

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING

February 2, 2012

4:00 p.m.

Iowa College Student Aid Commission
603 East 12th Street, 5th Floor, Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Conference Room

Members Present:

Janet Adams	Rob Denson
Bob Donley	Randy Feenstra
Crystal Ford	Ron Jorgensen
Fred Moore	Herman Quirnbach
Doug Shull	Kelli Todd
Roger Utman	Karolyn Wells
Cindy Winckler	

Members Absent:

Terrence Martin

Staff Present:

Nancy Ankeny	Todd Brown
Heather Doe	John Gilman
Anthony Girardi	Deb Krueger
Julie Leeper	Karen Misjak
Dan Powers	Bobbi Pulley
Carolyn Small	Ashley Wendt

Attorney General Present:

David VanCompernelle

Guests Present:

Dr. Louis Berger	Clarkson College
Linda Fandel	Governor's Office
Jason Glass	Iowa Department of Education
Diana Gonzalez	Board of Regents
Kim Hoyt	University of Southern California
Lois Leytem	Capri College
John Parker	Iowa Student Loan
Dan Richins	Ashford University
Dr. Richard Thompson	Jones International
Andrew Wick	Jones International
Dan Winegarden	Member of the Public

Call to Order

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission met for a regularly scheduled meeting on February 2, 2012. Commission Chair Adams called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. with a quorum present.

Amended Agenda

Chair Adams requested an amendment to the agenda removing the Administrative Rules because all needed information has not been received.

Motion: Commissioner Shull moved to approve the amended agenda removing the Administrative Rules. Commissioner Moore seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Minutes of Meeting

Motion: Commissioner Ford moved to approve the November 18, 2012 and December 13, 2012 Meeting Minutes as written. Commissioner Utman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Misjak shared that the financial aid application has seen a huge increase in applications. Upon completion of the FAFSA, all Iowa resident applicants have the option to link to the Iowa Financial Aid Application directly from their FAFSA confirmation page, and transfer their demographic information to the Iowa application. This streamlines the state financial aid application process for Iowa applicants and ensures all Iowa applicants are aware of the Iowa Financial Aid Application.

GEAR UP Iowa staff challenged their entire cohort to do a community service project. Mr. Gilman said this challenge was to come up with a solution for reducing student loan debt. There were two schools that decided to participate, Columbus Junction High School and West High School- Davenport. Students at these schools created presentations and went out into their communities to share their solutions. Staff went to Columbus Junction for the first presentation and Mr. Gilman shared that staff felt the group went beyond what was expected. At this presentation there were 251 parents and students that attended and only 73 of them were from the GEAR UP cohort. Mr. Gilman invited all Commissioners to attend the second presentation held by the students at West High School- Davenport on Monday, February 6, 2012 at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Gilman said both groups of students will be attending the National GEAR UP Conference next July in Washington, D.C. where they will present their solutions in an interest session for conference attendees.

Mr. Gilman shared that the GEAR UP Iowa Success Center has been open for 14 weeks and has recently moved to a 30 seat lab on the first floor. The Success Center partnered with Des Moines East High School, and Mr. Gilman said the goal is to have the 120 students that began the year without enough credits to be in the sophomore class end the school year on track. Commissioner Winckler asked if there is adult supervision in the lab during the operating hours. Mr. Gilman said a licensed teacher as well as a GEAR UP staff member is in the lab when students are present and that Des Moines East hired the teacher.

Ms. Doe presented highlights from the Annual Report and handed out the Condition of Higher Education Report, which can also be found on the Commission's website in the Higher Education Data Center. Ms. Doe said this report is an overview of the challenges and data in relation to educational attainment, college readiness, affordability and the future employability of the citizens of Iowa.

Legislative Committee Report-Internship Proposal

Commissioner Todd shared her Internship Proposal with Commissioners and said students have expressed an issue locating adequate internship opportunities in Iowa. Commissioner Todd requested support for her proposal from the Commission. Commissioner Todd introduced Dan Winegarden, a parent of a college student. Mr. Winegarden said that internships provide students with a reference that is able to speak on their work abilities and not just the education they have received. Mr. Winegarden believes internships help students learn skills in a far less risky place. Mr. Winegarden expressed his support for Commissioner Todd's proposal and finished by saying when a student graduates from college with a job, that it is the best thing a parent can ask for. Commissioner Winckler asked if there is any language for this proposal prepared. Commissioner Todd said she was waiting for support from the Commission and will work on language following that endorsement. Commissioner Moore said he supports the concept, but is not sure on the timing.

Motion: Commissioner Utman moved to approve the Commission's support of the Internship Proposal. Commissioner Todd seconded the motion. The motion passed with Doug Shull, Karolyn Wells, Fred Moore and Robert Denson voting nay.

Commissioner Todd left the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

Legislative Committee Report-Proposed Legislation Discussion

Ms. Misjak introduced Jason Glass, Director of the Iowa Department of Education (IDE) and Linda Fandel from the Governor's Office. Mr. Glass said a merger plan has been put together for the IDE and Iowa College Aid, and that ultimately the decision will rest with the Governor and Legislature. Mr. Glass handed out an outline with remarks addressing questions previously provided by Commissioners. Mr. Glass indicated that Iowa College Aid has a high level of abilities, and his long term goal is to continue the services currently provided by the Commission.

Commissioner Quirnbach asked for the rationale of the merger. Mr. Glass explained that a merger addresses some overlap in services and offers the possibility of expanding current services and getting the message out to more people. Mr. Glass complimented the publications currently produced by Commission staff and said he feels leverage can be gained by working together.

This merger would create a new division within the IDE. Mr. Glass said there are a number of divisions in the IDE, and Iowa College Aid would become the Division of College Student Aid. Ms. Misjak would be the Division Administrator on the Senior Staff of IDE and current staff would become staff of the IDE. Some redundancies would need to be addressed regarding accounting functions, human resources, and information technology. Mr. Glass said the number one priority would be to not interrupt the services provided by the Commission.

Mr. Glass said the current Commission would become the Iowa College Student Aid Council with the currently appointed Commissioners becoming the initial council members. Mr. Glass asked Commissioner Utman to explain how a council works under the IDE. Commissioner Utman said the council provides input to the State Board of Education (State Board) and asks for their approval. Commissioner Qurimbach asked if the council members would be able to give input directly to legislators. He also noted that there have been times when staff has complied with directives from the Governor's office and Commissioners have had an independent voice on a number of programs. Commissioner Moore gave the example of the budget this year and how Commissioners were able to share their opinions with the Governor. Commissioner Jorgensen asked if the council will include legislators. Mr. Glass said all currently appointed Commissioners will remain on the council. Mr. Glass advocated for the merger with IDE and said he does not micromanage his division directors and is very impressed with the staff of the Commission. Mr. Glass said he does not have the expertise to run Iowa College Aid and intends to allow Iowa College Aid to run itself. He would provide support by advocating for the Division of College Student Aid.

Commissioner Jorgensen asked if the merger was for financial reasons and cost savings or for improved service levels. He also asked if there will be a fiscal note documenting the cost savings. Mr. Glass responded that there really are not cost savings other than the redundancies in human resources and accounting. Mr. Glass believes being a part of a larger agency would make funding fluxuations less impactful and feels that working together would open doors to reaching more students. Commission Jorgensen asked if this merger is being modeled after different states. Ms. Misjak said there is talk in other states about doing something similar. Mr. Glass said this is an idea that was presented to the Legislature as a bill; the goal is to continue the high quality of services and possibly expand services.

In a response to a question from Commissioner Moore, Mr. Glass said the visibility of what the Iowa College Aid is trying to accomplish can be enhanced by being part of the IDE and, that IDE has a strong commitment to increasing the services provided to Iowa students. The IDE is an executive agency and decisions are made less by the State Board and more by the Governor. The State Board does have the authority to promulgate rules. Commissioner Moore said the current Governor supports an increase to the Iowa Tuition Grant, while the previous Governor did not. Commissioner Moore felt that moving the funding mechanism of the Iowa Tuition Grant under IDE that the funding stream could be lost. This decision could mean that the State Board would move the state a step closer to a super licensing board. This board would be responsible for approving all programs offered at higher education institutions in the state, including independent colleges. Commissioner Moore said he had an opportunity to speak with a representative from Illinois and it currently takes a year to get a program approved, which is also complicated by the fact that the Federal government requires all institutions to be registered in the state. Commission staff is swamped with the applications for registrations as it is now. Commissioner Moore is worried about future governance.

Chair Adams asked what the current make up of the State Board is and if there are any representatives from higher education. Mr. Glass said there is not a seat designated for higher education. Commissioner Qurimbach felt it would be appropriate to expand the State Board to include seats for higher education if this merger were to take place and that the Iowa College Aid should retain its right as an independent voice to the legislature. Commissioner Qurimbach noted that the bill has not been filed in either the House or Senate and that it would have to be a committee bill for which the timeframe is getting short. He also said the demise of the Federal Family Education Loan Program has changed the functionality of the Commission and that it is appropriate to analyze the function of the agency. However, he does not believe there will be enough time to review the bill during this current session. Mr. Glass said the merger is an idea and that IDE and Iowa College Aid can proactively think about where it can go in the future.

Commissioner Quirnbach thinks it would be helpful to get more specifics about the division and the functions the Commission would serve as well as what the specific gains would be. Mr. Glass said expanding the State Board would be a positive step, but is unable to speak for the State Board. Chair Adams asked if there would be one general budget for the IDE which would be broken down to each division. Mr. Glass responded there would be line items for each of the Commission's programs within the College Student Aid Division.

Legislative Committee Report

Ms. Leeper provided Commissioners with a list of bills relating to Iowa College Aid that she is currently following.

Commissioner Jorgensen said there have been issues with the functioning and timing on the I Have A Plan Iowa™ web portal, and said Representative Taylor offered a bill to require the Commission to request information from the school districts on a quarterly basis and give this information to the Legislative Oversight committee which would be able to cancel the mandate that is required of schools if necessary. The bill was not released from committee; however, Commissioner Jorgensen assured Representative Taylor that Iowa College Aid staff would report system performance and reports from schools to Commissioners. Ms. Misjak said staff has addressed this request and will handle the issue of reporting the status of the system to Commissioners as a "staff report" at each scheduled Commission Meeting.

Jones International University

Ms. Small said staff recommends denying Jones International University's application for postsecondary registration in Iowa. Commissioner Jorgensen asked if a limit on how long the university has to teach these students out should be set. Commissioner Moore asked if a motion could be proposed to allow Ms. Small to work with the school on an end date for the students to finish their programs. Ms. Small said the 27 remaining students are not all enrolled in the same program and will have different graduation dates. Commissioner Moore asked what a reasonable end date could be for these students. Mr. Thompson said that some of the students are in masters programs and those programs are shorter in length. He would like to work with the Commission to set a date for the Masters level students, a date for those that are close to finishing an undergrad program and a date for the recently enrolled students. Mr. Thompson added that eight of the students are scheduled to graduate this year and the others are set to graduate in 2013 or later, JIU will immediately begin to help the recently enrolled students to find other education options.

In response to a question from Commissioner Donley, Mr. Thompson said the sanction is a non adverse action, which is only a warning that requires them to be monitored. The next visit from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) will be on January 28, 2013. Ms. Small said if JIU is able to remove the notice from the HLC, they will be eligible for postsecondary registration in Iowa.

Commissioner Donley posed the question, of what will happen if one of the eight students scheduled to graduate this year are not able to do so because of a life event? Commissioner Winckler asked how the credits will transfer to another institution. Ms. Small said JIU remains accredited and are just under a notice which shouldn't affect the credits. It is up to the accepting institution to determine which credits they will allow to transfer.

Ms. Small asked JIU representatives where they are with the State's tuition refund policy. Mr. Wick said they will put a policy in place for the Iowa resident students which will give them 100% of their tuition at the 50% course completion mark, and 40% of their tuition at the 60% course

completion mark. Ms. Small said it appears this will meet the Iowa requirement, but will wait until she is able to review the written proposal.

Commissioner Moore called the question, which passed unanimously.

Motion: Commissioner Moore moved to deny Jones International University's application for postsecondary registration in Iowa, and requests that Carolyn Small work with JIU to identify an end date for the 27 Iowans who are currently enrolled in JIU online programs. Permit JIU's Iowa-based faculty member to fulfill contract commitments that end on April 6, 2012. JIU must cease operational activity in Iowa on and after April 7, 2012. Commissioner Donley seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Clarkson College

Motion: Commissioner Donley moved to approve Clarkson College's application for an amendment to its Iowa registration so that the college is authorized to provide a portion of its residential (i.e., on-campus) programs at an Iowa location. Commissioner Shull seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

University of Southern California

Motion: Commissioner Shull moved to approve the University of Southern California's application for an amendment to its Iowa registration to add a practitioner preparation program. Commissioner Utman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Postsecondary Registration Discussion

Agenda item deferred to next Commission Meeting.

Staff Reports

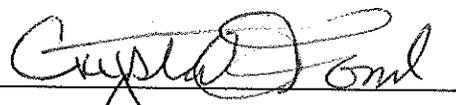
Ms. Krueger presented the FY 2012 Revenue and Expenditure Summary.

Mr. Girardi presented the Iowa College Student Aid Commission's Strategic Plan. Ms. Misjak said this plan was done in 2010 and has been updated to the current year. Mr. Girardi added that staff received a directive from the Governor's office to align the agency goals with the Governor's Policy Goals. The Strategic Plan was sent to the Governor's office the first part of January.

Commission adjourned at 6:15 p.m.



JANET ADAMS, CHAIR



CRYSTAL FORD, VICE CHAIR