



Faculty Advisory Council Illinois Board of Higher Education

20 December 2024
Meeting

Minutes

FAC members/alternates attending and their institutions
In person: (This meeting was held over Zoom)

Angela Antonou	University of St. Francis
Paul Bialek	Oakton Community College
Kristine Burgess	Rosalind Franklin University
Cynthia Boyce	at-large (Lincoln Trail College)
Amy Carr	Western Illinois University
Daniel J. Coles	Aurora University
John Cooksey	Truman College
Allison Douglas	Elgin Community College
Jason Edgar	Morton College
Greg Ferrence	Illinois State University
Tyrone Forman	University of Illinois at Chicago
Sarah Garber	Rosalind Franklin University (MS)
Jill Gebke	IBHE Assistant Director of Academic Affairs
Joao Goebel	National Lewis University
Jack Haines	Joliet Junior College
Tena Helton	University of Illinois, Springfield
Andy Howard	Illinois Institute of Technology
Dan Hrozencik	Chicago State University
Brooke Johnson	Northeastern Illinois University
Matt Landrus	Lake Land Community College
Mary Laundry	Adler University
Shaalein Lopez	Governors State University
Valerie Lynch,	Senior Managing Director of IBHE
James Marshall	Rockford University
Jessica McDonald	Olney Central College
Gay Miller	University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Laura Murdaugh	Kishwaukee College
Nkechi Onwaumeze	IBHE Senior Associate Director of Academic Affairs
Mike Phillips	at-large (Illinois Valley Community College)
Tiffany Puckett	Northern Illinois University

Patricia Saleeby
Nicole Scherger
Mary Ellen Schiller
Shawn Schumacher
Lichang Wang
J. Matthew Ward
Sue Wiediger

Bradley University
Elgin Community College
Roosevelt University
DeVry University
Southern Illinois University-Carbondale
Quincy University
Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

Absent:

Marie Donovan
Irene Jacobsen
Pratima Jindal

DePaul University
Eastern Illinois University
Waubensee Community College

9:00 Call to order and Introductions

Shawn called the meeting to order promptly at 9:00 am. He introduced Valerie Lynch, Senior Managing Director of IBHE, and provided us with a brief history of her career in Higher Ed. Individual self-introductions of members followed.

9:15 Reports: Chair (Shawn Schumacher);

Shawn noted that he had a short report for the month. He stated that not much had happened since our last our meeting, but he met with Jill to plan this meeting. At that time, the IBHE's 22 January meeting location hadn't been posted yet. Shawn said that he would report back, and he plans to go in person to the meeting. He mentioned that Amy Carr has written the library support document, but because email wasn't cooperating, not everyone had it at the time of the meeting. It was agreed that Amy would read the document to members during our business meeting.

Vice Chair (Dan Hrozencik);

Dan reported that FAC members should have received an email about the Jan meeting. If not, members contact him. He mentioned that the IBHE meeting for 22 Jan is at Chicago State University. He attended an SB3965 listening meeting, during which not much new arose, but he asked when the formula would be implemented and was told it might be used for next year's budgeting. Greg observed that a lot of the same talking points remain around this issue; the state has been signaling that their finances are on the negative side, and our role could be important down the road to advocate for money to come to higher ed. Greg asked about how we can advocate, and Dan replied that he has a packet that he can send to FAC about how to advocate. Tiffany asked whether anyone else is having a problem with the group rate plan for Olney. Members were instructed to let Jessica know if they have any hotel booking problems.

Secretary (Jack Haines);

Nothing to report other than to thank colleagues for their edits/suggestions

FAC Legislative Liaison (Mike Phillips),

Mike reported that new legislation will be signed in January. Some new state-house members are coming in, and committees will be re-constituted with the new people. Mike will notify us when the committees are remade. He mentioned that a few bills may be passed in the lame duck session;

however, the higher ed funding bill may not be passed in lame duck and will probably wait until the lame duck session is over. Mike promised to monitor the situation. Regarding the Community College funding bill, Mike shared a draft (very rough) and walked through some of the considerations of the bill. He noted that the 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 funding rule is difficult to instantiate, and equity, equalization, dual credit are all mentioned in the draft. The working group will take the document from committees and consulting groups and work with the feedback before it moves on. Mike said that would share more details with the caucus of FAC.

Assistant Director for Academic Affairs, IBHE (Jill Gebke);

Jill provided the following updates on staffing at the agency:

Glenda Gallisath, who worked on the Behavioral Workforce Initiative, left the agency.

The IBHE has three open positions:

Director of Higher Education Finance Policy, which provides senior-level oversight of the agency's fiscal policy analysis and policy-setting and serves as a member of the leadership team; oversees the Fiscal Policy administrative unit; provides leadership in strategic higher education finance, qualitative research, analytics, budgeting, and reporting; Supports strategic planning and policy development with a fiscal lens.

Capital Analyst, which serves as the IBHE's lead analyst on the higher education capital budget (construction, renovation of public college and university buildings, classrooms, labs, etc).

Assistant Chief Accountant.

Jill noted that the AI Task Force is wrapping up, and she thanked the Technology and Higher Ed subcommittee for its information.

With regard to Academic Program Effectiveness and Efficiency, IAI reports are wrapping up for submission by the end of the year.

Jill updated the FAC on nursing school grants and nurse educator fellowships. She reported that nursing school grants will go to 13 selected institutions of 32 that applied, representing a regionally diverse group of public and private colleges and universities. She added that many innovative proposals came in from this year's group, especially with regards to simulation enhancements.

With respect to nurse educator fellowships, Jill said that they selected 40 Fellows for their first round out of 43 submissions. The second round is planned to open in early January, and she stated that the agency needs to ensure it spends the \$800,000 that was allocated for this fiscal year, as each Fellow receives a stipend of \$10,000.

At the end of Jill's report, Patricia asked about the date for reopening the grant. Jill responded that that information will be posted on the website.

(Nkechi – had nothing else to add to Jill's report.)

9:30 Business Meeting

1) Old Business

a) Approval of minutes from the November 15, 2024 meeting at Rosalind Franklin University. The motion was made to approve the minutes by Dan and seconded by Mike. Alison & Jessica abstained.

2) Support Statement for WIU librarians

Amy read the document out loud to the committee after she thanked various members for their input on the document.

Some questions followed. Shawn mentioned that we should emphasize the Thriving Illinois plan, and we should take this topic to the IBHE board.

Tyrone suggested that in section E we should reorder sentences to put academic databases first and then argue for why what librarians do are essential.

Patricia S. noted social work accreditation standards that require library resources/staff, which must be done by librarians.

Jill, careful to mention that she was speaking from her perspective, encouraged the FAC to look at tying back to the agency and board's values (through Thriving Illinois). She recommended concepts such as building equity, sustainability, and economic growth.

Shaalein-spoke to the impact on students. She included that the employment of fewer librarians de-emphasizes the use of academic resources in favor of non-academic resources, often with negative impacts.

Alison added that equity is really important, and few low-income schools have degreed librarians. Therefore, they lack some of the experiences of more well-funded school districts.

Mike argued that it is important to highlight potential implications of program accreditations.

Amy thanked contributors, saying that we need another month to shore up the document. She pointed out that Thriving Illinois doesn't mention libraries, so if we devalue research, then we lose real, quality equity.

In light of Amy's comment, the FAC wondered whether we need to revise heavily? The consensus was no, but we should keep Jill's recommendations front of mind as we revise. Shawn thanked those who contributed to the document.

10:05 Guest Presentation: Dr. Heather McIlvaine-Newsad, Professor of Anthropology, Western Illinois University; "Rebuilding Institutions of Higher Education: Lessons from a Disaster Researcher."

Amy introduced our guest by reading prepared remarks with her credentials and a couple of quick anecdotes, during which she stressed that kinship building is important.

Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad worked with shrimp fisheries after hurricane Katrina, starting her career with this work. She sees connections between what's going on with High Ed and other disaster scenarios. She overviewed environmental disasters over 2024 and higher education with reductions in faculty and staff. She noted that at the core of these disasters is human decision making or the lack thereof. She pointed to results of major flooding events resulting from a failure to collectively act on things like climate change. In her view, a combination of similar death-by-a-thousand-cuts is happening to higher ed. State vs. tuition and fee funding historically has compounded the cascading events of disaster. In dealing with these kinds of situations, we must ask, "What is resiliency?" Among other things, she suggested the ability of a community/organization to survive a crisis and uncertainty. She advised using her Steps To Resilience, methods and benefits of providing clear direction, communicating effectively, working collaboratively, and engaging in adaptive leadership. Her concluding remarks and recommendations urged for the importance of constant conversations and group decisions as necessary, and that we must change the 'old' ways of doing things. She reminded us that there are lots of ways that we could learn from the world of disaster research and apply them to higher ed.

10:32 FAC Members' Questions for Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad

Sue asked, with respect to shared governance, how we can combine immediacy with collaboration?

A: Recognize that some things have to happen immediately. We can't always wait and ask for permission, but going forward still bring in individuals. Consulting others with expertise is critical.

Sue followed up by asking how we build that culture and give individuals authority to make immediate decisions?

A: Sit in the discomfort, pause, look at where we are now, look at the various negatives/problems and ask others how to build with what we have? It is important to know what exactly we want to build.

Paul offered that leaders sometimes kick the can down the road, so how can faculty know what's coming?

A: Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad suggested that we serve on the faculty senate, which is not always comfortable since lots of time is demanded. However, we can spend time on service, talk with different departments, ask questions of others, and try to avoid being disconnected. We have to be engaged in community, do research, and create and tell new stories.

Mike highlighted that risk communication can be difficult. People want to get back to what is normal, but Maintenance is needed. He said that plans get made in response to an event but then get forgotten once the risk is over. Furthermore, short term plans need revision over time. Conditions change, so our plans must change as well.

A: Remember that normal is a cultural construct; culture constantly changes, so ways to engage constantly change.

Andy asked about the role that accrediting agencies could play in building resilience. They can be a hindrance because they tell Universities that creative ideas may run afoul of programmatic rules.

A: Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad admitted not being super familiar with accrediting agencies. She said that what is normal/appropriate when accrediting different programs changes with time and context. She offered that “business as usual” is a hindrance to creating resiliency, and she encouragingly added that being engaged (on top of things) like the FAC members is crucial.

Mary Ellen mentioned patterns having been observed – having seen everything is a double-edged sword. One pattern she has observed in enrollment is for someone new to come into a position and makes decisions, while collaboration takes a back seat.

A: Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad noted that the last three presidents at WIU have been people from the outside who don’t ask for input or understand the culture. She argued that open and transparent conversations are needed.

James invoked the importance of elders in communities and knowledge they preserve. Some elders check out (burn out) and ignore what others have to say.

A: Social networks and their strength is important. Burn out is real, but we can learn whom to ask about important decisions even if those decisions are being made when we don’t have direct roles. Knowing others creates pathways to knowledge.

Mike suggested that it helps to have someone who’s trusted to bring important information to stakeholders. We need people who can stand up to authorities backed by their experience.

A: Just because things have been done for a long time isn’t a reason to keep them going. Sometimes the old way works for good reason, but other times more/different information and actions are needed. Different ways of being and living (from other cultures) are worth paying attention to. Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad argued that we don’t have to change core values, but we must adapt to fit a changing landscape.

On this point, Mike added that we have to consider our place in space, so cookie cutter solutions may not work everywhere. Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad recommended that we read the landscape around us and decide from there, noting changes. Further, we must be responsive to change and people’s various needs. We need to adapt based on the variables we see.

James added that on matters of collaboration, all voices need to be heard. He suggested that new voices insist on doing their thing, but they don’t stick around long. Further, without buy-in, even good decisions can wither, so we need long-term commitment to maintaining quality and good decision making.

A: Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad reminded us that maintaining our story is important; story telling is vital to communicate who we are.

(11:05) Shawn thanked Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad for her presentation.

11:08 Working Groups Meetings – Shawn encouraged groups to work as long as they want, go to lunch, and be back at 12:30 on the dot.

12:00 Lunch Break

12:30 Guest Presentation: Jose Garcia, Director of Strategic Communications, IBHE; “IBHE Marketing Campaign”

Shawn welcomed our guest, who wanted to speak about the direct admissions plan, but it hasn't launched yet. He outlined the IBHE's marketing campaign for ECACE (Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity, Access, Persistence, and Completion). He discussed their efforts and successes for targeting audiences. He and his team collected testimonials around the state of current ECACE beneficiaries, sharing with FAC members four videos demonstrating their marketing attempts. He reported that ads were run across social media forums in Spanish and English. They also received testimonials and put them in graphics to encourage skeptics that the benefits of the program are real. In determining their Planning Parameters, they asked who they are targeting and how? He listed the various media in which the information went out. The major take-away from their actions so far concern the effectiveness of authentic, genuine representation by former ECACE participants. Audiences notice the authenticity of real participants as opposed to stock photos, and the marketing campaign's successes are palpable.

Mike asked what the IBHE is doing to reach out to states where what can be taught in higher ed is being restricted. Jose answered that that is a question for the broader education space, but he does think that they don't appreciate or want the poaching of IL students, so they want to make applying to college easier – curbing the outmigration.

Shaalein asked whether the campaign is ongoing? Jose replied that no, it's concluded. Shaalein asked whether there is another initiative coming. Jose said, no, but the Direct Admissions program campaign will start soon.

Shawn asked what the FAC can do. Jose suggested that we work with the agency to get information out there; some of the direct admissions work will help. Shawn noted that it doesn't seem like faculty have a lot of ways to be more active, pointing to how affordability issues play a big part. He offered that anything the FAC can do to help IBHE, we're willing to do.

Gay asked whether we are playing catch up with other states or is Illinois a leader with Direct Admission Programs. Jose answered that we are one of the few states (Connecticut is one) to have a statewide Direct Admissions program. He said that Community Colleges will benefit greatly and that transferring will be easier through the Direct Admissions program.

Shawn invited Jose to reach out to us for anything we can do, *i.e.*, data, information, etc. Jose said he'll be sure to reach out to Jill, Nkechi, and others if we can do anything for them.

1:00 Caucus Meetings –

2:00 Working Groups

Equity, James – The Equity group is working on its current project: emails to teaching/learning centers for DEI pedagogy resources, Next, the IBHE has asked the group to produce a set of equity plans for faculty and classrooms. The working group is shifting back to faculty – determining what is working to find more faculty who look like our students.

Technology in Higher Education, Laura— The group spent today talking about ADA compliance issues – noting significant differences between private and public schools. The group plans on reaching out to Michael Gillespie for a brief presentation about what EIU has done. Andy will outline important issues. Dan Coles talked about how AU uses a product/service called [Risepoint](#) to ensure compliance and what needed to be fixed for compliance.

Funding, Dan – the group talked about SB3965 and our role, including how we should watch changes closely and make sure faculty have a voice in the process. They talked about the Community College funding formula process, and how no other listening sessions have been scheduled, However, Dan will let us know if any are scheduled.

Faculty and Student Mental Health Sue — the group looked at various surveys for questions that they want to incorporate in order to inform the IBHE.

Graduate Education – Dan C. reported that his former working group (Graduate Education) disbanded, and he met with the Tech in Higher Ed group.

Early College Consideration – Amy reported that the group is preparing a document with examples of changes to the Dual Credit Quality Act that could be suggested. They are trying to reach out to national policy groups to see if issues we've been experiencing are coming back to the policy groups.

Prior Learning Assessment -- Shawn (in Marie's stead this month) The group is currently at a standoff point; Marie is busy working on surveys to get out, and over break, the survey will be finalized so as to be sent out in January. Shawn shared a message from Marie – noting the growing concern of the revival of Community Colleges awarding bachelor degrees; it's the number one bill/concern for legislators. The ISBE backs it, and Marie is worried about ICCB backing it as well. Mike had no specific thoughts, but he mentioned that Community Colleges have ties with their legislators, so a better answer might be for Community Colleges to develop partnerships with universities because of the costs, efforts, staff, etc. involved. Alison asked if these plans are directed to Early Childhood education or all aspects of education. Amy wondered what the real narrative is? K-12 seems to have undue influence on how higher ed functions.

Amy asked about data collection; she wondered about things we might ask ICCB and IBHE regarding their data collection and whether they can decide what they can collect data about. Jill responded that she thinks it's legislatively mandated.

Sue related back to the equity group, noting that she'd be curious when there is a diverse faculty, what is the value if some students don't see them? James said that if one never encountered someone like him/her, how does that affect students. It was asked how to find mentors or professors whom students can identify with? Moreover, where is the assessment, and what is the information about faculty equity surveys?

Patrisha (Trish) noted that Social Work accreditation standards require DEI components – she has a lot of information at the national level about impacts, but schools with anti-DEI legislation require waivers and extra measures to meet accreditation standards.

2:10 Caucus Reports

2 Years Cyndi – The caucus members held conversations about bachelor's degrees and teacher education. The situation was likened to Common Course numbering suggestion, noting the high costs for faculty and various needs in order to implement the BA degree for early education. Members discussed what is driving the whole idea, suggesting that it seems to be about reducing costs for students, but raises the question: is this the best way to cut costs? This led to a discussion about partnerships between Community Colleges and Universities as the best solution. It was mentioned that offering bachelor's degrees goes against the mission of the Community Colleges, which are good at what they do; offering Bachelors isn't what we're good at. Questions addressed (or at least asked) included how much geography plays into the plan, whether enrollment is part of the issue, and whether it looks good for administrators to initiate these plans? Other issues of concern included that it is expensive to upgrade our systems and faculty, why we don't raise the salaries of teachers or revamp the curriculum in what we're doing now, and whether institutions would be requiring more than what's needed for the field? Finally, the caucus members discussed the myriad problems of AI in the classroom. It was suggested that it may be best not to heavily police students' use of AI in homework. They discussed how AI can be another tool for students not do their own work, and institutions need clear policies in syllabi and codes of conduct. Members claimed that we won't beat AI, so we need to learn how to work with it, forcing Instructors to restructure exams and assessments. It was noted that under new IAI regulations, 60% of math grades must be proctored in class. We have our work cut out for us because students coming in to our classrooms will be more versed in AI.

4 Years Amy – The caucus held a rich discussion about campus updates, unions and non-tenure track issues, and UIS's attempt to make budget cuts by looking at various programs. It was mentioned that with respect to Community Colleges and bachelor's degrees, some early childhood programs' problems could be addressed through marketing. Caucus members also spent time talking about academic integrity revolving around Reading and Writing. Tiffany asked what we are teaching and how do we really assess it? It was noted how time-consuming academic integrity reports are for everybody. Kristine offered that at her institution, they use lockdown browsers to avoid AI use.

Privates/Independents Andy – The caucus discussed academic integrity and AI, the burgeoning issue of offering/awarding bachelor's degrees at Community Colleges, and how most of the attention is paid to teacher ed and nursing (of which there has been a pattern over the years). They discussed the effects of this matter at privates/independents, namely how it might lower enrollments and might attract fewer qualified faculty. The caucus members also discussed the time it takes to build the infrastructure to make such initiatives happen. With respect to academic integrity and AI, Andy noted that AGI is here to stay. The caucus members will try to articulate where and when it ought and ought not to be used, focusing on the inherent value of critical thinking. It was suggested that AI might be clearing the way for critical-thinking improvement by reducing clutter of tasks.

In wrapping up this meeting, Shawn wished us all good break. He noted that he'll be in town over the Winter break, and we should feel free to reach out to him. (Today was Shawn's birthday!!)

2:36 Shawn sought a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Jack and seconded by Gay.

This meeting's minutes were recorded by FAC Secretary, Jack Haines.

Next FAC Meeting: January 24, 2024 at Olney Central College

Next IBHE Meeting: January 22, 2025 (Location: Chicago State University)