

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

January 8, 2025

2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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:

Guests: Alani Fredrick, Sharmilla Kakac, Cyndi Boyce, Amy Tarr, Robert Conn

Call to Order & Welcome: Dr. Gower called the meeting to order and welcomed the Council to the meeting. He provided an overview of the agenda and goals for the day. He expressed his gratitude for the Operations and Maintenance team and their efforts during the recent inclement weather.

Reports:

Brandon Weger gave a data update for enrollment in the Spring 2025 semester. 82% of students registered in the Fall have registered for the Spring. This is in line with recent trend lines. Fall 2024 semester ended down 9% compared to Fall 2023. He is awaiting more data regarding Dual Credit enrollment for the Spring semester which will be delayed given the inclement weather and K-12 school closings.

Ryan Hawkins gave an update on MAP grants. Due to higher-than-expected enrollment of MAP-eligible students in the fall term, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) has implemented a reduction factor to ensure the available funding supports all eligible students throughout the academic year. This adjustment affects the spring 2025 semester as follows:

- **Semester Institutions:** An 8% reduction in the maximum eligible award amount for the spring term.
- **Quarter Institutions:** A 6% reduction in the maximum eligible award amount for both the second and third quarters.

Andrea McDowell reminded the Presidents that Human Resources has distributed information about how to handle employee compensation/reporting time during college closure. Information has been shared with Presidents, Presidents Assistants, and O&M Team Leads.

Alex Cline gave an update on the implementation of CRM Advise/Recruit. They have identified that the functionality of the CRM would benefit Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, and believe that a comprehensive communication plan should be developed.

Dr. Gower asked for an initial meeting to include Jessica McDonald, Alex Cline, Tona Ambrose, and Matt Fowler to determine a charge and recommend membership for this committee.

Amber Malone reported on OAR and discussed preparations for the new term and necessary changes to reporting 10-day attendance given the two inclement weather days. She shared information about the new process for enrolling students in the Driver's Education program, and indicated there is potential for the same process to be used for CETL, Business & Industry, and Community Education classes.

Chancellor's Office - Dr. Gower reported on faculty negotiations. The parties have engaged in more sidebar conversations which appear to be productive and collegial. Administration is waiting for the IEA representative to respond with the next date for mediated negotiation sessions.

Presidents & Divisions

SALT – Dr. Fowler gave an update from Student Affairs and recognized Chad Groves for his acceptance into a doctoral program. He reported that IECC was not awarded funds in the competitive grant for Mental Health initiative. Dr. Gower indicated that the grant was well done, and the need justified, but noted a sizeable reduction in the amount of dollars available for allocation across the state community college system. SALT is developing strategies to ensure that mental health needs are being met, amongst the financial set-back.

AALT – Dr. Edgren gave an update from the Academic Affairs division. Transfer pathways are being reviewed and developed with active participation from faculty. The interviews for IECC's proposed Gas and Utility program are underway. He reminded SEPC that the group activity courses used for student athletes need to be revisited, and a unified and equitable approach developed for AY26. Dr. Gower asked the Presidents to begin these conversations with their Athletic Directors and to have a decision in place by the time students would register for Fall 2025 classes.

BOLT- Chris Simpson reported on the Groundbreaking for Applied Technology Center at the OCC campus on January 15th at 2pm. With the recent retirement notice provided by Doug Shipman, a Search Committee has been formed to select a Director of Business at OCC. On 1/22/25 Mr. Simpson will be touring NEWCOR in Newton, IL to gather information about enhancing the Welding Programs across the District. BOLT is meeting on 1/23/25 to discuss the next steps for campus bookstores. Implementation of those decisions is expected in Summer of 2025. Dr. Edgren inquired about soliciting faculty input in this process and President Simpson identified opportunities made available in the Fall 2024 term and anticipated opportunities yet this semester.

IOLT – Tona Ambrose gave an update on Dual Credit and the strategies for improving program participation and quality. She reported on Amatrol equipment that was secured through a recent B&I grant, and noted the new lab being constructed at the West Richland Center and the mobile equipment that can travel to the four campuses

or area High Schools. A meeting is scheduled for 1/10/25 to discuss marketing strategies to raise awareness and interest in training opportunities. She and Mr. Hawkins provided an update on IECC's new Driver's Education program. He reported that instructors have been selected and final pieces of program approval are now in place. IECC will be one of two colleges in the State of Illinois to offer the program. Tona reported on the ICAPS program and requested ideas and input from her colleagues about how the program can be enhanced. A search will soon be launched for the next Director of Adult Education to backfill the vacancy created by Rodney Ranes' upcoming retirement.

Faculty- Jessica McDonald reminded that academic advisors should be well informed regarding the newly developed Drivers Education program. She recommended that the Office of Dual Credit work proactively when onboarding Dual Credit students to have them registered for IECC alerts.

Consent

1. **December SEPC Meeting Minutes (Gower)-** Minutes from the December 2024 meeting will be provided and reviewed at the February meeting.
2. **Divisional Meeting Minutes (Vice Chancellors)-** Minutes from the most recent AALT, SALT, BOLT and IOLT were reviewed and approved as presented.
3. **Procedure 200.8 Campus Closures and Interruptions (Gower)-** Minor revisions to the procedure were reviewed and approved.
4. **Policy 400.4 Holiday, Leave, and Benefit Policy/Non-Bargaining Unit Employees (Gower)-** Revisions were made to the policy to reflect compliance with the Public Community College Act, regarding closures and interruptions in result of inclement weather. In practice, IECC was already in compliance with these requirements. Approval was given and the policy will now be presented to the Board on January 21, 2025.
5. **Policy 500.14 Tuition Waivers (Edgren)-** Minor revisions were reviewed and approved. The policy will now be presented to the Board on January 21, 2025.
6. **Procedure 600.1 Relationships with College Foundations & Other Area Relationships (Gower)-** The procedure was deleted, and the content was relocated to Procedure 800.1. Approval was given.
7. **Affiliation Agreements- Gibson Co. Ambulance, Posey Co. EMS, & White Co. Ambulance (Edgren)-** A copy of the affiliation agreements between IECC and the organizations were provided for review. Approval was given and the agreements will now be presented to the Board on January 21, 2025.
8. **Grant Update (Gower)-** A copy of the grant agreement was provided for review. Approval was given.

The Consent Agenda was Approved.

Removed from Consent Agenda

None.

Policy & Procedure First Reading (and Possible Approval)

None.

Staff Recommendations for Approval

None.

Informational/Discussion Items

- 1. Status Update New Procedure 300.31.1 Student Activities (Fowler)**- Dr. Fowler handed out ISAB Funding Request, New Organization Registration, and Annual Student Organization Registration Renewal forms for review. He asked for feedback on ways that the forms can be improved.
- 2. Bulk Update to Policies and Procedures/ College to Campus, CEO to Chancellor, Cabinet to SEPC/ Allowable per Procedure 100.1 (Gower)**- Dr. Gower informed the leadership team that he had authorized Lori Barger to make modest name/title changes across IECC's catalog and policy/procedure manual (i.e. CEO to Chancellor) to make sure language aligned with IECC's reorganization and organization chart. Each item will not require SEPC approval per Procedure 100.1.
- 3. Procedure 500.14 Tuition Waivers: Employees (Edgren)**- Revisions were made to simplify the process used for courses that are required for employee onboarding or professional development. Approval was given.
- 4. Policy & Procedure 500.15 Residency (Fowler)**- Lori Barger has requested that SALT review the last round of revisions which were made to reflect IECC's compliance with the ICCB Administrative Rules and the IL Public Community College Act in establishment of student residency. The item was tabled and SALT will take the item up for discussion and action in their January meeting.
- 5. Policy 500.21 Student Military (Fowler)**- Revisions were made to the policy to reflect compliance when returning federal funds that were issued for the tuition of a student who was unable to complete an academic term due to a call for military duty. This item will be reviewed and acted upon by SALT in their January meeting.
- 6. Administrative Guidelines Update (McDowell/Edgren)**- TABLED
- 7. IECC Climate Survey (Weger/Boyce)**- TABLED
- 8. Tuition Waivers- Applied Music Lessons (Edgren)**- TABLED
- 9. Other- None.**

Capital Projects-

Dr. Gower reported that a bid opening date in February 2025 had been identified for the Lincoln Trail College Technology Center.

District Finance-

None

Approval of Personnel Items-

- 1. Leadership Transition for Nursing Program Advisors (McDowell)**- Mrs. McDowell reported on the movement of reporting lines for Nursing Program Advisors to move out from Allied Health and into Jamie Carmen's advising reporting line. The shift in reporting structure will take place January 13.

2. Academic Advising to Student Affairs from Academic Affairs (McDowell/Fowler)-

Mrs. McDowell reported the recommendation to move Academic Advisors from the Academic Affairs Division to the Student Affairs Division. Dr. Fowler and Dr. Edgren had approved this shift and reported that conversations with Jamie Carmen and the members of the advising team were productive, and the move well received.

3. Other- Mrs. McDowell reported that Ken Pryor will be presented to the Board in January for a Technology Systems Specialist. Mr. Pryor had previously worked at Lincoln Trail College as an Information Systems Technician. Approval was given. The hire will be presented to the Board for consideration on January 21, 2025.

Other Items- SEPC agreed to adjourn and take a tour of the new laboratory and AMATROL equipment housed in the Terry L. Bruce West Richland Center.

Adjournment- The meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm.

Date of Next SEPC Meeting-

Wednesday, February 5, 2025, at 2 pm @ TLB WRC