

University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville
Board of Visitors Meeting
Banquet Hall – Independence Hall
April 20, 2023

Members present were Mr. Mike Arnold, Mr. Brad Cummings, Ms. Jenifer Floyd, Mr. Ted Hall, Dr. Michael Hester, Ms. Karen Ryan, Dr. Jody Smotherman, Mr. Calvin Wright, and Ms. Tammy Pearce. Others in attendance were Dr. Anne Austin, Mr. Bruce Hankins, Dr. Zach Perrine, Dr. Brian Shonk, Dr. Holly Smith, Mr. Heath Wooldridge.

1. Reception with students, alumni, and administration

a. Introductions – New Employees

- i. Jordan Layrock – RN Faculty
- ii. Jayla Cox – RN Faculty

b. Introduction – Internal Transfers/Promotions

- i. Ms. Jodie Hightower, Director of Human Resources
- ii. Ms. Tiffany Guinnip, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor/Director of Institutional Effectiveness

2. Establish a Quorum - Quorum was established.

3. Call to Order - Chairman Hall called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

4. *Approval of Minutes – January 19, 2023 - *Mr. Arnold moved to approve the minutes from the January 19, 2023, meeting. Dr. Hester seconded the motion and the motion passed with no further discussion or comments.*

5. Old/Continuing Business

a. Board of Visitors – Nominations for new members - New members to fill the vacated positions by the term expiration for Ms. Ryan and Ms. Freiert were proposed as Ms. Rachael Sowers, chief financial officer-Vital Link, and Mr. Micah Beard, regional president-Citizen's Bank.

b. Board of Visitors – Election of Officers FY24 - Dr. Smotherman lead the committee for election of officers for the 2023-2024 academic year. Proposed officers were Dr. Hester as chairman, Mr. Cummings as vice-chairman, and Mr. Arnold as secretary.

Dr. Smotherman moved to accept the proposals of the new officers and new board members for the 2023-2024 academic year. Ms. Pearce seconded the motion and the motion passed with no further discussion. Retiring board members and outgoing officers were thanked for their service.

c. Higher Learning Commission Reaffirmation of Accreditation Final Report (Final Step: Institutional Actions Council April 24-25, 2023) – Dr. Shonk reported we received our report from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) from our reaffirmation visit in November 2022. Of the 19 criteria with HLC, UACCB met 17 criteria with no issue and 2 criteria were met with concern. The two areas met with concern were focused on assessment of learning and strategic planning. Dr. Shonk commented we have identified those areas to be weak and we would be working to close the loop on assessment of learning outcomes and begin working on a new strategic plan within the next academic year. In four years, we will complete a follow-up report for HLC to provide an update on our progress within these areas.

- d. **Update on Gateway Center** – Dr. Shonk thanked the donors who assisted with the purchase of the 100,000 square foot property on East Main Street, which includes: Atlas Asphalt, Inc., Bad Boy Mowers, Centennial Bank, Citizen’s Bank, First Community Bank, Farco, Future Fuel Chemical Company, LaCroix Precision Optics, Peco, White River Distributors, Inc., and White River Now. UACCB received a grant to begin renovating the building. Jobs being completed and worked on now include painting the exterior and cleaning up sections of the exterior and interior. The students in the compact equipment program have been practicing and completing some work at the site as well (cleaning up debris and leveling newly added gravel). Mr. Ryan asked a question about any chemical concerns at the location. Dr. Shonk advised that a phase 1 environmental study had been completed and no issues were found. A phase 2 study was scheduled to be completed in the coming weeks. Dr. Shonk also noted that UACCB would be looking to renovate the front of the building for college use and two companies have approached and asked about leasing from 50,000 square feet to 90,000 square feet.
6. **Old Business**
- a. **Financial Update Report by Mr. Bruce Hankins, Chief Financial Officer** – *See item 6(a) i, ii, and iii*
 - b. **Enrollment Updates by Dr. Zach Perrine, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs** – Dr. Perrine presented his enrollment chart and commented that at the current place in our enrollment cycle we are meeting the same measures from last year. Headcount is up 2.16%, but this would really be considered as flat because the rate changes daily. Dr. Perrine commented that he believes if we can maintain the momentum, we will be on track to meet budget projections. Dr. Shonk commented that our challenge with enrollment is persisting from COVID-19 pandemic. Since the pandemic, enrollment has been down around 20% from pre-pandemic enrollment numbers. The same trend is reflected nationally across community colleges. Dr. Perrine commented that we have begun using Google Ads (SEO) and television spots with *The Vine* for marketing efforts to gain additional enrollments. Dr. Perrine commented academic signing days have been held at Cave City High School and planned for Batesville High School in the coming week. The response to the events has been very positive. Dr. Shonk added that he was proud of all students on academic signing days; he also commented that 34 out of 61 Cave City High School’s seniors were planning to attend UACCB and feels that students and parents are seeing the value of UACCB. Dr. Perrine commented that research on the current generation has shown that they are very value conscious and debt adverse, and we have focused on those facts. Mr. Hall commented on the transfer scholarship to the University of Arkansas Fayetteville and the UA two-year schools, which allows students graduating from any UA two-year school to attend UA Fayetteville at the two-year tuition rate. Dr. Perrine commented that we have changed our scholarship structure and now institutional scholarships are available to all students, not just recent high school graduates.
 - c. **Academic Updates by Dr. Holly Smith, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs** – Dr. Smith commented the current pass rate for the nursing program (RNs) is at 86.05% from the State Board of Nursing. All but one student from the program has tested and one student from a previous cohort tested so the addition of the failed score will lower the overall score to 84.09%. Dr. Smith commented on the additional resources being put into the nursing programs over the past year are showing to pay off with the increased pass rate. She also noted the support from other departments on campus helping with the

improvements to the program as well. Dr. Shonk recognized and commended Dr. Smith for her leadership to bring the pass rate in the program up.

d. **Fiscal Year 2024 Budget**

- i. ***Cost of Living Allowance** – Dr. Shonk commented that UACCB has been behind on salaries for a long time. In the last year a 2% COLA was issued in July 2022. For the upcoming academic year, a 2% COLA increase is proposed for the new year in July 2023.
- ii. ***Merit Increases** – An average of a 3% merit increase took effect in January 2023 for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. A 1-3% merit increase is proposed in the upcoming academic year to take effect in July 2023 or January 2024, dependent upon final 2023 fall enrollment.

Dr. Shonk requested the board entertain a motion to approve the 2% COLA effective July 1, 2023, a 1-3% merit increase in either July 2023 or January 2024 dependent upon enrollment and budget capacity. Dr. Hester inquired about how the merit increase would be determined. Dr. Shonk commented that the increase would be dependent on the employee's most recent performance evaluation. Dr. Hester moved to accept the proposals based on the recommendation of the Chancellor. Dr. Smotherman seconded the motion and the motion carried with no further questions. Dr. Smotherman added a comment that the board recognizes and appreciates the hard work of the faculty and staff.

- iii. ***Tuition and Fees** – Last year, an increase of \$5 to all tuition rates and a \$5 fee increase was approved. The increased amount charged to students was absorbed by the increase for Federal Pell amounts last year for those students who were Pell eligible. For the upcoming academic year, an approximate 10.48% is being requested. Currently we have four tuition rates in our tuition and fee structure, which include in-district, out-of-district, out-of-state, and online. Currently, we are charging an independent fee for online courses, which is the same as our out-of-state tuition rate. Dr. Shonk explained the impact of us placing the burden of paying for technology on campus only on those students taking online courses. Dr. Hester asked if all students are using a technological component in their coursework now. Dr. Shonk commented that yes, now, all courses have a technological component in our learning management system. He further commented that through the pandemic, instruction shifted very quickly, and the majority of instructors are requiring their students to use the learning management system regardless of if their course is online or on ground. Dr. Shonk further commented that 10 years ago around 22% of our course work was offered to students online, now we are sitting at approximately 43%. He further explained that we would be charging a working student with children who could only take online course work more than a student who was able to attend all their courses on campus. Dr. Shonk further explained that the online tuition rate stemmed from us joining the University of Arkansas Online Consortium; in which four of the UA two-year-schools pulled resources together to be able to provide more online course offerings in the early 2000s, when online courses were not common. Dr. Shonk commented that the consortium agreement does not exist any longer and we are removing the online tuition rate. For the upcoming

academic year, we are proposing a \$5 increase to each tuition rate and removing the online tuition rate. We also proposed increases in fees, the biggest being a \$20 increase to the technology fee to distribute the technology costs currently being covered by online students into the fee structure so it is covered by all students. Dr. Shonk noted that if you compare dollar amounts between the current tuition and fee structure and the proposed fee structure the increase would be approximately 10.48%, the way the tuition and fees are reported by the Arkansas Division of Higher Education, the increase will look to be exponentially larger.

Dr. Shonk asked for the board to consider a motion to approve the proposed increase of a \$5 increase for tuition rates, a \$28 Increase in fees and removing the online tuition rate for the upcoming academic year. Dr. Hester moved to accept the recommendation from the Chancellor. Mr. Arnold seconded, and the motion carried with no further questions or discussion.

e. **Announcements and Further Discission**

- i. Commencement will be on May 8 at 6:00 p.m. – Mr. Hall asked if regalia would be available for the board members. Ms. Hightower commented that all regalia for board members had been received and was in the Chancellor’s suite.
- ii. Next Board of Visitors Meeting – June 15, 2023
- iii. Mr. Hall commented and commended UACCB on a good job hosting the Batesville CEO Luncheon.

f. **Executive Session (if necessary)** – not needed.

g. **Adjourn** – With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tiffany Guinnip, executive assistant to the chancellor.