

Idaho Falls Higher Education Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2007 – 10:00 a.m.
Bennion Student Union Multipurpose Room - University Place – Idaho Falls

Member Attendees: Marge Foster (Chair), Juan Alvarez, Robb Chiles, Shlene Cox, Bart Davis, Fred Gunnerson, John Hansen, Jim McFadden, Linda McCoy, Maureen Parks, Lew Rodriguez, Mack Shirley, Mark Young

Institutional Attendees: Carol Baldwin, Mark Edwards, Scott Hamilton, Ann Howell, John Knox, Phil Packer, Bob Smith, Carol Spain, Kent Tingey, Byrd Yizar

Guests: Dean Mortimer, Janice McGeachin

Welcome and Introductions: Marge Foster welcomed everyone and called attention to the handouts. Attendees introduced themselves

Approval of Minutes: Minutes were approved as written.

Institutional Reports: Eastern Idaho Technical College – Scott Hamilton, Dean of Instruction, relayed greetings from President Bill Robertson. He addressed increase diversity and reach out to minority population. The primary mission of EITC is to provide technical training that leads to employment. They also act as a gateway to post-secondary education in the community. Many people that are low income, minority groups, single parents, and those returning to the workforce use EITC to access higher education. EITC reaches out to those populations and provide support services to help them be successful. The Center for New Directions provides many specialized support services. The center is funded by state, federal and college funding. It is unique because it utilizes a case management approach which provides more intensive services than the norm in student services. Students have individual counselors that help them with the entry process and financial aid. The counselors provide retention and intervention services if students begin to struggle. They also provide job search and placement services. Research shows that one of the necessary things for minority student success is to provide those intensive services. The Adult Basic Education program provides outreach to minority populations in the area. English as a Second Language is offered throughout the upper valley and Idaho Falls. Technology is an important component of this program and it helps people learn basic computer literacy. They also reach out and develop partnerships with employers in the area. They are currently providing ESL at Larsen Farms in Dubois. Larsen Farms provides the classroom, release time for their employees, and financial assistance for instructor transportation. ABE is also offering a civics class for immigrants who want to earn citizenship. EITC is reaching out to the low income and minority populations through Celebrate Your Future, Cinco de Mayo, and hiring of a bi-lingual recruiter. They recently received a Leland Beckman Foundation grant that will help provide additional outreach services within the community and area. In summary, EITC is providing support services, outreach services and doing as much as they can to help minority populations access higher education and achieve their goals.

Idaho State University – James “Byrd” Izar, Assistant Dean of Students, provided an overview of ISU’s minority and international student population. The number of minority students has remained steady. The retention efforts for minority and international students have been successful. In Fall 2007 they will have a unit that will house the Diversity Resource Center and hopefully a combination of international student services and faculty and staff resources for diversity issues. Enrollment statistics are 260 American Indians, 250 Asian, 131 Black/African American, 701 Hispanic, and 419 international students. ISU has about 8% identified minority students and 2.5% considered international students. They are trying to create more opportunity for students to volunteer information about themselves so they can better capture the numbers. President Arthur

Vailas created a Diversity Task Force to look at issues of diversity with faculty, staff, and students. The task force will submit a report to him in mid-May. All of the college deans are engaged in diversity discussions to determine what they can do at the college level that will enhance retention and recruitment of students of color and international students. Student leadership is engaged in the discussion of diversity and are a big part of the Diversity Resource Center.

University of Idaho – Mark Edwards, Director of Diversity and Community, explained the philosophy regarding diversity at the UI. It includes recruitment, retention, climate and curriculum and is evident in the strategic plan laid out last year. One major task of that plan was given to four different groups with four different goals. Those goals include teaching and learning; scholarly and creative activity; outreach and engagement; and, organization, culture and climate. All of them have consistent goals of working to see how diversity fits in their individual plans. In addition to the strategic plan, Provost Baker has charged each academic college to develop a diversity plan that will work to complement the strategic plan of the university. These steps will lead to a complete, comprehensive and effective diversity plan. President White has charged him with the task of making sure diversity does not stand alone but is woven into the fabric of the institution. As the UI works toward a diversity plan, they are doing it in a way that maintains the university's historical tradition while ensuring quality and excellence are not compromised. Numbers is one way to look at diversity. The UI has decided not to take that approach. They want a very comprehensive plan that covers recruitment, retention, climate and curriculum. While overall enrollment at the UI has decreased the last couple of years, the number of students of color has increased. The first goal of the UI is to educate the youth of Idaho. So UI has reached out to the students of color in Idaho. This year the UI is also reaching out to out of state students of color and to international students. Along with the recruitment of students, the UI is creating a more diverse environment among its faculty and staff. They continue to work on ways to recruit more effectively in all three areas. Through participation in activities throughout the state, UI promotes not only what is offered by UI but also other higher education opportunities throughout the state. The UI is in the process of hiring two new positions, a Native American Center Director and a Native American Tribal Liaison. Outreach and scholarships are very important and are being utilized to involve diverse groups and provide opportunities. As numbers increase, an infrastructure has to be in place to be supportive of the students. The CAMP program is an indication of current success that can be built upon in the future. At the end of the first semester this year the 35 freshman in the CAMP program had a combined GPA 3.19. There are successful programs in place but they will need to expand as recruitment and retention increase. Nationally, minority students, faculty and staff don't leave higher education because they weren't excelling but because of an unsupportive environment. One of the roles of student services is to make every student feel they have a right to be there, they are welcome, and that they make a contribution to the institution. Curriculum evolves over time and today we are producing students to live in an ever growing global society. Having diversity within the curriculum is important in that regard and UI continues to assess its core curriculum to find more ways to include everyone.

Brigham Young University-Idaho – Phil Packer, Associate Academic Vice President, said BYU I is in their first full summer semester. The new calendar and track system are tied to BYU I's mission to educate the youth of the LDS church. Two years ago they were turning away 3,000 students. The solution was to develop the three track system which allows more students to attend. Now they are down to 500 rejections and most of those need additional preparation to perform at the college level. The track system consists of 3 14 week trimesters per year. Classes were lengthened to one hour to maintain accreditation. The head count for summer is about 8,000 and FTEs are at about 6,500. The goal is to 11,600. International students are valued and encouraged to attend. Numbers have doubled to 500 in the last two years. BYU I has an office and a number of associations to provide educational support and leadership training for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. There is a financial emphasis to support and increase financial aid and scholarships. There is

considerable construction planned and underway. The new auditorium will 15,000 and will provide educational opportunities.

Diversity: Opportunities and Issues - Juan Alvarez, Deputy Lab Director for Management, serves on the Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs. He talked about the Hispanic community in Idaho and across the nation. He used himself as an example of a typical Hispanic student: He was a first generation student, born outside U.S., and his parents didn't speak English. It takes 4-5 years to overcome the language barrier. He was talented in math but language presented a barrier. After five years he was picking up the language. He attended a large high school and was a top math student. He received scholarships to the University of Miami. The role of the Commission for Hispanic Affairs is to gather data and be a resource for everyone. U.S. Census Bureau estimates that by 2030 we will see a growth of the Hispanic population from 35 million to 63 million. About 25% of K-12 students will be Hispanic. In Idaho the Hispanic population increased 22% compared to 6.5% for the rest of the population since 2004. 4 out of 10 Hispanics are 19 years of age or younger which means the wave is yet to come for the higher education system. 38% are born outside of the states. The median age for Hispanics in the state is 22-23 years. It is 35 years for Caucasians. 36% of Hispanics are below the poverty level compared to 36% of Caucasians. Financial aid is important to access. The number of Hispanic voters have increased from 14,000 to 19,000 between 2002 and 2004. Those that actually voted went up from 57% to 74%. Juan provided CDs of the Hispanic Profile Book 2007. He gave examples of the demand placed on public schools and what the future will bring for higher education. 12.4% of public school students are Hispanic compared to 8.9% for the general population. The age factor shows a disproportionate amount of children compared to the average population. He reviewed numbers for District 91 and District 93 and gave statistics for various assessment tools. There are issues in reading and math proficiencies in the Hispanic population compared to the non-Hispanic population. Inability to grasp material relates back to the language barrier. Another problem is frequent moving. The lack of proficiency hinders ability to pursue higher education. Higher education has a direct correlation to economic development. We need to look at what we are doing to get the kids to succeed in school and beyond. In 1996, 645 Hispanics graduated from Idaho high schools. In 2005 the number is up to 1,257. 44% of Hispanic adults over age 25 in Idaho are high school graduates. That compares to 84.7% for everyone else. The numbers indicate the challenge and the barriers. There are a lot of things the institutions are doing to reach out. Celebrate Your Future is a collaborative effort between the institutions in Idaho Falls that has had rapid growth. The Hispanic Youth Symposium begins tomorrow and is a great experience. It breaks the stereotypes that any one may have. The Commission for Hispanic Affairs will be in Idaho Falls on May 11. The Commission consists of five at large members appointed by the Governor. Juan represents District 7. The Commission would like to hear from the community about what is working and what is not working. The Commission has had a significant impact on the State of Idaho.

Diversity Discussion Points:

The INL is facing a big challenge in diversity. The pipeline needs to be improved. Battelle is making a significant effort through funding of organizations and scholarships to break the barrier for minority students to get access and get interested in science.

There are many considerations surrounding diversity. One issue is that we get stuck on ethnicity when a lot of it has to do with class, i.e. poor are treated differently than those with wealth. There are many groups and subgroups that need to be recognized when finding solutions. Diversity needs to be approached in ways that are effective in today's society. It needs to be a part of every aspect of society and reflected throughout our educational institutions.

Cinco de Mayo is a positive event for our community and provides an avenue for diverse cultures to participate. For example, the BYU I Polynesian club will participate this year.

The immigration issue has created separation and barriers. It is important that it not be confused with diversity.

Increased regulations since 9/11 have made it more difficult for international students attending U.S. universities while immigration policies in other countries are making it easier for student to attend universities in those countries. With more responsibility placed on U.S. institutions, they have had to create new positions to oversee the process.

Legislative Review: Senator Bart Davis said this was a unique year. We had a new governor, new house leadership, many new chairs and it was a learning process. One area that the legislature has fallen short on in the past is the appropriation for higher education. This last session they did significantly better. The increasing university/college fees and the debt load students are carrying is troubling. One of the things they tried to recognize this year is that accessibility is one of the principle causes of barriers to people. If students can live at home and attend college many expenses are reduced. Statewide, the #1 higher education need emerged in the community college area, particularly in the Treasure Valley. Governor Otter recommended several approaches. One approach was to offer \$5 million to any community to start a community college. On the appropriations side only 1st \$5 million was put on the table. The House rejected the governor's recommendation to reduce the 2/3 majority to 60%. Credit for one of the most significant local successes in higher education goes to a lot of people. He recognized Representative McGeachin's efforts to secure the \$300,000 occupancy costs on the Health Building at EITC. She was able to get \$225,000 through JFAC. He was troubled by an effort to modify the Idaho Promise Scholarship to limit the scholarship to only students who attend state run institutions. Senator Bob Lee who proposed the legislation believed students would be more successful attending schools of their choice. His pitch specified public and private schools in Idaho. The Senate substantially defeated the effort this year and upheld the original intent. It is important to remember the purpose of the Promise scholarship. It is one of the best things we do and we need to do more. It needs to be expanded. It was not intended to benefit institutions. It was intended to benefit students.

Representative Mack Shirley said he appreciated the stand Bart took on the Promise Scholarship. He believes there has been improvement in the appreciation of higher education. For example, the SBOE named a higher education specialist this year. They named Dwight Johnson who is a friend to higher education as the new Executive Director. It starts with the SBOE and then comes to the legislature. That is one of the reasons there was an 8% raise in appropriations for higher education. He agrees the Promise Scholarship should be expanded to four years. He worked for the Idaho Opportunity Scholarship which is needs based. The Governor requested \$25 million be placed in an endowment. JFAC was able to fund \$12 million. Contributing to the scholarship fund is open to everyone. The SBOE worked for two years on increased graduation requirements which were passed this year. There is still a lot of work to be done. There was a bill intended to help students who are not citizens to attend college without paying out of state tuition. It did not make it out of committee and remains to be addressed.

Legislative Discussion: Students who came to this country at a young age but are not citizens typically can't afford out of state tuition to attend Idaho institutions of higher education. Because of their status they aren't eligible for financial aid. They can attend schools out of state for less than it costs them to attend schools in Idaho.

Mark Young and Marge Foster thanked the legislators for the support of higher education and K-12. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Carol Spain, Management Assistant, University of Idaho at Idaho Falls.