

**ARKANSAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD  
Regular Quarterly Meeting  
April 21, 2017**

**Minutes of Meeting**

The April 21, 2017, regular meeting of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) was held at Arkansas Tech University in Russellville. Chair Sherrel Johnson Crafton called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with a quorum present.

Coordinating Board present:

Sherrel Johnson, Chair  
Dr. Jim Carr, Vice Chair  
Dr. Charles Allen  
Dr. Olin Cook  
Bob Crafton  
Chris Gilliam  
Florine Milligan  
Ben Pickard  
Greg Revels  
Sam Sicard

Coordinating Board absent:

Dr. Michael Stanton, Secretary  
Jim von Grep

Department staff present:

Dr. Maria Markham, Director  
Tara Smith, Deputy Director  
Dr. Marla Strecker, Senior Associate Director for Academic Affairs/Research & Analytics  
Ann Clemmer, Senior Associate Director for Governmental Relations  
Alisha Lewis, Associate Director of Communications  
Sonia Hazelwood, Associate Director for Research & Analytics  
Nichole Abernathy, Executive Assistant

Presidents, chancellors, institutional representatives, members of the press, and guests were also present.

Chairman Crafton introduced Dr. Robin Bowen, President of Arkansas Tech University (ATU), for a welcome. Bowen began by thanking everyone for coming to the Russellville campus of ATU. She then joked about the irony of being founded on April Fools' Day. After highlighting several ATU highpoints, Dr. Bowen introduced the Ambassador of ATU, Jerry the bulldog. After making a grand entry, Jerry posed for photos with Director Markham.

Chairman Crafton thanked Dr. Bowen for her welcome.

Agenda Item No. 1  
Approval of Minutes

Dr. Jim Carr moved to approve Agenda Item No. 1. Ben Pickard seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.

Agenda Item No. 2  
Director's Report

*ADHE Staff Changes*

Dr. Markham began by announcing several new ADHE employees. Financial Aid Program Specialist Josue Ramirez began on January 9. Associate Director for Research and Analytics Sonia Hazelwood began on February 13. Program Coordinator for Institutional Finance Sarah Cox began on February 13. Associate Director for Communications Alisha Lewis began on March 13. Program Specialist for Research and Analytics Beth Stewart began on March 13.

Dr. Markham pointed out that ADHE is one of the smallest state agencies, typically operating with less than forty (40) full-time employees. Preparing for AHECB meetings and doing reports, require a lot of work, and this is only a very small part of what they do, said Markham.

*Strategic Communication Plan*

Representatives from different institutions of higher learning across the state met over a year ago to formulate Closing the Gap 2020: A Master Plan for Higher Education. One of the workgroups was tasked with creating a plan for strategic communication for the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, said Alisha Lewis, ADHE communications director. Since then, partnerships have been formed between ADHE and the following organizations that have a shared mission and vision; Women's Foundation of Arkansas, Arkansas Student Loan Authority, Arkansas Challenge, Arkansas' 529, Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Career Education, and Arkansas Community Colleges.

*Legislative Update*

Ann Clemmer provided an update on higher education legislation passed during the session. She began with HB1650, which transferred the State Board of Private Career Education (SBPCE) to the Department of Higher Education (DHE). Clemmer noted that while the SBPCE had four employees, DHE would only receive one staff person to handle the SBPCE workload.

Chair Johnson asked how many private career schools are in Arkansas. Clemmer said 220.

Revels asked if Clemmer knew who would manage the SBPCE program. Clemmer said, Alana Boles. Boles currently manages the Institutional Certification Advisory Committee (ICAC), which is a similar program.

ADHE had three bills that became part of the Governor's package; the Funding Formula, Arkansas Future Grant and the reprioritizing of the Teacher Opportunity Grant.

Chair Johnson asked why there was a merger. Director Markham said it was merely for efficiency and cost savings.

Clemmer discussed HB18, which requires the Coordinating Board to develop an action plan to address the prevention of sexual assault on campuses and HB 1666, which requires institutions of higher education to provide information on mental health education and suicide prevention services for entering students.

Ben Pickard asked if HB 1666 required institutions to have licensed professionals on staff to help with students. Clemmer said, no.

Dr. Olin Cook asked if ADHE staff spoke on behalf of any of the gun bills. Clemmer said, no.

Before closing Clemmer outlined several more bills and said her legislative update would be available on the ADHE website.

Director Markham mentioned Act 599, which moved all of the institution's classified positions from under the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), to ADHE. We knew this move needed to happen for many years, said Markham. This will give institutions flexibility when giving raises. If they have the budget to give their classified employees raises - they give it, if they don't - they don't.

### Agenda Item No. 3 Arkansas Future Grant

In compliance with Act 1258 of 2015, the proposed rules for the Arkansas Future Grant were presented for AHECB review. Once approved, the proposed rules will go to the Governor and ALC Administrative Rules and Regulations Committee.

In accordance with 316 of 2017, the Department of Higher Education shall promulgate rules to implement the Arkansas Future Grant. The Arkansas Future Grant, also known as ARFuture, will provide grants on a first come, first serve basis to students enrolling in a program of study that leads to an associate degree or a certification in a: science, technology, engineering, or mathematics field; or a regional high-demand field.

Sam Sicard asked who would determine if a program qualifies as high demand. Smith said that ADHE staff would.

Greg Revels asked whether athletic scholarships were excluded. Smith said, no. They are considered as an institutional scholarship.

Chair Johnson said, even though the law doesn't require ADHE to contact recipients to collect delinquent funds, they can. Smith said that is correct. ADHE will use whatever form is feasible, whether via text, phone or mail to contact delinquent recipients.

Dr. Charles Allen moved to approve the review of Agenda Item No. 3. Florine Milligan seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.

#### Agenda Item No. 4 Academic Challenge Scholarship

In compliance with Act 1258 of 2015, the proposed amendments to the Academic Challenge Scholarship Program rules and regulations were presented for AHECB review. Once approved, the amendments will go to the Governor and ALC Administrative Rules and Regulations Committee.

In accordance with Acts 315, 597, House Bill 2243 and Senate Bill 542 of 2017, the amendments to the Academic Challenge Scholarship Program include expanding the definition of a traditional student, allowing a recipient to use the scholarship towards a graduate-level or professional degree if the student has remaining eligibility, changes the eligibility requirement for a non-traditional applicant and clarifies continuing eligibility requirements for the scholarship.

Greg Revels asked where all the changes to the scholarship came from. Smith said, some came from ADHE staff and some from legislators.

Florine Milligan asked how familiar high school counselors are with the new changes. Smith said that ADHE staff has ongoing communication with high school counselors regarding our financial aid programs.

Director Markham noted that constituent complaints drive many of the changes in legislation.

Dr. Jim Carr moved to approve the review of Agenda Item No. 4. Dr. Jim Carr seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.

#### Agenda Item No. 5 Governor's Scholars Program

In compliance with Act 1258 of 2015, the proposed amendments to the Governor's Scholars Program rules and regulations were presented for AHECB review. Once approved, the amendments will go to the Governor and ALC Administrative Rules and Regulations Committee.

In accordance with House Bill 2243 of 2017, the amendment to the Governor's Scholars Program includes changing the award amount for those students that are the highest achieving student that resides in a county where no student qualified for the Governor's Distinguished Scholarship.

Dr. Jim Carr asked if the number of recipients for the Governor's Distinguished Scholarship have gone up consistently over the years. Smith said in 2008, less than 350 recipients qualified. Now, more than 650 students qualify.

Dr. Olin Cook moved to approve the review of Agenda Item No. 5. Dr. Charles Allen seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved.

#### Agenda Item No. 6 Performance Funding Outcomes

Act 1203 of 2011 repealed Arkansas Code § 6-61-223 and amended §6-61-224, §6-61-228, §6-61-229, and §6-61-230. The act directed the Department of Higher Education to develop an outcome-centered component of the funding formula for colleges and universities by December 31, 2011. The Department of Higher Education, in conjunction with the presidents, chancellors and key staff at the universities and colleges and the Executive Director and key staff at the Arkansas Community Colleges (ACC), developed the outcome-centered component of the funding formula that was approved by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board on December 2, 2011. The funding recommendations are now based on the need component of student enrollment and the output components of student success and other performance measures. The proportion of the funding recommendation begins with five percent based on outcome-centered measures in 2013-14, increasing by five percent each year to reach 25 percent in 2017-18. In addition, A.C.A. § 6-61-233 states that the implementation of the funding component of the outcome-centered formula shall not progress beyond the 2014-2015 school year until such time as the Department of Higher Education determines that all institutions are funded at the minimum standard of equity defined as seventy-five percent (75%) of needed state funding, as determined by the needs-based component of the funding formula models. The results for the fifth year of the performance based funding is attached to this agenda item.

Dr. Olin Cook asked if it would be difficult for institutions that lose funding to pick up money to overcome the loss. Tara Smith said typically the loss would come out of an institutions base funding.

Bob Crafton questioned what happens to an institution when they don't meet the minimum score of six (6) for the second year in a row. Smith said the first year an institution doesn't meet the requirements, the school may submit an improvement plan that outlines the areas where the performance has not been met. This plan will also detail the actions that they will take to achieve or exceed the minimum score required by the performance funding model. If approved, the institution could receive improvement funding up to the amount of the performance funding that was lost, said

Smith. If they failed to meet the requirements for a second consecutive year, then those dollars would be forfeited.

A couple of years ago, one (1) institution failed to meet the minimum requirements. Now we have three (3) institutions. Is this a trend that was going to increase, said Greg Revels. Smith said, with the trend of enrollment changes, specifically with two-year institutions, it would've been very tough to continue to meet the minimum standards. Under the new model, the same types of things will be measured, however, there are some stop loss protections built in.

Chris Gilliam moved to recommend the approval of the review of Agenda Item No. 6 to the full Board for consideration. Sam Sicard seconded and the Committee approved.

#### Agenda Item No. 7 Distribution of Mineral Lease Funds

In accordance with A.C.A. §6-61-803 and A.C.A. §6-61-807, "There is created a program to be known as the Arkansas Research Development program which shall be administered by the Director of the Department of Higher Education. Funds may be made available for administration of the Arkansas Development Research Program, for purchasing state-of-the-art equipment, for minor renovations of laboratory space, for publication of findings, for employing scientists or research assistants, and for providing any other assistance to scientists in order to develop a continuing research capacity in this state which is recognized as exemplary."

The current balance in the Higher Education Research Development Fund is \$252,667. The fiscal 2017 appropriation of \$5,000,000 is adequate for the authorization of distribution of up to \$750,000 requested by the Arkansas Research and Education Optical Network (ARE-ON) board of directors.

**RESOLVED**, That after review by the Legislative Council, the Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education is authorized to distribute up to \$750,000 from the Higher Education Research Development Fund to the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville for continuing personal services and operating expenses related to ARE-ON.

Dr. Olin Cook moved to recommend the approval of Agenda Item No. 7 to the full Board for consideration. Sam Sicard seconded and the Committee approved.

#### Agenda Item No. 8 Associate of Applied Science in Agriculture Technology Arkansas State University Newport

The Associate of Applied Science in Agriculture Technology will train students for skilled positions as agricultural equipment operators, mechanics and service technicians, and chemical equipment operators in the agricultural industry. The

proposed program will provide a solution to the skills gaps that exist in agricultural science and the technology workforce. The proposed curriculum is comprised of 15 credit hours of general education and forty-five hours of skill specific courses and hands on training at local farms. Producers and industry have offered internships for students during their last semester of the program.

Chris Gilliam moved to recommend the approval of Agenda Item No. 9 to the full Board for consideration. Dr. Charles Allen seconded and the Committee approved.

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Associate of Applied Science in Agriculture Technology (CIP 01.9999; 60 credit hours) offered by Arkansas State University Newport, effective Fall 2017.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to inform the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of Arkansas State University System and the Chancellor of Arkansas State University Newport of the approval.

Chair Johnson asked if there were any water resource management components to this program.

Robert Summers, dean for applied science, said in the final semester there is an agriculture resource management course that covers water management. Johnson then asked if other programs have water resource management in the curriculum for other institutions that have similar programs. Dr. Strecker said she would get that information and send it to the board.

Agenda Item No. 9  
Masters in Athletic Training  
Arkansas State University

In 2022, the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) will recognize the Master of Athletic Training program as the entry point to the athletic training profession. This proposed graduate level Masters in Athletic Training (M.AT) program will provide an educational framework that prepares students to be successful as athletic trainers. Master's level prepared graduates will be positioned as healthcare providers who significantly improve the health and well-being of their patients and have meaningful, purposeful career paths. According to the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA), over 70% of practicing certified athletic trainers possess a master's degree. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, jobs for these graduates are expected to grow as new jobs are being provided by fitness and recreation sports centers and industrial workplaces. Existing jobs are available and expected to remain constant at hospitals, clinics, physician offices, professional sports clubs/organizations, and colleges/universities. Additional positions will be created in the healthcare industry as greater emphasis is placed on preventive care and reducing healthcare costs for an aging population.

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Masters in Athletic Training (CIP 51.0913; 65 credit hours) offered by Arkansas State University - Jonesboro, effective Summer 2018.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to inform the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of Arkansas State University System and the Chancellor of Arkansas State University – Jonesboro of the approval. Program continuation is contingent on ASUJ meeting and maintaining program accreditation requirements of the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE).

There were no questions.

Agenda Item No. 10  
Associate of Applied Science in Cybersecurity  
Bachelor in Science in Cybersecurity  
Arkansas Tech University

The Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Cybersecurity is a 60 credit hour degree that includes courses in forensics and incident response, virtualization, introduction to computer architecture, basic systems theory, network configuration, legal issues in Cybersecurity, large scale distributed systems, best practices in software design and hardware configuration. The 120 credit hours Bachelor of Science (BS) in Cybersecurity builds upon the AAS curriculum by including courses in operating systems theory, penetrating testing, applied cryptography, risk management, project and internship opportunities, software security analysis and reverse engineering techniques, and Cybersecurity capstone. The rise in cyber threats has created an unprecedented demand for cybersecurity specialists. Data breaches, malware infections, and software vulnerabilities are common on today's technology and it is critical to understand fully how these attacks occur, how to prevent them, and how to recover should an attack occur. The curriculum for the proposed programs include courses in programming, wireless technologies, mathematics, and networking with focused concentrations in both theory and practical hands-on experience. Graduates of the AAS and BS degrees will understand the techniques used to compromise and infiltrate systems as well as the proven methods to protect data.

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Associate of Applied Science in Cybersecurity and the Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity (CIP 11.1003; Associate of Applied Science in Cybersecurity 60 credit hours; Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity 120 credit hours) offered by Arkansas Tech University, effective Fall 2017.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to inform the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of Arkansas Tech University of the approval.



Chair Johnson asked Dr. Mohamed Abdelrahman from ATU to provide background information on this program. Dr. Abdelrahman said that this is the only program with this kind of focus in the state. UALR and UAF have similar programs with different focuses. With its good earning potential, this degree falls in line with ATU's mission to support its region and students, said Dr. Abdelrahman.

Agenda Item No. 11  
Biomedical Informatics  
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Informatics is the study of the fundamental principles that govern the generation, storage, processing and use of information in Biomedicine. Biomedical Informatics pursues use of information to improve human health. Biomedical Informatics is the use of any information, from molecular level to entire populations or eco-systems, toward the improvement of human health. These proposed graduate programs will cover human health-focused discovery in the basic biomedical sciences (Translational Bioinformatics); and the design, conduct and reporting of clinical studies (Clinical Research Informatics and Research Imaging Informatics); and the generation and use of information support patient care (Clinical Informatics and Clinical Imaging Informatics). Graduates of the proposed programs will be able to practice at the professional or scientific level. Those working in research operations most often hold a Master of Science degree and are trained in the practice of informatics as well as fundamentals of research. Scientific investigators in Biomedical Informatics hold a PhD, or an MD and an MS in Biomedical Informatics and have a research track record in Biomedical Informatics. Students pursuing the graduate programs in Biomedical Informatics have the option of choosing the 15 credit hour Graduate Certificate; the 36 credit hour Master's Degree; or the 55 credit hour Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. The PhD hours are inclusive of the Master's degree and the first two years are primarily coursework taken by Master's students.

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the Graduate Certificate in Biomedical Informatics, the Masters of Science in Biomedical Informatics, and the Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Informatics (CIP 51.2706; Graduate Certificate – 15 credit hours; Masters of Science – 36 credit hours; Doctor of Philosophy 55 credit hours (inclusive of the MS credit hours)) offered by the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, effective Fall 2017.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to inform the President and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas System and the Chancellor of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences of the approval.

Dr. Jim Carr asked how many other biomedical programs are in the country. Dr. Robert McGhee, dean of the UAMS Medical School said there are only four (4) in the country.

Agenda Item No. 12  
Institutional Certification Advisory Committee

**Initial Program Certification-Distance Technology**

**RESOLVED**, That pursuant to ACA §6-61-301, the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board grants initial certification to the institutions listed on pages 1-2 to offer the specified degree programs to Arkansas residents for a period of three years through December 31, 2020.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education is authorized to notify the administration of said institutions that the certification of the degree programs requires the institution to notify the Arkansas Department of Higher Education whenever any of the following occurs: (1) major reorganization of the controlling body; (2) changes in the charter or incorporation documents of the institution; or (3) changes in the method of operation of the institution's programs in Arkansas.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Coordinating Board instructs the Director to notify the administration of said institutions that any advertisement or published materials using the name of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board or the Arkansas Department of Higher Education must contain the following statement:

Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board certification does not constitute an endorsement of any institution or program. Such certification merely indicates that certain criteria have been met as required under the rules and regulations implementing institutional and program certification as defined in Arkansas Code §6-61-301.

DeVry University, Naperville, Illinois

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, Florida

Northcentral University, San Diego, California

Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts

**New Institutions – Distance Technology**

Emerson College, Boston, Massachusetts

There were no questions.

Florine Milligan moved to recommend Agenda Items No. 8 - 12 to the full Board for consideration. Dr. Jim Carr seconded and the Committee approved.

Agenda Items No. 13 & 14  
Letters of Notification and Letters of Intent

The Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education approved institutional requests for new programs not requiring Board action unless further review is

requested by the Board. During this period, the Institutional Certification Advisory Committee received notice of requests from out-of-state institutions to offer degree programs to Arkansas residents. The program notice lists appear in the Letters of Notification on pages 13-1 through 13-98 and in the Letters of Intent on pages 14-1 through 14-7 of the agenda book.

There were no questions.

#### Report of the Committees

Greg Revels presented the report of the Finance Committee and moved approval of Agenda Items 6 - 7. The board approved.

Dr. Charles Allen presented the report of the Academic Committee and moved approval of Agenda Items 8 - 12. The board approved.

#### Remarks by Presidents and Chancellors

Dr. Steve Cole announced that he would be hosting the next Coordinating Board meeting at Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas in De Queen on July 27-28, 2017.

In closing, Chair Johnson and Director Markham presented term limited AHECB members Florine Milligan, Ben Pickard and Bob Crafton plaques on behalf of their dedicated service to the Higher Education Coordinating Board and higher education in Arkansas.

With no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

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Nichole Abernathy

APPROVED:

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Dr. Michael Stanton, Secretary