

News

from the Illinois Board of Higher Education

Contact:

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College Completion Online, In Time, and Affordable

*University of Illinois at Springfield and Parkland College will describe
online learning academic programs for adult students returning to college
to complete undergraduate degrees*

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Springfield – College students who are recent high school graduates, living in campus residential facilities, and attending full-time, represent a traditional picture of “going to college.” Another model is growing in numbers and popularity among many Illinoisans who may not be so young, or so flexible to be able to physically relocate to a college campus. Online learning, combined with credits earned at local community colleges, is meeting that need – both financially and because of work and family commitments – for many adult students today.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) will be briefed on the programs developed at the University of Illinois at Springfield that are increasing college completions among adult learners. Ray Schroeder, Associate Vice Chancellor for Online Learning and Director of the UIS Center for Online Learning, Research and Service, joined by President Tom Ramage, Parkland College, and Gerard Joseph, UIS Financial Assistance Director, will describe a strategy for increasing persistence and baccalaureate completion among adult learners by linking concurrent enrollment in community colleges with online baccalaureate degree programs. Synchronizing financial aid between the community college and the university is a key to this strategy’s success.

“Adults, beyond the traditional college ages of 18-22, are an important segment of Illinois citizens who are now being served at Illinois’ community colleges and universities,” Carrie J. Hightman, IBHE Chairwoman said. “The online mode of delivery means that college degrees are attainable without limitations to attending a single college campus, within certain times of the day. Now is the time for expanding the opportunities for more Illinoisans to pursue a college degree online that is affordable and flexible, so that Illinois’ workforce is college educated and prepared for the jobs that will result in a prosperous Illinois economy and more highly educated society.”

The IBHE will also be briefed on final decisions for fiscal year 2014 state spending for colleges and universities made by the Illinois General Assembly, as well as on legislative initiatives enacted before adjournment of the Spring Session, scheduled for May 31.

The IBHE will meet Tuesday, June 4, 2013 at 1 p.m., at DePaul University, Lincoln Park Campus, Student Center, 2250 North Sheffield, Chicago.

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