

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Regents
From: Board Office
Subject: Regent Committee on Educational Relations Annual Report
Date: October 6, 2003

Recommended Action: Receive the report.

Executive Summary:

RCER Functions The functions of the Regent Committee on Educational Relations (RCER) are defined in the Board of Regents Policy Manual (§1.06A-2):

- To establish closer relationships and cooperation with post-high school institutions in the state.
 - To facilitate articulation between and among secondary schools and colleges in the state.
 - To determine the acceptability of credit from non-public Iowa colleges not fully accredited by the regional accreditation association.
 - To develop procedures for the validation or acceptance of credit in instances other than those delineated in the Manual.
 - To recommend for consideration by the Board of Regents possible modification in the general policy concerning admission of undergraduate students.
 - To coordinate student record-keeping practices and support joint research efforts related to student academic progress and performance with the Regent universities.
 - To coordinate and make recommendations on other matters concerning relations with secondary schools and other segments of post-secondary education as assigned by the Interinstitutional Committee on Educational Coordination (ICEC).
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Merged Membership
During 2001-02, with the approval of ICEC and the Board of Regents, the functions, organizational structure, and membership of RCER and the Regents Registrars and Admissions Officers (RRAO) Coordinating Committee were combined into one committee (RCER) to avoid duplication. Therefore, the Directors of Admissions were added to RCER and RRAO was dissolved.

RCER Officers For 2002-2003
Chair – Philip Patton (UNI)
Vice-Chair – Larry Lockwood (SUI)
Secretary – Kathy Jones (ISU)

RCER Membership for 2002-2003
SUI – Fred Antczak, Michael Barron, Larry Lockwood, Lola Lopes
ISU – Marc Harding, Kathy Jones, Howard Shapiro, Zora Zimmerman
UNI – Mary Bozik, Clark Elmer, Susan Koch, Philip Patton
Board of Regents Office – Diana Gonzalez (ex-officio)
Iowa Association of Community Colleges – Michael Morrison
Iowa Department of Education – Janice Friedel (ex-officio)

Goals and Outcomes for 2002-2003

Goal 1
To promote actively seamless articulation strategies promoting PreK-16 alignment.

Outcome 1
The Regent universities and the Iowa public community colleges continue to explore and expand the use of joint admissions programs. Under such programs, students at the community colleges interested in transferring to a Regent university are simultaneously admitted to a Regent university.

These transfer students are provided information available to currently enrolled students at the pertinent Regent university and receive advising services from personnel at that Regent university. Such plans call for mutually beneficial coordination of academic and student services between the pertinent Regent university and community college.

Outcome 2 The Liaison Advisory Committee for Transfer Students (LACTS), a sub-committee of RCER, developed and published two new brochures on transfer activities and programs in the state.

- The first brochure, *The Public Connection: Statewide Articulation Agreements Between Iowa's Community Colleges and the Regent Universities*,¹ identifies all statewide agreements between the Regent universities and Iowa public community colleges. A major enhancement to this year's brochure was the inclusion of the history and on-going development of statewide agreements benefiting transfer students.
 - The second brochure, *The Public Connection: A Comprehensive View of Articulation Between Iowa's Community Colleges and the Regent Universities*,² identifies all of the existing program-to-program articulation agreements between each Regent university and each Iowa public community college. This is a critical guide for students, advisors, parents, and counselors regarding transfer articulation opportunities for specific programs of study at Iowa public community colleges.
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Outcome 3 RCER sponsored the annual spring articulation conference, "A Future Search: Acting on Common Ground." The following were the goals of the conference:

- To identify all past activities in transfer articulation from the beginning of the public community college system to the present time. This provided a common ground for participants to see the myriad of activities, agreements, and interactions that have occurred between the Regent universities and Iowa public community colleges.
 - To envision a "perfect world" of articulation in the state. Participants brainstormed what would be necessary to create an ideal articulation and seamless transition among all public PreK-16 sectors. The group's focus was on the development of an integrated educational system to foster the academic growth and attainment of students.
 - To group ideas into common themes to be addressed by "work groups" that would be coordinated by the 2 + 2 Council.
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¹ This publication is available on the Board of Regents website.

² This publication will be available on the Board of Regents website during Fall 2003.

Goal 2 To facilitate and improve procedures for cross-enrollment of undergraduate and graduate students at the Regent universities and support the development and implementation of collaborative programs.

Outcome 1 The Regents Exchange Program has served as the model for the cross/dual enrollment of students at the undergraduate level. This program has operated successfully for many years.

Outcome 2 The Regent universities exercise more extensive coordination regarding cross enrollment at the graduate level. The institutions make greater use of faculty expertise in specific disciplines to provide a broader program of study for graduate students. This effort helps “place-bound” students receive the broadest and most enriching experience by tapping the resources of the entire Regent enterprise.

Of particular note is the coordination this year among the three universities in the Master of Public Health degree. Because each institution has unique resources and discipline-specific areas, students enrolled in this program were able to tap the collective body of resources to obtain a degree that could not be offered by a single university. These types of collaborative efforts could provide a model for additional existing as well as future academic areas.

Goal 3 To respond to the general education articulation issues from the state and specific concerns from ICEC.

Outcome 1 RCER recommended a change in the formula to calculate full-time equivalency (FTE). The current methodology underestimates an institution’s total educational output and effort and is not comparable to other institutions. This concern is of particular importance when FTEs are used in grant applications and when the institutions are evaluated for college rankings and bond ratings. The recommendation to change the formula from 15.5 credit hours/FTE to 15 credit hours/FTE was submitted to ICEC for consideration.

Outcome 2 RCER proposed further study and implementation of joint admission programs with Iowa public community colleges. RCER also proposed additional study of state-wide transfer equivalency and degree audit web applications for prospective students and their parents.

Outcome 3 RCER is considering the possibility of creating a Regent program to meet the needs of diverse learners by addressing the needs of students who complete an associate of applied science degree at an Iowa public community college. Such a program could be modeled after the Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS), which was created by the Board of Regents to address the needs of students who could not reside at one of the three campuses in order to obtain their undergraduate degree.

Goal 4 To study four-year graduation rate data and advising strategies and prepare a report for the Board of Regents by May 2003.

Outcome 1 Through a work team, RCER examined graduation rate data, time to degree data, and advising strategies at each of the Regent universities and prepared a report that met the requirements of the organizational review. Furthermore, RCER recommended that the annual Graduation and Retention Rates governance report be modified to include time to degree data as well as graduation rate data.

- Additional Topics of Discussion
- RCER discussed the reporting guidelines and results of the first annual First-Year Non-Persistence Study conducted by the three Regent universities.
 - The Regent universities discussed changes to the general structure of their academic calendars. RCER discussed the changes and their impact especially on students who are cross enrolled or in joint programs.
 - RCER hosted two guests from the Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute of the Ukraine for a conversation on the coordination among institutions of higher education.
 - RCER continued to support the expanded use of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) to facilitate the exchange of student records among post-secondary institutions in the state.
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2003-04 Goals

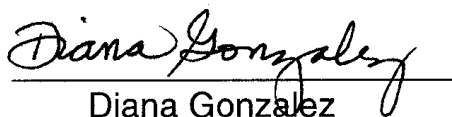
The following goals were identified by RCER for 2003-2004:


- Make progress toward an ideal model of a transfer information system that will enable students, counselors, parents, educators, and the public to determine how credits will transfer from Iowa community colleges to Regent universities, and to consider the feasibility and desirability of similar connections with Iowa private colleges and universities.
 - ▣ Investigate existing transfer information systems, similar to the New Jersey Transfer System model, with a particular focus on different systems, capacities, costs, funding structure, and staffing.
- Sponsor an articulation conference to examine how information about educational degree programs is communicated to students and the public and how access can be improved.
- Facilitate and improve procedures for cross-enrollment of undergraduate and graduate students at the Regent universities and support the development and implementation of collaborative programs.
- Respond to the general education articulation issues from the state and specific concerns from the Interinstitutional Committee on Educational Coordination (ICEC).

**Link to
Strategic Plan:**

The functions of RCER are closely aligned with two Key Result Areas of the current Board of Regents Strategic Plan – 2.0.0.0 Access and 4.0.0.0 Accountability. Specifically, RCER functions are linked to:

- Action Step 2.1.2.2: Increase collaboration and cooperation with other sections of postsecondary education in marketing efforts.
- Action Step 4.4.2.3: Explore opportunities for partnerships among the Regent institutions and with other sectors of education.


Diana Gonzalez

Approved: 
Gregory S. Nichols