

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Friday, December 11, 2009

DISCUSSION ITEM C-3: Budget Line Items: Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana: Workforce Certification Centers

Staff Recommendation

For discussion only.

Background

As part of the biennial budget process, the Commission makes recommendations on the so called higher education line items. The Commission is taking time during this off-budget year to take a closer look at the several line items in the budget than is typically possible during the busy budget session. This second group of line items to be reviewed by the Commission consists of two line items assigned to Purdue University: Agricultural Research and County Agriculture Extension Educators; and one line item assigned to Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana: Workforce Certification Centers.

IC 21-41-5, adopted by the General Assembly, identified a significant role for Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana in workforce and economic development for the State and its citizens. The College is charged with engaging state workforce and economic development organizations, business associations, private businesses, and other groups pursuing workforce and economic development objectives for Indiana. Ivy Tech Community College has created a Statewide Workforce Certification Center and Regional Centers on its campuses to deliver certification-based training courses, certification-testing services, and other activities directed toward the certification of Indiana's workforce.

Supporting Document

Line Item Request, Workforce Certification Centers, 2009-11 Biennial Budget Request from Ivy Tech Community College, December 2, 2009.

LINE ITEM BUDGET REQUEST WORKFORCE CERTIFICATION CENTERS

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Ivy Tech Community College has created a Statewide Workforce Certification Center and Regional Centers on its campuses to deliver certification-based training courses, certification-testing services, and other activities directed toward the certification of Indiana's workforce. Ivy Tech recognizes the value of portable, nationally-recognized certification to individuals seeking to prepare for careers or upgrade their skills, as well as to employers who need verification of their employees' skills.

The Center for Workforce Certification operates on two levels. The Statewide Center provides services to the Regional Centers through facilitation, follow-up, and coordination activities. In addition, it provides a clearinghouse function for information and research on workforce certifications, assists in development and standardization of certification policies, and provides or supports training for faculty and staff at the campuses and for new course development.

Starting with an allocation of funds in 2000-01, there are now 24 workforce certification centers located at Ivy Tech campuses around the state. In addition and due to demand, the College has three additional sites in outlying areas that are opening in 2008. The College integrates testing services through partnerships with testing providers such as Pearson VUE, ACT, Prometric, Certiport, CompTIA, Lasergrade, ETS, PAN Testing and Drake Kryterion. Ivy Tech is the leading educational provider of exams through our partnership with CompTia.

Although the initial target for delivery of certification was in the Information Technology area, the College now delivers training and testing for dozens of non-IT certification areas. With the addition of new testing vendors, our range of certifications include: Microsoft Office, Emergency Medical Technician, Healthcare Administrator, Airport Security Screener and Food Safety Manager. We are continuously seeking ways to expand our certification and assessment services to meet the needs of Indiana employers as well as our academic degree programs. In doing so, we work with such certifying agents as: Adobe, Macromedia, American Society of Social Work, Siemens, Novell, American College and the Federal Aviation Association. In 2006, Ivy Tech became the sole testing center provider for the Indiana Department of insurance testing. In 2007, the College launched computerized versions of the EMT exams in partnership with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. In 2008 the College will launch (through an Ivy Tech developed product) testing for the Indiana Alzheimer's Associate certification in dementia care and for Indiana Department of homeland Security for fire science.

Total certifications awarded by the College have grown from 1,572 issued in 2001 to 15,443 in FY2007. As of April 2008, certifications awarded have increased to 16,772. Growth has accelerated in recent years as professional licensing opportunities have been added.

In addition to our testing and assessment services, Ivy Tech offers both credit and non-credit training options that prepare students for certification and licensing exams. Many certification courses must be

taught by faculty who are themselves certified, so the Ivy Tech effort has included supporting faculty in training and testing for certifications necessary to teach new certification-based courses.

Funds appropriated by the state for the Workforce Certification line item in the budget bill are primarily used to fund research and development of new certification opportunities for the College as well as to update equipment, systems, and software used in the laboratories. An RFP process is often used, with each region or campus submitting proposals for consideration. Proposals implementing new information technology, healthcare, logistics and life science certification initiatives have been emphasized in recent funding allocations. Once certifications and associated training have been developed and implemented, they are expected to be financially self-supporting. The funding is also used to maintain the equipment in our testing centers. The most recent allocations have supported much needed upgrades in computer equipment and additional equipment installed for the highest level of testing security.

The new strategic plan recently adopted by the College places increased emphasis on Ivy Tech's historical mission of providing workforce education and economic development for Indiana's communities. Providing portable credentials through workforce certification training and testing services is a key component of this initiative.