

APPROVED

JUNE 29, 2022

Item #G-2
June 29, 2022

**MINUTES – BOARD MEETING
March 15, 2022**

Submitted for: Action.

Summary: Minutes of the March 15, 2022, meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education held via telephone and video conference as permitted by Public Act 101-0640 enacted June 12, 2020.

Action Requested: That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approve the minutes of the March 15, 2022, Board meeting.



STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

MINUTES – BOARD MEETING
March 15, 2022

A meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) was called to order at 1:00 p.m. via telephone and video conference as permitted by Public Act 101-0640 enacted June 12, 2020. Chair Atkinson determined that a fully in-person meeting is not practical nor prudent due to the disaster.

The following Board members were present: John Atkinson, Chair, Cody Castle, Jennifer Delaney, Andrea Evans, Teresa Garate, Jennifer Garrison, Veronica Gloria, Veronica Herrero, Pranav Kothari, Kenneth Shaw, Samiha Syed, and Eric Zarnikow.

The following Board members were absent: Max Coffey, Derek Douglas, Clarence Wyatt.

Others present: Ms. Ginger Ostro, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Lisa Freeman, Northern Illinois University; Dr. Gloria Gibson, Northeastern Illinois University; Dr. David Glassman, Eastern Illinois University; Dr. Cheryl Green, Governors State University; Dr. Terri Kinzy, Illinois State University; Dr. Dan Mahony, Southern Illinois University; Dr. Shawn Schumacher, Faculty Advisory Council; Dr. Angela Szczepanik-Sanchez, Disabilities Advisory Committee; Mr. Dave Tretter, Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities; Dr. Stephanie Bernoteit, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Sophia Gehlhausen-Anderson, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Eric Lichtenberger, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Mr. Joe Sanders, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Arthur Sutton, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Ms. Jaimee Ray, Illinois Board of Higher Education; and Ms. Tracy Rembusch, Illinois Board of Higher Education.

The meeting was conducted by video conference as allowed by Public Act 101-0640 and roll call votes were recorded for each matter acted upon. The audio of the meeting was recorded and may be requested on the IBHE website.

A. Call to Order/Roll Call

- **Call Meeting to Order, John Atkinson**

Chair John Atkinson called the meeting to order. Board Secretary Rembusch took roll call. A quorum was present.

- **Welcome and Remarks by Chair John Atkinson**

Chair John Atkinson stated that today's meeting is the first of many that will highlight the steps we are taking to address the first goal of *A Thriving Illinois*. He added that we have called on institutions to develop and implement Equity Plans and Practices. IBHE currently has legislation going through the General Assembly that would require public universities and community colleges

and encourage private colleges and universities to establish and implement Equity Plans and Practices.

Chair Atkinson reported that today marks another turning point as Illinois State University and President Terri Kinzy have developed a proposal for a College of Engineering that is designed with an equity lens to help close long-standing gaps in enrollment, retention, and graduation of underrepresented and underserved students in the engineering field.

B. Presentation

Equity Plans and Practices to Close Equity Gaps: A Panel Discussion

Chair Atkinson noted that we have brought together a tremendous panel of experts to launch the first of many conversations on Equity Plans, Practices, and how to Close Equity Gaps. Ms. Lisa Castillo Richmond became Partnership for College Completion's (PCC) second executive director in 2021; Dr. Lisa Freeman is Northern Illinois University's (NIU) 13th president; Dr. Nivine Megahed is the 11th president of National Louis University (NLU); and Dr. Avis Proctor became the sixth president of William Rainey Harper College in July 2019.

- **Ms. Lisa Castillo Richmond, Executive Director, Partnership for College Completion**

Ms. Lisa Castillo Richmond began by describing PCC's mission and vision and Illinois Equity in Attainment (ILEA), a diverse group of 25 colleges and universities. She discussed the core beliefs of ILEA and their equity plan. Ms. Castillo Richmond added that 21 of 25 colleges published equity plans that aim to eliminate gaps in degree completion by race and Pell status. She added that the group did a national scan and adopted a broad template with a clear and concise approach for an equity specific plan.

Ms. Castillo Richmond reported on the current work and future vision and goals of ILEA. She discussed the equity plan development process as a living document and said they are learning as they go. There are three assessment steps: Community of Practice; Annual Evaluation and Reflection; and a formal ILEA Evaluation. She stated that starting in the fall of 2022, PCC will release an annual report of the ILEA initiative and the progress.

She discussed the many ways that PCC supports the ILEA institutions. Ms. Castillo Richmond talked about resources to aid ILEA partners to eliminate disparities in degree completion and connecting ILEA partners to develop new content, programs, and other resources that align with the needs. She noted that it is important to build and maintain relationships with ILEA partners and understand each ILEA partner's institutional culture and context.

- **Dr. Lisa Freeman, President, Northern Illinois University**

Dr. Lisa Freeman noted the vision, mission, and values of NIU. The NIU equity statement was developed in 2019 through inclusive process feedback opportunities provided through focus groups as well as a survey. She stated it is very consistent with the core values of ILEA and a firm belief that all students can succeed if we provide them with the right support.

Dr. Freeman talked about the timeline for how NIU used their planning process and stated that they set annual and multi-year goals. In 2019, they launched their first strategic enrollment management plan and the institutional wide strategic action planning framework followed shortly

after. Dr. Freeman informed the group about NIU SEM (Strategic Enrollment Management) Plan and Accountability Plan with equity at the center. It is data-informed and aligns with the University goals.

Dr. Freeman reported on equitable access, affordability, and opportunity. She talked about the Huskie Pledge; test-free merit scholarships, honors program, and admission; the Common App; and the Rockford Promise.

Dr. Freeman discussed the NIU ILEA Equity Plan. She said they see this as a supplement, or a strategic enrollment management plan given their commitment to equity, and they are excited they had the opportunity to join the ILEA community.

Dr. Freeman shared the actions taken to eliminate the equity gaps in academic achievement. She stated that leadership, collaboration, and accountability are a few things that drive equity on the NIU campus.

- **Dr. Nivine Megahed, President, National-Louis University**

Dr. Nivine Megahed discussed the history of National-Louis University (NLU) and their mission and values. They built their strategic plan with the central pillar being their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The focus is on their students but they also thought about how to address it with faculty and staff.

Dr. Megahed gave a broad perspective on the different areas they reviewed as they built a DEI culture. They looked at human capital and she stated that many of those strategies have already been implemented. Academically they expanded curriculum in general and they are building culturally responsive teaching practices. Dr. Megahed added they are focused on building equitable practices for their students and community overall as well as creating physical space across the university.

Dr. Megahed discussed DEI 2021 progress for faculty, staff, and management/leadership demographics. They conducted low level surveys and were fortunate they were able to really start with a very small base and start over. They addressed every strategic and important issue that would help to drive equity.

Dr. Megahed reported on the Undergraduate College (UGC) which was created to reimagine higher education to drive equity in bachelor's degree attainment and employment. They focused on affordability, broad access admissions, and schedules to help students. Dr. Megahed presented data on the 2020-21 student enrollment which included 70 percent Pell eligible and undocumented and 70 percent first-generation and 70 percent Latinx and Black students. She also reviewed the major accomplishments and strategic priorities for the UGC major.

- **Dr. Avis Proctor, President, Harper Community College**

Dr. Avis Proctor stated that the pandemic has worsened situations for their students, but they are finding ways to support them and keep them on track to meeting their education career goals. She provided a brief overview of Harper Community College (HCC) and remarked on the demographics in 2009 compared to 2019.

Dr. Proctor stated HCC has had a long journey on diversity and inclusion but had not defined equity, so she charged their diversity and inclusion governance committee to develop the process. Their Strategic Plan consists of six goals which are awareness/outreach, core values, equity, partnerships, student success, and teaching and learning. She discussed the 2021-2024 strategic plan to include these six goals and the targets set to align with each.

Dr. Proctor reported that the College's equity gaps were reviewed at the beginning of the Fiscal Year 2021-2024 Strategic plan, and it was clear in their data that there are some gaps they need to pay attention to first. She said the most pressing gaps were present for Black and Latinx students in gateway course success, fall-to-fall persistence rate, and graduation rates. These have been reviewed and she is pleased to report that they have significantly reduced and eliminated equity gaps as a result of self-reflection. The equity related targets focus on equity goals, student success goals, and teaching and learning goals.

Dr. Proctor presented the six equity plan goals and stated the full ILEA Equity Plan is available on their website. She recognized the equity journey continues and discussed a few of those steps. She stated they are having an annual professional development day and the guest will be the executive director for student success at Georgia State University where they closed equity gaps.

Dr. Proctor closed by discussing college affordability and HCC's commitment to supporting the State of Illinois and *A Thriving Illinois*.

A brief discussion was held with Board Members and the panel. Chair Atkinson stated this was an amazingly, inspiring panel and topic and thanked each of them for the work they do and for elevating this work.

C. Reports and Updates

- **Advisory Committee Report – Student Advisory Committee (Mr. Mitchell Ryba)**

Mr. Mitchell Ryba, a second-year student at Harper College and Chair of the Student Advisory Committee (SAC), reported that the Committee created working groups to start diving deeper into issues surrounding equity, staying accountable, and affordability for all students. They are defining equity and what it means to be accountable from a state level to an institutional level. They want to start the conversation to ensure institutions see things through a lens of equity. SAC has also been a strong advocate to hire staff who focus on different initiatives to start addressing equity gaps.

Mr. Ryba expressed that the SAC recognizes that too many students are facing barriers to getting in and through higher education. He stated they are looking for ways to best serve students' needs. With the current world affairs, they are most likely going to have to redefine how to approach student life and assess the climate of the community.

Mr. Ryba stated they have collaborated on a lot of activities taking place throughout different college campuses. They want to make sure college campuses have resources for mental health. He stated it is also important to encourage support for areas of affordability from the cost of going to school to textbooks.

- **Advisory Committee Report – Faculty Advisory Council (Dr. Shawn Schumacher)**

Dr. Shawn Schumacher stated if the recent pandemic has taught us anything about higher education, it has been the importance of the faculty as they have had to reimagine teaching methodologies. He said they have learned to communicate in different ways with the students and administration while keeping the focus on students and their needs.

He reported on the work that the Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) has done throughout the past year. They have formulated six working groups which consist of an equity working group, dual credit and online/remote education working group, performance-based funding working group, student and faculty mental health working group, college affordability and student debt working group, and high impact practices in higher education working group.

Dr. Schumacher gave an update on the caucus work. He said there are three groups and each one has significant issues to tackle. They have spent most of their time discussing pandemic related issues and the effects of COVID. He stated that as our nation has become increasingly politically polarized and the four-year public university caucus discussed the intersection of academics and politics on campus. They feel the classrooms should be safe zones where difficult discussions could be held with differing opinions being aired and without fear of expressing one's opinion.

He reported that all three caucuses have hit upon similar issues regarding the current use of student evaluations and each caucus will continue to examine and analyze best practices when it comes to student evaluation.

Dr. Schumacher closed by giving an update on their future work and recommendations.

- **Faculty Advisory Council Recommendations on Mental Health Action on Campus Act (Dr. Sue Wiediger)**

Dr. Sue Wiediger stated that some of the people involved in this working group have deep expertise in counseling areas; others are faculty members concerned about student mental health. She stated that the bill originally passed in 2019. Between the pandemic and other issues, the act has not been funded and therefore, has not been fully implemented.

Dr. Wiediger reported that the working group came up with three main areas of the Act. They are focusing on three aspects: peer support; health care ratios; and a technical assistance center. The FAC is recommending more of a peer-monitoring approach where the students are providing some support, but they are clearly talking with and supported by mental health professionals. They also support telehealth options which are critical for rural and diverse populations. She stated that the technical assistance center is a great idea. IBHE is the logical host due to their expertise in data handling and existing connections in higher education but realize the staff is already very stretched.

Dr. Wiediger stated that the FAC is seeking to make the implementation of the act a little bit more robust and more sustainable. The purpose of the Open Letter is to identify issues that resonate across diverse institutions and the working group has now transitioned to looking at broader issues of faculty, staff, and student mental health.

D. Public Comment

No one registered for public comment.

E. Action Items

1. Consideration and Approval of New Units of Instruction at Public Community Colleges

The Illinois Board of Higher Education on motion made by Dr. Jennifer Garrison and seconded by Mr. Eric Zarnikow hereby grants authority to the Carl Sandburg College to offer the Associate of Applied Science in Agribusiness, Associate of Applied Science in Agricultural Mechanization, Associate of Applied Science in Medical Assisting, and Associate of Applied Science in Welding subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted. The roll call vote was:

Yeas: Atkinson, Castle, Delaney, Evans, Garate, Garrison, Gloria, Kothari, Shaw, Syed, Zarnikow

Nays: none

2. Consideration and Approval of New Units of Instruction, Public Service, and Research at Public Universities

• Presentation by Dr. Terri Kinzy, President, Illinois State University

President Terri Kinzy presented information on the new engineering college at Illinois State University (ISU) and why it is so important. She stated we want to keep students in Illinois and give them a range of opportunities for them to pursue the education of their choice.

Dr. Kinzy reported that ISU set forward to put together a proposal for the College of Engineering that is intentionally designed from the ground up with goals for equity and diversity. They consulted with engineering deans and administrators and aligned with the IBHE's *A Thriving Illinois*.

Dr. Kinzy reviewed their mission statement and the degree programs. She presented the engineering curricula and stated that they want the students to see themselves as engineers from day one. Dr. Kinzy added that faculty and staff recruitment and retention is critical as well as dedicated funds specifically to help underserved students. She added they will create an engineering living and learning community as tutoring and peer academic coaching is critically important. Another important aspect is the community college partners as they want to make sure there will be seamless transfer opportunities.

Dr. Kinzy discussed the implementation timeline. She added that their goal is starting from the very beginning with an equity lens as they hire leadership and bring in support from all the leadership at ISU to make this a success.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education on motion made by Dr. Kenneth Shaw and seconded by Dr. Andrea Evans Hereby grants to Illinois State University authorization to establish the College of Engineering, the Department of Electrical Engineering, and the Department of Mechanical Engineering in the Central Region, subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that

were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted. The roll call vote was:

Yeas: Atkinson, Castle, Delaney, Evans, Garate, Garrison, Gloria, Kothari, Shaw, Syed, Zarnikow

Nays: none

F. Consent Agenda Action Items

The Illinois Board of Higher Education on motion made by Ms. Veronica Gloria and seconded by Mr. Pranav Kothari unanimously approved Items No F-1 through F-3. The roll call vote was:

Yeas: Atkinson, Castle, Delaney, Evans, Garate, Garrison, Gloria, Kothari, Shaw, Syed, Zarnikow

Nays: none

1. Consideration and Approval of Appropriation Transfer for Fiscal Year 2022 – Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby approves the following appropriation transfer as requested by the Board of Trustees of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy.

Transfer Request 22-001
Education Assistance Fund

From:

Commodities, Equipment, Automotive & Travel \$117,800

To:

Equipment \$117,800

2. Consideration and Approval of Board Meeting Minutes – January 10, 2022

The Illinois Board of Higher Education unanimously approved the Minutes of the Board Meeting of January 10, 2022.

3. Consideration and Approval of Update to IBHE Personnel Policies.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education unanimously approved the Update to IBHE Personnel Policies.

G. Other Business

The next Board meeting will be held Wednesday, June 29, 2022. Additional details about the meeting location and agenda will be posted on the IBHE website.

J. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion made by Dr. Teresa Garate and seconded by Dr. Jennifer Delaney unanimously voted the meeting adjourned at approximately 3:45 p.m. The roll call vote was:

Yeas: Atkinson, Castle, Delaney, Evans, Garate, Garrison, Gloria, Kothari, Shaw, Syed, Zarnikow

Nays: none

Respectfully submitted by Tracy Rembusch, Secretary to the Board.