UPDATE ON 120 CREDIT HOUR LEGISLATION COMPLIANCE

Barb provided a summary of the legislation that includes 120 credit hour caps on undergraduate degrees. She noted that the legislation outlines two exceptions – accreditation requirements and employer requirements; neither of which tend to be specific to credit hours but to skills and competencies. IU is the largest statewide un-centralized higher education institution; thus IU faces challenges to meet this requirement. At the University level, Barb reported agreement to have the same credit hours for same degrees, but not necessarily the same courses. Indiana Commission for Higher Education (ICHE) recognizes IU as one institution, even though each campus has its unique talents, community and programmatic strengths and needs. Barb noted that presently we work in an era requiring much more coordination; such are the climate and setting in which we currently are working. These pressures are not unique to Indiana and the Republican administration, but are national.

Also, Barb stated that we will be dealing with “bookends” on our programs – 30 general education credit hours statewide requirements and 120 credit hours limitations. The professional degrees are the most strained to meet professional requirements along with the “bookends.”

This summer each campus indicated on a list of degrees with their respective credit hours those expected to comply and those which could not to the 120 credit hour limitation. Once compiled, the University administration has looked at the issues. With respect to education degrees, Barb reported that the University is prepared to make the argument for exceptions for dual certification programs, particularly elementary and specific education. Matt clarified that at IUN the students are being dual-certified. It was noted that on some campuses there are teacher certification programs that are outside the School of Education. Barb and university representatives are speaking with those units. The sticking point is individual programs on individual campuses that are above 120, but other campuses have 120 credit programs. Barb has had discussions in those individual instances to work on reaching compliance with the 120 credit hours.

Barb asked if there are any appeals. Karen noted concerns re: social studies and licensing students in three content areas, and some concern re: music education. Barb reported that Margie Ferguson is
working with schools of fine arts, for there are several degrees across the University for which there needs to be some consistency. Marilyn spoke to wanting to re-think the elementary program; would like 124 credits. Given that the minors do not lead to dual certification, Barb reported it will be tough to seek 124 for elementary at IU East. IU South Bend has concerns re: early childhood; the program is not dual certification (early childhood concentration), but includes certification for Pre-K and K. South Bend has designed a concentration to prepare students to pass the respective Praxis II, but the program is not technically a dual certification program. IUPUC has dual certification programs including special education and ENL, so can those programs be an exception? Barb stated that IUPUC needs to check with IUPUI, because IUPUC is a center of IUPUI. No other campus has a dual program of elementary and ENL.

Upon further reflection, Karen believes social studies will comply with 120. Gloria wants to double-check re: social studies, Barb thinks IUS is okay. Matt noted that at IUN social studies is at 126 and certifying in three areas. Matt questioned how the Commission for Higher Education is implementing the language of the legislation. Barb responded that there are two parts: 1) how ICHE interprets the legislation and it does not interpret “shall” in the same way as Matt suggested. The ICHE currently is being aggressive and over-stepping its authority, and thus institutions have to pick their battles. 2) IU is a loose confederation academically and that organizational format is not recognized in that way by the ICHE and the Board of Trustees. Ivy Tech and Purdue are more consistent and autocratic; thus IU remains the outlier. Matt found the explanation helpful. Barb indicated that where we have like degrees across multiple campuses we need to have like credit hours.

IUPUI math education is a Purdue degree; IU School of Education only offers the certification component. IPFW math education is a Purdue degree as well.

Jill questioned whether we can ask for general approval for dual certification degree programs to be beyond 120. Barb has no problems with seeking that approval. Marilyn added to Jill’s suggestion. School of Educations are being asked to do even more, given the increased demands on public schools. We are tracking these changes and how they may impact the preparation programs. We want to be responsive and mindful of the best teacher preparation. Recognizing the changing nature of public education, and not knowing all that may be coming, perhaps reference to these changes could be included in a preamble/letter to the ICHE, along with the principle to approve dual certification degree programs. At present, legislative offices are not hearing about teacher education bills being written for the next session.

To summarize the exceptions for education degrees, Julie Saam appreciated the reference to all dual certification programs, for IUK is considering a secondary special education/content area program. At IPFW the Spanish program in world language education is above 120. No other campus is above 120 in this program; Barb will have a conversation with the language faculty at IPFW. Barb reminded the Council that the University will not seek a common credit hour number for the elementary/special education.
The 30 Credit Hour General Education Statewide Core

Ivy Tech recently has changed its 30 hour general education core. Several campuses have expressed concerns re: the transferability of these hours. Barb recommended that faculty not worry just yet with respect to the legislation SEA 182 requiring all institutions to create a general education transferable core. The legislation is not as bad as it could be; initially it mandated the same 10 courses for everyone. Each campus gets to keep its own general education core for its “native” students. All the public institutions have to come together and agreed to a shared set of competencies and agreed to a 30 credit hour transferable core. Students must complete the entire 30 credit hours at one institution to be able to transfer them and to apply the credits to a degree. This agreement reflects recognition of some coherence to a general education core. Institutions will certify that students have completed the general education core, and that is transferable to a degree. If an institution has a general education core greater than 30 and a requirement beyond the shared set of competencies, the institution may require those additions. Every campus will be wrestling with this process. The state leadership team has agreed to the shared competencies and generally they align with the general education competencies across all the campuses. Each competency area has a number of credit hours attached to it. These competencies align with LEAP outcomes and those of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU).

Campus representatives will align respective general education requirements to competencies and return their recommendations back to state leadership team. This team will offer its agreement with the recommendations. The intent is to approve campus plans for implementation fall 2014. Barb recommended that individual campuses not worry about the Ivy Tech core at this time, for it may have to change.

Barb and the State Leadership Team recognize that the 30 credit hours will challenge 120 credit hour cap, specifically elementary. She reminded members that campuses will not be able to have students repeat or take additional courses in stated competencies. Department of Education standards/requirements may be turned to or noted for additional coursework.

In response to questions, Barb indicated that the 30 credit hour core is sovereign; it represents a cost cutting measure supported by Governor Daniels. The 30 credit hours must apply to 120; units cannot make a student take a new course addressing one of the competencies; students cannot be required to repeat a course in meeting competencies. No degree requirements have to be weakened to accommodate the 30 credit hours core. Barb noted that she has shared the status of discussions to date. Presently it is not clear of impact on education/prescribed professional degrees. Marilyn noted caution with respect to new testing requirements and facing the 120 credit hour restraints, along with the 30 credit hours general education. Barb also suggested that faculty discussion around the competencies will be helpful; this concept resonates across the state.

ONLINE INITIATIVE

In contrast to the discussion this morning, Barb noted that the initiatives surrounding online education are not a mandate, not coming from the state. She believes that the efforts provide wonderful ways for
schools to do things. Barb provided history/time line leading to this initiative. Expectations as to how technology is to be used in education are changing, and technology may make education more convenient, more affordable. IU has been addressing this question for about 15 years. Any number of task forces (7) have said the same thing, but never progressed. There had been difficulty in identifying where to house initiatives. At one time it seemed as though the initiatives should be in the School of Continuing Studies, but different units had concerns about that. Thus individual units moved forward. The Board of Trustees did not see IU organized in terms of distance education initiatives. There was one recommendation – a university office to do four things; strategic oversight, identification of ways to bring parts come together; coordination across campuses; ensure compliance with regulatory issues; develop a coordinated/unified face. Barb is the director of this office. Over the last year, she has talked with 150 units across university and has learned about wonderful ideas, barriers, existing plans, how to support plans. The report, Moving Forward recognizes that online education is a blunt phrase; there are many forms of online education. The University cannot think of online education as a monolith. IU is organized geographically/regionally, and online blows that out of the water. Advice from campuses has been leave us alone and protect us.

The President has provided Barb’s Office with four guiding principles, which do not represent hard and fast rules. They include:

1) We will not compete on cost; on campus/online education. We must think about pricing. Nor can there be competition among campuses, one cheaper than another.

2) There should be no duplication without distinction, which will require a level of coordination and agreement campuses have not had to reach before. Units are encouraged to think about online education offerings in a very student-centric way.

3) The University must use economies of scale; must be efficient in delivery. There has been no similar remonstrance process/guidelines for programs as we have for courses, e.g., course master inventory. ICHE provides more scrutiny of programs, than IU does presently. Examples – infrastructures, sharing faculty, quality assurances.

4) The University and units must think about the business case. Must think about programs that we move forward. We are a part of a competitive business. We will need to think about how to promote a program of distinction and how it is distinct. Must know that a market exists, and how we fit in the market. Must have a solid business case for going forward.

Efforts are underway to build a brand. IU will be working on how we can integrate community and convenience, and interaction and independence. IU has the infrastructure to find a balance between these two areas. The second branding point is market segmentation. Core campus will focus on graduate programs and regional campuses on undergraduate programs. There may be a place for exceptions in with respect to education.

The IU Online Initiative includes:

1) Graduate programs on core campus in professional schools. Have at least one on-line by 2014.
2) Undergraduate level, encourage development of joint academic programming across regional campuses. Joint means – ICHE has communicated that they believe that the 4-year multi-campus institutions (IU and PU) should be organized like Ivy Tech. We have communicated that that will not happen at IU. Yet, they may be joint/collaborative things around regional campuses, i.e., a bachelor’s degree in applied sciences. All campuses have agreed with this framework to consider joint curricula where there are shared faculty, programming. No expectations that the joint ones are the only ones for the regional campuses. Could be need for a new degree but no one campus has the full faculty to offer. There have been meetings among chancellors. Will be meeting with vice chancellors. Some of these discussions surround the Blue Print for Student Attainment (2nd year of implementation).

3) Innovation in mooks and badges; trying out some of the new technology formats. Will need to have discussions re: competencies and financial charges.

4) Specific gateway courses, different but similar to general education, i.e., dual credit high school courses. There is the Education Roundtable initiative for increased opportunities in high school dual credit. Can we think of some key courses to offer online – every campus would have on line? Efforts to identify which courses those should be. Potential packages with high schools.

The big picture is a University commitment to eight million dollars over three years. Some of those funds will go to costs for state authorization, offerings across state lines; marketing analyses; University-wide license with a proctoring agency, to affirm student identity. There will be staff in the online office – strategic direction, compliance, coordinating and IU Online brand – website portal. New funding will be available through UITS for design specialists, and for incentive funding to faculty.

Presently, there is no intention to stop a campus, paying for its own efforts, BUT such initiatives must coordinate across campuses. The coordination/helping find coordinators will be aided by online office. The Office will provide administrative assistance associated with collaboration.

From now through January units are developing ideas. In January the Office will identify initiatives to fund.

In response to questions, Barb suggested that faculty/school ideas should be directed to academic chancellors, who will forward them to the Academic Leadership Committee (ALC). Curricular frameworks should be shared with Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs; thus the ALC will know what is being developed before it is approved. The ICHE has approved a new template to be used for proposing new degree programs. Regional campuses must coordinate with the core campus for graduate online programs.

Submitted by
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