



**CSCU**

**CT BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

**ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**Meeting – January 11, 2018  
10:00 a.m. – 61 Woodland Street, Hartford**

**MINUTES**

Regents Present: Merle Harris, Naomi Cohen, Larry DeNardis, Aviva Budd, Hector Navarro, Matt Fleury, Yvette Melendez, Elese Wright (by conf.)

Regents (Ex Officio) Present: Barbara Richards (by conf.)

Regents Absent: Catherine Smith, Stephen Adair

NEASC/CIHE: Barbara Brittingham, President; Patricia M. O'Brien, SND, Sr. Vice President

Staff Present: Mark Ojakian, Jane Gates, Pat Ryiz

CSCU Presidents: Paul Broadie (GCC & HCC), Daisy Cocco DeFilippis (NVCC), Carlee Drummer (QVCC), Gina Glickman (MCC), Mary Ellen Jukoski (TRCC), David Levinson (NCC), James Lombella (ACC & TxCC), Steve Minkler, Lead Campus Administrator (MxCC) (by conf.), Wilfredo Nieves (CCC), Michael Rooke (NWCCC), Zulma Toro (CCSU)

Erin Fitzgerald, Associate Director, Office of Board Affairs, took the roll call for the meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Merle Harris at 10:10 a.m. Chair Harris welcomed the group and introduced the guests, Barbara Brittingham, President, and Patricia M. O'Brien, SND, Sr. Vice President, New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE).

Chair Harris summarized the biographies and experience of Drs. Brittingham and O'Brien and stated that the purpose of the meeting is to address questions about accreditation and substantive change and the similarities and differences between the two. The agenda item is listed below:

1. Substantive Change Discussion – BOR Academic and Student Affairs Committee and New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Commission on Institutional Higher Education (CIHE)

Link to NEASC CIHE Substantive Change Proposals

<https://cihe.neasc.org/institutional-reports-resources/reporting-guidelines/substantive-change-proposals>

President Ojakian welcomed Drs. Brittingham and O'Brien and expressed his thanks to them, NEASC and the Commission on Institutional Higher Education (CIHE). He noted the importance of good communication and a continued cooperative approach between CSCU and the Commission as the substantive change process proceeds.

Dr. Brittingham distributed the "Standards for Accreditation - Commission on Institutions of Higher Education" booklet and spoke about NEASC, established in 1885, and the changes in the accreditation of institutions of higher education over the years. On example she cited is that, now, the US Dept. of Education is heavily involved in the accreditation process. The Commission (CIHE), comprised of 29 members from colleges in New England, makes accreditation decisions and helps institutions learn about accreditation. Dr. Brittingham defined a substantive change as one that changes an institution and affects financial aid. She cited examples of substantive change - adding degree levels and merging institutions. She noted that the substantive change proposed by CSCU is the biggest change that the Commission has reviewed and the Commission takes it very seriously. CSCU has already submitted an Advisory Opinion to the Commission in which CSCU proposed the substantive change and asked the Commission to respond on the feasibility of the proposed plan.

Dr. Brittingham solicited questions from the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and other Regents in attendance. Questions centered on:

- i. *What will the Commission be looking for?*  
The focus is whether the substantive change proposal consistent with the Advisory Opinion and is the institution accreditable? Possible answers are – yes, no, could be a candidate for accreditation or not enough information provided.
- ii. *What are the steps to accreditation?*  
An institution must be transparent, lay out all the options and must convince the Commission that they can meet all the standards for accreditation.
- iii. *What is the role of the Commission and expectations of governing boards? How does the Commission view governing boards?*  
Governing Boards have become more important to higher education. They exercise fiduciary responsibility.

Dr. Brittingham reviewed the ten and five year accreditations for all twelve CSCU community colleges. Resources were mentioned frequently. The substantive change proposal seeks to utilize resources better and the expectation is that students will be served as at least as well as they are now. Dr. Brittingham mentioned the Federal financial aid program and the US government's involvement with institutional accreditations.

Dr. O'Brien noted that Standard Three: Organization and Governance has a subsection on Governing Boards and their relationship with internal governance. The institution will have the responsibility and the governance board will be ultimately responsible for the institution's quality and integrity.

- iv. *The Preliminary Quantification – Students First Community College Consolidation (Advisory Opinion) was approved by the BOR in December 2017. Everything that we've done is still in flux until what date?*

It is the Commission's job to make sure that the proposal has all the information for the Commission to make a decision.

- v. *What does the Commission require regarding the positions that will oversee the College?*  
Three positions are required: the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Academic Officer and the Chief Financial Officer. The College will need to have an organizational structure to articulate how and why it's going to work. How will the organization be able to accomplish this?  
Dr. O'Brien pointed to specific sections in the "Standards for Accreditation - Commission on Institutions of Higher Education" booklet that will provide additional information and requirements, i.e., Standard 7: Institutional Resources and Standard 3: Organization and Governance, Internal Governance, which addresses the positions required and the staffing plan for the new College.
- vi. *If the Commission approves CSCU's request for a Substantive Change, what does that mean?*  
Yes. CSCU can proceed with the substantive change.
- vii. *Is the System Office accredited?*  
No. Just the single institution.
- viii. *In the interim, does the accreditation of each institution stay in effect?*  
Yes. Either the 12 community colleges or the One College.
- ix. *What is the national landscape in terms of processes like this?*  
Dr. Brittingham responded that there are seven separately accredited universities within the University of ME. In VT, two institutions merged. In GA, pairs of institutions combined and in WI, the community colleges became affiliated with state universities. Dr. Brittingham stated that the Commission anticipates more of these institutional combinations.
- x. *Are there any cases of mergers that took place but have since reversed?*  
The Commission looks for enough evidence that the standards have been met. It does not expect that everything has been figured out in advance, only that the proposal is moving toward the "we figured everything out" end of the spectrum.
- xi. *Academic Programs: What will happen to academic programs targeted to specific geographical areas? CSCU has 500-700 academic programs. Do we have to have the process completed? What is the process around academic program planning? What is the Commission looking for?*  
The Commission is interested in what CSCU is going to do, by when and by whom. Regarding academic programs, the Commission is looking for detail – how many buckets, how will CSCU address this, who decides and when. Regent Harris noted that the CCC Consolidation Committee and its subgroups will decide on academic programs. A main goal post consolidation is to allow students to transfer to other colleges/universities easily.

Chair Harris thanked Drs. Brittingham and O'Brien for visiting with the ASA. It was very helpful. We look forward to continued conversations with them and the Commission.

**N. Cohen moved and A. Budd seconded a motion to adjourn at 11:10 a.m. The motion was unanimously approved.**