

Minutes approved by the Board of Regents at the November 30-December 1, 2023, meeting.

**BOARD OF REGENTS and its
INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND ACCESS COMMITTEE
NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

System Administration, Las Vegas
4300 South Maryland Parkway, Board Room
Wednesday, August 16, 2023

Video Conference Connection from the Meeting Site to:
System Administration, Reno
2600 Enterprise Road, Conference Room
and
Great Basin College, Elko
1500 College Parkway, Berg Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Ms. Laura E. Perkins, Chair
Mr. Donald Sylvantee McMichael Sr., Vice Chair
Mr. Joseph C. Arrascada
Dr. Michelee Cruz-Crawford
Ms. Stephanie Goodman
Dr. Lois Tarkanian

Other Regents Present: Mr. Patrick J. Boylan
Mrs. Amy J. Carvalho
Mrs. Carol Del Carlo

Others Present: Ms. Patricia Charlton, Officer in Charge
Ms. Keri D. Nikolajewski, Chief of Staff to the Board
Ms. Carrie L. Parker, Deputy General Counsel
Mr. Alejandro Rodriguez, Director of Government Relations
Mr. Tillery Williams, Director of Community Engagement, Equity
and Inclusion
Ms. Joyce M. Helens, GBC President
Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, NSC President
Dr. Karin M. Hilgersom, TMCC President
Dr. J. Kyle Dalpe, WNC President

Faculty senate chairs in attendance were: Mr. Patrick Villa, CSN; Dr. Molly Appel, NSC; Mr. Ed Boog, System Administration; and Dr. Bill Robinson, UNLV. NSHE Classified Council Chair Louellen Monte was also in attendance.

Chair Laura E. Perkins called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. with all members present. Vice Chair McMichael led the Pledge of Allegiance and Chair Perkins provided the Land Acknowledgement.

1. Information Only-Public Comment – Dr. Amy Pason, UNR, discussed UNR’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) matters. She shared her support for agenda items 5 (Recruitment and Hiring of Professional Positions) and 6 (NSHE Equity in Hiring and Retention, Blind Hiring Implementation); however, expressed concerns with a Systemwide proposal that would require all institutions to use the same program when each campus has unique needs.

Dr. Bill Robinson, UNLV Faculty Senate Chair, expressed concerns about implementing blind hiring across the System. He also stated that a large issue on the NSHE campuses seems to be retention more so than recruitment.

Vince Medina, Thrive Point Academy, shared his support for the CSN Back on Track Program (agenda item 7).

Kamilah Bywaters and Tracey Lewis, Las Vegas Alliance of Black School Educators (LVABSE), submitted public comment voicing support for the following agenda items as they believe they support the mission of the LVABSE: Vote Nevada Initiative: Overview (agenda item 4); Recruitment and Hiring of Professional Positions (agenda item 5); CSN Back on Track Program Implementation (agenda item 7); and the WNC Higher Education in Prison Program (agenda item 8).

Valessa Nantona submitted public comment in support of the CSN Back on Track Program (agenda item 7).

2. Approved-Minutes – The Committee recommended approval of the minutes from the May 17, 2023, meeting. (*Ref. IDEA-2 on file in the Board office*)

Vice Chair McMichael moved approval of the minutes from the May 17, 2023, meeting. Regent Tarkanian seconded. Motion carried.

3. Information Only-Chair’s Report – Chair Laura E. Perkins thanked staff for their work on the agenda, specifically Mr. Tillery Williams, Director of Community Engagement, Equity and Inclusion, and the IDEA Council. She underscored the important work of the IDEA Committee as it helps to better serve the NSHE students.
4. Information Only – Vote Nevada Initiative: Overview – Sondra Cosgrove, PhD, History Professor, College of Southern Nevada (CSN) and Executive Director, Vote Nevada, presented an overview on the Vote Nevada initiative and its efforts to address civic challenges, which also included the status of recent Supreme Court rulings impacting higher education. (*Ref. IDEA-4 on file in the Board office*)

Dr. Cosgrove provided a report on Vote Nevada – Affirmative Action Ruling and Civics Education in Nevada which included: *Students for Fair Admissions Inc. v. Presidents and Fellows of Harvard College*; filing for non-judicial office in Nevada; Vote Nevada’s support NSHE’s Mission Statement; Vote Nevada addressing problems with civics

4. Information Only – Vote Nevada Initiative: Overview – *(continued)*

studies; Vote Nevada’s Summer of Civics 2023 meetings; and the rise of Nevada nonpartisans.

Ms. Patty Charlton, Officer in Charge, thanked Dr. Cosgrove for her presentation and added that the Department of Education just released some guidance on the Affirmative Action ruling and that information will be presented to the Board of Regents at the October 20, 2023, special meeting.

Chair Perkins, Vice Chair McMichael, Regent Cruz-Crawford, Regent Carvalho and Dr. Cosgrove addressed and discussed the following topics: the recent Supreme Court ruling regarding affirmative action in college admissions has no impact on the NSHE institutions; and voter errors on mail-in ballots that can result in votes not being counted if voters are not a part of one of the major political parties (as all other non-major parties may not have the resources to reach out to its members to cure their ballots). They thanked Dr. Cosgrove for her work and especially for advocating for NSHE’s women’s athletic teams in Nevada.

5. Information Only-CSN Back on Track Program Implementation (Agenda Item 7) – Sara Quintana, Manager of Early College Programs, College of Southern Nevada (CSN), provided a presentation on the planned implementation of the Back on Track Program at CSN. The Back on Track Program, primarily a dual enrollment pathways program, will serve credit-deficient students and offer opportunities for continuing education through a vigorous and holistic multi-tiered system of supports designed to reach and increase access for marginalized populations in dual enrollment pathways. *(Refs. IDEA-7a, IDEA-7b and IDEA-7c on file in the Board office)*

Ms. Quintana provided a presentation on the Back on Track Program – Specialized Credit Retrieval Services through a Restorative Justice Model which included: community need; proposal elements; maximizing impact; differentiated delivery options; early childhood education; and timeline of next steps.

Regent Cruz-Crawford, Regent Goodman, Regent Carvalho and Ms. Quintana addressed and discussed the following topics: advertising and organizing community events to share information about the CSN Back on Track Program; good communication and awareness of students in need of the Back on Track Program on the counselor level; and CSN will begin to offer dual enrollment in the fall 2023 at the Battle Born Youth ChalleNGe Academy and the Beacon Academy of Nevada.

Regent Arrascada commented that the presentation was about an academic program which falls under the scope of the Academic, Research and Student Affairs Committee. He requested a follow-up presentation to the Academic, Research and Student Affairs Committee at a future meeting.

Chair Perkins and Ms. Quintana discussed major obstacles for the program thus far, such

5. Information Only-CSN Back on Track Program Implementation (Agenda Item 7) –
(continued)

as funding; how the Board can assist with supporting the program; capacity building – support for the program at the secondary sites; and establishing alignment between the Division of Workforce and Economic Development (DWED) programs and secondary credit.

Chair Perkins requested an update be presented to the Committee in 6-8 months.

Agenda items 5 and 6 were combined (correlating to numbers 6 and 7 in the minutes).

6. Action Taken-Recruitment and Hiring of Professional Positions (Agenda Item 5) – The Committee took action to postpone consideration of this item and requested that additional information be brought back to a future Committee meeting. (*Refs. IDEA-5a and IDEA-5b on file in the Board office*)

7. Action Taken-NSHE Equity in Hiring and Retention, Blind Hiring Implementation (Agenda Item 6) –The Committee took action to postpone consideration of this item and requested that additional information be brought back to a future Committee meeting.

Chair Perkins, Dr. Pason and Dr. Robinson discussed the topic of blind hiring which included: anonymizing information being helpful in addressing implicit biases; blind hiring may not be practical for recruiting academic faculty; current work being done to gather data for blind hiring at UNLV and UNR; retention issues vs. recruitment issues; concerns about a blind hiring requirement across the System; and improving efficiency in the NSHE hiring processes.

Ms. Seval Yildirim, UNLV Vice President for Diversity Initiatives and Chief Diversity Officer, clarified that UNLV has not run the blind hiring pilot program due to issues with WorkDay. She explained that it is important to be cautious on how searches for academic faculty and non-academic faculty are discussed. She stated academic searches are very different in nature and must include shared governance principles meaning that it is critical to work with the faculty senate, as well as departmental faculty. Currently, UNLV will be implementing best practices that include diversity checks, training on bias, and search advocates to sit on search committees. Vice President Yildirim said that while blind hiring may work well for executive, administrative and staff positions, there may be serious issues with implementing blind hiring for academic faculty recruitment. When UNLV is prepared to run a blind hiring pilot, it will be done with an administrative faculty search.

Chair Perkins thanked everyone for their input and suggested staff have a well-developed plan to present at the next Committee meeting.

Regent Goodman recommended tabling items 5 and 6 due to the lack of information available.

6. Action Taken-Recruitment and Hiring of Professional Positions (Agenda Item 5) and
7. Action Taken-NSHE Equity in Hiring and Retention, Blind Hiring Implementation (Agenda Item 6) – (continued)

Regent Arrascada said the next logical steps would be to wait until a blind hiring pilot is implemented and completed, then use the results to create a plan.

Regent Goodman agreed and recommended tabling items 5 and 6.

Officer in Charge Charlton offered to gather and present different strategies and approaches to blind hiring at a future meeting after engaging HRAC and other institutional stakeholder groups for input. She said any changes in WorkDay would be across the System.

Mr. Tillery Williams, Director of Community Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion, stated at the last meeting it was decided that the blind hiring pilot would move forward. There were ongoing conversations for 3-4 months and it was determined there were not enough staff positions to conduct it at the NSHE office; however, UNLV agreed to implement the pilot itself. Due to the aforementioned issues with WorkDay, UNLV was not able to implement the pilot in the time between the last meeting and the current meeting.

Regent Carvalho shared it is important to have data driven analysis for this. In the institutional research dashboard, there is aggregated data for both Systemwide and the institutions. It seems there have been improvements over the last decade and perhaps that that kind of information in terms of a pilot or what the pilot should look like should be considered. Regent Carvalho also thought it could be helpful for the Committee to have information on employees who exited the NSHE and the reasons behind why they left. She did not think a NSHE systemwide approach would be the best course for this.

In response to the data Regent Carvalho referenced in the institutional research dashboard, Chair Perkins said it also includes classified staff which gives the illusion that the NSHE is more diverse than it is. She said those populations should be separated by academic, administrative, and classified employees.

Regent Goodman believed it may be beneficial to look into hiring practices other than blind hiring, as it seems that the institutions are taking steps to ensure their hiring processes are better.

Chair Perkins directed staff to formulate a plan for implementing a blind hiring pilot at the NSHE system-level, after gathering input from all stakeholders, and to present it to the Committee at its next meeting.

Regent Goodman moved approval of tabling items 5 and 6. Regent Cruz-Crawford seconded.

6. Action Taken-Recruitment and Hiring of Professional Positions (Agenda Item 5) and
7. Action Taken-NSHE Equity in Hiring and Retention, Blind Hiring Implementation (Agenda Item 6) – (continued)

Ms. Keri D. Nikolajewski, Chief of Staff to the Board, advised the appropriate motion would be to postpone items 5 and 6 to the next Committee meeting.

Regent Goodman amended her motion by moving approval of postponing items 5 and 6. Regent Cruz-Crawford seconded. Motion carried.

8. Information Only-WNC Higher Education in Prison Program – Cathy Morin, Adjunct Professor, Western Nevada College (WNC) provided a presentation on the activities and initiatives of WNC’s Higher Education in Prison Program (HEPP) which is designed to provide access to higher education and workforce education for the under-served population of incarcerated men at the Northern Nevada Correctional Center (NNCC) and Stewart Conservation Camp. HEPP’s vision follows the college’s vision: “To be an integral and innovative educational partner fostering equity and a life of learning in an inclusive environment for the evolving, diverse communities it serves.” The HEPP program strives to be student-centered, inquiry-driven, and data-informed, and to provide effective educational pathways for students. *(Ref. IDEA-8 on file in the Board office)*

Professor Morin provided a report which included: the context of the program; program data: 95 percent of the incarcerated population will return to their communities and 73 percent will re-offend in the state of Nevada and the level of degree vs. the recidivism rate; higher education in prison opportunities: 35 percent of state prisons provide college-level courses and those programs only serve 6 percent of incarcerated individuals nationwide, and 760,000 incarcerated men and women will be eligible for Pell Grants according to the Department of Education; program challenges include funding, facilities, stigma and stereotypes, staffing, technology and consistency; and letters of support from students enrolled in the WNC Higher Education in Prison Program.

Chair Perkins, Vice Chair McMichael, Regent Goodman and Professor Morin addressed and discussed the following topics: the Prison Program being incentivized, and rehabilitative and eligible students must have a high school diploma and no discipline incidents for at least a year; program enrollment may help with reduced sentences; a potential partnership between the WNC Higher Education in Prison Program and Hope for Prisoners; and availability of the program for women in Nevada corrections facilities

Dr. J. Kyle Dalpe, WNC President, thanked Professor Morin and Deb Conrad, Prison Education and Apprenticeship Program Director, for their hard work and dedication. He also thanked all Regents who have attended the prison program commencements.

Regent Arrascada requested a follow-up presentation at a future meeting of the Academic, Research and Student Affairs Committee meeting and would like that report to include more statistics pertaining to Nevada.

9. Information Only-IDEA Council Campus Activity Update – Mr. Tillery Williams, Director of Community Engagement, Equity and Inclusion, provided an update on IDEA-related activities at each of the NSHE institutions. (*Ref. IDEA-9 on file in the Board office*)

Director Williams thanked the IDEA Council for their guidance and support in his role, and all the work done to promote DEI on the NSHE campuses.

He provided an update on IDEA-related activities at each campus which included: UNR: the 2023 Northern Nevada Pride Parade and Festival, Latino Parent Open House, preparation for the NevadaFIT week, new sensory equipment available at the campus library, finalization process of lactation and quiet rooms, and recruitment of a new Title IX Director; GBC: upcoming LGBTQIA+ “Train the Trainer” sessions, and a Community Drum Circle led by Shoshone drummer Jeremiah Jones; WNC: the WNC DEI Committee, CREST Program and Disability Support Services hosted a motivational speaking event, and the Department of Health and Human Services will provide education (at no cost) on SafeZone LGBTQIA+ for WNC faculty and staff; TMCC: Latinx enrollment has increased to 34.2 percent, upcoming Tu Bienvenida event, TMCC Program Director for Equity, Inclusion and Sustainability will present at the NSHE Southern Nevada Diversity Summit in the Fall and an active recruitment for a coordinator in the Office of Equity, Inclusion and Sustainability; DRI: welcomed its new cohort of members to DRI’s IDEA Committee in early July, and upcoming LGBTQIA+ “Train the Trainer” sessions; NSU: submitted recommendations and a configuration guide for the training component of the Anti-Bias and Anti-Discrimination Policy, grand opening of the Multicultural Collective in the Fall, and upcoming programs including various DEI training, film screening and events.

10. Information Only-New Business – Regent Arrascada requested an overview of the IDEA Council including membership, terms, meeting schedules and so forth.

Chair Perkins requested staff disaggregate the employee data by different classifications: academic, administrative, and classified.

11. Information Only-Public Comment – Dr. Bill Robinson, UNLV Faculty Senate Chair, commented on UNLV Athletics which included inequities between women and men’s athletic programs, issues with the equity report submitted annually by UNLV to the federal government (EADA), budgeting, and recruitment of local talent.

Vice Chair McMichael expressed his concerns with the lack of resources for non-partisan voters concerning ballot issues in Nevada.

The meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

Prepared by: Winter M.N. Lipson
Special Assistant and Coordinator to the Board of Regents

Submitted for approval by: Keri D. Nikolajewski
Chief of Staff to the Board of Regents