College Affairs Committee

Date: October 9, 2026
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: Boyle Education Center Boardroom and Zoom

Attending:
Tracy Crockett (Co-Chair), Lisa Merritt (Co-Chair), Breah Bollom, Dallas Crumpton, Scott Dove, Ryan Powell, Greg Pereira (President), Kyle Matthews (Recorder)

Absent:
Galit Ruebush, Tom Barry, Sara Henson

Guests:
Frank Payne, Matthias Austin, Steve Broadbent

Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m.

1. New Business

a. Committee Member Introductions – Tracy Crockett and Lisa Merritt

2. Old Business

a. Review Minutes from June 12, 2026 Meeting – Tracy Crockett and Lisa Merritt
   - Motion to approve the meeting minutes.
     Motion made by Scott Dove, seconded by Breah Bollom.

3. New Business

a. Inclusive Access (IA) Course Fees for the Winter 2027 Term and Beyond – Frank Payne
   - Payne explained to new Committee members that he submits quarterly requests for new IA course fees. IA has been found to be more cost effective for both students and the College as it avoids shipping and restocking fees. Publishers are also offering less discounts than they have in the past. Students can receive IA materials on their first day of class and will have two weeks to decide whether they want to opt out, in which case they will need to find course materials on their own. This is the first time that Payne has submitted such a request for three full terms, in this case Winter, Spring and Fall 2027. Physical course materials are proving to be more of a loss leader for COCC. Payne noted that this request includes The Bedford Bookshelf, which costs about $30 and contains over 100 titles that can be used in various Writing classes at COCC.
   - Merritt asked if Payne has heard any feedback from students who use IA, as compared to physical course materials or open educational resources (OERs), and how accessible digital course materials are.
     - Payne said that over 2,600 students in the current term are using IA and only 56 have opted out. Some students opted out because they already had access to their course materials by other means, while other students simply prefer physical over digital materials. Payne has not heard complaints about IA from students on a regular basis.
     - Powell said that some students don't realize that need to opt out until it's too late, and there is a solution that is currently in the works.
   - Merritt asked if any publishers offer lifetime access to IA course materials.

  - Frank said that some publishers do offer lifetime access, including VitalSource, which publishes The Bedford Bookshelf.
- Pereira asked if there is a way that COCC can recommend students opt for IA when it would benefit them in the long-term, particularly when it can overlap with classes they might take in the future.
  - Powell said that instructors, as well as staff from Admissions and Records and the eLearning department, have encouraged students to opt for IA.
  - Payne added that he has a meeting coming up with Cengage to discuss access costs to Cengage Unlimited for 2027. If there is value there, it needs to be tempered with the cost to students to make sure it's still valuable.
  - Dove added that eLearning staff will consult with students when possible about what classes they might take in the future and will advise them to consider products like Cengage Unlimited when it would grant them access to any titles they might need.
- Crockett asked if faculty have given any feedback on IA, and if there is any obligation placed on faculty to recommend IA to their students.
  - Payne said that faculty are not obligated to recommend IA to their students per COCC's academic freedom policy. It is presented to the faculty as a way to help students save money and have instant access at the start of term.
- Motion to approve moving the proposed IA course fees for the Winter, Spring and Fall 2027 term from first to second reading.
  Motion made by Breah Bollom, seconded by Ryan Powell.
  ☑ Motion approved by all voting members present.

b. Proposal to Establish G-23-4: Collegewide Digital Accessibility Policy, First Reading – Matthias Austin and Steve Broadbent

- Austin explained that COCC's current policy on digital accessibility only applies to instruction and academic materials, so this proposal is for a collegewide policy. It recognizes digital accessibility as a priority for the College. It also gives guidance on how to update instructional materials accordingly and work with vendors who might not provide accessible digital materials.
- Crockett asked if there are plans for action if this policy is adopted.
  - Austin confirmed this and explained that actions that would be carried out are different for each department, depending on how much digital content they have. It could be a simple matter of updating their webpages, reviewing whether their online PDFs are still relevant and up to date, etc.
- Pereira asked how COCC employees can be trained in accessibility compliance.
  - Austin explained that COCC currently does not require trainings for College employees.
  - Pereira suggested that some of the concepts in this proposal could be packaged along-side other employee expectations.
  - Austin suggested that such expectations could be added to eLearning expectations for instructors. For other staff members, it would depend on the requirements of their positions. Austin is working on a digital accessibility hub and has been meeting with various departments to learn how they use digital content.
- Bollom noted that complying with digital, visual and audible requirements for accessibility will require a lot of additional work for COCC's faculty and staff.

  - Austin acknowledged this reality and noted that the last sentence of the proposed policy states that all COCC employees "have a role in supporting the accessibility of the digital content and technologies they create, procure, or manage." He suggested that the more an employee knows about accessibility, the faster they can create accessible content and help other employees do the same.
  - Bollom suggested that online trainings and resources for creating accessible content should be made available for faculty.
  - Austin concurred and said that there will be a lot of varying factors that will need to be covered.
- Pereira suggested adding a link to the policy that can direct users to where they can learn more about digital accessibility requirements. Austin and Bollom concurred.
- Merritt asked if the incoming accessibility laws that are driving this policy have any onus on the products used by COCC, such as Adobe Acrobat or Canvas.
  - Austin said that some products have their own tools to check for accessibility, but not all of those tools can fix the errors they find.
  - Merritt asked if their parent companies are held accountable by the incoming law.
  - Austin explained that they are not subject to the law as they are private institutions.
  - Powell added that COCC can ask vendors to ensure their products meet the College's accessibility standards.
- Austin summarized that he will make some clarifying edits to the second sentence of the proposal and remove a specific reference in order to generalize the language. A link to COCC's accessibility resources will also be added to the proposed language.
- Motion to approve moving the proposal to establish G-23-4 with proposed revisions from first to second reading.
  Motion made by Scott Dove, seconded by Breah Bollom.
  ☑ Motion approved by all voting members present
- Broadbent asked if this proposal should be presented to any additional groups for feedback before it is returned to the College Affairs Committee for a second reading.
  - Merritt noted that this proposal has already been shared with various teams and departments, College leadership, and via Bobcat community, and feedback has been received.
  - Dove suggested that, if this proposal's second reading is approved, it would be helpful to notify all College personnel when the new policy is published.
  - Austin concurred and said he plans to post about the new policy on Bobcat Community if it is adopted.

Motion to adjourn the meeting.
Motion made by Breah Bollom, seconded by Ryan Powell.
Meeting adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: Friday, November 13, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. in the Boyle Education Center Boardroom and via Zoom