Military Prior Learning Assessment (MPLA) Task Force
Meeting of February 3, 2016
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Illinois Board of Higher Education
1 N. Old State Capitol Plaza,
Suite 333
Springfield, Illinois 62701-1377

1. Welcome and Introductory remarks
   James Applegate – Executive Director of IBHE
   Provided introductory remarks and welcomed the members of the MPLA Task Force for
   the start of the initial meeting.

2. Introduction of members and general discussion on task force activity by Arthur Sutton
   Taskforce Chair

   Members present:
   Amy Sherman, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning
   Adam Tournier, McKendree University
   Janet Fontenot, Southwestern Illinois College
   Walter Pearson, Loyola University, Chicago
   Charlotte Warren, Lincoln Land Community College
   Cynthia Rathunde, City Colleges of Chicago
   Kim Eck, Illinois Student Assistance Commission
   Jeff Newell, Illinois Community College Board
   Kevin Schott, Office of the Fire Marshal
   Dan Wellman, Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs
   Ron Williams, Western Illinois University
   Arthur Sutton, Task Force Chair, IBHE

   Participants:
   Lumina
   Meegan Dugan-Basset

   Illinois Community College Board staff
   Ashley Becker

   Illinois Board of Higher Education Staff
   Amanda Winters
   Candace Mueller
   Daniel Cullen

Presentation(s)

Amy Sherman – presented on the Illinois Military Prior Learning Assessment Survey
"PLA is a set of *well-established, researched, and validated methods* for assessing non-collegiate learning for college credit."
The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) has conducted a statewide survey of Illinois colleges and universities to identify the use of prior learning assessment (PLA) policies and practices to assist members of the military and veterans to speed up completing college in order to successfully enter the Illinois workforce. Key findings from the Survey include:

- While many colleges and universities offer some form of military PLA, there is a need for greater consistency, transparency, and access to PLA for those students who have served in the military.
- Most responding higher education institutions offer a variety of Military PLA options, a majority of colleges award credit based on a review of the Joint Services Transcript using recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE), and accept credit in transfer from the Community College of the Air Force.
- Limits on the number of PLA credits that can count in a student's degree plan are set by most colleges, yet these limits are not consistent across institutions or even across PLA methods.
- While institutions usually have formal PLA policies that are reviewed regularly, fewer have PLA policies specific to student veterans or members of the military.
- Institutions see many reasons why PLA should be valued, including providing a time-saving avenue for degree completion, providing a cost-effective avenue for degree completion ,and increasing student persistence toward a degree.

The military PLA survey was conducted with assistance from the IBHE and its Faculty Advisory Council, The Illinois Community College Board, and the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs and originated as a project of the Illinois Joining Forces Education Working Group.

Information on IBHE website:
http://www.ibhe.org/Veteran/MPLA/2.3.16CAELPresentation.pdf

Dan Cullen and Amanda Winters – presented on IBHE Academic Affairs Military-Related Initiatives

IBHE Academic Affairs (AA) Staff presented on several inter-connected projects that they are working on to address the issue of veteran credit articulation. The first effort focused on bridges to licensure. This work began back in 2012 and was directed by IDVA under a federal and state mandate to identify the gaps between military training and professional licensure requirements. IBHE, along with other key partners, collaborated on this effort and assessments were completed. Some resulting bridge programs that

resulted from this effort are in the areas of licensed practical nurse, police officer training, and emergency medical technician. AA staff have also participated in the development of a pilot program called Military Training Counts (MTC) which has initially focused on military credit articulation efforts at Illinois community colleges. Several schools have developed articulations in applied and technical fields. The goal of the initiative is to scale up the pilot by bringing on more schools, sharing articulations among per institutions and defining the role for 4-year institutions in this effort. There are plans being developed to hold a day long training and collaborative event for new pilot schools in summer 2016. AA staff have also been actively engaged in a multi-state effort to address veteran articulations efforts. This group, called the Multi-State Collaborative on Military Credit (MCMC) is organized under MHEC and includes 13 states (the MHEC states plus Kentucky). The collaborative received a $900,000 grant from Lumina to fund the initiative for three years. A limited amount of funding comes to eth states to support state level veterans work. The goal of the project is to identify policies and practices to help military service members, veterans, and their families to overcome barriers to access, participation, and completion of a postsecondary credential and entrance into the workforce. IBHE staff participate and lead in some of the workgroups in the collaborative which include; articulation of academic credit; licensure and certification; communication and outreach; and data, technology and systems. The contact people for these initiatives are Dr. Dan Cullen, Deputy Director for Academic Affairs, IBHE (cullen@ibhe.org) and Amanda Winters, Assistant Director for Academic Affairs, IBHE (winters@ibhe.org).
"...the recognition of military learning for academic credit, industry-recognized credentials, and college degrees through the use of prior learning assessment. "
Information on IBHE website:
http://www.ibhe.org/Veteran/MPLA/2.3.16CullenWintersPresentation.pdf

Discussion of policies and work of the group.
Next meeting March 30, 2016