



DLAB

Distance Learning Authorization Board

December 20, 2017

The Honorable Scott Walker
Governor of Wisconsin
115 East State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Walker:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Distance Learning Authorization Board (DLAB), I am pleased to provide you with the attached report that summarizes the Board's 2017 activities. The report was approved by DLAB at its December 14, 2017, meeting for submission to you and the chief clerk of each house of the legislature for distribution to the legislature as required by s. 39.87(3), *Wis. Stats.*

If you have any questions about the report, please contact me at (608) 266-1770.

Sincerely,

Morna K. Foy
Chair, Wisconsin Distance Learning Authorization Board
President, Wisconsin Technical College System

cc: Jeff Renk, Chief Clerk, Wisconsin Senate
Patrick Fuller, Chief Clerk, Wisconsin Assembly

DLAB members:

Ray Cross, President, UW System and DLAB Vice Chair
Rolf Wegenke, President, WAICU and DLAB Secretary
Laura Gutierrez, Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services
Barb Lundberg, Interim President, Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College



DLAB

Distance Learning Authorization Board

Report of 2017 Activities

The Wisconsin Distance Learning Authorization Board (DLAB) was enacted by 2015 Wisconsin Act 208, on March 1, 2016. The Board is attached to the Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB) for administrative purposes and HEAB hosts a DLAB-related webpage on its website; the DLAB website is available at <http://www.heab.state.wi.us/dlab/index.html>.

As required by s. 39.87(3), *Wis. Stats*, annually by January 30, the DLAB shall submit a report “that summarizes the board’s actions taken during the immediately preceding calendar year.” This report was approved by the DLAB at its December 14, 2017, meeting for submission under s. 39.87.

2017 Meetings

The Board met four times in 2017: January, March, August and December. Primary business of each meeting was approval of new institutional applications for participation in State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) or renewal of institutional applications. The Board also made some revisions to their Bylaws and Operating Procedures and elected officers for 2018.

Officers for 2018 elected at the December 2017 meeting are as follows:

- Chair: Dr. Morna Foy, President, Wisconsin Technical College System
- Vice Chair: Dr. Ray Cross, President, University of Wisconsin System
- Secretary: Dr. Rolf Wegenke, President, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

Modification of Bylaws and Operating Agreement

The Board approved one modification to its bylaws at its December 2017 meeting to reflect changes to DLAB membership as modified by 2017 Wisconsin Act 59, the 2017-19 Biennial Budget. As required by Act 59, DLAB membership now includes the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (or designee) rather than the executive secretary of the Educational Approval Board.

The Board updated its Operating Procedures for institutional renewals at its August 2017 meeting. The original Operating Procedures approved by the Board stated that annual institutional renewals would follow the same process as initial review of applications. Under this process, the applicable sector representative reviewed the application and if appropriate for approval, presented it to the Board for action at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

This original renewal process presented challenges based on timing of renewals, which are driven by the National Council for SARA (NC-SARA) calendar that is linked to the specific date that institutional membership fees are paid. Changing the renewal process to allow for approval by designated sector representatives helps ensure compliance with the NC-SARA timeline and streamlines the renewal process. The change approved by the Board authorizes applicable DLAB sector representatives to approve institutional renewals that continue in compliance with SARA requirements. Sector representatives report to the Board on approved renewals at the next scheduled DLAB meeting. Renewal requests from institutions that are not in compliance with SARA requirements are brought to the Board for action.

Institutional Application Approvals, Renewals and Enrollment

As of December 31, 2017, 49 Wisconsin-based higher education institutions are approved by DLAB to participate in SARA, including five new institutions and 44 institutions that were approved as renewals. The five new participating institutions approved in 2017 are: Gateway Technical College, Blackhawk Technical College, Waukesha County Technical College, Wright University and Madison Media Institute, which was approved on a provisional basis pending its success in finding a new accrediting body.

Participating institutions are required to comply with SARA enrollment and complaint reporting. No complaints were filed against any Wisconsin-based SARA participating institutions in 2017.

Based on 2017 enrollment reporting, 6,673 out-of-state students used distance education to enroll in Wisconsin-based SARA participating institutions, with some students enrolling from each of the other 46 SARA-participating states. Two states (California and Massachusetts) did not participate in SARA during 2017 and Florida only began accepting applications in October.

At the same time, other states reported 29,645 Wisconsin residents who attended an out-of-state participating SARA institution, with at least some Wisconsin students attending in each of the 46 other SARA-participating states. The table below shows the top five home states of students attending Wisconsin institutions under SARA and the top five states where Wisconsin students attended under SARA in 2017.

Home State	Out-of-State Students Attending Wisconsin Institutions Under SARA		State of Attendance	Wisconsin Students Attending Out-of-State Institutions Under SARA
Minnesota	1,121		Minnesota	6,673
Illinois	1,069		Arizona	6,431
Michigan	713		Colorado	1,840
Texas	375		Iowa	1,820
Georgia	279		West Virginia	1,390

Among Wisconsin-based SARA participating institutions, the largest number of out-of-state students attended Herzing University (1,399 students), Concordia University Wisconsin (843 students), University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (603 students), University of Wisconsin-Stout (467 students) and the University of Wisconsin-Platteville (411 students).

As required by s. 39.86(3)(a)2., *Wis. Stats*, the following chart lists all DLAB-approved SARA institutions. The list of approved institutions is available on the NC-SARA website at <http://nc-sara.org/states/WI>; a link to this site is included on the DLAB website.

Wisconsin-Based Participating SARA Institutions

UWS:

University of Wisconsin Colleges	University of Wisconsin – Parkside
University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire	University of Wisconsin – Platteville
University of Wisconsin – Green Bay	University of Wisconsin – River Falls
University of Wisconsin – La Crosse	University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
University of Wisconsin – Madison	University of Wisconsin – Stout
University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee	University of Wisconsin – Superior
University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh	University of Wisconsin – Whitewater

WAICU – Private, Non-Profit:

Bellin College	Marian University
Cardinal Stritch University	Marquette University
Carroll University	Medical College of Wisconsin
Carthage College	Milwaukee School of Engineering
Concordia University Wisconsin	Mount Mary University
Edgewood College	Nashotah House
Herzing University (not WAICU member)	Viterbo University
Lakeland University	Wisconsin Lutheran College
Maranatha Baptist University (not WAICU member)	

WTCS:

Blackhawk Technical College	Moraine Park Technical College
Chippewa Valley Technical College	Nicolet Area Technical College
Fox Valley Technical College	Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
Gateway Technical College	Northcentral Technical College
Lakeshore Technical College	Southwest Wisconsin Technical College
Madison Area Technical College	Waukesha County Technical College
Mid-State Technical College	Western Technical College
Milwaukee Area Technical College	Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College

Proprietary Institutions:

Madison Media Institute	Wright Graduate University for the Realization of Human Potential
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Wisconsin-based institutions participating in SARA were asked for feedback about their experiences in SARA, including whether SARA participation has increased their distance education enrollment. Those responding to the survey believed SARA participation had simplified their ability to use distance education to serve students. Their support for SARA is evidenced by the 100% renewal rate in 2017 among institutions that participated in 2016. It was less clear that SARA participation increased online enrollments.

Exempt Institutions

Another statutory responsibility assigned to the DLAB is that the Board “create and maintain” a list of higher education institutions that are legally authorized to operate in Wisconsin. Institutions that are legally authorized in a state are exempt from additional state authorization requirements as stated in the “program integrity rules” issued as final regulations of the US Department of Education in 75 Fed. Reg. 66832 to 66975 (October 29, 2010).

The board is required to make this list available to the public and at least annually provide the list to the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in the Wisconsin Administrative Register. The list of exempt institutions was provided by HEAB (as the administrative agency to which DLAB is attached) to the Reference Bureau and published in the Administrative Register on December 18, 2017. The listing of exempt institutions is available on the DLAB website; the list that appeared in the Administrative Register is available at:

http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/register/2017/744A3/register/public_notices/public_notice_annual_listing_of_exempt_postsecondary_institutions_under_s_39_87_stats/public_notice_annual_listing_of_exempt_postsecondary_institutions_under_s_39_87_stats

2018 Anticipated Activities

For 2018, DLAB priorities include:

- Submitting bi-annual Wisconsin state application for SARA participation, due in June 2018.
- Reviewing institutional renewal applications and any new applications.
- Continuing to provide input on SARA policies and procedures.
- Continuing strong cross-sector collaboration that makes DLAB unique in how states are complying with SARA requirements.
- Continuing as a technical resource for Wisconsin-based higher education institutions seeking to participate.

In conclusion, the DLAB continues to serve an important role in facilitating the ability of Wisconsin-based higher education institutions to expand their distance education offerings and enrollment.