



## Commission for Adult Learners

March 14, 2012

324 Outreach Building,

University Park, PA

10:30 a.m.

### Minutes

Attended: Anna Griswold, Chair, Jane Ashton, Lori Bechtel-Wherry, Gloria Deschler, Martha Jordan, Erica Kresovich-Rockey, Leslie Laing, Gary Lawler, Spencer Lewis, Paula Milone-Nuzzo, Jane Owens, Paula Pierce, Karen Pollack, Pat Shope, Karen Sones, Rachel Stover, Judy Wills (recorder), Ken Womack

By phone: Martha Aynardi, Paul deGategno, Beth Ann Delaney, Ron McCarty, Renee Scheske, Ann Williams

Unable to attend: Paula Hogart, Tara Scales Williams, Kevin Snider, Deb Straussfogel

Guests: Nancy Herron, Mukund Kulkarni, Wayne Smutz, Craig Weidemann

- 1) Anna Griswold called meeting to order.
- 2) Griswold reminded members of location change to Chestnut Cottage, Penn State Hazleton, for the April 11, 2012 meeting. Judy Wills will follow-up with members who have not yet sent availability to attend.  
The group and members introduced themselves.
- 3) Approve minutes from February 8, 2012
- 4) Panel Discussion
  - a) ***Adult Degree Completion Task Force Report***—Mukund Kulkarni, Chancellor, Penn State Harrisburg; Wayne Smutz, Associate Vice President for Academic Outreach and Executive Director, World Campus

Draft committee report is in process for Drs. Weidemann and Hanes. Final report will also go to the Provost.

Membership is a mixed group including chancellors, DAAs, faculty, DCEs and administrators University-wide from a majority of campus locations and World Campus. Commission members on the task force are Martha Jordan, Ken Womack, Ann Williams, and Jane Owens. Jeremy Cohen was consultant to the group.

The committee asked Outreach Marketing to look at what programs are offered elsewhere when identifying which elements to consider and which specific degrees to propose.

Needs of multiple stakeholders were considered for the programs to be convenient and workable: Faculty need to consider unique needs of adults, Prospective employment fields should be considered, Structure and length of program should be clearly mapped, articulation agreements should be looked at, and programs should leverage competitive technological advantage of infrastructure to deliver statewide via VLN or World Campus.

i) Degree elements

- (1) Ideas were discussed around improving transfer credit process while maintaining quality, for instance through Prior Learning Assessment.
- (2) Degree should be unique to Penn State
- (3) Degree should be marketed to prospective students and employers emphasizing that it is for adults.

ii) Degree areas under consideration that match criteria

- (1) Health Care-Proposal to further investigate an Allied Health Program as an opportunity to have highest potential to address unique needs of adults.
- (2) Engineering
- (3) General LAS for flexibility

iii) Questions and discussion points

- (1) Program would need to be approved by Faculty Senate and ACUE. Presenting as a Bachelor of Professional Studies may streamline the process.
- (2) The University needs to look at how to best consolidate support of the program.
- (3) Question was raised about the market analysis of number and quality of jobs which need the skills and knowledge contained in the program. Certain campus associate degree programs are offered which could articulate into properly targeted program.
- (4) There is a group looking at alternate models for structuring general education credit delivery University-wide. PLA could be a means of shortening the path and reducing overall costs.
- (5) There is a need to link goals with outcome and assessment at the front-end with a predictable course schedule provided when students begin the program.
- (6) Suggestion to look at what models other institutions use for degree completion programs and considering whether characteristics of students comprising cohorts impact program outcome.
- (7) There is a need to look at whether a proposed program would allow students opportunity to move into administrative position in another field of health care.
- (8) Dr. Smutz will send information about a proposed webinar through the Education Advisory Board in Washington, DC, presented by a marketing analysis firm which moved into higher education and studied health care.

b) ***Introduction of New Programs Working Group***—Lori Bechtel-Wherry, Chancellor, Penn State Altoona

- i) This new group was charged in mid-February by Dr. Hanes to aid in the identification, coordination, and development of critical planning elements for bringing new academic programs to the campuses and campus colleges per Core Council Recommendations. The Core Council recommends “that, as

some current programs are phased-out or consolidated as a result of targeted reviews, new programs should also follow in their place.” The Council further suggests that new programs should be “strategically selected, based on high prospective demand and high student interest, and, to the extent possible, be career-oriented” and “enable maximum sharing of faculty and other resources, the use of technology and cooperative scheduling; such considerations should be central to all new programs going forward.”

- ii) Membership is a mix of chancellors, faculty, and administrators from across the University. Commission for Adult Learners members who are part of the working group are Lori Bechtel-Wherry and Gary Lawler.
  - iii) The group is looking at various reports including the latest draft report from the Adult Degree Completion Task Force as well as Labor & Industry Report, Program Enrollments, grade reports and others.
  - iv) Subcommittees have formed to consider audience, leadership and needed resources. Preliminary reports are expected mid-April.
  - v) First steps would be defining framework and strategy to identify new programs and a systematic approach to maximize current program offerings.
  - vi) DAAs and Associate Dean’s at western campuses have been meeting to identify a program grid that may be shareable among those campuses, similar to the Eastern Alliance.
  - vii) An RN to BSN program partnering Dubois and Altoona has a target launch date fall 2012 following an accelerated format. Advising will be based in Altoona. Nursing courses will be taught by Altoona Faculty, general education credits will be shared between locations via Polycom.
  - viii) Discussion comments noted shared opportunities and referrals to suit student needs, for instance students from the Lewistown learning center.
- c) ***Prior Learning Assessment Initiative***—Pat Shope, Prior Learning Assessment Coordinator, Adult Learner Advocacy Office, University Park
- i) Shope shared a flowchart of the current PLA process.
  - ii) Shope has been benchmarking other institutions to determine what they are doing regarding PLA and what practices Penn State can build upon.
  - iii) Shope will serve as University-wide point of contact to help faculty and students find answers and keep process flowing in the right directions and as a gatekeeper to maintain best interest.
  - iv) Shope distributed a handout outlining the process of PLA. Some faculty have been using PLA since their start at the University. These champions need to be identified.
  - v) As awareness and utilization of PLA grows, there will be need for additional assessors, who will need to be certified. Shope is in process of certification through CAEL.
  - vi) Shope will create a pool of faculty who are able to do portfolio assessment. This needs to be agreed upon in advance and made public. Getting faculty invested as stakeholders in the process at the beginning is key.
  - vii) As articulation agreements grow, PLA will change.
  - viii) Idea of a one-credit course to learn the portfolio process was introduced. Question was raised of how fee is divided and whether the credit would count.

- ix) Attendees have had varied experiences navigating the portfolio assessment process at other institutions where they have worked.
- x) Shope needs help of Commission to craft PLA vision as a piece of the broader overall vision for adult learners.
- xi) Suggestion was made to get PLA onto an Academic Leadership Council (ALC) agenda. Griswold reported upcoming meeting with Mike Dooris to discuss for Quality Advocates. Additional suggested venues were Faculty Senate committee, CCC, ACUE, and Academic Leadership Forum. Members noted cultural change takes time and consistent messages and education about PLA: It is important for faculty to see benefit to the students and their control in the process. Dr. Herron noted that tying PLA outcomes to Core Council Recommendations may be beneficial in sharing benefits of PLA.
- xii) This year's Hendrick keynote speaker has written about PLA as part of the coming transformation of higher education.

Griswold thanked panelists for participating in the discussion on behalf of Dr. Weidemann.

#### 5) Committee and Task Force reports

- a) Awards—Paula Pierce
  - (1) The committee is working on the Annual Awards to be presented at the May 14 Hendrick Best Practices for Adult Learners Conference: Superior Service to Adult Learners Award and Outstanding Recruitment or Retention Program for Adults Award.
  - (2) The committee plans to send an email calling for nominations to the Commission, campus Adult Enrollment Coordinators, Directors of Academic Affairs, Directors of Continuing Education and Chancellors. Pierce asked members to forward to additional distribution lists as appropriate.
- b) Faculty Engagement-Martha Aynardi
  - i. The committee reviewed the Executive Summary of the IntelliQ survey and need clarification on some of the figures. Jordan will send contact information for Trish Evanitsky, project manager at IntelliQ for committee to follow-up.
  - ii. The committee continues to work on the primer on PLA and will use it as a resource piece on a web-based repository which Larry Ragan will maintain.
  - iii. Recommendation was made to have a document for sharing with campus senates. Pollack will ask advice of Susan Youtz.
- c) Hendrick Conference Planning—Judy Wills
  - i. Twenty-eight proposals were received, an increase over past years. Fifteen were chosen in addition to the Incentive Grant Panel, Chancellors Panel, and Shirley Hendrick Award Recipient for a total of eighteen offered sessions.
  - ii. The committee continues to gather adult learner photos for use in the morning slideshow. Members may send photos to Erica Kresovich-Rockey.
  - iii. Opening panel will be a moderated student panel with questions submitted by registrants via online registration form or Facebook.

- iv. Keynote speaker will be Anya Kamenetz, author of DIY U: Edupunks, Edupreneurs, and the Coming Transformation of Higher Education. Book signing will be available after her address. The committee invited Ms. Kamentez to speak on her October 2011 article in Change Magazine on Prior Learning Assessment and other non-traditional ways how a traditional institution can serve adults.
- v. Target time frame to open registration is within the week.
- d) Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)-Jane Owens
  - (1) Gary Lawler reported on the committee's work of reviewing the credit by examination form.
  - (2) Owens will give an update with recommendations to Dr. Herron.
- 6) 2012-13 Chair-Elect slate – Griswold reported that two members have been contacted by the nominating committee as possible candidates for the 2013-14 Chair role. Pending confirmation of their respective availability to serve in the chair role, Wills will prepare and send ballots to members to allow voting before the April meeting. Ballot results will be shared on April 11.
- 7) Griswold adjourned the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Judy Wills