



Contact Alisha Lewis
Telephone 501-320-3095
Email Alisha.lewis@adhe.edu
Website Adhe.edu
For immediate release

AHECB MEETS AND HEARS REPORTS

LITTLE ROCK - The Arkansas Department of Higher Education Coordinating Board met for the regularly scheduled meeting at the office of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education on Friday, April 20.

The board approved the Advanced Placement (AP) credit policy, which establishes a set of guidelines for public colleges and universities to award course credit for students who take advanced placement exams. Advanced Placement courses are rigorous, college level classes offered in high schools where students have an opportunity to earn college credit while taking the courses. In order for students to earn college credit, the students must earn a certain score on the end of the course exam. The policy is designed to reduce the cost burden on students and ensure uniformity among colleges and universities for AP acceptance standards. Students who earn a minimum score of a three on the AP exam will have transferability of AP credit between public colleges in Arkansas. The policy provides that students who earn higher than a score of three could potentially receive more credit from the awarding college or university.

The courses that are included in this new policy are the classes based on corresponding Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS). These types of courses are typically taken as part of the general education requirement on an associate and bachelor degree level. Credit earned from Advanced Placement exams without corresponding ACTS courses will be awarded at the discretion of the college or university.

The mission of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education is to advocate for higher education; to promote a coordinated system of higher education in the state; and to assist each of the publicly and locally supported institutions of higher education in the state in improving the delivery of higher education services to the citizens of Arkansas.

“During 2016, there were over 27,000 exams taken by Arkansas high school students,” said Dr. Maria Markham, Director of Arkansas Department of Higher Education. “With our Board passing this policy, these college-prepared students can plan their higher education career and understand the incentive of attending college in our state.”

This policy underscores the commitment that Governor Hutchinson has made to making college more affordable for high school students that are pursuing college credit through these courses. Since 2012, the State of Arkansas has paid for all AP exam fees for public school students in the State. Arkansas and the District of Columbia are the only state and city in the nation that pay for AP exams for all students regardless of economic means. In 2016-2017, 27,178 Arkansas public school students took 47,181 AP exams. These exam fees range between \$53 and \$83 per exam depending on the economic background of the student. The State paid for the exam fees totaling \$3,472,172.00. A score of three or above on these AP exams translates to college credit and cost savings for these students and their families.

“The Arkansas Department of Higher Education Coordinating Board’s policy regarding Advanced Placement credit is a huge win for Arkansas students and their families,” Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner Johnny Key said. “This new policy rewards students for taking rigorous courses in high school and offers expanded options when choosing which college or university to attend upon graduation, and it fits very well with our effort to expand opportunities for AP coursework to traditionally underserved students. In addition, it also makes higher education more affordable for students and their families. Through efforts like these, we are transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education.”

In financial matters, the board approved up to \$750,000 from the Higher Education Research Development Fund be allocated to the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville for expenses associated with the operation of the Arkansas Research and Education Optical Network of all public universities. They also approved the Economic Feasibility of a Loan for North Arkansas College to secure an unsecured revolving line of credit loan not to exceed \$675,000 with a term

of up to five (5) years at an annual interest rate not to exceed 3.74%. Proceeds from the loan will be used to bridge the timing difference between the actual acquisition and development cost of a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Student Information System (SIS) software package and funding from a federal Title III – Strengthening Institutions Grant. The Board of Trustees for North Arkansas College have approved the request.

The board also approved the Economic Feasibility of Loan Issues for Arkansas State University at Jonesboro and for Arkansas State University Mid-South. The Arkansas State University Board of Trustees approved pursuing both loans with proceeds used for educational and general (E&G) purposes on December 8, 2017.

The board also approved the pursuit of new programs, presented by Dr. Jessie Walker, Senior Associate Director for Academics.

Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas-

- Certificate of Proficiency in Diesel Engines
- Certificate of Proficiency in Suspension and Steering
- Certificate of Proficiency in Brakes
- Certificate of Proficiency in Electrical/Electronics Technical
- Certificate in Diesel Technology

Henderson State University-

Master of Science in Nursing

South Arkansas Community College-

Certificate of Proficiency & Technical Certificate in Culinary Arts

Southern Arkansas University-

Bachelor of Science in Public Health

Southern Arkansas University Tech-

Associate of Applied Science in Nursing

University of Arkansas- Fayetteville

Master of Design Studies with Concentrations in Resiliency Design & Retail and Hospitality Design

University of Arkansas at Fort Smith-

Associate of Applied Science in Unmanned Aerial Systems

University of Arkansas at Monticello-

- Certificate of Proficiency in Manufacturing Principles
- Technical Certificate in Industrial Production Technology
- Technical Certificate & Associate of Applied Science in Advanced Manufacturing

University of Arkansas – Pulaski Technical College-

- Technical Certificate in Emergency Medical Sciences – Paramedic
- Associate of Science in Emergency Medical Sciences – Paramedic
- Associate of Science in Health Information Technology
- Associate of Science in Surgical Technology

The next regularly scheduled board meeting is July 26-27 at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

###