

MINUTES

WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMMISSION

Community College Regular Meeting

February 13, 2020

The February 13, 2020 Commission Meeting was called to order by Commission Vice Chair Kay Dooley, 9:30am, at Laramie County Community College's Clay Pathfinder Building in Cheyenne, Wyoming

A roll call of voting members was taken. A quorum was present. Due notice had been published.

Introductions were made.

Commissioners Present: Greg Blikre, Dennis Boal, Vice Chair, Dooley, Dr. Craig Frederick, Julia Newman, and Ember Oakley

Commissioners Absent: Dr. Jackie Freeze

Commission Staff Present: Dr. Sandy Caldwell, Executive Director, Dr. Ben Moritz, Deputy Director/Chief Academic & Student Services Officer, Larry Buchholtz, Chief Operating Officer, and Rob Dennis, Policy Analyst.

INTRODUCTIONS

- Dr. Caldwell introduced Dr. Ben Moritz as the new Deputy Director for the Wyoming Community College Commission (CCC). Dr. Moritz introduced Paris Edeburn as the new Chief Technology Officer. She will start in her new role March 2nd. Chairman Dooley introduced Representative Northrup who is taking time away from the state capitol and was attending the CCC meeting to provide public comment.
- Representative Northrup touched briefly on the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree and the impact the new degree will have on our community near Northwest College. There are a number of people who have some education or have an AS degree and yet they are site bound. There are people raising families and working jobs. People have expressed interest in continuing on, furthering their education, and furthering themselves to step up in their work. They are working in healthcare and the bentonite plants. Some are secretaries in those plants. Representative Northrup indicated he knows a lady who works at the hospital, has an associate degree, is very eager to get into the program and get going, but she is stuck. The BAS is valuable tool. He had spoken with the Joint Appropriations Committee (JAC) that the CCC needs to come forth with a plan to obtain more money. The Commission needs to put forth a plan, garnering support from both sides of the Legislature.

Commission Vice Chair Dooley entertained a motion to approve the agenda. **Motion:** Commissioner Blikre motioned and Commissioner Newman seconded. **Motion passed unanimously, agenda approved.**

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Kristin Bekes, Powell Chamber and Economic Partnership – Ms. Bekes offered her full support for the NWC BAS program. Workforce is a huge topic of conversation. She appreciated the legislature prioritizing the impact of the community colleges. Most competition for students in the community and kids comes from southeast Montana.

BAS program hits on a couple areas. Business needs a qualified and educated workforce. NWC's BAS degree allows students a place close to home to better themselves. It also allows a local opportunity for the community to achieve a four-year degree. From a workforce perspective and with the distance from the University of Wyoming, this program will make a huge impact in Powell. The BAS matches community desire for education and workforce training.

- Seaton Smith, Chair of Commissioners – Mr. Smith agreed with Ms. Bekes and offered his support for the NWC BAS degree. He had experienced the issues that the NWC is trying to overcome. The degree encourages the local community and family to obtain their degree and advance their skill set. Locally more workers, educated workers are needed. Mr. Smith noted they do not want to see local students go out of state and they cannot always send students to Laramie. The BAS will also draw kids in from a regional perspective. He strongly supports.
- Mike Williams, Executive Director of Uinta BOCES – Mr. Williams noted the community is continually asking for more education. He has seen a large number of resident's head to Utah for their education. Local communities have started to depend on Utah State. His group has been working with regional next generation sector strategy groups. He and colleagues have been told the BAS program would allow for industry a seamless pipeline of an educated workforce.
- Kayla McDonald, Director of Sweetwater County Economic Development – Ms. Kayla commented in Sweetwater county, there exists a large number of careers in the energy industry. Education is a huge factor in business development attraction and retention. She noted WWCC's BAS program is a great initiative. Especially after looking at the curriculum tied to the program. She would like to pledge her full support for WWCC's BAS program.
- Dr. Dave Throgmorton, Executive Director of Carbon County Higher Education Center – Dr. Throgmorton clearly sees the need for this type of a Bachelors program in their own community. He further indicated that it is hard to get people to come to Sweetwater County. He knows many people who have great industrial skills and huge knowledge, but not the opportunity to move forward in their career. Through the addition of the program, people in the community can now pick up additional skills and be more productive employees. Dr. Throgmorton indicated his hope that the Commission will move forward with the programs. He noted these programs are a wonderful use of our community colleges and a great way to broaden our partnership with the University of Wyoming.

B. ORGANIZATIONS/ALLIANCES:

- **Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees (WACCT)** – Mr. Ernie Over Mr. Over noted yesterday WACCT hosted their annual meeting and state capitol visit. Walter Wragge from NWCCD missed a step and split an incision open. Fortunately, there was not additional damage to his knee. He offered that this was a dreadful accident, complementing the Highway Patrol and capitol personnel for quick action.

WACCT held an election yesterday. Don Erickson from LCCC was reelected Treasurer. Dr. Judith Bartmann, EWC, was elected Secretary. Regina Clark, WWCC, was elected Vice President. Mr. Ernie Over was reelected as president. A few topics discussed during the meeting include statewide marketing for community colleges and the transforming lives committee meeting. He noted that WACCT is in a transition from staff to student-based awards with a focus next year on student achievement. Dr. Moritz

presented, in a morning session, a good overview of the community college budget process. Erin and Shawn Taylor provided advocacy training. WACCT members had a nice visit at the capital and talked with legislators. Mr. Erickson mentioned the copy of the legislative priorities sheet which has been distributed to legislators. WACCT members were presented final awards at a reception the night prior. Erin Taylor sends regrets as she is working on behalf of WACCT at the Legislature this morning.

- **Wyoming Department of Education** – Ms. Shelley Hammel
Ms. Hammel had four updates: 1) WDE has really focused on K-3 reading efforts. Individuals may have heard about it through HB297 which provides districts greater responsibility to address K-3 reading to help with in-service and preservice teachers. 2) Perkins V state plan will go to Governor Gordon and the next step will be to the State Board of Vocational Education for approval. Plans will be based on a comprehensive local needs assessment and include a bold change in requiring teacher externships. The goal is to prepare teachers to prepare students with the latest practices for the workforce. 3) Computer science standards have been promulgated, but are waiting on the Governors approval. WDE is working diligently on grants to support teachers in the field. The Department is developing computer science through Micro-Credentialing of practitioners, developing strategic computer science for all, integrating computer science into the curriculum in culturally relevant ways, developing district strategic plans for computer science, and NSF stackable micro credentials. 4) Recalibration and funding of K-12 is up for consideration. WDE and K-12 funding is evaluated every 5 years. Focus of past legislative efforts has been on the funding mechanism. Now the Basket of Goods is under review. The question has arisen if WDE is providing the appropriate Basket of Goods.
- **Presidents' Council** – Dr. Stefani Hicswa, President of the President's Council.
Dr. Hicswa noted that having Dr. Dale and Tribley join the team is a true pleasure. The team has been spending time looking at legislative priorities in conjunction with Dr. Caldwell and Erin Taylor. She is honored to be President of President's at a time of great collaboration.
- **Educational Attainment Executive Council (EAEC)** – Dr. Stefani Hicswa, Co-Chair [\(Note Tab 1\)](#)
Dr. Hicswa confirmed her roles as EAEC Co-Chair along with, initially, with UW President Neil Theobald. Dr. Theobald designated Dr. Kent Drummond to serve with Dr. Hicswa. Dr. Hicswa, Dr. Drummond and Dr. Caldwell worked closely with council members to put together a plan. In 2017, the council worked with the Lumina foundation to develop goals with regard to the completion agenda for the United States. At the time, Wyoming had yet to start the conversation. Later, Governor Mead issued an executive order indicating that 60% was not good enough as a state, Wyoming needed to be at 67%. Subsequently the Legislature codified Governor Mead's Executive order.

In the current plan draft, The EAEC looked at the 60% and 67% goals and further defined them as, leading the nation economic level goal of 60%. The EAEC feels 60% is an obtainable goal. The EAEC wants to work towards 67% in the obtainment plan as an aspirant level goal. The Committee is divided into 4 subgroups spending months working on four areas:

- 1) Alignment of workforce, workplace and postsecondary education
- 2) Infrastructure and recruiting
- 3) Funding and affordability

- 4) The college going culture in K-12, adults, and working with business and industry to value training

EAEC contracted with National Council on Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to look at metrics. The EAEC has defined five metrics:

- 1) 3rd grade reading level
- 2) High school graduation of entering 9th graders
- 3) High school to college matriculation within one year of high school completion
- 4) Credential productivity rate
- 5) Participation of adult students

Included is a list of priorities under consideration, what is completed, what is in progress, upcoming, what needs completion, etc.

The plan is on the Commission's website, and open for public comment until February 21st. The Council will meet the following Friday, February 28 to take public comment into consideration. It is very important the Commissioners and those in the audience take an active role in providing feedback and have say in the final plan. EAEC has intentionally kept the plan very concise.

Within each page the goals are outlined and then focused. Dr. Hicswa pointed out the chart located at the bottom. Regions of the state are in different places when it comes to completing credentials to compete on the workforce needs in the local area. To reach the goals of 60% and 67% each region needs to approach the issue differently.

Dr. Hicswa explored the focus areas. Focus I, alignment of workforce, included a gap analysis. Knowledge of gaps is needed to start work. A need exists to look at credentialed employees. EAEC can look at the adult workforce as a group and identify who in the workforce can increase credentials and skills. Focus area II, infrastructure recruitment, retention and completion, has been a focus of the colleges and the University for some time. Objectives are important as the EAEC looks at future strategic plans. EAEC wants to conduct an economic impact study and determine the return on post-secondary education investment. Dr. Hicswa noted they also want to look at the impact of out of state students. Out of state completion can be of assistance in raising numbers. EAEC wants to be an importer of working age adults to live and stay. EAEC will look at post-secondary credential completion level timelines. Community colleges focus on a three-year and UW on six-year completion rate. EAEC will be working with pathway programs to move students to degree completion in a timely manner. In objective 6, EAEC wants more people to obtain credentials through partnerships with businesses for workplace learning. Focus area III funding and affordability is of interest. The EAEC has been looking at funding levels and median debt. Objective 1 looks at education as nearly free as possible, student debt levels, and the median debt ratio. Objective 2 is increased productivity. EAEC recognizes the need for more people in the pipeline. EAEC is wanting to push the state legislature to establish a need-based state aid program similar to other states. Tennessee is the most famous. Mississippi has a program "Complete to Compete." Low-income, first-generation students, do not understand how to navigate the system. Focus area IV which explores developing a college going culture. Because of Wyoming's natural resource economic base, many high school students have gone directly to work and make a really good wage without a college credential. This outcome is no longer possible. The EAEC has included some objectives for high school graduation rates, college matriculation rates, and adult participation rates.

Comments on the plan are due February 21st. The next steps for the Council are to review comments and then we will have a draft plan and our marching orders.

Dr. Caldwell emphasized that the public comment period is open and the EAEC has received 30 comments and some quite detailed notes. The Council has expressed clearly, they will make changes on public comment.

- **Community College Faculty Alliance** – No Report
- **Wyoming Public Television** – Terry Dugas, General Manager ([Note Tab 2](#))
Mr. Dugas offered appreciation to those who came to the legislative reception Tuesday night. Thank you to the event partners: Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund, Wyoming Humanities Council, Alliance for the Arts, Wyoming Public Media, Department of Tourism. Mr. Dugas had nothing else to add in the included report and concluded his update.

C. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

- **Pending and Potential Legislation** - Dr. Sandy Caldwell ([Note Tab 3](#))
Dr. Caldwell had several things to review. Notes included under Tab 3 are already out of date. Legislation has changed significantly from initial reporting. This is a budget year and the non-budget bills require a 2/3rds vote to pass. For commissioners and for presidents, CCC holds a legislative update every Friday at 9 am. Larry Buchholtz closely watches all bills as they proceed forward, when committees are meeting before a bill, and if the committee is meeting after moving off the floor. CCC also receives a daily update from the Governor's office at 4 pm. Larry Buchholtz provides a tracking chart with priority indicators 1, 2, and 3 with 1 being the highest priority.

HB 95 – Building and Construction projects: Currently in-house appropriations. The Commission already has approval for authorized and prioritized projects at the colleges. The bill requires college projects to receive legislative authorization for major maintenance in excess of \$1.5 million. This will result in a potential slowdown of previously CCC approved major maintenance projects. The bill will also challenge bundling of projects and force split bids.

SF101 – Impacts motor vehicles: The file put a ceiling on motor vehicle registration costs for the first five years. It impacts motor vehicle funding directed to the colleges as part of local funding. Caught CCC staff by surprise. CCC has shared concern as the bill would introduce a hard cut to funding. Overall this file would have a big impact on the local counties and colleges.

SF108 – Retirement bill: This file is currently in committee. The Executive Branch will provide testimony. Bill will impact those at the colleges who are on the Wyoming Retirement System. The bill will change employee age and funding retirement eligibility.

SF129 – Health insurance: Currently monitoring the file as it has changes potentially impacting health insurance deductibles and percentage the state pays, possibly increasing employee contribution. This would impact all college employees.

CAPCON: The current CAPCON file does include college projects with a footnote for NWCCD level II funding for the Gillette College Academic Center. Footnote included so when the project moves to Level III it confirms legislative authority for funding.

SF 93 – Wyoming Works Fix for Prior Students. Student applicants who were already in a specific program were disqualified from program admission as they had already been prior students. The bill addresses the challenge and would remove prior enrollment criteria. Colleges estimate Wyoming Works student participation to double with removal of the requirement.

HB 001 and SF 001 – Budget bill. Dr. Caldwell shared most items in the budget request are preserved. The colleges were preserved from technology cuts. It was clearly noted that with colleges at the helm, most initiatives related to SLEDS have been moving forward. Mackenzie Williams, Wyoming Attorney General’s Office, clarified that HB 001 and SF 001 are both being introduced at the same time and then conferenced at the end of the session. Dr. Caldwell noted the budget bill is missing \$256,000 for WYIN faculty and the Data Security Expert. The lack of the expert is not about the Commission. CCC will receive security assistance from ETS. The \$30 million official exception request is not reflected in the current bill but is being tracked.

Tomorrow is the last day for bill introduction. Next week bills are out of the floor and into committee. Presidents have their legislative attendance rotation.

- Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees - Erin Taylor ([Note Tab 3](#))
Dr. Caldwell reminded all that on ([Tab 4](#)) is WACCT platform document, available to the public. The WACCT platform and document highlight the great work underway by Erin Taylor. The document closely parallels Commissions initiatives.
- Budget - Larry Buchholtz ([Note Tab 5](#))
Mr. Buchholtz noted many of the budget updates were previously covered. The budget bill includes an appropriation for \$27 million for the community college major maintenance budget, calculated on 2% of property replacement value. Another budget footnote for Executive branch agencies, is the amount appropriated for salaries this biennium must stay flat. On the letter included in the tab is a reminder that in 2021 the Commission will recalibrate the base period. Recalibration is dependent upon an enrollment year which has yet to occur.

Commissioner Boal asked about the status of health insurance. Dr. Caldwell responded in the agency’s budget request the current and predicted premium increases are included. The \$7.2 million recurring cut has been kept. The Commission will not pursue. Colleges are looking at how to handle in their budgets. Early conversations around health insurance. There is concern about a potential employee premium increase. There is an amount in the budget, to make the EGI whole to account for an unexpected premium increase. And there is a bill up to increase employee contribution/premium and also employee deductibles.

D. CONSENT AGENDA ([Executive Summary](#))

Commissioner Dooley noted all items on the consent agenda will be considered together. Any Commissioner may have an item removed and placed on the regular agenda. Dr. Caldwell added the Consent Agenda includes draft regular and emergency rules. The rules are on the agenda as per a timing issue. The rules are identical to those passed in October. Rules need to be considered again for promulgation to happen within the standard timeline and for implementation of the Wyoming Works and BAS programs.

Motion: Commissioner Frederick motioned, Commissioner Blikre seconded the introduction of the Consent Agenda for further discussion. **Motion Passed: unanimously**

Commissioner Boal asked if there was an issue with a second set of emergency rules. Mackenzie Williams, from the Attorney General’s office, responded his office is working with CCC through the process. Under the Administrative Procedure Act, an agency can have no more than two sets of substantially similar emergency rules. One version passed in June. The second set passed in October had significantly added material, creating a first set. Thereby the second set needs additional time to process as a set of regular rules. Mr. Williams confirmed this is a reasonable exercise of the emergency rules power and advised the process not continue beyond an extension of the second set. Dr. Caldwell added the first set of Emergency Rules in June were only half of Wyoming Works. In October Wyoming Works rules were completed and added BAS program rules. Commissioner Boal noted the potential need for a public hearing. Mr. Williams agreed noting that is precisely the process in promulgating the regular rules. CCC is not required to have a public hearing unless under certain circumstances or if the Commission chooses to. CCC is required to accept all the comments as part of the regular rules process.

- I. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:
 - October 24, 2019 (note Tab 6)
 - January 8, 2020 Special Meeting (note Tab 7)
- II. ACCEPTANCE OF REPORTS:
 - 2019 Summer Enrollment Report (note Tab 8)
 - Financial Report (note Tab 9)
 - 2019 College Audit Report (note Tab 10)
 - Performance Indicator Report (note Tab 11)
 - Academic Program Review (note Tab 12)
- III. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT REGULAR AND EXTENDED EMERGENCY RULES: (note Tab 13)
 - Chapter 1
 - Chapter 5
 - Chapter 6

Commissioner Dooley requested a vote on **approval of the consent agenda**. All in favor, none opposed. The agenda and materials for consideration **passed unanimously**.

E. REGULAR AGENDA:

- I. ELIMINATION AND HIATUS OF APPROVED PROGRAMS ([Executive Summary](#))
 - Laramie County Community College (note Tab 14)

Dr. Caldwell commented under CCC authority is the recognition of elimination or hiatus of programs at the colleges. Tracking of eliminated programs is needed so the Commission can accurately report community college degree offerings. This is on the agenda as a point of information, a first, and ensure discussions are taking place. In the future these items will be on the consent agenda as a non-action item. Commissioner Fredrick asked about this process during the January special meeting.

Dr. Shaffer noted the error on the executive summary, the summary should read, “the deactivation of 20 programs and suspending or placing on hiatus 14 programs.” Dr. Shaffer highlighted how significant of an action this is for LCCC. There are two big drivers behind the actions, current budget issues requiring reallocation of funds. In order to put money into new programs or things, the college must reprioritize creating great angst. The second piece is our moving to a major milestone in the

guided Pathways Program. This is a purposeful winnowing of programs to those that offer the greatest opportunity for students.

II. NEW ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAM APPROVAL REQUESTS (ACTION ITEM): [\(Executive Summary\)](#)

- Casper College [\(note Tab 15\)](#)
Brandon Kosine, V. P. Academic Affairs
Casper College is putting forth three new certificate programs: Web Design and Development, Community EMS, and Ranch and Agra-tourism Management. The College is also putting forth an AAS program in Web Development and Design.

Dr. Caldwell clarified the vetting process. All programs have been approved by the Academic Affairs Council and then brought before the Executive Council. All programs for all colleges were approved by the Executive Council. All programs will be approved as one full action item.

- Laramie County Community College [\(note Tab 16\)](#)
Kari Brown-Herbst, V.P. Academic Affairs
LCCC is proposing a STEM Associate of Science pathway degree. The faculty have shaped a program for all students interested in STEM in all areas. Students can eventually choose a specified field, not lose traction, and be prepared for their transfer destination. Faculty took a hard look at calculus requirements. LCCC does not anticipate a great number of graduates because program structure and students will have a choice point for academic specialization. Commissioner Frederick questioned elimination of natural science programs. Ms. Brown-Herbst noted the path to Bachelor's degrees in science are embedded in the pathway proposal.

- Western Wyoming Community College [\(note Tab 17\)](#)
Dr. Cliff Wittstruck, Interim V.P. for Student Learning
WWCC is presenting 5 new programs to address adjustments to the guided pathways programs. These degrees address former issues and better serve students. Commissioner Boal asked if the primary object is for students who may not have necessarily identified a program, to get them started in a direction to quickly and efficiently reach a destination. Dr. Wittstruck acknowledged the former guided pathways were too prescriptive and lacking flexibility. Focus areas are set to give students enough coursework to make an informed decision. President Dale noted Western was an early adopter of Pathways 5 years ago.

Dr. Shaffer provided an update on LCCC's Pathways program at Commissioner Dooley's request. Guided Pathways is a research backed, institutional redesign around four pillars: clarify paths, get students on a path, help them stay on a path, and insure they are learning what they need. Commissioner Oakley asked how this design swings the pendulum back? Dr. Wittstruck noted use of interdisciplinary studies and building more flexibility.

Dr. Caldwell added there is a lot to Pathways, potentially needing a workshop to discuss. There is a difference between a structured program and a guided pathway which puts students on a path minimizing time to degree completion. It strikes a balance between providing students good information without being too prescriptive.

Motion Commissioner Boal, Commissioner Newman Seconded the motion to approve all new program requests. The motion **passed unanimously**

III. NEW WYOMING WORKS NON-CREDIT AUTHORIZATION (ACTION ITEM):
([Executive Summary](#))

- Eastern Wyoming College – CDL ([note Tab 18](#))
Dr. Heid Edmunds, Vice President Academic Services
EWC is seeking approval for a non-credit Wyoming Works CDL certification program. EWC, NWC, and LCCC were awarded programmatic funding. Dr. Caldwell excitedly noted the formation of this consortium. She added that EWC and NWC would not be able to do these programs without the consortium.

Commissioner Blikre asked for an explanation of the consortium. As per the emergency rules adopted in October, the question was posed on how to implement programmatic funding for high cost programs. The Commission approved emergency rules for consortiums. Within one week the colleges applied and submitted applications to the selection panel, fully exhausting funding. Commissioner Blikre asked how are NWC and EWC working together given the distance between the two schools? Dr. Edmunds noted meeting of the Directors, establishment of a statewide advisory committee, and sharing of resources (instructors, equipment, and testing sites). Dr. Hicswa added rotation of a mobile training lab moving between three different colleges. Commissioner Frederick asked when will the programs start, how often will training be offered, and how many students will be trained? Dr. Edwards responded with anticipated training of 4 students per month for 8 months.

- Northwest College – CDL ([note Tab 19](#))
Dr. Hicswa, President Northwest College
Noted the program proposal for the CDL program is before the Commission and the program proposals are all very similar due to the consortia nature.

Motion Commissioner Newman, Commissioner Blikre Seconded the motion to Wyoming Works eligibility for the non-credit program requests. The motion **passed unanimously**

IV. NEW PROGRAM APPROVAL REQUESTS APPLIED BACCALAUREATE DEGREES ACTION ITEM: ([Executive Summary](#))

Dr. Caldwell noted two separate motions and action items are needed, one for the colleges and one for letters for accreditation purposes. Dr. Caldwell reminded the Commission in October they approved CWC and LCCC for their BAS programs. Both colleges had their HLC site visits. Both schools are waiting for the HLC published report. During the October meeting, CCC authorized NWC and WWCC to begin the authorization process. What is before is the actual approval of the BAS program degrees. HLC is awaiting letters of approval. These programs were approved by the Academic Affairs Council and the Executive Council on February 12, 2020.

- Northwest College ([BAS Presentation, Note Tab 20](#))
Dr. Hicswa presented NWC's, BAS program in Professional Studies. The program is approved by NWC Trustees. The presentation covers five areas required for HLC approval: the mission, ethical and responsible conduct, resources and planning, teaching and learning opportunities within. NWC's student-centered mission is focused on student needs, cultivating and serving the community, preparing students for transfer, career, and life. Lastly NWC is to be forward thinking.

Dr. Gregg Thomas detailed the process history and program details. History is included in tab 20. Following Wyoming's decision to allow BAS programs, NWC decided to not rush program introduction. Eventually assembling a BAS committee consisting of 3 of 5 division chairs, faculty, and deans. The Committee went through several iterations of program designs. The committee completed an extensive input process gathering feedback from anyone involved in supporting a BAS program if approved.

Late August/September the NWC committee surveyed 217 students resulting in three primary observations. 126 responded they would be interested in the program and would want to enroll within the first 3 years. 78 would be ready to enroll year one. Students said they need a flexible program, with an even split responding full vs. part time, online and face to face, day or night time. Important selection factors included cost, convenient schedule, school familiarity. NWC also conducted a survey of service area employers, 37 responses collected. 86% of respondents see a need for the program. 70% of those with the ability to hire said they would be interested in hiring BAS grads. Employers could see 29-36 jobs available for program graduates.

Curriculum includes four areas of focus: Communication, Organizational Leadership, Management, Marketing. Curriculum is listed in order of importance and is similar to UW, LCCC and others. Program and curriculum built around a cohort model, offering flexible delivery, ease of transferability. NWC will build a cohort of students proceeding through together, offer flexible schedules and promote ease of transferability. NWC conducted a thorough analysis of structural support both internal and external. NWC tried to make the program around preexisting courses, resources, etc. A team was assembled of three major working groups academic, student services, and administrative services who provided thorough review. NWCC is extremely confident they have academic and student support in place necessary to offer the program.

Dr. Hicswa noted tremendous external support from a survey of employers. Chair Kay Dooley is involved in community economic development. NWC has been very responsible and diligent to make sure the program is needed, coursework is at the bachelors' level, and that the resources are there. The program will invigorate our campus and will challenge us on a level making for professional jobs.

Commissioner Frederick asked if there is a different pathway for someone who has an AA or an AS degree? Dr Hicswa noted the program is very flexible, designed for a student to utilize whatever degree they are coming out of. Commissioner Frederick asked for additional details noting often feedback received is the program doesn't work with an AS. Dr. Thomas added admissions is set up to allow any student to enroll. The program is not exclusive to an AA or an AS degree. Commissioner Frederick asked about an individual who comes in without any degree, if NWC would emphasize the applied science program? NWC would work with the individual student to determine their interests. The student would have the option on working towards one of two degrees.

Commissioner Boal questioned professional studies. He found, when reading Professional Studies provide theory and practice-based learning in an interdisciplinary curriculum to be vague. When questioned what will someone be learning in professional studies, he cannot answer. Need to articulate what it is that someone is going to learn.

Dr. Astrid Northrup responded the degree is opposite of a traditional degree. Students will enter having completed an Associate of Applied Science or skill set along with professional coursework. This was a broadening of coursework to finish the degree. Students who are entering the program are already working professionally. Thereby they are able to bring in college credit and work experience. Chose name for 3 reasons, to validate the professional background, to expand the basis for entrepreneurship, and recognition the preparation of this degree.

Commissioner Blikre asked about degree breadth and if a student could get a BAS directly in history. He also asked if the degree being so broad would compete with UW degrees? Dr. Thomas noted the degree reaches a broad swath of students for access. It does not mean that the program is broad. Professional Studies is exactly as described, NWC has taken someone who has received specialized training and then given them the skills and knowledge to be professional in their area. The degree is a culmination in the curriculum and their experiences. Commissioner Blikre noted his concern about the politics and perception of competition with UW. There is a perception by the Legislature and others this program is so wide open to compete directly with UW. Dr. Thomas noted the coursework is a subset of UW BAS coursework. NWC has been working with Anne Alexander and the UW Registrar's Office who reviewed the proposed curriculum. While there may be curriculum similarities, NWC is not competing with UW for the target audience. A better educated Wyoming helps all of us. Dr. Hicswa noted she also has been working closely with Dr. Theobald. There is a population that may transfer to the university. There is a new partnership with the university to offer the degree. Commissioner Dooley commented that she lives in the service district, as soon the possibility of the degree passed through the Legislature, people were they could enroll the next day. Commissioner Dooley's background in technical education and has heard from employers for 30 years about that they can teach employees the technical skills but they have to learn how to communicate, lead and manage.

Dr. Caldwell noted Dr. Northrup had described an inverted curriculum. Adding on professional components on top of a specialized area. BAS must also provide for transfer capacity and courses will be in the common course numbering system.

Commissioner Boal reminded that we are discussing community colleges and they do not provide the same function as UW. This program takes the person in the community who is an Office Manager, has some specialized skills, then they can add additional specialized skills to become an Administrator. Dr. Hicswa used the specific example of welding. The Bachelors of Professional Studies provides the opportunities for a welder to advance and run his own company. Dr. Hicswa thanked the Commission for their consideration of the proposal.

Commissioner Dooley noted that given time, action should be taken on Northwest College. **Motion Commissioner Boal, Commissioner Blikre Seconded** the motion to approve Northwest College's degree program in Professional Studies. The motion **passed unanimously**

The meeting was suspended for a 45-minute lunch break and reconvened at 1:15.

Meeting reconvened at 1:20 pm. Discussion resumed at agenda item IV, BAS program approval.

- Western Wyoming Community College ([BAS Presentation, Note Tab 21](#))

Dr. Dale introduced WWCC's BAS in Business degree proposal. She recalled WWCC had met with the Commission in October of 2019, requesting an authorization to move forward with the program. Today she will showcase the work that has been done. The new degree has been in the works since April 2019. WWCC thoroughly engaged a wide variety of stakeholders throughout their service area and taken their feedback into consideration. Stakeholders have been deeply involved in the development of the degree. A majority of the degree is upper division classes offered online. Western has 23 online degrees. She noted, they will point out how they intend to support online students. The degree will be relevant and accessible, anywhere and anytime to meet the students and workers of southwest Wyoming.

As mentioned with NWC, there are HLC expectations including considerations of readiness. Dr. Dale noted the Commission is here to judge the readiness of WWCC for the program. Western's mission was revised in January 2019. The degree reflects in the mission as an innovative opportunity. Western is where passion meets purpose. The Commission will see today how Western creates passion and provides purpose. The presentation covers evidences and review of stakeholders. Related to teaching and learning, Dr. Dale noted HLC's requirement for appropriate rigor, faculty support, and assessment of student learning. The requirement is not just about instruction but also about student support services.

Slides detail the rationale and support including attainment goals, business and industry demand, growth in management occupations, the need for a skilled workforce, meeting the needs of industry, a focus on organizational and industrial management. WWCC really wants to help retain students in Wyoming. The program will also impact the recruiting of businesses to the area as the economic development folks noted earlier. WWCC will create a seamless pathway from AAS to BAS. Western's human and financial capacity is sufficient to support a degree. With Western's commitment to academic access and excellence, the program is a great addition. Dr. Dale shared an example of a nontraditional student, Jeanette. She's in her mid-30's, who openly shares she's a recovering addict. She is also a single mom with a 12 and 13-year old, currently caring for her parents. She came to Western for her GED and went on for an AAS degree. She wants to show her kids how to break the cycle. She is a great example of how this degree can change someone's life. Students should not be limited by access to such programs.

Dr. Whittstruck noted that it is an exciting time for the College and Wyoming. Each college is building programs that serve the specific needs of their service areas. The Bachelor of Applied Science in Business at Western is for people looking to be leaders in technical fields. The program has been built so a student who just finished an Associates recently or 15 years ago, or a welding degree, or even a high school graduate, could move directly into this degree. WWCC expects students completing the program will have obtained the skills and abilities listed in the slide.

WWCC has developed the BAS in Business with two names Organizational Management and Industrial Management. Western had spoken with HR managers and picked Organization Management as a practical title. The Industrial Management title addresses the need for someone who has completed an automotive program and looks to move into leadership.

Western questioned the need for the program. The data presented comes from Electronic Modeling Solutions Incorporated (EMSI). Within one year, there were

ninety-nine listed jobs specifically requiring bachelor's degree. Within Carbon County there were 45, Lincoln County 34. There is a significant need for individuals having a bachelors degree in the area. The job postings slide demonstrates the actual need as in the average posting time for construction managers is 52 days. A total of 307 times these jobs were posted and reposted within one year. Businesses are not able to find people with the necessary degrees. Companies are forced to hire hundreds of people from out of the area.

Western's degree includes 60-64 credits from an Associates or equivalent, 42 credits of upper division coursework, and 14-18 additional elective credits. The total number of credits for the degree is 120. The additional credits provide flexibility. WWCC offers open enrollment. A recent high school graduate can start the program as an entering/first-year student. For students starting at the mid-point in their education, requirements are a little more specific. A student must have an Associates or a minimum of 60 credits. Western will accept up to 90 credits from a regionally accredited college or university. A minimum of 30 credits need to be earned at Western. Western has added an Advanced Standing status to help with student success at the 3000 or 4000 level.

Academic rigor in the program is determined through a review of the breadth vs. depth at the 1000-2000 or 3000-4000 level. Courses rigor and level was also evaluated based on their level of general education and foundation as well as format and assessment. Western placed great emphasis on being able to defend course rigor to the HLC. Sixteen new courses were developed and meeting specific requirements. The Center for Teaching, Learning and Innovation completed a deeper review on course quality. Western is prepared to support program students through various services. Faculty must have a Master's degree or higher with 18 grad credit hours in the area in which they are teaching. WWCC projects an initial enrollment of half-time students with enrollment leveling over time. All parts of the college have weighed in to make sure the college is ready to support students and the program. Western continues to garner support and feedback from local employers and advisory councils.

Dr. Dale added some additional quick notes. Everyone should be aware of recent events in the local coal industry and the impact in the local service area. Western believes this will be one solution in helping maintain a skilled workforce. The program provides an opportunity to prepare and provide a rapid response. Western will come up for a comprehensive evaluation in 2022, allowing Western to complete a deep dive into institutional quality and learner engagement.

Commissioner Oakley asked if current professors are ready for teaching online 3000 and 4000 level courses as opposed to 1000 and 2000. Dr. Whittstruck confirmed faculty were ready, class syllabi are approved, and loaded into Colleague. Western was very careful in finding qualified faculty with a significant teaching background.

Commissioner Fredrick requested differentiation between Industrial vs. Organizational Management. Dr. Whittstruck noted the biggest difference can be attributed to the student's educational background. If a student had a technical degree such as in diesel mechanics, oil, or gas, the student would pursue an Industrial Management degree. If the student had an AAS in Business Management then they would pursue an Organizational Management degree. Dr. Whittstruck provided a few examples of AAS degrees that are not industrial based: Business Information Systems, Computer Information Systems, and Paramedicine. Dr. Dale noted the

creation of industry sector partnerships as an economic development initiative. Health care is an example of a recently developed program. There are 40 students in paramedicine with 24 interested students for this fall. Through this program, the school intends to learn about additional needed AAS degrees. Dr. Caldwell noted next gen partnerships are also embedded in the Wyoming Works programs and play a role in workforce development. Dr. Dale noted, Western has done a heavy lift regarding next gen partnerships in the area leading to a new advanced operations program.

Commission Boal asked for an approximate number of residential and online students enrolled at Western. Dr. Philip Parnell responded, there are approximately 400 students living on campus. The number of online students is uncertain. Dr. Whittstruck clarified at least half of current Western students are enrolled in an online course. Dr. Dale had just conducted 40 listening sessions around service area. This program will provide opportunity and access in locations such as Cokeville, Big Piney, and Encampment. Dr. Caldwell added, Western's area is almost 33,000 square miles or the approximate size of West Virginia. Western uses the quality matters rubric to verify quality instruction for online programs.

Commissioner Frederick asked to be shown the Applied Science program. With the competition and politics in the state, if this program is to get a bachelor's degree in the area, the school will run into problems.

Commissioner Dooley requested a motion. **Commissioner Blikre moved, Commissioner Oakley seconded** approval of Western Wyoming Community College to pursue a Bachelor of Applied Science Degree Business with two emphasis Organizational Management and Industrial Management. **The motion passed unanimously.**

V. AUTHORIZATION: BEGIN HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE PROCESS TO OFFER NO MORE THAN TWO APPLIED BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS (ACTION ITEM): ([Executive Summary](#))

- Northern Wyoming Community College District ([Presentation, Note Tab 22](#))
Dr Caldwell noted the Commission received four letters of support for NWCCD from industries and region representatives to begin the substantive change process.

Dr. Tribley noted this has been a large and participatory effort. He gave great credit to Dr. Estella Castillo-Garrison for her spearheading efforts. She is one of the great emerging leaders in the State of Wyoming. Dr. Tribley is here seeking authorization in taking the next steps in developing one degree in management and leadership with emphasis in business and technology. NWCCD will show the applied nature of the degree in the curriculum and how they involve industry to move students into the workforce. NWCCD's strategic plan is meant to align programs, capacity, and enrollment strategies with statewide and regional demands for a skilled workforce. NWCCD serves 3 counties Campbell, Sheridan, and Johnson.

The NWCCD advisory committee surveyed 90 participants through advisory boards members. Fifty of the 90 industry partners affirmed their support, 49 said they will hire new employees with four-year degrees within the next 3 years. Dr. Tribley received 21 letters of support. NWCCD surveyed 385 students. The majority of students (221) responded they would take a four-year degree.

Dr. Tribley added he and Dr. Garrison had work to complete with the faculty regarding program adoption. Dr. Garrison quickly assembled a faculty committee including the faculty senate president and vice president representing each of the two schools. Dr. Tribley noted the approval process started with the faculty and then was presented to the Trustee's last December. The degree has been developed with significant input from businesses and industry. NWCCD has engagement from all in our community at both Gillette and Sheridan college campuses.

Dr. Garrison noted they are thrilled to be at this point. There is a lot of enthusiasm with industry partners. The next gen has also been enthusiastic as they are developing manufacturing. NWCCD surveyed all AAS students and reached out to advisory committees and industry partners as well as next gen. organizations.

Commissioner Dooley asked for a motion authorizing Northern Wyoming Community College District to being the substantive change process to offer no more than two Baccalaureate programs in Management and Leadership with an emphasis in Business or Industrial Technology. **Commissioner Blikre moved, Commissioner Oakley seconded.**

Commissioner Boal wondered if we should be concerned at least 3 out of 4 programs sponsored have the title of management, leadership, organization. He asked rhetorically as CCC seems to be doing the same type of program over and over again.

Commissioner Dooley noted CCC is looking for people in individual service areas to address their needs and make a program accessible. People may not be able to go to Sheridan, Rock Springs, etc.

Dr. Tribley suggested that local groups were involved in planning and indicated a demonstrated need. NWCCD had listened closely to industry needs. NWCCD is uniquely positioned to meet the local need. While all schools may be generally offering the same degrees each community college degree can be different in the manor they tailor the degree to meet the needs of the local community. NWCCD is exploring a creative curriculum with their business partners.

Commissioner Blikre noted we are looking at Applied Science in Management and Leadership with an emphasis in Industrial Technology. Our partners economic partners are indicating they have great craftsman but are looking for employees to receive management and leadership experience.

Dr. Shaffer noted Wyoming needs greater baccalaureate degree producing capacity. The state needs to be producing an additional 2,000 baccalaureate degrees per year. The first two programs at each institution need to be extremely strategic. Schools have identified the best programs to launch with success. The best programs target to provide management or supervisory experience for individuals. This is the next step to increase baccalaureate capacity in the state.

Dr. Tribley added that they have 212 students currently tracking in a business degree with the majority planning on transferring to UW. NWCCD is not intending to compete with UW

Dr. Caldwell highlighted at the Riverton and HLC workshop they talked about how to target and highly customize the degree to the region. There is a big difference between duplication and replication which is appropriate within the service area. We are not duplicating as these are highly individualized programs for each service area.

There is some replication of the courses within each program. It is critical there is transferability within the degrees. Therefore, we will have degree completion capacity statewide. There are regional specific elements built within the degree that make the degree relevant for that area.

Commissioner Dooley noted a motion on the floor and asked for a vote. **The motion carried unanimously.**

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Note Tab 23)

Dr. Caldwell provided, in the packet, a written report as a status update on commission priorities hoping to be concise and available to the public. Dr. Caldwell wanted to make sure commissioners saw a status update for each priority component and category established in June 2019. The update is highly reflective in the Commission's budget request including the exception requests.

- Educational Attainment – This was already covered by Dr. Hicswa
- Common Transcript / Student Success Transfer Process – Currently waiting to hear on the \$3 million grant
- Organizational Operations – All have been working on hiring and developing new staff.
- Statewide College System Strategic Plan – Have been working diligently on the Education Attainment Executive Council plan which will be combined with the statewide college system strategic plan. Have been making sure the EAEC plan is available for public review and comment.
- Relationship building - Working hard to build relationships and elevate the message of the community colleges, their impact on the state, and roll in continuing economic vitality.
- Additional Grant Opportunities – Exploring additional grant opportunities. EAEC had received an additional \$30,000 grant.
- Update on legislative session
- Update on emergency rules
- Commission staff activities
- President's Summit and luncheon with Governor – The Governor referenced the meeting with the community college presidents in his State of the State Address. As well as referencing the Educational Attainment Executive Council and how important the work is for the state of Wyoming.

Read through the report for a quick update on what is going on.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS:

- Good News from the Colleges (Note Tab 24)
Good news from all the colleges is also listed out in the Tab. Dr. Caldwell recommended Commissioners review all the good work compiled and included under the tab. Last night's WACCT event was a great moment to celebrate all the positive things going on at the community colleges.

ADJOURNMENT

- Commissioner Dooley thanked everyone for their patience as she conducted the meeting.
- Commissioner Dooley asked for a brief update on Dr. Tribley's NWCCD trustee who was injured. Dr. Tribley reported the Trustee was in good spirits and on the mend.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:32 PM

Jackie Freeze 4/21/2020
Dr. Jackie Freeze
Chairman

Sandy Caldwell 4/21/20
Dr. Sandy Caldwell
Executive Director

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