



Faculty Advisory Council Illinois Board of Higher Education

MINUTES

17 October 2025 Meeting Agenda

Lake Land College
Webb Hall, Room 081
5001 Lake Land Boulevard
Mattoon IL 61938

FAC members/alternates attending and their institutions

In person:

Patrick Crawford
Daniel J. Coles
Stacy Kosier
Dan Hrozencik
Marie Donovan
Shawn Schumacher
Nicole Zeller
Allison Douglas
Shaalein Lopez
Jill Gebke
Andy Howard
Greg Ferrence
Mike Phillips
Jack Haines
Matt Landrus
Sarah Hill
Cynthia Boyce
Lara Hernandez-Corkrey
Jason Edgar
Brooke Johnson
Tiffany Puckett
Paul Bialek
Jessica McDonald
J. Matthew Ward
James Marshall
Kristine Burgess
Lichang Wang
Sue Wiediger
Amy Carr
Tena Helton

Augustus College
Aurora University
Carl Sandburg College
Chicago State University
DePaul University
DeVry University
Eastern Illinois University
Elgin Community College
Governors State University
IBHE Assistant Director of Academic Affairs
Illinois Institute of Technology
Illinois State University
Illinois Valley Community College (at-large)
Joliet Junior College
Lake Land College
Lake Land College
Lincoln Trail College (at-large)
Moraine Valley Community College
Morton College
Northeastern Illinois University
Northern Illinois University
Oakton Community College
Olney Central College
Quincy University
Rockford University
Rosalind Franklin University
Southern Illinois University-Carbondale
Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville
Western Illinois University
University of Illinois- Springfield

Absent:

Mary Laundry	Adler University
Patricia Saleeby	Bradley University
Mary Ellen Schiller	Roosevelt University
John Cooksey	Truman College
Tyrone Forman	University of Illinois-Chicago
Gay Miller	University of Illinois- Urbana Champaign

9:00 **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU**, Call to order and Introductions.

9:02 **Matt Landrus, Lake Land College and Host**, started by giving a round of thank yous. He also gave a Speech of Introduction for **Dr. Josh Bullock**. He is an avid Green Bay Packers fan. Matt spoke about his leadership during the COVID pandemic.

9:05 Welcome Message: Dr. Josh Bullock, Lake Land College

Dr. Bullock shared that Lake Land College is the second-largest community college in Illinois by land area, serving 53 communities and 31 school districts. The college continues to expand its reach into Effingham and other areas within its district. Dr. Bullock also highlighted the institution's strong commitment to cost efficiency, noting that their textbook policy has significantly reduced overall student expenses each semester.

Dr. Bullock transitioned the discussion to the issue of Illinois' "brain drain" and how Lake Land College aims to help reverse this trend. He emphasized that while the college continues to reduce costs, it is also prioritizing accessibility for working students. To support this goal, the college offers a "two-day-a-week" program model, allowing students to maintain employment during the remaining days of the week. Additionally, Dr. Bullock described a flexible lab policy that enables students to complete lab work on their own schedules. Lake Land is moving toward a competency-based education; a student can step in and out of earning credentials to accommodate their time availability.

Dr. Bullock emphasized the importance of strengthening connections with K-12 schools through intentional pathways and dual credit opportunities. He noted that Lake Land College works closely with partner districts to ensure students take only the courses that contribute directly to their academic and career goals, thereby reducing unnecessary credits and associated costs.

In addition to academic alignment, Dr. Bullock discussed efforts to enhance student engagement and well-being by expanding clubs, organizations, and campus activities. These one hour a week is set aside for club activities and initiatives are designed to promote a sense of belonging and improve overall mental health among students.

He also underscored the broader value of education as a community asset, stressing the college's ongoing commitment to fostering partnerships that link educational advancement with local community development and workforce needs.

Dr. Bullock spoke about how the Faculty is the connection between the students and the communities. That Faculty play a crucial in the education setting in a number of ways.

- 9:17 **Matt Landrus, Lake Land College**, gave a speech of introduction to **Ed Thomas**, Division Chair of Humanities and Communications/Communication and Speech Instructor and **Tara Blaser**, Philosophy /English Instructor

How Humanities Can Get a Glow Up: Ed Thomas and Tara Blaser, Lake Land College

The presentation began with an overview of the motivation behind the “Glow Up” initiative, which seeks to enhance how students perceive and connect with Faculty and Staff in the division. Key questions guiding the effort included: *How do students see us?* and *How do they choose instructors they can relate to?* Thomas added, “We have entered a culture moving away from honoring institutions to esteeming the individual—so we must personalize our big institutions.” Adding they want to put the “human” back into humanities.

Thomas and Blaser collaborated with the Marketing and Public Relations (MPR) Department to achieve several objectives: to showcase faculty personality while maintaining professionalism, to develop cohesive and distinctive branding for the division, to guide the project from concept to implementation, and to secure the necessary funding to bring the initiative to completion.

They also described the **#OOTD (Outfit of the Day)** initiative, which provided each faculty member with a \$200 allowance for institutional apparel to promote unity and visibility across campus. In addition, they developed creative **recruitment cards**—designed in the style of collectible baseball or Pokémon cards—featuring faculty and staff portrayed with superhero themes. Each card includes a QR code linking students to additional information about the featured individual, creating an engaging and personalized recruitment tool.

- 9:29 They also introduced **“Fat Heads,”** large cardboard cutouts of faculty members’ faces used to generate excitement and visibility at campus events. Each fat head has a comment bubble that can be changed out (with a wet erase so passersby can’t easily change what’s written in it). The comments periodically change in response to new questions, such as “I used to have a job as....” The team reported positive outcomes from all of these initiatives, noting increased engagement and enthusiasm among both students and staff.

The presentation then transitioned to the **“Ed Talks”** project, a series of recorded conversations with members of the division. The videos were modeled after *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee*, featuring informal yet insightful discussions with prominent campus figures—conducted in a golf cart to add a lighthearted and approachable tone.

- 9:37 **Jack Haines, JJC**, spoke about the brilliance of these initiatives and suggested that they should discuss these policies around the region and country. **Matt Landrus, Lake Land College**, confirmed that he believes these programs are having an effect.

- 9:39 **Sue Wiediger, SIU-Edwardsville**, asked about introverted instructors. Blaser said that she herself is an introvert, but when shown the results for students, went along with activities.

- 9:40 **Tena Helton, UIS**, asked how many instructors they had in the program, and they said most of the Faculty. **Jill Gebke, IBHE**, asked the students in attendance if it works, and they said yes.
- 9:41 **Greg Ferrence, ISU**, asked about jokes running their course, and the students said they are honest when the jokes fall flat.
- 9:44 **Matt Landrus, Lake Land College**, then introduced **Greg Powers**, Director of Broadcast Operations/ Speech and Communication / Broadcast Instructor and **Beth Hartnick**, Director of Dental Hygiene Program / Dental Hygiene Instructor

Lab Visits- Greg Powers and Beth Hartnick, Lake Land College

The group participated in lab visits that were divided into two tours: one showcasing Lake Land College's **Dental Hygiene Department** and the other highlighting the **Broadcast Journalism Department**. Both departments presented recent upgrades and technological enhancements designed to improve hands-on learning and align with current industry standards. These visits offered attendees a firsthand look at how the college continues to invest in modern facilities to support student success and program excellence.

- 10:45 Business Meeting
Marie Donovan approved the minutes and **Shawn Schumacher** seconded. All in attendance approved. **Andy Howard** abstained because they were not at the meeting.
- 10:50 **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU**, made small changes to the agenda for expediency.
- 10:52 Guest Presentation: "IBHE Updates", Valerie Lynch, Senior Managing Director, Illinois Board of Higher Education. Dr. Lynch opened her remarks by expressing gratitude to the Faculty Advisory Council members for their service in representing both their institutions and the State of Illinois. Lynch noted that she had worked at Lake Land College for 18 years, and was a graduate. She was the VP for Student Services at LLC and collaborated with the VP of Academic Affairs. She then turned her attention to student needs, particularly the growing issue of food insecurity across campuses. The IBHE seeks to inform campus policies through evidence-based research. She proposed that the FAC establish a working group dedicated to addressing this challenge and emphasized that our role as educators and council members is to help meet the evolving needs of students. She invited the council's input and guidance on how best to move this initiative forward.
- 10:56 **Jason Edgar, Morton College**, asked how this connects to "A Thriving Illinois." She said that finding those connections is important and that the Governor's policy should be our guiding light.

Dr. Lynch continued her presentation by providing updates on IBHE staffing, new units, and organizational restructuring including divisions of Academic Strategy and Quality, and Talent and Workforce Development. She highlighted the institution's three guiding pillars: Equity, Sustainability, and Growth.

- 11:03 She also reviewed the **Academic Program Evaluation and Efficiency Report**, noting recent changes, including the implementation of a standardized rubric. This rubric provides

insight into program outcomes, identifies programs demonstrating strong performance, and flags programs that have been discontinued, offering a more structured approach to evaluating academic offerings and that The IBHE is a coordinating, not a regulatory body.

- 11:08 **Amy Carr, WIU**, inquired about the reasons for the changes to the rubric. **Jill Gebke, IBHE**, explained that the updates were prompted by the introduction of a hard deadline this year, which necessitated a more structured approach. Additionally, she noted that the previous rubric was outdated, and updating it ensures that the Academic Program Evaluation and Efficiency Report remains meaningful and accurately reflects program performance. Jill ended by saying they are attempting to provide up-to-date information.
- 11:11 **Cynthia Boyce, Lincoln Trail College**, asked who the program is focused on, and Jill said it was for the four-year public institutions, and they have been informed. **Paul Bialek, Oakton College**, asked the same question.
- 11:13 **Dr. Lynch** moved on to **Reduced-Credit Bachelor's Degrees** and showing in some parts of the country a reduction in credits for a Bachelor's Degree, like Kansas and Florida, is being considered. The IBHE might convene a cross-sector working group about this topic; they are in the early research phase. Workforce needs are driving this exploration.
- 11:17 **Amy Carr, WIU**, asked: what is the IBHE's vision of what a baccalaureate degree is? If a BA or BS is all about a student's major, then it makes sense to reduce the total number of credit hours for a bachelor's degree, and to be intellectually honest about communicating that a baccalaureate is really just about a student's major (and maybe minor). But if a broader liberal arts and sciences foundation is part of what it means to be educated with a baccalaureate, then shrinking the total hours would seem to erode that foundation.
- 11:18 **Sue Wiediger, SIU Edwardsville**, shared that her college is undertaking a similar initiative to reduce the total number of credits required for degree completion, since "everyone else is doing it," as her administration says. One strategy is to cut out a minor. Sue asked, though, if employers recognize these degrees as qualitatively different. We don't want to say that a reduced-credit bachelor's degree is the exact same degree, and then have questions about whether it enables the same success. While the approach resembles credit for prior learning, the institution is not labeling it as such. Discussions are ongoing regarding which courses—whether general education or major-specific—could be adjusted or reduced to streamline degree pathways. **Nicole Zeller, Eastern Illinois University**, narrated similar feelings from her institution. She [Nicole] added that there are standards in curriculum that are hard to cut. One needs to look at the accreditation bodies, including professional associations. Professional careers need the humanities, need diverse thought processes. Dr. Lynch restated that it's an ongoing discussion that probably won't get solved in this speech but in our working groups.
- 11:24 **Dr. Lynch** discussed the launch of the **SUCCESS** program, Supporting Universities and Colleges in Creating Equitable Student Success. October 17th is the launch day, with the hopes of having an equity champion at each institution within the year. SUCCESS will "accelerate equity plan implementation by offering 3 different opportunities for collective learning and support" in relation to three communities of practice: holistic advising/FYE,

supporting student basic needs, and reducing DFW rates. The IBHE will produce podcast episodes for data use for equity, and offer targeted technical assistance. An update will be required from every public university on their equity plan implementation by May 2026.

- 11:27 **Sue Wiediger, SIU Edwardsville**, asked if the material is available, and Dr. Dr. Lynch said no because of the current political climate.
- 11:29 **Dr. Lynch** transitioned to Workforce and Behavioral Health Initiatives and spoke about finding ideas to get students more engaged and getting a pulse check on current FAC IBHE topics. We did not have time to discuss these or legislative considerations related to them, but those topics include the community college baccalaureate (HB 3717; IBHE has a study underway), equity plan implementation, reduced-credit bachelor's degrees, AI in teaching and learning (data privacy, academic integrity), Federal Accreditation Reform (April 2025 Executive Order), which has an outcome-based focus; and national trends regrading faculty governance and shared decision-making.
- 11:30 **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU**, recessed the meeting for lunch.
- 12:15 **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU** reconvened the meeting.
- 12:16 **Chair Report- Dan Hrozencik, CSU**, IBHE Chair Pranav announced that he will attend both the upcoming December Zoom and Rockford meeting in March. He noted that individual Zoom participation will no longer be permitted at in-person meetings unless an ADA accommodation is requested. He also mentioned that additional onboarding meetings are being scheduled. The next IBHE Board Meeting is scheduled for November 12th in Elgin, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Chair Dan Hrozencik shared that he has sent out a request for participation in a Library Task Force and distributed a draft of the Competency and Numeracy Plan. Members were encouraged to ensure their institutions are represented at these meetings and to report back on relevant developments. He also emphasized the importance of continued engagement and communication between institutions and the Board to maintain alignment on statewide initiatives.
- 12:35 **Vice Chair Report- Jack Haines, Joliet Junior College**, A discussion was initiated regarding the possibility of moving the May meeting date up by one week to avoid conflicting with graduation ceremonies. **Marie Donovan, DePaul University**, inquired whether the change would affect the council's ability to meet with legislators. **Mike Phillips, IVCC, Legislative Liaison**, responded that while attendance might be slightly smaller, legislators would still be available for meetings during the adjusted timeframe. **Greg Ferrence, ISU, noted** that faculty participation might be limited since the semester would have concluded. After several exchanges about dates and potential disruptions, **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU**, said that the date should remain unchanged to avoid further scheduling issues. Jack continued by stating that he will post the poll for the next meeting on the FAC website. He then transitioned to a discussion about the need for schools to host in 2026–2027.
- 12:45 **Secretary Report- Jason Edgar, Morton College**, noted that the membership list has been updated and is now available on the FAC website. Members who are not receiving meeting minutes in advance were advised to check the website for access. The minutes will undergo a

few executive edits prior to being finalized and posted online. **Greg Ferrence, ISU**, asked about stipulation for posting minutes. **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU**, said that it shouldn't be a problem since it's the draft of the minutes.

12:50 **Legislative Liaison Mike Phillips, IVCC**, provided an update on several bills currently under review, including legislation related to employee benefits and the purchase of annuities. He noted that a bill which would address how the SURS self-managed plan currently requires employees who chose this plan to put at least 50% into annuities. has passed the House but is currently stalled. He also emphasized the importance of communicating to students that Illinois offers student benefits not available in other states. **Tiffany Puckett, NIU**, commented that Career Services offices typically do not provide this type of information to students. For example, Illinois might advertise that unlike other states, like Texas, Iowa, North Dakota, and Missouri, Illinois does not limit what can be taught in the classroom, such as by only recognizing two genders, period (which is inaccurate). Elsewhere student support services have been eliminated for students in relation to race, gender, etc.

Mike added that approximately half of the faculty in Texas are reportedly seeking employment elsewhere. Mike spoke to the Governor in August about his advertising ideas regarding Illinois higher ed, and the Governor's office directed him to talk to the IBHE. How to be visible to students in other states, as well as those in Illinois. **Shaalein Lopez, Governors State University**, questioned why the state is not acting if faculty retention is such a widespread issue. **Sue Wiediger, SIUE**, suggested that language regarding sex and gender in related legislation should be carefully reviewed and considered. For example, there is difference between saying there are two sexes and two genders. **Jill Gebke, IBHE**, said that we should explore these answers on our own campuses. **Amy Carr, WIU**, asked if the stalled bill was for public universities or community college, and Mike said he thinks it's just for community colleges. **Marie Donovan, DePaul University** suggested talking to the Illinois School Counselors Association about Mike's recruiting/advertising ideas. Jill said to let admissions officers and recruiters know this about Illinois—rather than focus on out-of-state schools. UIUC has targeted ads like this. Mike thinks the One Click Illinois page might add this set of reasons for staying in Illinois. Mike ended by talking about federally funded programs, like the TRIO Program, which provides extra support for students. He encouraged FAC members to review their TRIO programs on campus. **Lara Hernandez-Corkrey, MVCC**, said that TRIO programs have already been cut, and institutions and students may not even know it yet. TRIO supports first-generation and low-income college students and has a great track record. Diversity is one of its goals, so it could go away under the current federal administration. Mike suggested we each find out more about our own TRIO programs and tell federal legislators how it helps students across the board. Tena added that some TRIO programs have already been cut.

12:54 **Jill Gebke, IBHE**, reported that she had no formal updates at this time. **Amy Carr, WIU**, asked about her email wondering if the IBHE has any IBHE contact person to help higher ed institutions identify what sorts of ADA compliance is considered reasonable or unreasonable. Jill advised members to connect with their institutional peers or designated point persons for clarification. Amy also asked if the IBHE had a response to the concern that the University of Illinois was paying a private recruiting company half of the tuition dollars for online students it recruited. Jill had no response to share to this question. She

added that she had no additional items to report but briefly discussed updates to a recruitment-related bill, which includes new provisions prohibiting practices such as offering higher commissions for advisors enrolling students in classes.

- 12:56 **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU**, divided the council into caucus sessions.
- 12:58 Caucus Meetings
- 1:25 Working Group Meetings
- 2:05 **Public Institutions Caucus- Amy Carr, WIU**, spoke about a number of things: digital accessibility and ADA compliance, and the structure of faculty governance in relation to union leadership. **Tiffany Puckett, NIU**, disclosed that her school was one of five schools in the country to receive a student success award.
- 2:08 **Two-Year Caucus- Cynthia Boyce, Lincoln Trail**, spoke about introducing the caucus to its new members. The caucus spoke about ADA compliance issue challenges in the state, and the issues for community college when it comes to reduced credits for an AA and an AS.
- 2:09 **Private Caucus- Andy Howard, IIT**, expressed concern about students leaving IL to pursue degrees out of state and discussed matters related to prior learning assessment. He said that the disappearance of GRAC-Plus loans was a huge problem for graduate programs (**Kristine Burgess** added that this was true at **Rosalind-Franklin** as well). He also addressed upcoming federal policy issues concerning student visas and raised concerns about the 90–108 credit hour range, emphasizing that degree programs need to demonstrate greater value. Andy suggested that a reduced-credit degree should be called something other than a baccalaureate degree. He wonders if an abuse of prior learning assessment could be a factor in this. The caucus also proposed inviting a representative from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) to a future FAC meeting, adding that HLC HQ is in Chicago.
- 2:14 **Higher Education Funding working group - Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU**, said that the funding working group is going on hiatus, unless the funding bill returns.
- 2:15 **Equity working group- James Marshall, Rockford University**, discussed DFW rates both for Faculty and student support offices, adding that HLC has some information on this subject.
- 2:23 **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) working group- Marie Donovan, DePaul University**, reported that they completed a project analyzing the content of every college's website. She indicated that this information would be shared with the FAC. During the consortium meeting, the findings were discussed, and recommendations for policies and guidelines were proposed.
- 2:26 **Faculty and Student Mental Health working group- Sue Wiediger, SIUE**, said that the group didn't have much to discuss, as they work through IRB approval for a faculty mental health survey, so they discussed shared governance.

- 2:27 **Early College working group- Amy Carr, WIU**, said that the group continued working on a document that compares NACEP to the Dual Credit Quality Act.
- 2:28 **Technology working group- Jack Haines, JJC**, discussed geographical issues with tech, economic issues with tech, and faculty skill sets so they can help students with technology. On the subject of AI, how do faculty stay relevant? Are micro-credentials the future of AI and education tech? **Mike Phillips, IVCC**, says these micro-credentials are useful.
- 2:30 **Student Needs Working Group, Cynthia Boyce, Lincoln Trail**, discussed the first meeting of the group and the specific needs that students are looking for including food and housing, adding that this info could be gathered with a survey. Also, how are campuses selecting these students who have student needs? **Tena Helton, UIS**, asked how colleges are deciding who is needy, and **Jill Gebke, IBHE**, noted that the IBHE does not collect this data.
- 2:38 **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU**, thanked Lake Land College and the local coordinators, Matt Landrus and Sarah Hill and their team, and sought a motion to adjourn. **Marie Donovan with the motion, Shawn Shoemaker with the 2nd**. Unanimous consent

Minutes respectfully submitted by *Secretary Jason Edgar, Morton College*

DRAFT