

**Illinois Eastern Community Colleges**  
**Strategic Engagement Planning Council (SEPC) Minutes**

**April 3, 2024**

**9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

The SEPC held a strategic meeting on April 3, 2024.

**Participants:** Ryan Gower, Sheryl Childers, Tona Ambrose, Alex Cline, Jay Edgren, Matt Fowler, Ryan Hawkins, Amber Malone, Jessica McDonald, Andrea McDowell, Chris Simpson, Brandon Weger

**Not Participating:** None.

**Invited Guests:** None

**Welcome:** Dr. Gower welcomed the Council to the meeting. He provided an overview of the agenda and goals for the day.

**Vice Chancellors Reports:** The Vice Chancellors gave an update from each of their respected divisions.

**Faculty Representative:** Jessica McDonald gave an update and reported on items brought to her attention by the faculty.

The Council had a long and productive discussion about on-going and upcoming changes, and the importance of keeping people at the center of decision making during the re-organization efforts.

**Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Gower reminded the Council that “approval of minutes” at SEPC will include approval of SEPC minutes, as well as a review and acceptance of Division minutes. This step is important to ensure leadership is aware of work that is transpiring across the District. Council approval of the available minutes was given.

**Discussion Items**

- 1. Specific Addresses/Emergency Preparedness (Ambrose)-** Mrs. Ambrose brought discussion regarding establishing individual building addresses at IECC campuses to be utilized in the event of an emergency. Alex Cline is checking to ensure the building from which the call is being made is visible to emergency dispatchers. This discussion item will return in May or June.

- 2. 2023 SENSE Report (Weger)-** Mr. Weger provided a copy of the executive summary of results for review. The SENSE survey benchmarks items that address key areas of student engagement. The data produced from the survey will aid in the development of strategies focused on enhancing student engagement & success.
- 3. Community Education (Ambrose)-** Mrs. Ambrose brought discussion regarding a more uniform approach to oversight and operation of community education efforts. Dr. Gower charged the Council with thinking about the alignment of community education with our mission, values, and strategic pillars and to return to future meetings prepared to discuss where community education should fit into long-term planning efforts.
- 4. Student Advisory Board Bylaws (Fowler)-** Dr. Fowler provided a copy of the bylaws for review. The bylaws distinguish guidelines for Illinois Student Advisory Board members. Dr. Gower asked members of SEPC to provide any feedback to Dr. Fowler within 2 weeks to allow SALT to do a final review and adoption.
- 5. Student Code of Conduct (Fowler)-** Dr. Fowler provided a copy of the proposed changes to the Student Code of Conduct for review. The Council will share proposed edits with Dr. Fowler over the next 2 weeks, and this item will return for SEPC approval in May.
- 6. Variable Tuition for B&I 1.6 Courses (Edgren)-** Dr. Edgren presented a proposal that would give authorization for the Business & Industry division to charge a differential tuition rate for training opportunities at their discretion. According to Dr. Edgren, many such courses require a larger financial investment from the District during development and implementation.
- 7. Academic Affairs Update (Edgren)-** Dr. Edgren provided the Council with an update on upcoming retirements and position vacancies within Academic Affairs.
- 8. IECC Athletic Practice Start Times (Edgren)-** Dr. Edgren proposed a uniform start time for athletic practices across the District. In addition to practices, the group discussed games and trips. It was decided that the College Presidents would meet independently to discuss this proposal and those decisions would be made locally.

9. **TRIO SSS & Upward Bound Pay Increases (Fowler)**- Dr. Fowler presented a recommendation for pay adjustment for employees in these areas and the grant funding sources that would cover these additional costs. There was a consensus among the Council that this was a good recommendation. The group discussed the timing of implementing this recommendation as well as strategies for better incorporating TRIO SSS into our admission, advising, and retention efforts. The Student Affairs and Institutional Outreach divisions will develop timelines and implementation plans to address these areas. This item will return to SEPC in May as an approval item.
  
10. **Student Activity Fee (Fowler)**- Dr. Fowler presented the allocations for previous years and discussed the projected allocations for AY24-25. The Council supports allowing the Student Affairs Division to retain decision making on how the Student Activity Fee will be budgeted. This necessitates modest revisions to Policy 300.3 which was a subsequent approval item.
  
11. **IECC Hiring Plan (McDowell)**- Mrs. McDowell presented the information submitted by the Vice-Chancellors and their respective divisions. The team discussed operating revenues, projected costs of future salary increases, and strategies for the sustainable operation of their units. The hiring plans are incomplete at this time and Human Resources will continue to work with the Vice-Chancellors and the CFO to develop implementation plans to be considered at future SEPC and Board of Trustees meetings.
  
12. **Other- None**

### Consent

1. **Turnitin Services Contract (Weger)**- Mr. Weger recommended continued use of Turnitin services. The product provides interactive training for students utilizing AI submissions and provides the institution with protection against academic misconduct.
  
2. **Standard Waiver of Liability Form (Hawkins)**- Mr. Hawkins provided a copy of the waiver for review that provides a basic release of liability.
  
3. **Policy 500.41 Student Attendance (Edgren)**- Dr. Edgren provided a copy of the newly developed policy that outlines criteria for reporting student absences. Approval was given and the policy will be presented to the Board on April 16, 2024.
  
4. **Procedure 100.4 Student Trustee Selection (Gower)**- Dr. Gower provided a copy of the newly developed procedure for the selection process of student trustees.

5. **Grant Update (Gower)**- Dr. Gower provided a copy of the grant update for review.
6. **Affiliation Agreements - Rehab for Life & ProgressiveHealth Rehabilitation (Gower)**- Dr. Gower provided a copy of the affiliation agreements for review. Approval was given and the agreements will now be presented to the Board of Trustees on April 16, 2024.

Approval was given for the Consent Agenda.

### **New Business**

1. **Policy 300.3 (Gower)** – Dr. Gower recommended modest changes to Policy 300.3 to make it clear that the Student Affairs Division is responsible for making recommendations about the use of the Student Activity Fee. Their recommendations still require Board of Trustee Approval prior to implementation. Approval was given, the Policy 300.3 will be presented to the Board of Trustees on April 16, 2024.
2. **Lightcast Career Coach Services (Weger)**- Mr. Weger recommended the continuation of Career Coach services. Dr. Fowler discussed the importance of the tool for future efforts in the Student Affairs division, and the team recommended incorporation of the tool into the program of study websites and making use of the tool as part of our student onboarding processes. Data shows that area high schools are the biggest consumers of this service at this time. Approval was given.
3. **Model Partnership Agreement/Three to Your Degree (Ambrose)**- The Council was presented with a revised MPA that President Ambrose would like to present to area K-12's soon. In this proposal, fees priority courses (IAI, GECC) experiences are held flat with non-priority elective courses being assessed a bigger fee. The goal is to use cost as an incentive to encourage students and schools to participate in dual credit experiences that count toward degree requirements instead of free electives. Approval was given.
4. **FY25 Budget (Hawkins)**- Mr. Hawkins provided a copy of the tentative budget for FY25. Approval was given and the tentative budget will now be presented to the Board on May 21, 2024.
5. **Grants & Compliance Job Duties (Fowler)**- Dr. Fowler presented a copy of the job duties for the position. He brought to the attention of the SEPC that the July 1<sup>st</sup> deadline is approaching for complete implementation of those duties and reminded that training is available if needed.

**6. FCC Administrative Asst. Job Description (Edgren)-** Dr. Edgren presented a job description for the Academic Affairs Data Integrity Specialist for review. Approval was given.

**7. Other-** None

The meeting ran over the allotted time and adjourned at 3:32 pm

Next SEPC Meeting:

Friday, May 3, 2024