

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Thursday, June 13, 2013

DECISION ITEM A: **Resolution on Indiana Becoming a LEAP State**

Staff Recommendation

That the Commission adopt the *Resolution on Indiana Becoming a LEAP State*.

Background

Founded in 1915, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) is a leading national association concerned with the quality and vitality of undergraduate education, and is therefore well positioned as a constructive resource in helping Indiana to realize the Quality goals that are part of *Reaching Higher, Achieving More*.

Indiana institutions, as well as the Commission for Higher Education, have been active participants in many AAC&U projects and initiatives (see Attachment 2 for a glossary that identifies some of these initiatives and defines related terminology). There are currently 17 public and independent Indiana institutions or university campuses that are members of the AAC&U LEAP Campus Action Network, and Indiana is one of nine states participating in the AAC&U Quality Collaboratives project.

The Commission and the institutions have already utilized the AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes and VALUE Rubrics as reference points in developing the Statewide Transfer General Education Core. Looking to the near future, AAC&U's expertise and on-going projects in related areas should also assist Indiana in developing the Single Articulation Pathways (newly mandated by SEA 182-2013), further refining the Statewide Transfer General Education Core, and exploring assessment approaches to demonstrate student mastery of competencies and learning outcomes.

By joining the LEAP States Initiative, Indiana will have the benefit of working with other large-scale efforts designed to improve teaching and learning, emphasize learning outcomes and assessment, and produce not just more college graduates, but college graduates with a skill set aligned with the demands of the 21st Century workforce. There are currently eight states, including two in the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), that are part of the LEAP States Initiative: California, Kentucky, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Oregon, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Supporting Document

Resolution on Indiana Becoming a LEAP State, June 13, 2013

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WHEREAS, *Reaching Higher, Achieving More* embraces the proposition that Indiana’s completion, productivity, and quality goals are not mutually exclusive, and that our State’s success depends on achieving all three;

WHEREAS, the Quality section of *Reaching Higher, Achieving More* emphasizes the need to clearly articulate the learning outcomes associated with a college education and calls for the adoption of “comparable assessments that use common metrics and competencies to gauge learning”;

WHEREAS, the core activities of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), and in particular, its LEAP States Initiative and its Quality Collaboratives project, comprise an extraordinary set of resources – including research-based best practices derived from nearly 1,300 member two- and four-year institutions – that can aid the Commission in meeting its Quality-related goals;

WHEREAS, AAC&U’s national 2013 survey of employers, the latest in a series commissioned since 2005, provides key insights into the competencies that employers value in college graduates;

WHEREAS, Indiana institutions enjoy a long history of involvement in AAC&U activities, as exemplified by IUPUI, whose Principles of Undergraduate Learning served as an important influence on the development of AAC&U’s LEAP Vision for Learning and its Essential Learning Outcomes;

WHEREAS, nine of Indiana’s sixteen public two- and four-year institutions and campuses, including six Indiana University and Purdue University regional campuses, as well as eight Indiana independent institutions, are presently members of the LEAP Campus Action Network;

WHEREAS, Indiana is one of nine states participating in AAC&U’s Quality Collaboratives project, which if focused on the Degree Qualifications Profile and authentic assessment of student learning; and

WHEREAS, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education is committed to promoting approaches and supporting campus practices that lead to demonstrated student mastery of the intellectual and practical skills needed for Indiana’s workforce to be innovative, entrepreneurial, and internationally competitive in the 21st Century,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

- I. Best Practices:** The Commission endorses Indiana joining the Association of American Colleges and University’s LEAP States Initiative to collaborate with other states in identifying and advancing best practices that result in Indiana colleges graduating more students with the 21st Century knowledge and skills to succeed as lifelong learners and members of the workforce;
- II. System Coherence:** The Commission uses the opportunity of becoming a LEAP State to bring together Indiana’s various state-level and campus initiatives in an integrated way to reinforce one another and amplify their impact on student learning; and
- III. Transformational Change:** The Commission, the institutions, and the business community commit to a strategic, comprehensive agenda to bring to scale innovative models that enhance teaching and learning, so that all students graduate with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful participants in the 21st Century workforce.