



Faculty Advisory Council Illinois Board of Higher Education

MINUTES

19 December 2025 Meeting Agenda

ZOOM

FAC members/alternates attending and their institutions

Mary Laundry	Adler University
Daniel J. Coles	Aurora University
Patricia Saleeby	Bradley University
Dan Hrozencik	Chicago State University
Marie Donovan	DePaul University
Shawn Schumacher	DeVry University
Irene Jacobsen	Eastern Illinois University
Allison Douglas	Elgin Community College
Shaalein Lopez	Governors State University
Jill Gebke	IBHE Director of Student Success
Nkechi Onwuameza	IBHE Director of Academic Strategy and Quality
Trish Aumann	IBHE Managing Director of Academic Strategy & Programs
Andy Howard	Illinois Institute of Technology
Greg Ferrence	Illinois State University
Mike Phillips	Illinois Valley Community College (at-large)
Jack Haines	Joliet Junior College
Matt Landrus	Lake Land College
Sarah Hill	Lake Land College
Cynthia Boyce	Lincoln Trail College (at-large)
Paula Deanda	Moraine Valley Community College
Lara Hernandez Corkrey	Moraine Valley Community College
Jason Edgar	Morton College
Brooke Johnson	Northeastern Illinois University
Tiffany Puckett	Northern Illinois University
Paul Bialek	Oakton Community College
Jessica McDonald	Olney Central College
James Marshall	Rockford University
Kristine Burgess	Rosalind Franklin University
Sarah Garber	Rosalind Franklin University (MS)
Lichang Wang	Southern Illinois University-Carbondale
Sue Wiediger	Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

Tyrone Forman	University of Illinois-Chicago
Kristi Barnwell	University of Illinois- Springfield
Gay Miller	University of Illinois- Urbana Champaign
Tosha Baker	Wabash College
Amy Carr	Western Illinois University

Absent:

Nicole Zeller	Eastern Illinois University
Mary Ellen Schiller	Roosevelt University

- 9:00 **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU**, called the Zoom meeting to order and introduced IBHE Chair Pranav Kothari.
- 9:01 **IBHE Chair Pranav Kothari** began by responding to the prepared questions. He noted that many of the questions focused on budgetary concerns and explained that multiple staff members are currently working on these issues. While Kothari acknowledged that the agency has been short-staffed, he indicated that those positions are in the process of being filled. He emphasized that resources are being aligned with institutional priorities to ensure progress, and stated that, from a staffing perspective, operations are moving in a positive direction.
- 9:06 **IBHE Chair Kothari** also noted that some budgets remain tight, but cautioned against negotiating at this stage, as doing so would effectively mean negotiating with ourselves to make premature concessions. In response to a question about the funding formula task force being finalized in 2024, he stated that while the work is complete, it is not possible to predict when the formula will ultimately be passed. He explained that consultant firms have run extensive models aimed at identifying more equitable ways to support students, but emphasized that the final decision rests with the legislature. He concluded by transitioning to upcoming policy considerations for the new year, including federal financial aid changes, and noted that loan capacity may be extended to allow students to borrow through graduate school.
- 9:12 **IBHE Chair Kothari** then shifted to a different set of questions, beginning with concerns about community colleges offering limited baccalaureate degrees and the potential for those programs, if not carefully structured, to encroach on community college associate-degree programs or duplicate offerings at four-year institutions. Kothari emphasized that the goal of the initiative is to create clear educational pathways, particularly for rural students who lack access to nearby universities, and noted that when the initiative launches it will include significant parameters, including assurances that any new community college baccalaureate degree would not displace enrollment at a nearby four-year institution and would be narrowly focused on programs responding to specific economic needs within a geographic region, consistent with approaches adopted in other states, with IBHE positioned to execute and support its implementation. He acknowledged that the program is relatively new and will require continued learning, but expressed optimism about its long-term potential. Chair Kothari also reported that statewide enrollment gains are generally positive, though unevenly distributed across regions, and encouraged academic leaders to contact IBHE with any

questions or concerns. He stressed that the IBHE would be nervous about putting in parameters for enrollment at various public universities, since each higher ed institution in Illinois has its own board (unlike in some other states). The IBHE plays a coordinating function only.

- 9:18 **IBHE Chair Pranav Kothari** then transitioned to questions related to diversity and equity, reaffirming that IBHE has not removed diversity language from its materials and continues to encourage all institutions to pursue and meet their stated diversity goals. He emphasized that these efforts remain an important part of IBHE's broader mission and institutional expectations. **IBHE Chair Kothari** also briefly addressed questions regarding course numbering, clarifying that no mandates or directives have been imposed at the state or regional level, and that institutions retain autonomy in this area.
- 9:24 **Patricia Salesby (Bradley)** raised a question regarding changes to the classification of professional degrees, such as nursing, specifically in relation to which graduate-level degrees qualify as "professional" for purposes of eligibility for Direct GRAD loans above the standard borrowing cap. **IBHE Chair Kothari** responded that he was surprised by the reclassification, but noted that it presents an opportunity for professional and trade organizations to step up with career pathways.
- 9:25 **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** asked whether IBHE currently has a strategic plan. **IBHE Chair Kothari** responded that a plan does exist, but its implementation was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and emphasized that revisiting and refreshing the plan is an important next step.
- 9:28 **Marie Donovan (DePaul)** expressed appreciation for the Chair's participation in the meeting and then asked whether the Board has engaged colleges and universities in discussions about concerns related to degrees potentially shifting to community colleges. She stressed that given the many online partnerships between community colleges and 4-year institutions, the core problem is affordability, not accessibility. **IBHE Chair Kothari** responded that such conversations are already occurring, noting that institutions frequently raise these issues directly with the Board. He emphasized that the goal is not to displace students based on geographic proximity and reiterated that communication between IBHE and colleges and universities remains strong. He concluded by noting that the IBHE will continue to retain regulatory authority in this area.
- 9:32 **Amy Carr (WSU)** asked who are the conversation partners he might recommend for naming, navigating, or critiquing the effects of the rise of dual credit and other early college courses on the shape of higher education as a whole? (For example: unique Gen Ed programs at public universities are increasingly difficult to create, when so much credit and GECC-related expectations are embedded into high school and community college Gen Ed.) **IBHE Chair Kothari** agreed with the concern regarding deferred maintenance and stated that capital needs would be addressed at a future meeting. Carr then mentioned that the Illinois Articulation Initiative narrows the kind of courses that can be developed for transfer, and this in turn limits what participating 4-years can create by way of Gen Ed. This means that schools like the University of Chicago that do not participate in IAI can offer unique liberal arts/sciences university degree requirements. Who are the conversation partners to

talk about the effects of IAI and the rise of early college on the shape of higher education as a whole, including universities' ability to create unique Gen Ed requirements?

IBHE Chair Kothari responded that he didn't know. The desires of parents seemed to be driving shifts to early college. He added that college students are not only 18-22-year olds, which is why workforce PELL etc. comes up. There are many understandings of what college is about, and there is no single answer, noting that the issue is complex and context-dependent, and shared several anecdotes from his time in Ohio to illustrate the range of possible approaches. He emphasized that the question requires clearer definitions and depends heavily on the individuals and institutions involved in the conversation.

- 9:38 **Patricia Saleeby (Bradley)** added that in many closed Facebook groups with parents, there is discussion of using AP/IB and dual credit courses to “knock out” Gen Ed courses, both to save money and to fast track to get to (say) medical school as soon as possible.
- 9:40 **Vice Chair Jack Haines (JJC)** referred to talking points in the chat and Kothari took those points. The talking points referred to specific examples of deferred maintenance.
- 9:41 **Patricia Saleeby (Bradley)** posed a broader question about strategies for reaching families to highlight the value of an Illinois education, including the potential use of state treasury resources as an incentive to encourage students to remain in-state through the creation of baby bonds. She is thinking of a working group on it. Such funds would be available those who stay in Illinois. **IBHE Chair Kothari** responded positively, stating that he found the idea compelling and expressed interest in reviewing the research paper she referenced. Saleeby indicated that she would share the paper with FAC leadership.
- 9:45 **Chair Dan Hrozencik (CSU)** shared his experience working with state bonds (Illinois State Scholarship) and noted that the State Treasurer has a state sponsored 529 program. **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** added that he believes this particular funding mechanism was eliminated in the 1980s.
- 9:48 **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** also stated that he appreciated SIU–Carbondale administration being included in FAC discussions, noting that coordination between campus administrations and IBHE would be beneficial overall, particularly for institutions hosting FAC meetings.
- 9:49 **Amy Carr (WIU)** asked about complaints related to early college credit courses and violations to academic freedom. **IBHE Chair Kothari** responded that there is a designated section addressing these concerns on the IBHE website, clarifying that higher education–related issues fall under IBHE, while complaints involving high schools are handled by the local school district. **Patricia Saleeby (Bradley)** raised the issue of students leaving the state for education, emphasizing the importance of acknowledging that, for some students, leaving Illinois may be preferable. She asked whether there is a policy mechanism to create scholarships as an incentive to retain students in-state. **IBHE Chair Kothari** responded that it was a strong idea and also noted that many students who leave the state for education eventually return after completing their degrees. He concluded by emphasizing that these discussions and policies are ongoing. **Amy Carr (WIU)** voiced concern that baby bonds would add to family pressure on students to choose an in-state school, rather than to follow a pull to where they might most like to go—such as a selective liberal arts college in another state.

- 9:56 **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** asked about an issue related to the SURS Self-Managed Plan that he and several colleagues have been working on for several years and. In order for a Self-Managed Plan participant to be considered "retired" and eligible to participate in state-sponsored retirement health insurance, the law currently requires them to purchase an annuity with at least 50% of their plan savings. HB 2378 would remove that requirement and allow retirees to continue to manage their retirement savings while also being eligible to participate in state-sponsored retirement health insurance. **IBHE Chair Kothari** responded that he serves on the SURS Board and welcomed any information Phillips wished to share.
- 10:00 **Chair Dan Hrozencik (CSU)** thanked Chair Kothari for his time and participation, and then transitioned the meeting to executive reports.
- 10:02 **Vice Chair Jack Haines (JJC)** reported that January polling results were very strong. He also stated that the host schedule for the following year was largely in place, with the exception of September, which still requires confirmation.
- 10:03 **Secretary Jason Edgar (Morton College)** reported that there were no substantive updates from the secretary's position. He noted that the membership list is current and that the minutes under consideration contained only minor corrections, with nothing further to report.
- 10:05 **Legislative Liaison Mike Phillips (IVCC)** discussed common course numbering, stating that it is primarily an Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) issue rather than a legislative one. **Marie Donovan (DePaul)** asked whether community college presidents support common course numbering, to which Phillips responded that they do not, noting that there is currently no demonstrated need for it.
- 10:08 **Nkechi Onwuameza (IBHE Director of Academic Strategy and Quality)** provided updates from IBHE, and noted that in November, Governor Pritzker signed a bill with changes to the Diversifying Faculty Initiative (DFI) that remove racial-specific definitions of eligibility. Now Pell eligibility is key for DFI applicants, and they are restricted to serving in public universities and introduced **Trish Aumann, Managing Director of Academic Strategy and Programs for the Illinois Board of Higher Education**. She will support institutions for program reviews and assessments. Nkechi and Jill both report to Trish.
- 10:17 **Marie Donovan (DePaul)** asked for additional information about Trish Aumann. **Trish Aumann (IBHE)** shared highlights from her professional background, including work with early college programs and service in administrative roles such as Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs. She noted her roots in the St. Louis area, which have given her familiarity with institutions in that region, and expressed enthusiasm about working with FAC, including collaboration with the dual credit group.
- 10:21 **Chair Dan Hrozencik (CSU)** passed the meeting to **Secretary Jason Edgar (Morton College)** who sought a motion to approve the minutes. **Jack Haines (JCC)** motioned to approve and **Gay Miller (UIUC)** seconded. The minutes were approved with the following

abstentions: **Jessica McDonald (Olney Central College)**, **Amy Carr (WIU)**, and **Patricia Saleeby (Bradley)**.

- 10:23 **Patricia Saleeby (Bradley)** and **Greg Ferrence (ISU)** led a discussion on baby bonds as well as in-state scholarships at their schools now and in the past. Greg stressed that he would like the money from such funds to be able to go to housing as well; there are already many options for covering tuition.
- 10:27 **Marie Donovan (DePaul)** provided an introduction for **Brian Durham (ICCB)**, who opened with a discussion of common course numbering, outlining both its potential advantages and drawbacks. Some of the pros include increased transfer clarity and predictability, stronger equity outcomes, streamlined articulations and statewide alignment, administrative efficiency, and increased student confidence. The cons are a decrease in academic autonomy and faculty governance, superficial equivalence and its associated risks, the burden of implementing and maintaining a common course numbering system, and the drawbacks of a one-size-fits-all assumption. He noted that common course numbering remains “on the table” and emphasized that implementation would involve a lengthy ramp-up period. He suggested community colleges might voluntarily take this on, perhaps with AI assistance. He added that the common core numbering initiative comes from community college presidents, not from the ICCB.
- 10:34 **Marie Donovan (DePaul)** also asked why the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) is not sufficient, Durham stated that he does not view common course numbering and IAI as mutually exclusive. **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** asked why the IAI system could not simply be revised or improved, to which **Durham (ICCB)** responded that a lack of consistency across institutions remains a challenge. He encouraged faculty to engage their campus administrations to ensure that faculty perspectives are included in these discussions.
- 10:39 **Kristi Barnwell (UIS)** expressed concerns about the feasibility of common course numbering, citing issues related to course number loss, expiration, and the administrative time required, which she argued could detract from one-on-one student engagement. She also noted the potential financial and workload costs, suggesting these resources might be better directed toward instruction. **Durham (ICCB)** responded that any such efforts would involve both two- and four-year institutions, reiterated that the approaches are not mutually exclusive, and again emphasized the importance of faculty participation in the conversation.
- 10:42 **Brian Durham (ICCB)** then transitioned to a discussion of three-year bachelor’s degree pathways at community colleges, outlining three key points. First, he described the model as one tool among many rather than a comprehensive solution to workforce demands in high demand applied fields, like nursing, cybersecurity, early childhood, and health care. Second, he emphasized a focus on nontraditional, place-bound students. Third, he noted that guardrails would be built into the program. In response to a question from the chat, he clarified that participation in the program would not be mandatory, though some institutions may choose to adopt it in response to high demand.
- 10:47 **Durham (ICCB)** also addressed questions related to third-party marketing and course organization platforms like Coursera, noting that ICCB has limited influence over those

decisions. Third-party marketing and course organization platforms might accelerate growth and improve delivery, especially for online and adult-focused programs. But they introduce real risks related to cost, academic control, data governance, and mission alignment. With focus they can function as revenue generators and recruitment tools. Their use is most defensible when narrowly-scoped, faculty-governed, transparent, and periodically reassessed against public-interest goals. Ultimately, these are local curricular decisions made by institutions. There is real tension between the workforce mission of education and the academic mission of institutions. He explained that appointments to the ICCB Board are made by the Governor, not the Board itself, and noted that one member is currently serving beyond an expired term. He stated that there are no specific due dates for transitional instruction reports and provided his contact information in the event FAC members encounter difficulties reaching ICCB staff. He further noted that ICCB does not maintain emergency funds specifically for students, but indicated that other funding mechanisms may be available to address student needs. He concluded by briefly discussing funding formulas, noting that community colleges already operate under their own established formulas.

- 10:56 **Brian Durham (ICCB)** then addressed adequacy and equity in community college funding, discussing factors such as data analysis, base formula funding, targeted allocations, and potential revisions. He noted that the legislative timing for these measures can be unpredictable, moving quickly or slowly depending on circumstances. Illinois community colleges have 3 formulas across unrestricted grants and additional formulas for some restricted funds: base operating (credit hour generating), equalization (property tax leveling), and performance-based funding--momentum points (nominal dollars).
- 11:08 **Amy Carr (WIU)** inquired about the various ways that dual credit courses are FUNDED across the state. He responded that a lot of dual credit funding is "in load" for faculty and for high school teachers alike.
- 11:11 **Brian Durham (ICCB)** discussed how instructional workload is allocated for early credit courses. **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** added that at his institution, high school instructors teaching dual credit courses are not compensated by the college, while community college adjuncts are paid when they teach courses on the high school campus.
- 11:13 **Amy Carr (WIU)** asked where faculty could submit academic complaints related to early college programs. **Durham (ICCB)** provided contact information but noted that ICCB has limited authority in these matters and he would want to talk to his academic team before first. He then used this as an opportunity to transition to a discussion of diversity goals, emphasizing that ICCB's position is to comply with applicable law.
- 11:17 **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** asked whether there is a way to preserve the TRIO program. **Durham (ICCB)** responded that ICCB faces similar challenges and emphasized that both organizations should take a strategic approach to funding these programs. He noted that, as with many initiatives in 2025, federal funding remains uncertain and advised assuming it will likely be a tight funding year.
- 11:20 **Brian Durham (ICCB)** discussed that, under state law, community colleges (not universities) have the right of first enrollment for dual credit students. **Jack Haines (JJC)**

raised a concern about an apparent inequity, noting that high school dual credit classes are capped at 36 students, while comparable community college classes are capped at 20. Durham recommended contacting your Chief Academic Officer (CAO). He added that the CAO organization has developed a best-practices guide on dual credit.

- 11:25 **Cynthia Boyce (Lincoln Trail College)** asked about placement standards for dual credit courses and how those standards vary for high schools versus for community colleges. **Durham (ICCB)** advised that such concerns are generally governed by campus policies and partnerships with high schools, and recommended speaking directly with the relevant Deans.
- 11:28 **Marie Donovan (DePaul)** asked about cost studies related to early college programs. **Durham (ICCB)** responded that ICCB has not conducted a feasibility study locally, but noted that similar studies have been completed elsewhere in the country. Donovan also inquired about ICCB's funding request from Santa, to which Durham indicated that the agency is seeking \$50,000.
- 11:30 **Chair Dan Hrozencik (CSU)** casually dismissed the meeting for lunch.
- 12:45 Working Groups
- 1:30 Caucus Meetings
- 2:00 Working Groups/ Caucus Reports
- 2:00 **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)- Marie Donovan (DePaul)** said they are waiting to speak to individuals pertinent to the group and had nothing to report.
- 2:01 **Faculty and Student Mental Health- Sue Wiediger (SIUE)** said that there was nothing to report.
- 2:02 **Equity- Tyrone Forman (UIC)** said they are talking about making recommendations for students with disabilities.
- 2:03 **Early Credit- Amy Carr (WIU)** reported that they are preparing a draft comparing NACEP and Illinois Dual Credit Quality Act standards and noted that discussions included the need for consistent class sizes between high school and college campuses. **Daniel Coles (AU)** added that while larger high schools can maintain such consistency, smaller high schools may face challenges in doing so.
- 2:07 **Technology- Greg Ferrence (ISU)** said there was nothing to report. They want to have a discussion of digital literacy, but the discussion always comes back to AI.
- 2:09 **Student Needs- Cynthia Boyce (Lincoln Trail College)** explained that the group has collaborated to develop a set of definitions to better clarify its purpose and discussed plans for the coming months. She noted, however, that there will not be any significant reports or outcomes to share this year.

- 2:13 **Independent School Caucus- Shawn Schumacher (DeVry)** said the group discussed basic course numbering from an independent school perspective, noting that it would present challenges and that the caucus does not plan to recommend support for it. They also mentioned that they will address the DePaul layoffs at their next meeting.
- 2:15 **Two-Year Caucus- Cynthia Boyce (Lincoln Trail College)** said the group also discussed common course numbering, weighing potential benefits against associated costs. She noted that the majority of the conversation focused on this topic and concluded that the costs likely outweigh the benefits, particularly if improvements can be made to IAI codes. She added that even faculty members sometimes find the codes confusing, highlighting the potential for even greater confusion among students and parents. **Gay Miller (UIUC)** noted that while there is little literature highlighting disadvantages, there is extensive literature on the advantages of course numbering, though most of it focuses on community colleges. **Jack Haines (JJC)** suggested that FAC compile the course numbering discussions from the minutes into a one-page document as a preliminary summary or “opening salvo.”
- 2:25 **Public Institutions Caucus- Amy Carr (WIU)** continued the discussion of numbering and the public caucus is against it. She agreed with Jack’s idea to compile the numbering discussions in the minutes.
- 2:59 **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU,** sought a motion to adjourn. **Jack Haines (JJC)** made the motion to adjourn, **Andy Howard (IIT)** seconded. Unanimous consent.

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