

**State of Wisconsin  
Distance Learning Authorization Board (DLAB)**

**September 10, 2020  
Virtual Meeting**

**Minutes**

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Members present:

Secretary Dawn Crim, Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS)  
Dr. Morna Foy, Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS)  
Dr. Anny Morrobel-Sosa, University of Wisconsin System (UW System)  
Dr. Russell Swagger, Wisconsin Tribal Colleges and Universities  
Dr. Rolf Wegenke, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU)

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Others present:

Ms. Monique Currie, WTCS  
Ms. Joan Gage, DSPS  
Dr. Connie Hutchison, State of Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB)  
Ms. Paige Smith, UW System  
Ms. Rebecca Larson, WAICU  
Ms. Sonja Umberger, WAICU

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**Call to Order and Open Meeting Statement – Dr. Rolf Wegenke, DLAB Chair**

Dr. Wegenke, DLAB Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. and stated a quorum was present. Dr. Wegenke requested that Ms. Umberger read the Open Meeting Statement as follows: “The September 10, 2020 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 May 21, 2020 DLAB meeting minutes – Dr. Wegenke**

The minutes of the May 21, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously (Swagger/Crim motion). The minutes will be posted to the DLAB website.

**Report of the Chair – Dr. Wegenke**

Dr. Wegenke welcomed the presidential designee of the UW System to the Board, Dr. Anny Morrobel-Sosa.

## **Report: Review and Approval of Institutional Renewal Applications**

### Wisconsin Technical College System – Monique Currie

Ms. Currie provided an update of the renewals in the Wisconsin technical colleges sector. Seven colleges: Chippewa Valley Technical College, Fox Valley Technical College, Madison Area Technical College, Nicolet Area Technical College, Northcentral Technical College, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, and Southwest Wisconsin Technical College have submitted their renewals and have been approved. Dr. Wegenke reminded the Board that they have delegated to the staff decision-making authority on renewals and this information is provided to the Board for information only.

### University of Wisconsin System – Paige Smith

Ms. Smith provided an update on the renewals in the University of Wisconsin System. All 13 UW institutions submitted their renewals and have been approved. The UW System is a full partner with institution participation.

### Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities – Rebecca Larson

Ms. Larson provided an update of the renewals in the Wisconsin non-profit, independent institutions sector. Seven colleges: Bellin College, Carroll University, Concordia University Wisconsin, Herzing University, Marian University, Marquette University, and Milwaukee School of Engineering submitted their renewals and have been approved.

## **Report: NC-SARA Updates**

### NC-SARA Portal Entity Meeting Update – Paige Smith

Ms. Smith reported that the NC-SARA annual conference for state portal entities was the following week. DLAB state portal representatives will cover every conference meeting. After the conference they will report to the Board in a summation writing and verbally. As the next Board meeting is in December, a summary will be provided to determine if there is a need to meet before that meeting. Ms. Smith has been asked to present on DLAB's appeal process at the NC-SARA conference—to walk through Wisconsin's set up of the appeal process that complies with NC-SARA's new manual requirements. Ms. Smith reported that the SARA policy proposals will go to the NC-SARA board meeting in October. NC-SARA has provided a general overview of the six proposals. Most of them fall within clarifications of language now that the SARA manual has been in place for a few years.

Ms. Smith reported there is a provision that provides institutions an opportunity to weigh-in regarding changes or proposals to the SARA manual or other issues that may be affecting state members and/or institutions. This can be accomplished through NC-SARA staff, regional contacts, and other locations or areas within the NC-SARA process, but not through NC-SARA board members. Another provision clarified that non-credit bearing courses for distance learning

programs are included in the SARA manual. A clarification was made in the manual to address how to “teach out” should an institution close. There were also standard language changes.

#### NC-SARA Response to DLAB Concerns – Rolf Wegenke, Rebecca Larson

Dr. Wegenke reported that DLAB has had concerns about mission creep from NC-SARA and not having a regular process to consider the views of regional contacts, institutions, and state portal entities. A meeting with higher education was held “to clear the air.” Since that meeting Dr. Wegenke has had conversations with Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) president, Susan Heegaard, who raised the idea of having another meeting with NC-SARA president, Lori Williams, to further address these concerns. Ms. Larson added that discussions with Ms. Heegaard were in follow up to make sure NC-SARA has heard and is being responsive to the concerns that DLAB has raised. Dr. Wegenke stated that a meeting has yet to be scheduled, but efforts are being made to have NC-SARA listen. He will keep DLAB informed.

#### **Report: M-SARA Regional Steering Committee Update**

##### Approval of Wisconsin NC-SARA Renewal Application – Morna Foy

Dr. Foy reported Wisconsin is a member in good standing with NC-SARA for the next two years. She thanked the portal representatives for putting the application together.

##### General Updates – Morna Foy

Dr. Foy reported that the status of the relationship between states and NC-SARA board is a frequent steering committee discussion. Many MHEC states share the view that NC-SARA needs to engage and solicit input from members and then act on that input. She also reported there are currently two openings on the NC-SARA board. The steering committee put forward two names: Betsy Talbot of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, and Dr. Foy specifically put forward Gretchen Bartelson of Northwest Iowa Community College. Both are strong advocates to hold NC-SARA to its original intent—to ensure students are getting what they pay for when it comes to distance learning and that institutions are providing the information needed so that everyone is comfortable with students going to other states.

#### **Report: Governor’s Task Force on Student Debt Recommendations – Rebecca Larson**

Ms. Larson reported the Governor’s task force on student debt took a comprehensive look at the ways to address student debt and to support students who have accumulated debt. She said the Department of Financial Institutions did a great job running the task force in a virtual environment. There were nine meetings with several proposals advanced/brought forward to address student debt. She reviewed the proposal entitled, “ENHANCE PROPRIETARY SCHOOL REGULATIONS AND REINSTATE THE EDUCATIONAL APPROVAL BOARD: Wisconsin should strengthen its oversight of proprietary schools through enhanced regulations, robust involvement in NC-SARA, and the reinstatement of the Educational Approval Board [(EAB)].” She said EAB was previously moved into the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional

Services. This proposal would reinstate EAB as a standalone entity and advocate for a more active role in NC-SARA oversight. She asked if the Board wanted to provide education to the Governor's office as to why NC-SARA and DLAB exist, and to review the complaint and consumer protection procedures that are already in place in Wisconsin.

A discussion ensued.

The Board agreed to have portal staff put together a response to the Governor's office on this proposal.

### **Discussion: Other Items**

No other discussion items were heard.

### **DLAB Final 2020 Meeting Date**

Dr. Wegenke stated that the final DLAB meeting for 2020 is scheduled for December 1, 2020. If needed, a special meeting may be called in advance of the December 1, 2020 meeting.

### **Adjournment**

There was no further discussion and a motion was made to adjourn the meeting (Foy/Morrobel-Sosa). The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.