections and increase the number of non-union workers on campus (q10 and q11). Fully 70% of staff who say they are *very* concerned that the legislation will lead to an increase in non-union workers on campus are also strongly opposed to the legislation. In contrast, 67% of staff who are not very concerned about an increase in non-union workers *support* PHEEIA. The NTPs who are very concerned about non-union workers are especially opposed to allowing SUNY campuses to raise income through partnerships with private business – 52% *strongly* oppose this (with an additional 12% somewhat opposed). One professional staff member asked “why are there labor law modifications on a bill that passes itself off as a way for campuses to raise cash?” Another professional staff member wrote “I am very concerned about the future protections for those faculty and staff who will remain on campus after I retire, not just the workers who are employed by potential private/public entities on campus.”

Finally, there is evidence that NTP hesitations about PHEEIA extend to all aspects of the legislation. NTPs who do not support tuition-related facets of the legislation tend to oppose the legislation overall.

CONCLUSION

A strong majority of Stony Brook Professional Employees, including both faculty and non-teaching professionals support the passage of the PHEEIA. While this support is modulated, particularly for NTPs, by a variety of hesitations about various aspects of the legislation, for well over two-thirds the positive aspects of the legislation outweigh its weaknesses.

The campus sentiment about PHEEIA is well captured by a faculty member who wrote that “It is a rare opportunity to change the way the university is funded in New York state; it is an opportunity that we will have to make work. It comes with pitfalls and dangers like all opportunities, but it should not be allowed to slip away.”

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR SURVEY RESEARCH
 March 25 –March 31, 2010

Q1 - In this year's budget, Governor Paterson 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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449)	(333)	(116)	(358)	(85)
	%	%	%	%	%
Heard a Great Deal/Some	72	78	55	73	69
Heard a Great Deal	28	30	22	29	24
Heard Some	44	48	33	44	45
Heard a Little/Not much	24	19	39	23	26
Heard a Little	15	14	19	15	15
Heard Not Much	9	5	20	8	11
Heard Nothing At All	4	3	6	3	6

Q2 - How strong are your views on the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA) and its specific provisions?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449)	(333)	(116)	(358)	(85)
	%	%	%	%	%
Very/Somewhat Strong	73	79	58	74	70
Very Strong	37	44	19	37	37
Somewhat Strong	36	35	39	37	33
Not So/Not At All Strong	10	9	13	10	11
Not So Strong	9	8	11	9	11
Not At All Strong	1	1	2	1	-
Have Not Heard Enough About It	17	12	29	16	20

Note: Data may not add up to 100% because of "no answer"
 NTP: Non-Teaching Professionals

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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449)	(333)	(116)	(358)	(85)
	%	%	%	%	%
<u>Strongly/Somewhat Support</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>76</u>
Strongly Support	60	70	28	62	55
Somewhat Support	19	18	23	18	21
<u>Somewhat/Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>21</u>
Somewhat Oppose	9	5	20	8	15
Strongly Oppose	8	5	17	8	6
Have Not Heard Enough About It	4	2	11	5	2

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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449)	(333)	(116)	(358)	(85)
	%	%	%	%	%
<u>Strongly/Somewhat Support</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>79</u>
Strongly Support	54	64	25	54	55
Somewhat Support	26	25	29	27	24
<u>Somewhat/Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>
Somewhat Oppose	8	5	17	7	8
Strongly Oppose	9	5	21	9	9
Have Not Heard Enough About It	3	2	8	3	4

Note: Data may not add up to 100% because of "no answer"

NTP: Non-Teaching Professionals

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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449) %	(333) %	(116) %	(358) %	(85) %
Strongly/Somewhat Support	83	90	60	83	82
Strongly Support	64	75	30	65	61
Somewhat Support	19	15	30	18	21
Somewhat/Strongly Oppose	15	8	36	14	15
Somewhat Oppose	7	3	19	6	11
Strongly Oppose	8	5	17	8	4
Have Not Heard Enough About It	2	2	3	2	4

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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449) %	(333) %	(116) %	(358) %	(85) %
Strongly/Somewhat Support	66	70	53	66	71
Strongly Support	37	44	17	34	54
Somewhat Support	29	26	36	32	17
Somewhat/Strongly Oppose	28	23	39	28	21
Somewhat Oppose	13	12	13	13	13
Strongly Oppose	15	11	26	15	8
Have Not Heard Enough About It	7	6	8	6	8

*Note: Data may not add up to 100% because of “no answer”
NTP: Non-Teaching Professionals*

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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449)	(333)	(116)	(358)	(85)
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly/Somewhat Support	75	84	48	76	76
Strongly Support	52	63	19	51	57
Somewhat Support	23	21	29	25	19
Somewhat/Strongly Oppose	20	13	42	19	20
Somewhat Oppose	11	8	22	11	12
Strongly Oppose	9	5	20	8	8
Have Not Heard Enough About It	4	2	10	5	4

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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449)	(333)	(116)	(358)	(85)
	%	%	%	%	%
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Increase	9	8	13	9	11
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Increase Substantially	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Increase Modestly	9	8	13	9	11
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Stay the Same as Now	18	15	27	18	17
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Decrease	71	76	60	72	72
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Decrease Modestly	44	45	42	44	45
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Decrease Substantially	27	31	18	28	27

Note: Data may not add up to 100% because of "no answer"
NTP: Non-Teaching Professionals

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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449) %	(333) %	(116) %	(358) %	(85) %
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Increase	73	78	55	73	68
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Increase Substantially	17	19	10	17	15
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Increase Modestly	56	59	45	56	53
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Stay the Same as Now	16	14	23	16	18
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Decrease	11	7	20	9	14
Number of Faculty/Staff will Decrease Modestly	8	5	16	7	9
Number of Faculty/Staff Will Decrease Substantially	3	2	4	2	5

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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449) %	(333) %	(116) %	(358) %	(85) %
Very/Somewhat Concerned	46	41	60	46	43
Very Concerned	20	16	33	20	19
Somewhat Concerned	26	25	27	26	24
Not Very/Not At all Concerned	46	50	33	45	51
Not Very Concerned	34	36	28	33	38
Not At All Concerned	12	14	5	12	13
Don't Know/Have Not Heard Enough About It	9	9	8	9	7

*Note: Data may not add up to 100% because of “no answer”
NTP: Non-Teaching Professionals*

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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449)	(333)	(116)	(358)	(85)
	%	%	%	%	%
<u>Very/Somewhat Concerned</u>	51	43	71	52	45
Very Concerned	23	17	38	23	20
Somewhat Concerned	28	26	33	29	25
<u>Not Very/Not At all Concerned</u>	44	50	28	42	53
Not Very Concerned	29	32	21	29	29
Not At All Concerned	15	18	7	13	24
Don't Know/Have Not Heard Enough About It	5	5	2	5	2

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?					
		Employment		Location	
	Total	Faculty	NTP*	West Campus	HSC
Base:	(449)	(333)	(116)	(358)	(85)
	%	%	%	%	%
<u>Very/Somewhat Concerned</u>	55	48	79	56	57
Very Concerned	22	19	32	22	24
Somewhat Concerned	33	29	47	34	33
<u>Not Very/Not At all Concerned</u>	37	43	19	36	42
Not Very Concerned	24	28	15	25	22
Not At All Concerned	13	15	4	11	20
Don't Know/Have Not Heard Enough About It	7	9	2	9	1

Note: Data may not add up to 100% because of "no answer"
NTP: Non-Teaching Professionals