

**ARKANSAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD**  
**Regular Quarterly Meeting**  
**April 28, 2023**

**Minutes of Meeting**

The April 28, 2023, regular meeting of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) was held at Henderson State University (HSU) in Arkadelphia. Chair Graycen Bigger called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., with a quorum present.

Coordinating Board present:

Graycen Bigger, Chair  
Dr. Jim Carr, Secretary  
Keven Anderson (via Zoom)  
Al Brodell  
Dr. Jim Carr  
Dr. Jerry Cash  
Dr. Kyle Miller (via Zoom)

Coordinating Board absent:

Kelley Erstine  
Chad Hooten  
Andy McNeill

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

Chair Bigger began by thanking everyone for participating in the meeting. She then introduced Dr. Charles Ambrose, Chancellor of Henderson State University, for a welcome.

Dr. Ambrose said that in June of 2022, HSU faced a \$12.5 million projected budget shortfall for the fiscal year and long-term debt of \$78 million, and depleted financial reserves. HSU needed to restore financial integrity for sustainable operations, said Ambrose. After making hard decisions, HSU made significant progress in restoring sustainable operations. Dr. Ambrose said that with the continued support of the ASU System and the State of Arkansas, HSU will build seamless pathways from school to work while preparing students with degrees and credentials for high-demand careers.

Next, Secretary of Education Jacob Oliva presented information on the LEARNS Act. He began by noting that ADE had been engaged in conversations across Arkansas with legislators, parents, and the Governor, to figure out how Arkansas can improve learning and outcomes. He said where Arkansas ranks nationally in literacy and math is a little disheartening. Improving those ranks is important for the state, but it is also important for the students, said Secretary Oliva. The LEARNS Act is a strong blueprint and vision to help improve some of these outcomes. Secretary Oliva stated that the comprehensive educational reform initiative will support students in high quality early education all the way from the cradle to career.

Agenda Item No. 1  
Approval of Minutes

Dr. Jim Carr moved to approve Agenda Item No. 1. Al Brodell seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.

Agenda Item No. 2  
Agency Updates

Mason Campbell presented the agency updates. He announced that ADHE has two new employees: Krystal Morgan, a program specialist for Research and Analytics and Dr. Tina Moore, the Director of Workforce Development.

Agenda Item No. 3  
Report on Academic Program Viability

Mason Campbell reported that 452 programs were initially identified as non-viable during the AY2022 viability process. Of the 452 programs, 16 were recommended for deletion. ADHE staff will monitor the process made by the institutions and the 16 non-viable programs will be removed from active status on the approved programs list effective May 1, 2023.

There were no questions.

Al Brodell moved to approve Agenda Item No. 3. Dr. Jim Carr seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.

Agenda Item No. 4  
Rules Governing the  
Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program

The proposed amendments to the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship Rules were presented to the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) for initial approval. While most is clean-up of language the metrics for assessing candidates did changed slightly.

Al Brodell asked Ms. Alisha Lewis to explain the change in the grading criteria. Ms. Lewis said that 60 percent of the budget goes to STEM research projects. ADHE didn't have a method to determine/assess the non-STEM areas. Therefore, an additional rubric was added to the overall grading system.

Dr. Jim Carr moved to approve Agenda Item No. 4. Dr. Jerry Cash seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.

Agenda Item No. 5  
Arkansas Health Education Grant Program  
Request for Contract Reallocation

In accordance with Arkansas Code 6-81-1101, the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) is authorized to enter into direct contracts with selected accredited schools of dentistry, optometry, veterinary medicine, podiatry, chiropractic, or osteopathy which do not participate in the program, if the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board determines that the needs of the state are not being met by institutions participating in the program.

College	Total 13
Cleveland Chiropractic College (Kansas City, MO)	1
Life University (Marietta, GA)	2
Logan College of Chiropractic (Chesterfield, MO)	3
Palmer College of Chiropractic (Davenport, IA)	2
Parker College of Chiropractic (Irving, TX)	5
Texas Chiropractic College (Pasadena, TX)	0

There were no questions.

AI Brodell moved to approve Agenda Item No. 5. Dr. Jim Carr seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.

Agenda Item No. 6  
Distribution of Mineral Lease Funds

The Division of Higher Education recommended that up to \$475,000 from the Higher Education Research Development Fund be allocated to the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville for expenses associated with the operation of the Arkansas Research and Education Optical Network of all public universities.

AI Brodell asked how much this fund was previously. Mr. Fuller said that over the past five years, the fund has averaged around \$230,000 per year.

AI Brodell moved to recommend the approval of Agenda Item No. 6 to the full Board for consideration. Keven Anderson seconded and the Committee approved.

Agenda Item No. 7  
Bachelor of Arts in Social Media Influencing  
Arkansas Tech University

Agenda Item No. 7 was removed from the agenda.

Agenda Item No. 8  
Master of Arts and Graduate Certificate in  
Organizational Development and Learning  
Arkansas Tech University

The proposed Master of Arts and Graduate Certificate in Organizational Development and Learning degree programs provide graduate level instruction in training and organizational development, organizational management and leadership, globalization and diversity, project management, organizational change, budgeting, implementation, and assessment of organizational development programs. The proposed program, with a core focus on organizational leadership, learning, and organizational development, allows students to develop effective leadership at all organizational levels, manage teams, make strategic decisions, design, and evaluate organizational training and development, and communicate effectively in diverse professional settings. Its graduates will influence an organization's culture, productivity, and team strength.

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Master of Arts and Graduate Certificate in Organizational Development and Learning (CIP 30.9999) at Arkansas Tech University, effective Fall 2023.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director of the Arkansas Division of Higher Education to inform the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of Arkansas Tech University of the approval.

Dr. Sandy Smith, Department Head and Professor of Emergency Management, presented additional information.

Dr. Jerry Cash moved to recommend Agenda Item No. 8 to the full Board for consideration. Dr. Jim Carr seconded and the Committee approved.

Agenda Item No. 9  
Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant  
Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas

The proposed Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program will teach students to collaborate and work under the supervision of a registered occupational therapist. Upon passing the licensure exam, graduates will practice as Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTA). Occupational Therapy Assistants use rehabilitative activities to help clients of all ages overcome physical, emotional, mental and/or social limitations and become independent in their daily living. OTAs work in a wide variety of settings such as hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation facilities, nursing homes, extended skills care, education, community-based settings, mental health facilities, and so much more.

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant (CIP 51.0803) at the Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas, effective Fall 2023.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director of the Arkansas Division of Higher Education to inform the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas System of the approval.

Dr. Debby King, Vice Chancellor for Instruction, presented additional information.

Dr. Jerry Cash moved to recommend Agenda Item No. 9 to the full Board for consideration. Dr. Jim Carr seconded and the Committee approved.

Agenda Item No. 10  
Certificates of Proficiency and Technical Certificate  
in Forestry Technology  
South Arkansas Community College

The proposed program in Forestry Technology will provide training and hands-on experience for students interested in working in the Forestry Industry. This program will produce a talent pipeline of well-trained workers to fill high-demand, entry to middle-skill positions of which there is an immediate need in the region and across the country.

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Certificates of Proficiency and Technical Certificate in Forestry Technology (CIP 03.0511) at South Arkansas Community College, effective Fall 2023.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director of the Arkansas Division of Higher Education to inform the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of South Arkansas Community College of the approval.

Dr. Stephanie Tully-Dartez, Vice President for Academic Affairs, presented additional information.

Dr. Jerry Cash moved to recommend Agenda Item No. 10 to the full Board for consideration. Dr. Jim Carr seconded and the Committee approved.

Agenda Item No. 11  
Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies  
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

The Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies, a 30 credit-hour program, supports graduate students whose academic interests and career goals are not currently serviced by existing degree programs or span two or more subject areas. The target population for this program, like the Bachelor of Arts program in Interdisciplinary Studies, are both high-achieving students who cannot be adequately served in other degree programs offered by the University as well as those seeking to return to the University to complete their graduate degrees after an absence. This degree-completer audience, consisting of non-traditional working professionals, will be uniquely served through this program as it can combine prior graduate coursework completed in person on the UAF campus or at other accredited institutions with online offerings in a variety of areas.

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (CIP 30.0000) at the University of Arkansas Fayetteville, effective Fall 2023.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director of the Arkansas Division of Higher Education to inform the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of University of Arkansas Fayetteville of the approval.

Dr. Terry Martin, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, presented additional information.

Dr. Jerry Cash moved to recommend Agenda Item No. 11 to the full Board for consideration. Dr. Jim Carr seconded and the Committee approved.

Agenda Item No. 12  
Bachelor of Arts in Italian  
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

The proposed Bachelor of Arts in Italian program at the University of Arkansas challenges students to think critically about the literary and cultural history which founds Italian and Italian American studies by integrating language acquisition and intercultural competence through the classroom and co-curricular activities on campus and through global experiences and high-impact practices such as study abroad, internships, and service learning. Beyond the more traditional outcomes of language learning and through the most up-to-date tools in foreign language pedagogy, the program encourages the importance of Italian for interdisciplinary study. The end goal is to create global citizens who are prepared to embrace the principal aspects of Italian society and who have critically explored their native language and culture. An Italian major is a wonderful complementary course of study to numerous fields: Architecture,

Art History, English, History, International Relations, International Business, Music, Philosophy, etc.

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Bachelor of Arts in Italian (CIP 16.0902) at the University of Arkansas Fayetteville, effective Fall 2023.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director of the Arkansas Division of Higher Education to inform the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of University of Arkansas Fayetteville of the approval.

Dr. Terry Martin, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, presented additional information.

Chair Bigger asked if there were any discussions about internships in the northwest Arkansas area. Dr. Martin said there are a lot of internship opportunities in northwest Arkansas.

Dr. Jerry Cash moved to recommend Agenda Item No. 12 to the full Board for consideration. Dr. Jim Carr seconded and the Committee approved.

### Agenda Item No. 13

#### Technical Certificate in Electrical Lineworker Technology University of Arkansas – Pulaski Technical College

The proposed Technical Certificate in Electrical Lineworker Technology would be a for-credit offering of UA-PTC's successful, non-credit lineworker program, High Voltage Lineman Training Academy (H-VOLT). The H-VOLT Academy, whose external funding ceases June 30, 2023, is a certified power lineworker training program designed to provide quality education along with real-world, hands-on instruction to those seeking careers as electrical lineworkers. UA-PTC would like to transition the non-credit program into a for-credit offering while retaining the quality and integrity of the program. UA-PTC will absorb operating costs that were previously funded by external resources. Students enrolled in the proposed for-credit program, like the non-credit program, will gain the knowledge and skills needed to install, repair, service, and maintain electrical power lines and supporting equipment.

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Technical Certificate in Electrical Lineworker Technology (CIP 46.0303) at University of Arkansas – Pulaski Technical College, effective Fall 2023.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director of the Arkansas Division of Higher Education to inform the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas System of the approval.

Dr. Ana Hunt, Interim Provost, provided additional information.

Dr. Jerry Cashed asked if the non-credit tuition was the same as for-credit programs. Dr. Hunt said the fees will be increased from \$8,500 for non-credit, to \$11,000.

Chair Bigger asked if industry partnerships have been set up. Dr. Hunt said they have.

Dr. Jerry Cash moved to recommend Agenda Item No. 13 to the full Board for consideration. Dr. Jim Carr seconded and the Committee approved.

Agenda Item No. 14  
Institutional Certification Advisory Committee

**RESOLVED**, That pursuant to A.C.A. §6-61-301, the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board grants initial certification to the institutions listed on pages 1 - 3 to offer the specified degree programs to Arkansas residents for a period of three years through December 31, 2026.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Director of the Arkansas Division of Higher Education is authorized to notify the administration of said institutions that the certification of the degree programs requires the institution to notify the Arkansas Division of Higher Education whenever any of the following occurs: (1) major reorganization of the controlling body; (2) changes in the charter or incorporation documents of the institution; or (3) changes in the method of operation of the institution's programs in Arkansas.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director to notify the administration of said institutions that any advertisement or published materials using the name of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board or the Arkansas Division of Higher Education must contain the following statement:

Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board certification does not constitute an endorsement of any institution or program. Such certification merely indicates that certain criteria have been met as required under the rules and regulations implementing institutional and program certification as defined in A.C.A. §6-61-301.

**Initial Program Certifications – Distance Technology**

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, San Marcos, California  
Walden University, Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Initial Program Certifications – Distance Technology – New Institutions**

Fielding Graduate School, Santa Barbara, California  
Southern California University of Health Sciences, Whittier California  
University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, California

Dr. Jerry Cash moved to recommend Agenda Item No. 14 to the full Board for consideration. Dr. Jim Carr seconded and the Committee approved.

Agenda Items No. 15 & 16  
Letters of Notification and Letters of Intent

The Arkansas Division of Higher Education approved institutional requests for new programs not requiring Board action unless further review is requested by the Board. During this period, the Institutional Certification Advisory Committee received notice of requests from out-of-state institutions to offer degree programs to Arkansas residents. The program notice lists appear in the Letters of Notification on pages 15-1 through 15-64 and in the Letters of Intent on pages 16-1 through 16-6 of the agenda book.

Report of the Committees

Chair Bigger presented the report of the Finance Committee and moved approval of Agenda Item 6. Al Brodell seconded and the board approved.

Chair Bigger presented the report of the Academic Committee and moved approval of Agenda Items 8 - 14. Dr. Jim Carr seconded and the board approved.

Remarks by Presidents/Chancellors and Guest

Chair Graycen Bigger thanked everyone for coming and announced that the next quarterly meeting will be held on July 28, 2023, at Northwest Arkansas Community College, at 9:00 a.m.

With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

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Nichole Abernathy

APPROVED:

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Dr. Jim Carr, Secretary