



ECACE
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CONSORTIUM FOR EQUITY

AAS Transfer
Working Group Meeting
March 25, 2022
Minutes

A meeting of the Early Childhood Access Consortium for AAS Transfer Working Group was called to order at 2 pm via telephone and video conference as permitted by Public Act 101-0640.

Participating in the meeting were: Christi Chadwick, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Marcus Brown, Illinois Community College Board; Allison Decker, Illinois Community College Board; Kate Connor, City Colleges of Chicago (Truman College); Melissa Szymczak, Joliet Junior College; Andrianna Smyrniotis, Illinois Central College; Paula Luszcz, Oakton Community College; Danyle Watkins, Lincoln Land Community College; Joanne Kantner, Kishwaukee College; Anne Pradzinski, National Louis University; Lisa Downey, National Louis University; Eric Sheffield, Western Illinois University; Dawn Munson, Elgin Community College; Marie Donovan, DePaul University; Amy Kelly, Governors State University; Stacie Kirk, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; Cathy Main, University of Illinois Chicago; Vicki Trinder, University of Illinois Chicago; Amy Chamley, Parkland College; Caleb Westberg, Chicago State University; Thomas Pavkov, Northern Illinois University; Marlena Constant, University of Illinois Springfield; Polly Walters, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; Richard Bush, Black Hawk College; Jodi Becker, Black Hawk College; Julie Lindstrom, INCCRRA; Jennifer Hernandez, Illinois Board of Higher Education

Marcus Brown, Deputy Director Illinois Community College Board, welcomed the working group, went over general meeting guidelines, and went over the meeting agenda. Marcus provided updates from the previous meeting regarding field experience and how that is documented as well as the audit process. There have been questions about how to document field experience and ISBE was able to provide some points of clarification for requirements. ISBE will be looking for information about how an institution monitors or verifies the field experience information, but that is an institutional policy. Per ISBE, institutions should also utilize the appropriate program change form and/or individual pathway form if there is a change to the process. ISBE does not set a specific hour requirement for field experience and observation hours. These are program-level decisions at the institutional level and there may be changes as these things are developed. Marcus acknowledged that there are also programmatic accreditation issues that the institutions are working through, in which case it is important to have clear policies in place. Marcus also noted the upcoming ISBE board meeting and rule changes that could be potentially taking place as it relates to the work of the committee dealing with General Education requirements, field experience requirements, student teaching experience, and clarity around supervising teaching credentials.

Marcus introduced Julie Lindstrom with INCCRRA who presented on Gateways Level 4 and 5 credentialing guidelines. Lindstrom also went over the entitlement process and the submission requirements to begin that process. The levels and credentials of entitlement by institution are published on the INCCRRA website. Christi also asked about how we find out the length of time an institution has been entitled. Julie advised that every year institutions are asked to provide an update form to note any faculty or course changes. A question was asked about how a student could gain the next level credential, and if that package of information could be put together to

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gain advancement, even after a pause in attendance. If each institution attended was entitled the combination of coursework would count towards advancing credentials.

Marcus Brown introduced the team from University of Illinois to discuss transfer pathways. Anne Pradzinski discussed the new programming that was created at UIUC to use a cohort model and online modality. Students take two 8-week synchronous courses and a 16-week asynchronous courses, and the final semester is student teaching. It will take them 2 years plus one semester to complete. There are 2 pathways: licensure and non-licensure, but students are still in a cohort together regardless of pathway. They made many changes to the traditional program coursework and embedded general education content into courses. There are also new courses that build on their work experience and prior learning. Anne also explained the integrated general education requirements and how they have made this work at the institution. Marcus asked about the cohorts and how that works. Anne advised that students stay in the same cohort regardless of internship and student teaching paths. Marie Donovan asked about general education and clarified that students in program do not take any additional general education other than what they have already taken. Ann explained that as of now, that is the method they are attempting, but it may change. They are not necessarily “waiving” general education coursework but embedding the content and trying to remain flexible. Stacie Kirk explained that SIUE is similar with how they approach the cohort models. SIUE is also looking at ways to embed gen ed content/competencies. Eric Sheffield asked if there had been any reaction from the Registrar’s office in response to this model. She advised that there had been no feedback up until now, but they will continue to work with the Registrar’s office as the process continues. Marcus advised that from ISBE’s perspective, this model is a feasible solution to addressing this issue as it relates to AAS transfer processes.

Marcus advised that the other issue that may arise are tension points at both the 2- and 4-year institutions. Items for discussion in the breakout rooms include: what are challenges, solutions, and opportunities in the transfer sphere that we can work with? What are the roles of both the 2- and 4-year institutions? How can we design pathways that allow for broad transfer beyond institution to institution? What are the obstacles?

Kate Connor asked about consistency and ways to give the 4-years more of a clear structure for what would be counted. This may help with some of the transfer challenges. Melissa Szymczak agreed and noted that the challenge is the people that received an AAS years ago resulting in several people being pulled into the 4-years. She also advised that from an advising standpoint, it can be difficult to navigate. There are many individual questions that come through with these students that are not always easy to answer. Kate also asked about getting a one-page document drafted by ICCB and IBHE that could go to all the advisors to help explain this process. Joanne Kantner also asked that there be something provided that would document this process. Paula Luszc stated that we are hearing different things from each school, so each are taking a different approach. The students are looking for the best “deal” and the easiest path to finish. They are looking for online and flexible options so some institutions should be mindful of this. Marcus advised that the IGAs for the institution does explain the role of the mentor. How would we build in a structure to help students navigate this and help the communication between 2- and 4- year institutions? Melissa Szymczak advised that it would be helpful if someone at the state level could put together a spreadsheet of available programs and details. Marcus asked what it is that the 2 years need from the 4 years to make the AAS transfer process work effectively. Paula Luszc stated that a flow chart/cheat sheet would be helpful. Andrianna Smyrniotis also agreed that this type of cheat sheet would be helpful when they get questions about navigators and points of contact so that they can direct students appropriately.

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Polly Walters with SIUE asked how the Registrar's office was supposed to handle this and how would the degree audit look if these gen ed competencies were embedded in the coursework? Marie Donovan advised that she wanted to hear Polly's perspective on how the faculty can help the Registrar's office as they navigate this process. Anne advised that they went to IBHE rules and the 15-hour general education requirement for students with an AAS degree. If a student comes in with only ENG 101, how do you know that ENG 102 is met? She advised that those competencies are already embedded in the program. Polly advised they are using the IAI core curriculum waiver for some of these. They are still not sure how the degree audit will look if the content of a course is embedded in another course. How do they make sure students are meeting gen ed requirements? There are ways to navigate this, but they will be different at each institution. Eric asked if Polly would be able to share progress and updates as they navigate this process. He also suggested that all the Registrar's meet to discuss these issues. Christi suggested that something could also be sent out through the consortium to ensure that Registrars were able to meet and discuss. It would also be helpful to understand common requirements across institutions and have that information in one location. Marie Donovan emphasized the need to meet with Registrars and bring them into the discussion.

There was no public comment.

Chadwick advised that a short survey would be sent after the meeting to ensure that the meetings are beneficial and collect feedback on how to better highlight key issues. The meeting closed at 3:30 pm.