

*"Northeast Iowa Community College provides in-demand education and training focused on improving lives, driving business success and advancing community vitality." NICC Mission Statement*

**Northeast Iowa Community College  
Advisory Meeting Minutes  
Agronomy & Crop Science  
March 23, 2021, 4:00 p.m.**

*\*This meeting was recorded for internal purposes.*

- I. Call to Order
  - a. Voting Members Present: Nolan Hageman-Pioneer Seed Sales Representative
  - b. Non-Voting Members: Bruce Bearinger-Dean of Agriculture, Animal Science, and Transportation, Kristi Creek-NICC Administrative Assistant, Melissa Hageman-South Winneshiek High School, Sherry Massman-NICC Academic Advisor, Tad Mueller-NICC Agriculture Instructor
  - c. Members Absent: Trevor Kapustynski-Osage Cooperative, Alex Kluesner-AgVantage FS, Joshua Michel-Iowa State Extension, Angie Mohs-NRCS, Chad Phillips-Nutrien Ag Solutions, Rick Tafoya-NRCS, James Wendel, Matt Simon-NICC Science Instructor
- II. Welcome and Introduction of Members and Guests: Tad called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.
- III. Advisory Committee Review: NA
- IV. Approval of Minutes: Tad reviewed the September 22nd meeting minutes. There were no comments on the minutes and they were declared approved as read.
- V. Old Business
  - a. COVID-19 Update: Tad gave an update on NICC's COVID mitigation efforts. NICC continued with a hybrid model and limited classes on campus for the spring semester. Tad has two face-to-face courses this semester, and has the option for students to Zoom into the class if they cannot be on campus, and has had good attendance. This was also beneficial for days affected by weather conditions. The College plans to return to full in person classes for the fall 2021 semester.
  - b. Grants Update: Tad updated the group on the SARE and NRCS grants. With the NRCS grant, there will be a field day in June, and the plan is to have a face-to-face, on campus event. Bruce updated the group on the Conservation Innovation Grant through C2A3, which looks at two major factors, partnering with the Foundation on their Net Zero initiative, and manure management, water quality, and soil health.
- VI. Program Assessment and Statistical Data
  - a. Program Dashboards: NA
  - b. Current Enrollment Data: There are currently 13 agronomy students, 9 of which are double majored. The overall agriculture and animal science enrollment for the spring semester is 96 students. This is the lowest the department has seen over the last few years.
  - c. Annual Key Program Indicator Report: Tad reviewed the report which shows key data points such as employment outlook, enrollment trends, graduation rates, survey responses and advisory committee participation. Total program enrollment and advisory committee participation were areas recognized as needing improvement.
  - d. Board/Certification Pass Rates: There are no required certifications in the program, however there are courses within the program that prepare students for their custom applicator certification, drone operator's license, and the certified crop advisor certification.

- VII. Employer Updates
  - a. Nolan: The industry has seen a boost in commodity prices. Locally there has also seen a boost. Nolan feels the job outlook will continue to be good.
  - b. Melissa: Melissa will be picking up 7th and 8th grade agriculture next year as well as work experience courses. She will not be able to teach NICC classes, but due to the schools close proximity to NICC, she does not feel students will lose out on the opportunity to take those courses.
- VIII. Sector and Regional Planning Board Reports: NA
- IX. New Business
  - a. Curriculum
    - i. Education Plan: Tad gave an overview of the current education plan.
    - ii. Curriculum Map: NA
    - iii. Guided Pathways: NA
  - b. Course Guide Review
    - i. AGA:154 - Fundamentals of Soil Science: Tad gave an overview of the course. Nolan felt there is a lot of great information in the course. He felt students don't need a lot of information, but having a basic concept is good.
    - ii. GIS:111 - Introduction to Geographical Information Systems: Tad gave an overview of the course. There were no comments made about the course.
  - c. Policies and Procedure Changes: The College did review the UAV Policy to ensure that it is up-to-date, and within the Agriculture department, high school instructors are no longer required to have their master's degree to teach concurrent courses, however it is recommended.
  - d. Technology and Equipment: There are no major equipment plans for next year. Tad did put in a request for iPads for the classroom. Since Tad is retiring in 2022, he does not want to purchase a lot.
  - e. Student/Industry Engagement (Internships, Job shadows, etc.): Students will be going out on their internships in a few weeks.
  - f. Other (Accreditation, etc.)
    - i. Advisory Committee Survey: Kristi emailed the survey to everyone, and will mail a hard copy if members prefer to fill it out that way. Any feedback the Committee can provide is greatly appreciated.
- X. College Updates
  - a. A Dean of Advanced Manufacturing, Industrial Technology, and Computer Science, Mark Gerein, was hired in November. Mark and Bruce's positions used to be combined in one district-wide position, and due to the high workload, that position was moved to two.
  - b. NICC had a visit from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), NICC's accrediting body, in October. Next year the Department of Education will visit the college for a review.
  - c. Graduation will take place face-to-face at Upper Iowa University in May with COVID precautions in place.

- d. The College is exploring some new program opportunities, which include a 2+2 Conservation Agronomist program with Upper Iowa University (UIU), as well as an Agriculture Education program with UIU, and a reinstatement of the AS Pre-Vet degree.
- XI. Good of the Order: Sherry shared Last Dollar Scholarship stats for the College which was available starting in the 2019-2020 school year. This year six Agronomy students are receiving these funds. This is a scholarship available only to Iowa residents.
- XII. Next Meeting Date: September 2021
- XIII. Adjournment: Tad adjourned the meeting at 4:54 p.m.