



INDIANA COMMISSION *for*
HIGHER EDUCATION

November 23, 2016

Dr. Barbara Gellman-Danley
President
The Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Dear Dr. Gellman-Danley:

I write to you on behalf of twenty-two Indiana public and private colleges and universities to apply for five-year extensions related to their compliance with faculty qualifications for dual credit instructors as described in Assumed Practice B.2. The Indiana Commission for Higher Education's application is attached and we are prepared to respond to questions you might have.

It has been the Indiana Commission's long-standing policy on dual credit that the high school faculty used by the institutions to teach dual credit courses should have credentials consistent with other faculty who teach for the institution. Although we do collect a significant amount of data on students who take dual credit courses, we had not been collecting data on faculty who teach them. We now have such data to support our application and will be updating that data at least annually.

The Indiana Commission has an extensive student data warehouse, enabling us to track students who complete dual credit courses from our public institutions. The results based on several years of data indicate that students who earn dual credit perform significantly better than students who do not on four key measures: college-going rate, freshman GPA, credit hours taken, and persistence. These effects are pronounced for non-white and low income students, populations we must serve better and are committed to doing so. Befitting our culture of continuous improvement, we will refine and extend our analyses and soon will add completion data.

Our state, institutions, school leaders, and communities have taken concrete steps, with more coming, to provide coordinated opportunities and incentives for teachers to complete coursework needed to become fully qualified. While the precise shape and extent of these opportunities will not be fully formed until spring, in part awaiting General Assembly action on the 2017-19 Biennial Budget, several examples illustrate the scope of our efforts. The public universities, in concert with our two-year institutions, are developing a web site that will gather course and degree completion opportunities directly aimed at dual credit teachers and make it easy for teachers to enroll. The Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis, with whom the Commission has partnered on dual credit and early college, will seek funds to expand, to both public and private institutions, its highly successful STEM Teach initiative. Fully online institutions, such as WGU Indiana and the American College of Education, provide other options for teachers. Local initiatives being an important component of our solution, school corporations and communities are stepping up to foster the means for dual credit classes to be taught by qualified faculty.

We have expended considerable time and energy into building a well-coordinated, statewide infrastructure for delivering dual credit opportunities to all Indiana high schools, as required by state law and supported by state appropriations. Postsecondary institutions, school corporations, dual credit program leaders, the Indiana Department of Education, secondary teachers, and postsecondary faculty are among those who constitute the fabric of this infrastructure. The Dual Credit Advisory Council, which includes representation from the groups just mentioned, as well as education leaders from the General Assembly, provides overall direction and guidance. We believe we have a strong, quality delivery system for dual credit that has demonstrated positive outcomes for a range of students, especially the underserved, and we are firmly committed to expanding and making it even stronger. This is why we are applying to extend the deadline for compliance with the Assumed Practices and why we have invested the effort needed, working with all key stakeholders, to ensure we can realize our commitments and fill all gaps in the preparation of our dual credit instructors.

If you have any questions about the application, please address them to Dr. Ken Sauer, Senior Associate Commissioner and Chief Academic Officer.

We appreciate your consideration of our application and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teresa Lubbers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Teresa Lubbers
Commissioner