

Board for State Academic Awards

Charter Oak State College
Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium

Minutes of Meeting September 18, 2008

Members Present: A. Hanzalek, E. Alquist, J. Long, J. Titley, J. Whitcomb, L. Winkler

Staff Present: E. Klonoski, S. Adams, G. Claffey, K. Corcoran, D. Goldsmith, C. Williams

Guests Present: Lisa Wildman (Charter Oak State College student), Carolyn Rogers (AFSCME 1303) and Scott Ciecko (DHE)

1. Call to Order

A. Hanzalek called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. and asked E. Klonoski to introduce the guests.

E. Klonoski introduced Lisa Wildman who is interested in being elected as the new student representative to the BSAA. Carolyn Rogers, Vice President of AFSCME 1303, is here today filling in for Jason Jakubowski whose wife just had twins.

2. Approval of Minutes of Board Meeting July 31, 2008

On a motion made by E. Alquist and seconded by J. Whitcomb, the Board APPROVED the Minutes of July 31, 2008.

3. Action Items

Charter Oak State College

A. Conferral of Degrees

On a motion made by L. Winkler and seconded by J. Titley, the Board APPROVED Resolution 08-39, Conferral of Degrees.

B. Approval of Graduate Degree Program

S. Adams explained that the Master's degree program would be structured as a collaboration with Western Connecticut State University. In order to proceed to the next steps in the process, the College needs Board approval. Following approval by the Board, many actions are still required. The Attorney General's office has indicated that we would need to go for a legislative change to the State Statutes in order for the College to offer a Master's degree. We will also need approvals from the Board of Governor's for Higher Education and NEASC.

Dr. Jonas Zdanys has been working with Dr. Adams on these procedures and approvals. But it could easily be at least a year-and-a-half or longer before the actual degree is in place.

On a motion made by J. Long and seconded by J. Whitcomb, the Board APPROVED Resolution 08-40, Approval of Graduate Degree program.

CTDLC

C. Purchase and/or Lease of Resources to Support the CT Community Colleges Contract

K. Corcoran provided an overview about the improvements that are required for the current database and software. The CTDLC seeks to purchase, lease or a combination of both for hardware, licenses and other services to implement the Community College VISTA contract. There would be no fiscal cost to the CTDLC because the Community Colleges would be compensating the CTDLC for the purchase / lease costs. The CT Community Colleges have decided to use Blackboard for hosting. This would be the transition year for the Community Colleges and this contract would represent a one-year extension. The contract would not exceed \$400,000 and it would be put out to bid. Staff would only continue with the bid process should we have firm contracts in place from the Community Colleges for payment.

On a motion made by L. Winkler and seconded by J. Long, the Board APPROVED Resolution 08-41, Purchase and/or Lease of Resources to Support the CT Community Colleges Contract.

D. Approval to Purchase VMWare Products and Services

G. Claffey explained that VMWare is a brand of virtual servers, and that the BSAA has found cost savings in migrating many of its physical servers into a virtualized environment. At this point, the BSAA is looking to expand its one-year pilot into a three-year bid to a vendor for all of its VMWare virtualization projects.

G. Claffey further explained that the CTDLC recently signed a contract with the Department of Higher Education (DHE) for a disaster recovery platform. The CTDLC hopes to build on the success with VMWare initiatives and solicit new clients. At this point, staff has identified a number of New England schools and colleges that might be interested in solutions similar to the DHE offering. The contract would not exceed \$450,000.

On a motion made by E. Alquist and seconded by J. Long, the Board APPROVED Resolution 08-42, Approval of VMWare for a three-year contract.

E. Increase in Membership Fees

D. Goldsmith explained that the CTDLC has two categories of institutional members: Full membership, which is exclusive to CT public / private higher education institutions, and Affiliate membership, which includes K-12 schools, government agencies, non-profits, and out-of-state higher educational institutions. Since 1998, membership fees have been set at \$500. At the July 2008 Executive Council meeting, it was voted to increase fees to \$1,000

in two steps. Their recommendation is that membership fees for 2009-2010 be set at \$750 per institution and for 2010-2011 at \$1,000 per institution.

On a motion made by J. Whitcomb and seconded by E. Alquist the Board APPROVED Resolution 08-43, Increase in CTDLC membership fees.

4. Personnel Committee Report

A. Hanzalek called on John Titley to present the Personnel Committee Report.

J. Titley reported that the Personnel Committee met to discuss the three personnel changes, two of which are for the CTDLC and one is for Charter Oak State College. The changes at the CTDLC came about with Ed Klonoski's appointment as Executive Director / President, BSAA coupled with the resignation of the Director of Instructional Design, which left unfilled positions at the CTDLC. The two proposed CTDLC changes arise from the Appreciative Inquiry Process, the growth of K-12 initiatives, and higher education and student services programs. These revisions include the reclassification of one position and the creation of a new staff position entitled Account Executive. Adjusting the position level of the former Associate Director of eTutoring and Online Services to the Director of Higher Education Academic and Student Services has been reviewed and approved by Fred Owen, the BSAA's external consultant.

J. Titley went on to explain that with the rapid growth of the College's Distance Learning courses and programs, it is now evident that the College needs a full time Instructional Designer dedicated to its work. The staff proposes increasing the current 20 hour position to 40 hours. The current Instructional Designer would go from part-time to full-time for the College with no budgetary consequences because a vacant position in the Registrar's Office would not be filled.

F. CTDLC: New Position and Position Description and Reclassification of Employee

On a motion made by J. Whitcomb and seconded by J. Long, the Board APPROVED Resolution 08-44, Personnel Changes.

J. Titley also noted that the Personnel Committee is at the time when the Board reviews the Executive Director's annual report. The BSAA will go into Executive Session at the November Board meeting to discuss E. Klonoski's report. After those discussions, the Personnel Committee will issue its written report.

5. Reports and Discussion Items

A. Charter Oak State College Distance Learning Report

Dr. Barry Vroeginday presented the College's Distance Learning report, noting the continued growth of the College's online courses. Staff has a lot of courses to manage which includes hiring faculty, designing the courses and getting them posted to the web. B. Vroeginday reminded the Board members that staff wants to be sure that we do not grow the online courses to the point where we are hurting other areas of the College. We need to be

sure that the courses are educationally sound, that we have adequate space for the required staff, and that the technology can handle the additional students.

Charter Oak State College boasts an 89% completion for 15-week and 90% for 8 week course, and 95% for 15 week courses. These completion / retention rates are among the highest in the online education business.

B. Vroeginday went on to report that staff is seeing some minor decreases in the non-credit courses. The retention for most of the non-credit courses ranges from 89-100%. Recently, the College hired an outside library consultant to evaluate eJones Global Library to be sure that it is providing adequate support for our students with its online library.

In terms of the on-demand courses, B. Vroeginday reported that they still remain problematic. Staff is working with our IT staff to better fit those courses into the Jenzabar system. We will continue to develop new online courses but will scale those down in order to get the existing courses into our new format. We will continue to develop those courses that are needed by businesses. Finally, staff will be creating a new course evaluation that would help us to better connect with our faculty and the distance learning students and will encompass the “visiting” (non matriculated students). Staff is also working on outcome assessments.

The Board accepted the report.

B. Business Office Cash / Accrual Reports

Cliff Williams described the changes in how we are reporting the revenue numbers for the College with the implementation of Jenzabar, which features an accrual accounting system. Under the previous cash basis system, revenues were only recorded when it was received. Under the accrual process, the entire revenue is posted when the transaction is processed. In the past, a student on a payment plan under the cash system will only show the partial payment that was made in that month. The accrual system will display the total amount of the revenue for that transaction regardless of payment plan status or paid amount. The business office will supply the Board with cash based monthly summaries for one more year so that comparisons with last year’s financial reports will still be possible.

The Board accepted the report.

C. Charter Oak State College Strategic Plan Update

S. Adams presented an update about the College’s Strategic Plan and indicated that at the next Board meeting she will do a synopsis of last year and the outlook for the upcoming year.

The Board accepted the report.

D. CTDLC Strategic Plan Update

D. Goldsmith reported that the CTDLC is still in the process of finalizing its Strategic Plan. A report will be distributed to the Board in November. Staff is still reviewing which niche that the CTDLC falls into and the size of institutions that it should service.

The Board accepted the report.

E. Marketing Report

C. Hebert reported that the fall marketing campaign will be underway. Currently staff is in a *data collection process* in order to make informed decisions about marketing for the spring and to give us benchmarks for future performance. Radio is still the number one driver for getting people to the College's website. The Admissions staff is seeing improvements in brand recognition when they are traveling around Connecticut meeting with prospective students.

The Board accepted the report.

F. Financial Reports

The Board accepted the report.

G. Enrollment Reports

The Board accepted the report.

H. Financial Aid Report

The Board accepted the report.

6. Chairman's Report

A. Hanzalek reminded the Board members about the three events on October 3. The Board members will be sitting on stage and processing into the Torp Auditorium with other platform guests.

7. Executive Director's Report

E. Klonoski reported on the following:

- Separate meetings were held with Secretary Genuario and Lisa Moody to discuss the dire need for bond funds for the BSAA technology (which is our core business) and to reiterate the disastrous effect that any new rescissions would have on the budgets;
- An agreement has been reached with Apple's iTunes University to form a partnership with K-20 institutions;
- The leased space at Alumni Road is finally under construction and some Charter Oak staff will be able to relocate at the beginning of the year;

- The President testified with other Higher Education Presidents at the joint Banking and Higher Education Committees informational forum about the concern over the possible instability of Financial Aid for the next cycle;
- Charter Oak State College attended a press event to announce the new online course that staff helped to develop, *Homeownership 101*, as part of partnerships with First Time Homebuyer Magazine, Sovereign Bank and Freddie Mac; and
- The President attended a meeting hosted by the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) Executive Directors to discuss areas where Charter Oak could be of assistance and for them to be better informed about the College's programs.

8. Other Business

No further business.

9. Adjournment

At 2:10 p.m. on a motion made by J. Long, the Board ADJOURNED.

Secretary
September 18, 2008