



**Draft Minutes of the Council on Postsecondary Education Work Session**  
**Wednesday, February 18, 2015, 5:30 p.m.**  
**Shepard Building**  
**Room 500**  
**80 Washington Street**  
**Providence, Rhode Island 02903**

The Council on Postsecondary Education met for a Work Session on Wednesday, February 18, 2015 in the RIDE Conference Room in the Shepard Building. At 5:35 p.m. Chair Bernstein welcomed everyone. He then took roll call.

**Present:** Dennis Duffy, Thomas Izzo, Judy Ouellette, Kerry Rafanelli, John Rainone, John Smith Jr., Dr. Jeffery Williams, and Michael Bernstein.

**Absent:** Antonio Barajas, Eva-Marie Mancuso

**1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

Chair Bernstein entertained a motion to accept the agenda. On a motion duly made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Ouellette, it was

**VOTED:** That The Council on Postsecondary Education accepts the agenda for the meeting of February 18, 2015 as posted.

Vote: 7 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Michael Bernstein, Dennis Duffy, Senator Thomas Izzo, Judy Ouellette, Kerry Rafanelli, John J. Smith Jr., and Dr. Jeffery Williams

NAYS: 0

**2. REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Bernstein:

Chair Bernstein announced that the upcoming Board meeting will be rescheduled from Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, to a time after the Senate has provided advice and consent on the new members added to the Board and the two Councils. He indicated that the Council meetings for March will also be rescheduled so that the new members will be included.

The Chairman also reminded the Council that this will be his last meeting as chair and reiterated that he was very proud of the accomplishments of this new Council in their few months together. He also thanked both Chair Mancuso and Dr. Barajas who have been replaced for all of their service to both this Council, the Board, and the prior Board of Governors on which they both served.

### **3. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER**

While the Council requires the submission of a full or abbreviated proposal for many changes in academic programs, a notice through the Office of the Postsecondary Council from the Commissioner is sufficient under the following circumstances per the Council's policy 4.0 – Section I – B:

- Change in program or unit title
- Addition of new options in an existing program
- Suspension and reopening of programs
- Creation of a short-term nontraditional academic unit
- Seeking, receiving or losing national accreditation for an existing program
- Offering previously approved programs under contractual agreements
- Development of certain non-credit programs
- Certain certificate programs

With these regulations as the framework, the Commissioner reported that there are two notices of change for programs at Rhode Island College:

- Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies
- Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies

### **4. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **a) Rhode Island Legislative Bills related to Higher Education**

##### **Performance Funding**

The Commissioner reported that the legislature is suggesting a bill that will require the establishment of performance funding for the public institutions of higher education.

His PowerPoint presentation offered a primer on the background and context of this topic.

The National Conference of State Legislatures has produced a study of the best practices in performance funding based on the results of such programs around the country. They include the following:

1. Put enough funding at stake to create an incentive for institutions to improve results.
2. Decide whether the funding will come from new money or base funds. Most states are putting aside 5 percent to 25 percent of higher education dollars for performance funding.
3. Allow postsecondary institutions with different missions to be measured by different standards.
4. Engage all stakeholders – policymakers, higher education leaders and faculty members – in the design of the funding system.
5. Phase in the performance funding system to make the transition easier.
6. Keep the funding formula simple, with unambiguous metrics, so expectations are clear to everyone.
7. Maintain focus on the goal of improving college completion, while rewarding both progress and success.
8. Include a measure to reward colleges that graduate low-income, minority and adult students to ensure that institutions keep serving these populations.
9. Align the funding formula with state economic and workforce needs by providing performance funding to those colleges that are graduating students in high-priority fields.
10. Preserve academic quality by incorporating student learning measurements into the performance funding system.

Council members asked the presidents for their reflections on this potential funding formula.

Dr. Dooley expressed that his concerns relate to the difficulty of never having any funding based on performance in the past. The prior years' funding methods mean that an upcoming formula will depend on a false "base". He feels that those institutions whose commitment has been to access including such programs as the Talent Development program at the University may have these programs put at risk based on a potentially false logic in the formula itself.

Dr. Carriuolo expressed her concern that retention efforts that are currently underway may not be properly included in a base calculation for performance awards.

Mr. Di Pasquale stated that he is unclear that such goals as “timely graduation” are not attainable or desirable in an institution such as CCRI where completing is more important than timeframe. With over 70% of CCRI’s students categorized as part time, a two or three year completion measure does not provide an insight into the college’s performance.

Chair Bernstein indicated that this legislation and the planning process for the recommendations made to the General Assembly must be approached with an abundance of caution in order to make the ultimate model an acceptable and viable one that supports the missions of the institutions rather than undermining them.

Dr. Purcell indicated that the model proposed was set on a timeframe of one year or more from now when significant study and consideration had been made to support the proposal. However, this legislation seems to be fast-tracking it.

Senator Izzo expressed his observation that the legislature will often make proposed bills that are designed to inspire studies and conversation well in advance of implementation. He said that the Council and the Commissioner need to articulate the concerns and repercussions of the action especially in as much as the base is problematic.

#### **b) Dual Enrollment Policy**

The Dual Enrollment Policy that was approved at the December meeting of the full Board of Education required public comment per the RIDE regulations. Dr. Purcell reported that the funding for this program which will be offered to all high school students in the state will be provided for in the Governor’s recommended budget.

The amended version of the policy which amendments are a result of the public hearings will be voted on at the next meeting of the full Board of Education.

The Council packet contained a redlined version of the dual enrollment regulations which incorporate the feedback from the public comment period. There is also a final version of the regulations which also includes redlined updates as well as a table of comments received and a summary of the changes that resulted from the public comments.

The Commissioner reviewed the enrollment complement from the three institutions of public higher education as well as the price of the various enrollment arrangements. He reminded the Council members that they will be asked to approve the Dual Enrollment Regulations as presented.

### **c) Statewide Longitudinal Database System (SLDS) update**

The Commissioner introduced two Office staff members who are involved with the Statewide Longitudinal database system: Steve Vieira who is on loan from CCRI and is serving as the Project Manager and Bobbi Seiler, Business Analyst, who is serving as the SLDS Coordinator.

The goal of this grant-funded project is to develop a postsecondary data warehouse that connects data from the three public higher education institutions with other state agencies including RIDE, DLT, as well as other outside entities. The vision is that this database will support with comparable data among its participants those efforts to provide accountability related to state initiatives, including financial aid and workforce development as well as useable data for funding formulae and performance funding.

Mr. Vieira provided a timeline for this project's upcoming 3-6 months goals as well as the expected outcomes.

Ms. Seiler presented several data stories that illustrated how various, isolated programs through the system provided supports to students from underserved populations as they entered higher education. Each of these data stories provided significant data that underscored their individual success in both persistence and completion by these students in comparison to those students with comparable demographics but not supported by the individual programs. However, Ms. Seiler pointed out that these programs operate independently and without reference to others like them. Without a statewide data system, these programs will operate without clear monitoring of their effectiveness and will not be able to evolve or to find future, consistent funding sources since there is no systemic analysis of what works for these students and what does not.

Therefore the coordination of comprehensive systems of support, especially during the vulnerable transition from high school to college, needs good longitudinal data. Such data will help all partners work together to achieve the common goals for students success.

## **5. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chair Bernstein announced that there were no topics for discussion this evening in an Executive Session.

## **8. NEXT MEETING**

Chair Bernstein also announced that all meetings in March have been cancelled until the new members of the Board and the Councils have received Senate confirmation. This is anticipated in the upcoming couple of weeks. At that time, Council members will be

contacted by the Commissioner or his staff regarding the scheduling of upcoming meetings which will include the new members.

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made by Dr. Williams and seconded by Mr. Smith, it was:

**VOTED:**                    **THAT** The Council on Postsecondary Education adjourns its work session.

Vote       7 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS:    Michael Bernstein, Dennis Duffy, Senator Thomas Izzo, Judy Ouellette, Kerry Rafanelli, John J. Smith Jr., and Dr. Jeffery Williams

NAYS:     0

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.