



Faculty Advisory Council Illinois Board of Higher Education

20 February 2026 Meeting Agenda
IBHE FAC Meeting
Via Zoom

FAC members/alternates attending and their institutions

In person:

Mary Laundry	Adler University
Patrick Crawford	Augustana College
Daniel J. Coles	Aurora University
Dan Hrozencik	Chicago State University
Shawn Schumacher	DeVry University
Nicole Zeller	Eastern Illinois University
Allison Douglas	Elgin Community College
Shaalein Lopez	Governors State University
Nkechi Onwuameza	IBHE Director of Academic Strategy and Quality
Trish Aumann	IBHE Managing Director of Academic Strategy & Programs
Andy Howard	Illinois Institute of Technology
Mike Phillips	Illinois Valley Community College (at-large)
Jack Haines	Joliet Junior College
Matt Landrus	Lake Land College
Lara Hernandez Corkrey	Moraine Valley Community College
Jason Edgar	Morton College
Juan Martinez	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
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
Danielle Trapp	Wabash Valley College
Tosha Baker	Wabash Valley College
Amy Carr	Western Illinois University

Absent:

Patricia Saleeby	Bradley University
Marie Donovan	DePaul University
Greg Ferrence	Illinois State University

Cynthia Boyce
Mary Ellen Schiller

Lincoln Trail College (at-large)
Roosevelt University

- 9:00 **Chair Dan Hrozencik (Chicago State University)** called the meeting to order and opened with a discussion regarding Congresswoman Castro. He reported receiving multiple emails indicating that she would be unable to attend and described efforts to secure replacement speakers, which were ultimately unsuccessful. He also discussed potential locations for future meetings and outlined the agenda and activities typically associated with the May meeting at the Capitol. Chair Hrozencik referenced the IBHE Board's proposed budget allocations and noted significant public comment urging the release of funding. He then asked whether any members had attended the IBHE board meeting. **Tiffany Puckett (Northern Illinois University)** stated that she had not attended but noted that her Faculty Senate is moving forward with resolutions requesting IBHE action on the bill.
- 9:07 **Chair Dan Hrozencik (Chicago State University)** He discussed the slides that were distributed in advance, which focused on higher education and budget recommendations. He highlighted key takeaways from the Coalition for Funding in Higher Education meeting, with particular attention to discussion of the Governor's budget address. He expressed growing frustration with the Governor and the administration's inability to move the funding bill forward, noting that lobbyists do not believe the bill will pass this year. He also shared information about the Coalition for Transforming Higher Education funding website. He discussed two caucus items. First, IBHE Chair Kothari shared via email that he appreciated receiving the questions in advance and asked that questions for the April HLC meeting be submitted to the caucus chairs." **Amy Carr (Western Illinois University)** asked a question concerning moving the website, and Dan said he didn't think it would be an issue. **Tyrone Forman (UIC)** asked who our new liaison to the IBHE will be. **Trish Aumann (IBHE)** said they are interviewing people.
- 9:22 **Jack Haines (Joliet Junior College)** mentioned the March meeting and how well it is going host wise.
- 9:23 **Jason Edgar (Morton College)** had no secretary reports except that the April welcome packet for the meeting is almost done.
- 9:24 **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** stated that he had several items to address. He reviewed the higher education funding website and explained how to use it. He discussed the political dynamics of the budget process following the Governor's proposal and presented a visual aid indicating that higher education funding has not increased since 2019. He noted that the funding bill will not be voted on until May. He reminded the FAC that the General Assembly is required to pass a balanced budget and explained how this requirement can result in tax increases or deficit spending at the state level. He also provided an overview of budget rescissions and their impact. He also mentioned Higher Ed Lobby Day is April 16th.
- 9:36 **Tyrone Forman (UIC)** asked a question needing more understanding on a particular piece of the funding bill in which Mike Phillips did not have information on it. Nkechi (IBHE) said it continues to be funded. **Amy Carr (WIU)** was curious about the bill list not being

received via email. Mike said he had not sent it yet and then sent it in real time. He also said that bills that cut funding are passed in the Spring because they affect students who also do not vote.

- 9:40 **Nkechi Onwuameza and Trish Aumann (IBHE)** provided the IBHE report and discussed recent hires and how they benefit the Board. She highlighted an upcoming event being hosted at Illinois State University focused on addressing student homelessness. **Nkechi** reviewed several programs, including Pell Grants targeting short term, high quality job training for in-demand high wage occupations, and noted key deadlines occurring in July. She stated that the DFI (Diversified Faculty Initiative) remains in existence, has already been reviewed this year, and is fully funded. She also discussed program revamps, including the removal of specific language (DFI no longer targets minorities) and changes to eligibility requirements (i.e., Diversifying Faculty Awards are now only for public universities with at least 35% of the students being PELL eligible). She reported that two invitations were sent to Loyola University Chicago and the College of DuPage to join the FAC, and that neither institution has submitted materials at this time. **Sue Wiediger (SIUE)** asked for IBHE updates to include equity, and Nkechi agreed. **Tyrone Forman (UIC)** asked for clarification on who changed the DFI application process, and whether any modeling has been done on the pool of applicants in comparison to previous years. Nkechi replied that the changes involved interagency work, including the Attorney General's office, to align with federal guidelines. Because they timeline had shifted (delayed by an amendment), they expect a decrease in applicants this year **Amy Carr (WIU)** asked if the FAC would be able to get updates on the IBHE's proposed budget regarding deferred maintenance.
- 9:56 **Nora Heist (IBHE)** discussed revisions to the DFI programs that created changes to the DFI board. She also mentioned how board members come and go on the board, and that members of this advisory council could run for board seats. She expressed the importance for the work that the board does.
- 10:02 **Chair Dan Hrozencik (Chicago State University)** requested approval of the minutes, JH motioned to approve, PB with the second, unanimous consent with two abstentions: JM and TP.
- 10:03 **Chair Dan Hrozencik (Chicago State University)**, with the cancellation of the speaker, asked for a general caucus to discuss topics pertinent to the FAC. He asked what issues should FAC or the IBHE be spending time working on? How do we communicate better with stakeholders? **Sue Wiediger (SIUE)** asked whether there is a need for higher education to separate degrees from credit hours, given the presence of Prior Learning Assessment credits and the pressure to develop degrees with only 90 credit hours. For example, what would these do to faculty workload calculations? She noted that dental hygiene Associate's degrees had almost as many credit hours as a baccalaureate degree. **Kristine Burgess (Rosalind Franklin)** mentioned that her school is having such discussions at the graduate level as well for Physician's Assistant programs (are they moving toward a doctorate rather than a master's degree?). **Jack Haines (JCC)** said the HLC conference in Chicago 21-24 March will have a session on "Creating a Reduced Credit Bachelor's Program". **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** said he is on an accreditation team at his college and they were collecting evidence to send to evaluators—but wondered how to write up narratives, and wondered if they could just be a checklist based on boiler plates. **Andy**

Howard (IIT) said that AI issues are going to be at the forefront of these discussions. **Amy Carr (WIU)** wondered if AI literacy becomes a general ed requirement, then who is discussing IAI expectations? **James Marshall (Rockford)** reiterated that IBHE is serving as the voice for the Governor's decision, but noted that this approach did not feel like appropriate messaging or aligned with the Board's role in advocating for higher education funding. **Nora Heist (IBHE)** explained how the board is approaching the equitable funding formula, and that it has been deeply personal work for the board. She said after the meeting in Elgin, IBHE Chair Pranav went around and got everyone's opinions on higher education funding and equitable funding. **Amy Carr (WIU)** asked a question about IBHE and Heist said she couldn't discuss those talks, or was it something more specifically that Amy was asking for, including implied advocacy. Carr said that the public caucus was discussing these areas. **Gay Miller (UIUC)** said we should move away from disagreements and instead focus on equitable funding for all students, emphasizing the importance of sharing how institutions are using equitable funding while allowing legislators to determine the most realistic way students can access those funds.

10:30 Caucus Meetings

11:30 **Mike Phillips (IVCC)** introduced the following speakers and program:

"Transforming Undergraduate STEM Education: Supporting Equitable and Effective Teaching," A National Academies Consensus Study Report Anne Egger, Professor, Geological Sciences, Science and Mathematics Education, Central Washington University; and Executive Director, National Association of Geoscience Teachers; Archie Holmes (Chair), Professor, Chandra Family Department Electrical and Computer Engineering, The University of Texas at Austin; and Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, The University of Texas System; Kerry Brenner, Study Director, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

11:32 **Brenner** opened with an initial overview of the report, noting that it is designed to address only the most challenging questions. **Holmes** emphasized that the report spans all academic levels and includes a call for future research, clarifying that the focus is not limited to STEM disciplines. He also discussed the acronym VITAL, referring to Visiting Instructors, Temporary faculty, Adjuncts, and Lecturers. **Brenner** then reviewed the framework of the report through the table of contents. **Phillips** raised questions regarding articulation agreements, to which **Brenner** responded that the term "articulation" can be interpreted differently, noting that course-level articulation is clear from a student perspective and that the report's chapters address these issues. **Holmes** added that a central challenge is setting the general knowledge level appropriately, cautioning against making it too high or too low, and recommended keeping it as minimal as possible, citing Texas as a model. **Chair Dan Hrozencik (CSU)** said the standards in Math and Science have changed and was curious how far they are "drilling down" but felt the answer was already addressed by the presenters.

11:51 **Anne Egger** reiterated that the talented instructors within the FAC should not be concerned about the report, noting that these goals are already embedded in their courses and should instead be expanded more broadly across academia. She also discussed how academic disciplines develop their own cultures, particularly in foundational courses that remain central and persistent within STEM fields, and they are in charge of evaluations. Holmes discussed later chapters including equitable and effective learning environments and

valuing and supporting instructors, along with available resources. **Brenner** said that the report was made when an administrator with no pedagogy background wanted to understand more about STEM and wanted resources. Brenner ended by asking for questions.

12:07 Amy Carr (WIU) asked a question about tension in higher education between the major and the liberal arts classes that apply more broadly and asked “do you think higher ed is moving to only majors” and what her thoughts were. **Holmes** expressed the enormous benefits of the broadness of the liberal arts degree and said that some students won’t like it, but mostly students enjoy the overall degree. **Egger** said everyone should have a positive view of STEM, so people aren’t hating science. **Andy Thomas (IIT)** said the faculty will be spending a lot of time changing the coursework, and who is going to make the calls on where the professor should spend their time. **Brenner** says the report solves that problem and discusses the levers and incentives of the system and departments. **Juan Martinez (NEIU)** discussed things found at his school and relationships when students transferred and asked about their challenges. **Holmes** said to go to chapter seven, where there is evidence that students start at one institution and end at another. **Chair Dan (CSU)** thanked the presenters for their time and dismissed the FAC on Zoom to lunch.

12:19 Lunch

12:45 Working Groups

1:30 Reports

Public Institutions Caucus- Amy Carr (WIU) discussed the benefits of having lunch during Zoom meetings as a way to gather her thoughts. The caucus then discussed questions for IBHE Chair Kothari and considered a possible statement to IBHE. Members reviewed the website and explored ways to make it more interactive for both group members and the public. The group also discussed the three-year bachelor’s degree. Sue described a podcast about “what is tenure?” and said that a key argument for tenure had not been academic freedom had not been job security, but the need for a long-term job commitment by faculty for institutional curricular change. Why invest in development of new programs is there are annual contracts instead of tenured faculty? Juan Martinez shared an example from a private university with many adjuncts; they were not invested in as faculty sufficiently to respond to a call for a massive overhaul of the curriculum.

1:33 Private Schools Caucus- Shawn Schumacher (DeVry) started with preparing questions for IBHE Chair Kothari. He said they prepared some really good questions. They also continued the STEM discussion that occurred at 11:30.

1:35 Two-Year Caucus- Jack Haines (JCC) mentioned that the two-year caucus discussed questions to ask the HLC in April, but then got into a discussion about discrepancies regarding early college credit. The group also prepared questions for IBHE Chair Kothari, including questions submitted by Cynthia Boyce.

- 1:38 **Early College working group- Amy Carr (WIU)** said they were down a few individuals, but they were able to discuss NACEP, and one thing they found is an administrative code, and it will be discussed further down the road.
- 1:39 **Technology working group- Jack Haines (JCC)** said the group is working on a document regarding AI concerns, AI's impact on entry level white collar jobs, as well as what administrators are doing to infuse AI into coursework.
- 1:42 **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) working group- Shawn Schumacher (Devry)** said the **Marie Donovan (DePaul)** is meeting individuals to form a coalition for PLA and if there are any questions to reach out to her directly.
- 1:43 **Higher Education Funding working group-** nothing to report
- 1:44 **Equity working group-** nothing to report.
- 1:45 **Student Needs working group- Jessica McDonald (Olney)** continued discussion of student needs survey and if it should be broken into two surveys. More discussions of liaisons at each school and how to reach them. Reiterated the list of student needs by category. The group nominated **Jessica McDonald (Olney)** as Vice Chair of the Student Needs working group. **Amy Carr (WIU)** asked if there were other surveys going out and the group wasn't sure but it would be interesting to know.
- 1:57 **Chair Dan Hrozencik, CSU,** sought a motion to adjourn. JH motioned, TF with the second. Unanimous consent.

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