



Commission for Adult Learners

September 14, 2011

105 The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel

10:30 a.m.

Minutes

Attended: Anna Griswold (Chair), Jane Ashton, Martha Aynardi, Beth Ann Delaney, Gloria Deschler, Paula Hogard, Martha Jordan, Erica Kresovich-Rockey, Leslie Laing, Gary Lawler, Spencer Lewis, Paula Milone Nuzzo, Jane Owens, Paula Pierce, Karen Pollack, Tara Scales Williams, Renee Scheske, Kevin Snider, Karen Sones, Rachel Stover, Debra Straussfogel, Judy Wills (Recorder), Kenneth Womack, and Careen Yarnal

Unable to attend: Lori Bechtel-Wherry, Paul deGategno, and Ann Williams

- 1) Anna Griswold welcomed 2011-12 members and called the meeting to order.
- 2) Introductions
 - a) Members in attendance introduced themselves.
 - b) Martha Jordan reviewed the history of the Commission as presented by Eric White at the November 2008 Commission meeting. Summary is available on the Commission's web site.
 - c) Jordan shared excerpt from email message sent from Dr. Craig Weidemann, Vice President of Outreach and Commission sponsor to the President and Provost introducing Commission members for 2011-12 and citing '...Over the last few years, the Commission has elevated its work to advance critical policies and initiatives to support adult learners at Penn State. Please note that we have a high level of leadership – four chancellors and a dean, who have committed their time to serve on the Commission this year. Anna Griswold will serve as chair for the Commission and has an ambitious list of goals for the group to accomplish for the coming year...'
- 3) Commission goals for 2011-12

- a) Anna Griswold shared the Commission's goals for the upcoming year and reviewed the overall structure and mission of the Commission. (Attached). Griswold also will share action's resulting from last year's Student Aid Task Force when the Financial Aid profile of adult students is available
 - b) Martha Jordan shared a story of an adult learner who was mentored by Dr. John Romano, former sponsor of the Commission and last year opened a fund in honor of Romano's retirement. The stipulation was to use the money to assist with non-tuition related costs of adult students struggling with disability. Recently, the man's wife came to Martha's office unexpectedly to again contribute to the need-based assistance fund.
 - c) Student member Erica Kresovich-Rockey shared her story of her path as an adult learner, juggling school with multiple household roles and a full-time job in the University's development office.
 - d) Griswold suggested opening each Commission meeting with an adult learner success story.
- 4) The group approved minutes of June 8, 2011, meeting, as submitted, by voice vote.
 - 5) Committee chairs introduced themselves and briefly reviewed their committees' respective charges.
 - a) Faculty Engagement—Co-Chairs, Martha Aynardi, Karen Pollack
 - i. The group will continue its focus on Credit by Exam (CrX) and build on ideas gleaned from their meeting at Penn State Berks to encourage expanded use of Credit by Exam, possibly through incentives for Faculty.
 - ii. Jordan gave an update on the University-wide survey of faculty who teach undergraduate adult learners. The survey will be administered by a third party company who the University has used previously. Request is pending asking that the Provost prepare a memo to deans and chancellors relaying the purpose of the survey and asking for appropriate unit or campus contact to compile the lists of undergraduate faculty. Once a University-wide list is gathered, the goal is to go live with the survey in early October, with results available for analysis in November. Then the committee can team with the Schreyer Institute to develop workshops based on results.
 - b) Hendrick Conference Planning—Chair, Judy Wills

- (1) The committee will plan the one-day May 2012 conference sponsored by the Commission for practitioners working with adult learners to gather and share best practices for recruiting and retaining adult learners.
 - (2) The conference will reserve slots for 2011 Incentive Grant recipients to showcase their Commission –funded initiatives and the 2012 Shirley Hendrick Award recipient to share his or her accomplishments. The Commission’s annual awards will be presented at the conference.
 - c) Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)—Chair, Jane Owens
The group would like to increase awareness of PLA within the University. Current utilization is low. Goal is to develop a strategy to identify a program to pilot.
A search for an approved full-time PLA Coordinator position in the Adult Learner Advocacy unit is underway.
Managing the message is important while building awareness. Responsibility is on the student to demonstrate previous college-level learning. An idea is to look at the School of Nursing’s model.
Suggestion was raised to look at campus sites for ease in finding PLA information and contact. Jordan reminded the group that an Adult Enrollment Coordinator has been named on each campus and can serve as contact.
 - d) Awards—Anna Griswold represented Chair Ann Williams, who was unable to attend. The group will be a conduit for the Shirley Hendrick award, the Incentive Grant program, and the Commission’s Annual awards. Having a designated group to review nominations and proposals will help gain visibility for the grants and awards and aid in thoughtful review. The group will look for good things happening University-wide for adult learners and recognize accordingly.
- 6) During lunch, the Committees discussed goals for the year
 - 7) The group reconvened and shared outcome of committee discussions (Attached)
 - 8) Anna Griswold adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Commission for Adult Learners 2011-12 Projects and Goals

1. Review results of the survey to undergraduate faculty on their perspective of adult learners; propose ways to strengthen their engagement of this population; collaborate with Schreyer Institute to develop pedagogical workshops and special topic presentations.
2. Create an adult learner-specific Pulse Survey to send to current adult learners and those who applied but did not attend. Gather data on their needs for academic programs and services, as well as barriers to returning to school.
3. Present the findings from both surveys at a Quality Advocates workshop and participate in an Institutional Research Interest Group to better inform the Penn State community of adult learners at our campuses.
4. Host the annual Hendrick Best Practices for Adult Learners Conference for Penn State faculty and staff to share recruitment and retention practices.
5. Monitor progress toward accomplishment of three Faculty Senate Recommendations:
 - a. Continue to advance the increased use of prior learning assessment among our academic departments and faculty. This would include a system-wide audit of courses eligible for credit by exam and credit by portfolio review.
 - b. Expand the network of faculty who work with students who have extensive prior knowledge and experience that may be reviewed for academic credit.
 - c. Monitor progress for expansion of existing student aid services to best serve adult learners.
6. Monitor goals and initiatives at the federal and state levels that encourage the enrollment of adult learners

Commission for Adult Learners
Committee: Awards
Meeting Date: 9/14/11
Meeting Location: University Park/Penn Stater

Committee Members Present: Spencer Lewis, Paula Pierce, Rachel Stover, Tara Williams
Anna Griswold (sitting in as chair for Ann Williams)

Summary of Meeting Discussion: As a newly designated CAL committee, this first meeting of the awards committee was spent reviewing the charge and the purpose of each of the awards or incentive grant programs. The committee also reviewed the timeline for calling for nominations or proposals. The committee discussed its role in promoting nominations or proposals vs. selection. While its primary function is to review nominations and proposals and make selection of recipients, this committee will, along with all commission members, make efforts to promote these awards by reaching out to the various units that members represent on the commission.

The committee discussed that perhaps in the call for incentive grant proposal, the commission might want to indicate areas of particular interest or new initiatives it would like to see proposed

The committee also discussed whether we should promote fewer incentive grant awards with larger stipends for each or more awards with smaller stipends. This issue will be discussed further at future committee meetings and recommendations made to the Commission chair.

The next committee meeting would likely be a conference call and members will be informed by Dr. Ann Williams, committee chair, of the date and time.

Notes submitted by: Anna Griswold

CAL Faculty Engagement Committee Discussion Sheet

9/14/11

Goals for 2011-2012:

1. Develop a faculty primer on PLA
2. Analyze faculty survey data then team with Schreyer to assist in faculty training
3. Present survey results and recommended actions (via the Faculty Affairs Committee) to the Faculty Senate in April or August of 2012.

Discussion Points:

- Faculty need to be more informed about prior learning assessment (PLA) so they can be more helpful when students ask about it.
- A 'just in time' primer on PLA should be developed for faculty use. We should differentiate between PLA and life experience.
- We need to contextualize why this information is important and how faculty should treat adult learners who inquire about PLA.
- We should profile the typical adult learner to have faculty understand typical adult learner challenges. Being an adult learner is different than being a traditional student. We should emphasize that 'one size fits all' treatment of students may not be appropriate. We should also emphasize what the adult learner brings to the classroom.
- We want adult learners to feel welcome at Penn State and faculty can and should help with this.
- We should team with the Schreyer Institute to discuss how to deliver this message to faculty. They can help us to create and deliver workshops (at the campuses or through a World Campus course like OL2000?) and presentations to help faculty better understand the adult learner, to explain PLA, and to help initiate and implement PLA at the various campus locations.
- Faculty should be allowed to list training on their FAR under faculty development or service.
- With regard to the faculty service, we should ask Rodney Erickson to send a letter to the deans and chancellors explaining the purpose of the survey, its value, and ask them to identify a campus point person who will personally ask faculty to complete the survey.

To Do:

1. Create an ANGEL group to share information and communicate with committee (Martha).
2. Use Doodle.com to find monthly meeting times for the committee (Martha)
3. Invite Angela Linse to attend our September meeting once a date has been set (Karen).

Mwa1
9/21/11



Commission for **Adult Learners**

2011-12

Committee Discussion Sheet
Prior Learning Assessment Committee
Jane Owens, Chair

Members: Jane Ashton, Gloria Deschler, Martha Jordan, Paula Hogard, Gary Lawler, Kevin Snider, Karen Sones

This committee is designed to identify institutional issues of Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), including common definitions, usage, benefits, and efficiencies; and student, faculty, and staff training. Recommendations may be made regarding the format and delivery of PLA awareness information.

Goals for 2011-12:

Continue to increase awareness of University's prior learning assessment policies and procedures through presentations with special emphasis on the academic community. Contact will be made by Chancellors to Dr. Hanes office for access/direction

Create list of PLA FAQ's /myth busters for consideration and dissemination

Through liaison with degree completion task force, request PLA options for prescribed courses

Work in collaboration with faculty engagement committee PLA activity

Discussion Points:

Campuses wish to use PLA more to help recruit adult learners but are reluctant to do so as they fear internal obstacles for students who attempt it

Suitability of Learningcounts (CAEL initiative) within PSU? Better to go with our own (new hire)

PLA coordinator for our own internal "clearing house" approach using our own faculty and courses.

May wish to consult Colleges within PSU who have approved "block credit" for specific professions/licenses (Nursing, CRMJ)for best practice message to other Colleges

Consult external experts for advice, where appropriate



Commission for Adult Learners

2011-12

Committee Discussion Sheet

Hendrick Best Practices Conference Planning Committee

Judy Wills, Chair

Members: Judy Wills, Leslie Laing, Beth Ann Delaney, Erica Kresovich-Rockey, and Renee Scheske

The charge of this committee is to plan, coordinate, and present a conference that showcases best practices of the University's adult learner practitioners.

- Continue to involve current and previous Incentive Grant recipients as conference break-out session presenters and in other activities.
- Identify a conference focus and a nationally recognized keynote speaker.
- In conjunction with the conference, provide resources, such as a conference booklet and/or the Commission Web site, to inform participants and others of successful programs and services for adoption/adaptation at their locations.
- Promote the Commission's Superior Service to Adult Learners and Outstanding Adult Learners Recruitment or Retention Program awards; solicit and review nominations; select recipients; recognize via presentation of awards at the annual conference.

Goals for 2011-12:

Take action on feedback received from last year's conference to enhance the experience this year, possibly by introducing discussion forums in place of one round of breakout sessions. The committee will look at other ways to make the conference more interactive.

Increase the involvement of Incentive Grant recipients to showcase successful programs and initiatives.

Make the conference sessions more solution oriented.

Discussion Points:

The committee discussed the idea of 'connecting the dots' from one conference to the next to demonstrate a pathway of accomplishments through the years.

Ideas for keynote speakers were discussed.

Evaluations from last year were reviewed and ideas were shared on ways to enhance collaboration among attendees.

The committee will decide whether to build the conference around a theme and look at past sessions with the possibility of inviting past presenters to repeat popular sessions.