

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
(Final; Information)

HE.13.01 Report on the September 21, 2012 meeting of the FAC to the IBHE.

The Faculty Advisory Committee to the Illinois Board of Higher Education met at 8:30 a.m. at Moraine Valley Community College. The group was welcomed by Dr. Pamela Haney, newly named VPAA, replacing Dr. Sylvia Jenkins, now President of MVCC. The College, celebrating its 45th anniversary, has new centers in Tinley Park and Blue Island and is expanding with new buildings and remodeling on its home campus. It has seen a growth in graduation rates after instituting an "Agree to Degree" program in which students pledge to complete their degrees.

IBHE liaison Ocheng reported three new appointments in Academic Affairs at IBHE; the search for the Deputy Director continues. IBHE has seen numerous staff turnovers. Ocheng distributed an article about a three year bachelor's degree for future discussion. Several concerns were immediately raised including course availability, year-round financial aid, impact on small colleges, effect on community colleges, student interest, etc. It is already possible to complete some programs in three years utilizing summer school, advanced placement credits, etc.

Abbas Aminmansour joined the group electronically to discuss a proposal to establish an IBHE Faculty Fellows Program in which individuals could work with Executive Director George Reid or in various IBHE areas. This could link to faculty sabbaticals, released time from an institution or even emeritus professors learning about the IBHE, its state government linkages, and providing expertise on issues or for projects. Abbas and IBHE Director Reid will continue to work on proposal specifics.

Senator Ed Maloney, Chair of the Senate Higher Ed Committee, Rep. Robert Pritchard and IBHE Executive Director Reid joined the group for an extended discussion. Maloney said legislators understood the value of higher education but face urgent budget needs in multiple areas. He urged aggressive efforts to communicate our needs. Lobbying is best done when legislators are in their home districts. To be effective individuals need to establish ongoing relationships with legislators, which may involve working in election campaigns.

Many issues were raised. One legislative stress was the necessity of shared sacrifice and finding ways to do more and be more efficient. There is no doubt higher ed is underfunded. We need to tell our story and students can be very effective in this. Given a major change in membership on the Senate higher education committee, there will be a great need to educate new members and to develop linkages. The importance of working together K-20 and even pre-K was noted: "We need to instill a love of learning and the joy of discovery at all levels of education."

At the close of the morning session, Senator Maloney was honored with a citation and plaque for his many contributions to higher education in his legislative roles.

After lunch the group toured the new Cyber Security Facility. A federal grant has enabled the MVCC to develop a training program in cyber security with an emphasis on protection of data stored in new forms.

Steve Rock, WIU, a member of the ISAC-MAP Task Force summarized its work to date. They have largely looked at data and program history. It is badly underfunded currently: roughly half of those who qualify are unable to receive funding. One goal is to make the program more efficient and "weed out" those who do not complete a degree. Submission date for the report is January, 2013.

The group then divided into caucuses. One typical focus was planning the year's work. All caucuses are concerned about the future of MAP and other financial issues affecting institutions. Pensions are a concern of the public institutions. A focus of one caucus was the nature and role of "certificates," because certificates are key to meeting the goal of 60% of Illinois adults having a college degree or certificate by 2025. Issues discussed by caucuses ranged widely from the need for child care facilities for night students to issues related to a three year degree, articulation agreements, and remediation.

After a brief business meeting to hear reports from the caucuses and to approve the minutes of the June meeting, the FAC adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Ken Andersen
UIUC Alternate to the FAC