

ARKANSAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD
Special Meeting
July 30, 2009

Minutes of Meeting

The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board held a special meeting on Thursday, July 30, 2009 in the Soderquist Business Center at John Brown University. Chairman Burns called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and all members were present.

Coordinating Board present:

Bob Burns, Chair
David Leech, Vice Chair
Dr. Charles Allen, Secretary
Sarah Argue
Dr. Joe Bennett
Jodie Carter
Dr. Olin Cook
Bob Crafton
Phil Ford
Dr. Dan Grant
Kaneaster Hodges
Steve Luelf

Department staff present:

Dr. Jim Purcell, Director
Dr. Stanley Williams, Deputy Director
Dr. Karen Wheeler, Associate Director
Rick Jenkins, Associate Director for Planning and Accountability
Cynthia Moten, Associate Director of Academic Programs
Brooks Harrington, Assistant Director of Academic Programs
Tara Smith, Coordinator of Financial Aid
Zanette Douglas, Coordinator of Institutional Certification
Brooks Harrington, Assistant Director for Planning and Accountability
Lillian Williams, Assistant Coordinator of Academic Programs
Ashley Pettingill, Coordinator of Institutional Finance
Alana Boles, Assistant Coordinator of Academic Programs
Dale Ellis, Communications Officer
Nichole Abernathy, Administrative Support

Presidents, chancellors, institutional representatives, members of the press, and guests were also present.

Chairman Burns thanked presidents and chancellors for attending the Special Board meeting.

Next, Chairman Burns introduced new Board member Sarah Argue from Little Rock and welcomed her to her first AHECB meeting.

Dr. Glen Fenter, President of Mid-South Community College (MSCC), spoke on the Goldsby program, MSCC's unique and innovative scholarship program. The Goldsby Scholarship program provides funds for high school students to attend MSCC classes and earn a substantial number of hours toward their college degrees. It also serves to streamline and enhance the transition from high school to college. Since 2002, approximately 136 degrees and certificates have been awarded to Goldsby Scholars. Dr. Fenter stated that if Arkansas wants different results, we have to embrace different systems and ideas.

Agenda Item No. 1 Concurrent Enrollment Update

Dr. Purcell discussed concurrent enrollment in Arkansas. He noted that concurrent enrollment does help to expedite the number of degrees produced in Arkansas. There are two kinds of concurrent enrollment courses; General Education courses, which can be taught on college campuses or in high schools and Career/Technical Education (CTE), which are taught on college campuses or sometimes at career centers. Data show that in 2008, 17,136 students registered in General Education courses and 13,947 in CTE courses. Data also showed that English and mathematics were the top two General and Education courses in 2008.

Arkansas law and AHECB policy address minimum standards of readiness for high school students taking general education college courses, said Dr. Purcell. Institutions that offer a concurrent enrollment course on a high school campus taught by a high school teacher must hold membership in the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP). Concurrent courses taught on a high school campus by high school teachers are required to meet the same standards as college courses taught on the campus. Concurrent courses taught on a high school campus must be endorsed, meaning that they are college-level courses in one of the four core areas of math, English, science, and social studies and listed in the Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS).

ADHE staff will review, in cooperation with ADE, blended AP/concurrent offerings throughout the state to determine if these programs are pedagogically appropriate and in keeping with the ADHE guidelines. The pilot report deadline will be extended from its initial due date of May 2009 to May 2011 which will provide for the continuation of the statewide blended AP/concurrent course pilot program for a minimum of two years.

On March 27, 2009, the Legislative Joint Auditing Committee asked for a review of funding issues related to concurrent credit courses. Due to complexities involved in the higher education formula funding process, the amount of funding provided to colleges and universities for concurrent credit students could not be determined (there are inconsistencies among the State's colleges and universities in recording the activities, i.e., tuition, scholarships, tuition waivers, related to concurrent credit students).

Dr. Purcell explained that the quality and integrity of concurrent courses taught by high school teachers at the high school was also among stakeholder concerns.

As a result of the concerns, ADHE has established a group of presidents and chancellors to recommend resolutions for concurrent enrollment issues. A group of senior administrators from two- and four-year institutions will take the recommendations and recommend to ADHE staff policy and procedure changes.

The AHECB will be asked to act on concurrent enrollment recommendations no later than January 2010. Dr. Purcell stated that progress is being made.

Dr. Joel Anderson voiced serious reservations regarding a common end-of-course exam stating that a cookie-cutter approach is not practical. He said focus on the adherence of NACEP standards instead of end-of-course exams, would be more beneficial.

Dr. Barry Ballard commented that concurrent courses present a wonderful opportunity for students. He said that the legislative community says that institutions are inconsistent, when in fact, they're just different. One of our greatest strengths is our diversity. We do things differently to serve our individual communities. Dr. Ballard stated that institutions should be commended in 2010 for meeting NACEP standards.

Phil Ford asked what the difference is in AP and concurrent courses. Dr. Ballard stated that concurrent courses take the college courses to the high schools and AP courses are high school courses.

Dr. Dan Grant voiced concern stating that part of the college experience involves having a relationship with other college students.

Kaneaster Hodges asked if there are state appropriations for AP courses. Dr. Ballard said there are millions.

Mr. Hodges said that there seems to be a growing number of high school valedictorians and asked if it is a result of grade inflations.

Dr. Charles Allen asked what the oversight process is for AP courses. Dr. Ballard said evaluations.

Steve Luelf asked how high remediation rates factor in. Dr. Ballard said they don't. Superintendents and principals love concurrent courses. It's a win, win situation. He said that concurrent students are meeting college-level standards and there is very little grade inflation.

Instead of drawing territory lines, Dr. Olin Cook asked why students couldn't decide where they take classes. Dr. Purcell explained that there are multiple institutions in one school district and no oversight. In order for there to be oversight, there needs to be one institution and one set of standards.

Phil Ford asked if ADHE and the institutions are separated on this issue. Dr. Purcell explained that ADHE feels that a standardized test is needed and the institutions believe that violates their academic freedom.

Sarah Argue expressed concern regarding the push for career and technical training. Especially since it appears that our economy is leaving the industrial type training, she said.

Dr. Purcell explained that we are trying to provide educational experiences that will lead to other educational experiences. If we can make sure that students with no dreams recognize theirs, hopefully it will lead to other undertakings.

Dr. Corbet Lamkin explained that his campus is unique because of its location in an industrial park. Welding might seem to be a dying profession, but the defense department needs welders, he said.

Dr. Joe Bennett asked if there is a method to provide more concurrent enrollment information to the AHECB. Dr. Purcell said that ADHE will share any information it receives with the AHECB members.

Emily Jordan-Cox commented that very positive things are going on in AP in Arkansas. In 2007, Arkansas and Massachusetts tied for the highest improvements in AP courses.

With no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Nichole Abernathy

APPROVED:

Dr. Charles Allen, Secretary