

Report on IBHE Faculty Advisory Council Meeting

March 18, 2011

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The Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) held a regularly scheduled meeting at the Kennedy-King College (KKC), one of the City Colleges of Chicago, on Friday March 18, 2011 with 25 member institutions present.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Abbas Aminmansour at 8:30 AM. KKC Interim President Derrick Harden welcomed the group to his campus and noted that remediation, a subject that was on FAC's agenda for the day was a major issue for KKC as well. Katonja Webb, Interim Vice President of Kennedy-King College was also in attendance.

A discussion followed on the legislation under consideration or preparation that may, if approved, adversely affect higher education in Illinois. Examples include performance-based funding, tuitions established by the State rather than institutions and modification of pension plans. The group agreed with the Chair's suggestion to invite Don Sevens, IBHE Deputy Director for External Affairs and State Representative Naomi Jakobsson to future FAC meetings for discussion and input.

Professor Tim Scherman of Northeastern Illinois University, Chair of the FAC Task Group on Remediation and Articulation reported on the activities of his group in preparing a position statement on the subject. FAC members offered input to the task group. It was noted that we need to take a P-20 approach to the issue with emphasis on our values and that while there are potentials for financial gains for the State and our institutions in addressing the issue, this is not an exclusive financial matter. The task group will have its final statement for consideration and possible adoption at the April 8 FAC meeting.

The Council discussed a position statement on the need for all higher education institutions to maintain and consistently follow clear policies and practices for hiring as well as promotion and tenure of faculty. A discussion followed relative to the audience for the statement. It was decided that it should be shared with IBHE and publicized at the Council's web site, but IBHE should not be asked to take a position on the subject. Further, it was noted that we should ask IBHE to post the statement at its web site and share it with the Presidents' council. Council members offered editorial suggestions for enhancing the document. The statement was adopted by the council.

Burks Oakley, Professor Emeritus of the U of I and Scholar in Residence at UIS as well as Raymond Schroeder, Professor and Director of the Center for Online Learning, Research, and Service at UIS gave a presentation to the Council on the subject of online education. They offered statistics on the growth of online and blended education as well as benefits of such offerings including access to quality education to those who may not be able to benefit from traditional forms of education. In 2009, 5.6 million students enrolled in an online course. A fair amount of discussion focused on offering courses and programs that meet high quality standards with emphasis on course content and instructor qualifications. There was agreement that decisions for course/program contents and instructor qualifications must be made by the appropriate academic units and subject to shared governance just as they are with in-residence courses and programs. It was agreed that the Council will prepare for adoption a document stating the Council's position and support for quality online and blended education.

The three caucuses of the Council (Publics, Privates and Community College) held parallel meetings and reported to the Council on their discussions and topics of interest.

The Council took care of other routine business such as approval of minutes, etc. The meeting adjourned at about 3PM. The next meeting of the Council will be held at the Northeastern Illinois University on April 8, 2011.

Respectfully submitted
Abbas Aminmansour