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Higher Education Coordinating Board Approves Arkansas Course Transfer System

RUSSELLVILLE (Oct. 27, 2006) — The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) approved the implementation of the Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS) at its regular meeting today at Arkansas Tech University.

The AHECB was directed by Act 672 of 2005 to create a transfer curriculum for all public two-year colleges and universities by Dec. 1, 2006. The mandate specified that all freshmen and sophomore general education courses be accepted for full transfer credit in the appropriate subject area. Twenty-two faculty review teams finalized almost 90 course index numbers and names, as well as established course descriptions and learning outcomes. Comparable courses listed on the ACTS Web site are guaranteed to transfer to any public higher education institution in Arkansas. The ACTS Web site, which will be on the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) site, contains sections for students, institutions and the general public. The Transfer Committee made up of chief academic officers will meet at least annually to consider adding courses to ACTS.

“ADHE staff and the faculty teams have worked countless hours over the last two years to develop the Transfer System so that transfer is no longer a hindrance for freshmen and sophomore students. This system ensures that general education courses are equivalent at public institutions across the state, stimulating students to further persist to degree completion,” ADHE Director Dr. Linda Beene said.

In other business, the AHECB adopted guidelines for awarding economic development initiative funds to two-year colleges. As part of the board’s recommendations for general revenue funding of the educational and general operations of Arkansas public institutions of higher education in the 2007-09 biennium, \$6.6 million will be distributed to two-year colleges for economic development initiatives after approval of a proposal.

The following new programs were approved: Doctor of Philosophy in health promotion and prevention research at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Associate of Applied Science in aviation maintenance at the University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville, Associate of Applied Science and Technical Certificate in culinary arts and Technical Certificate in baking and pastry arts at Pulaski Technical College Arkansas Culinary School, Technical Certificate in culinary arts at NorthWest Arkansas Community College, Bachelor of Arts in international studies at the University of Central Arkansas, and Associate of Applied Science in pharmacy technician science at Arkansas State University—Beebe.

The AHECB also adopted amended rules and regulations for the State Teacher Assistance Resource (STAR) Program. Amendments to the loan-forgiveness program included: allowing eligibility to students entering their sophomore or subsequent year and actively pursuing or admitted to a teacher education program; defining what is considered actively pursuing a teacher education program; and clarifying eligibility requirements.

The full AHECB meeting agenda and background information can be found at <http://www.arkansashighered.com/qmeet/2006-10-Oct-Agenda.pdf>. For information about the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, visit www.arkansashighered.com or call (501) 371-2000.

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