



DLAB

Distance Learning Authorization Board

December 13, 2024

Virtual Meeting

Minutes

Members present

Dr. Eric Fulcomer, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU)

Jay Rothman, Universities of Wisconsin (UW)

Layla Merrifield, Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS)

Secretary Dan Hereth, Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS)

Members absent

Dr. Russell Swagger, Wisconsin Tribal Colleges

Others present

Sherrie Nelson, Higher Educational Aids Board

Joan Gage, DSPS

Megan Stritchko, WTCS

Paige Smith, UW

Rebecca Larson, WAICU

Sonja Umberger, WAICU

Call to Order and Open Meeting Statement – Dr. Eric Fulcomer, DLAB Chair

Dr. Fulcomer, DLAB Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.

Sonja Umberger called roll and a quorum was present. She read the following Open Meeting Statement: “The December 13, 2024 meeting of the Wisconsin Distance Learning Authorization Board and all other meetings of this board are open to the public in compliance with State Statute. Notice of the meeting has been sent to the press in an attempt to make the general public of Wisconsin aware of the time, place, and agenda of the meeting.”

Action: Approval of September 20, 2024 DLAB meeting minutes – Dr. Eric Fulcomer

The minutes of the September 20, 2024 meeting were approved unanimously (Rothman/Merrifield motion). The minutes will be posted to the DLAB website.

Report of the Chair – Dr. Eric Fulcomer

Dr. Fulcomer welcomed the board and reviewed the agenda.

Election of 2025 Officers – Dr. Eric Fulcomer

Dr. Fulcomer noted that there is a longstanding tradition for board officers to rotate positions. The following individuals were elected to serve in the respective roles for the 2025 term:

Dr. Fulcomer proposed, and Secretary Hereth seconded, the motion for Jay Rothman to serve as Chair of DLAB for the 2025 term, which was unanimously approved.

President Rothman moved, with Secretary Hereth seconding, that Layla Merrifield be appointed as Vice Chair of DLAB for the 2025 term, and the motion was carried unanimously.

President Merrifield proposed, with Secretary Hereth seconding, that Eric Fulcomer take on the role of Secretary of DLAB for the 2025 term, which was also unanimously approved.

Dr. Fulcomer congratulated the board and thanked them for their continued willingness to serve.

Report: Review and Approval of Institutional Renewal Applications

Universities of Wisconsin – Paige Smith

Paige Smith reported no renewals in the Universities of Wisconsin (UW).

Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities – Rebecca Larson

Rebecca Larson delivered an update regarding the renewals within the private sector. Ten colleges: Alverno College, Carthage College, Edgewood College, Lakeland University, Marian University, Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, Mount Mary University, Ripon College, Viterbo University, and Wisconsin Lutheran College have submitted their renewals and have been approved.

Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services – Joan Gage

Joan Gage reported no renewals in the DSPS Educational Approval Program.

Wisconsin Technical College System – Megan Stritchko

Megan Stritchko provided an update of the renewals in the Wisconsin technical colleges sector. Seven colleges: Northwood Technical College, Madison Area Technical College, Fox Valley Technical College, Mid-State Technical College, Moraine Park Technical College, Lakeshore Technical College, and Waukesha County Technical College have submitted their renewals and have been approved.

Report: Staff Updates

NC-SARA and Federal Regulations

Paige Smith provided a brief status report on NC-SARA and federal regulations.

NC-SARA authorized 10 new policy changes to the SARA Manual during the Policy Modification Process. The next PMP will begin in January 2025 during which proposals can be submitted for consideration.

The Regional Steering Committees are working together to modify the PMP to minimize the number of proposals submitted and/or focus on particular topics for policy consideration. The PMP will continue through September of 2025 and then submitted to NC-SARA during its October 2025 meeting.

As to federal regulations relating to distance education, there were proposals issued over the summer regarding the following: Definitions, Return of Title IV funds, and TRIO programs. It is believed that the proposed changes will go into effect very soon after the new year. DLAB staff will continue to monitor the federal regulations to clearly understand the changes and their impact to distance learning, as well as determine what will be required to comply.

Complaints Report – Joan Gage

Joan Gage reported no complaints.

DLAB Annual Report for 2024

Megan Stritchko reviewed the draft of the DLAC Annual Report, which outlines activities for 2024. DLAB is statutorily obligated to submit this annual report to the governor and the legislature. The report provides a summary of DLAB's activities, includes details about institutional members, and outlines anticipated activities for the upcoming year. She will update the draft to reflect the 2025 officers and will make a technical edit by changing “campuses” to “universities” for UW institutions. Additionally, a cover letter from Dr. Fulcomer, the current chair, will accompany the report.

The board expressed their appreciation for the work Stritchko did to prepare the report.

A motion was proposed to approve the draft of the annual report, which included an officer update and technical edits (Rothman/Hereth). The motion was carried unanimously.

Stritchko will coordinate the cover letter to accompany the letter with Dr. Fulcomer.

Discussion: Other Items

No other discussion items were heard.

Adjournment

The meeting concluded without any additional discussion, and a motion to adjourn was proposed (Merrifield/Hereth). The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting officially adjourned at 11:22 a.m.