PENNSTATE

Commission for Adult Learners

The Pennsylvania State University
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COMMISSION FOR ADULT LEARNERS
December 9, 2009
324 Outreach Building,
University Park
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Minutes

Attendees: Keith Hillkirk (chair), Martha Jordan, Linda Higginson, Karin Foley, Amy Pancoast, Anna Griswold, Karen Schultz, Leslie Laing, Theodora Jankowski (by phone), Jane Owens (by phone), Bob Farrell (by phone), Joel Rodney (by phone), Sharon Christ (by phone), and Judy Wills (recorder)
Guest: Tammie Durham, John Mills, Ted Timmerman, Carolyn Julian (by phone), and Yolanda Beattie (by phone)
Unable to attend: Galen Grimes, Joann Olson, Spencer Lewis, Michael Mahalik, Jacob Moore, Lori Bechtel-Wherry, and Laura Swinyer

1) Keith Hillkirk called meeting to order and the following announcements were made:
   a) Martha Jordan received a copy of the Shenango Ambassador newsletter announcing the Dennis W. Bartholomew Outstanding Adult Student award and encouraged other campuses to consider adding new awards at their campus. Joel Rodney requested that the Cheryl Plumb award at Penn State York be added to the list of adult scholarships.
2) Draft minutes from December 9, 2009 were approved by voice vote.

3) Committee Reports (Full reports attached)
   a) Faculty Engagement-Theodora Jankowski reported on behalf of the committee.
      - Sandy Gleason has edited the faculty survey. Bob Farrell will circulate the survey to current members so they are familiar with the content. Bob will assume oversight of the survey if needed into Spring 2010. Bob suggested outsourcing the survey through the Survey Center or outsourcing for professional formatting. Martha Jordan met with Sandy Gleason about the survey and ideas to move it forward faster. Martha has spoken with Diagnostics Plus about obtaining a proposal for conducting the survey. They have done surveys for the University previously and can provide analytics.
      - The Faculty Handbook appendix is with Sandy Gleason for major revision.
      - Committee members are in the process of forwarding additions and corrections to the Student Handbook appendix to committee chairs.
      - Laura Swinyer brought a concern to the committee around the registration process for CE courses at University Park and how she felt it may be causing an imbalance in acessibility. Karen Schultz will check details of the registration process to determine if additional follow-up is necessary.

- The committee suggested an unmet need for a student-to-student mentoring system for adults. This will be brought to the Executive Committee to discuss how the Commission can help or support such a system.

b) Hendrick conference planning-Leslie Laing gave an update of the current meeting. Full report is attached.

c) PLA-Jane Owens reported that the committee is looking at enhancing the information about PLA on the web and other sources. Within Outreach, the recommendations can go through Laura Miller for the It Shows web site, University-wide, the committee will seek the support of Commission members or sponsors. Jane Owens will bring to the Executive Committee for advice.

4) Veteran's Rep Panel-Keith Hillkirk facilitated a panel discussion with Tammie Durham, Penn State Schuylkill; Yolanda Beattie, Penn State York; Ted Timmerman, University Park; Carolyn Julian, Penn State Harrisburg; and John Mills, World Campus around issues and concerns faced as campus veterans' representatives and how the Commission can support their work using the following questions:

a) Why do veterans select Penn State and how are they hearing about our programs?
   - Word-of-mouth/reputation via other students or family.
   - Contact with Education centers and military-sponsored fairs. Partnering with campuses.
   - Reputation and veterans students' network.
   - Mailers are sent using reports from University Park of veterans just released. The reports are sorted and distributed by service area. These RONA reports (Register of Names and addresses) are purchased monthly from the Veterans' Administration (VA). Ted Timmerman's office parses the list out to campuses by service area. His office has an agreement with the VA allowing a second contact via post card. About 10,000 letters are sent each year and the response rate is 1.5-3%.
   - The World Campus has both active duty and veterans students.

b) What programming do you provide/What problems are encountered and how can the Commission help?
   - The process of getting Certificate of Eligibility (COE) for benefits from the VA is slow.
   - Students get caught in procedure if using Chapter 33 benefits. The campus uses a work around for getting to scheduled status, but sometimes students need to apply for emergency funds for living expenses.
   - The campus works with the Bursar's office so that no holds are on and students are not dropped.
   - The process creates frustration, especially for late applicants as it delays funds.
   - One campus worked with a student who experienced a months-long wait for a COE.
   - Ted Timmerman thought the problem is with the VA. The legislation and procedures shift as things get further behind. The VA is trying to get universities to handle each case only once to streamline.

The Commission discussed the terminology involved and what 'registered' status means to the VA and the University. Ted Timmerman stated that the indicator is in Angel and the e-Lion account. The question also was raised asking what percentage

of veteran students rely solely on VA benefits for living expenses. The campus reps reported either none or one to two per year.

c) What transitional issues are Veterans reps and veterans facing with the influx of veterans returning to campus?
   - Getting information from VA on COE when student makes application.
   - Veteran students were polled about transitional issues and suggestion was made to have a better orientation system to introduce Penn State to all adult learners in a straightforward, less than half-day format.
   - World Campus sends out a handbook to students. They also have developed orientation videos for their web site and are developing a video clip for veterans and active military.
   - Waiting for COE is biggest problem. Also the campus veterans' club is struggling to become active.
   - The VA pays for work study students. Campuses and University Park both use the work study students.
   - Targeting programming for veterans in FTCAP. One campus has a power point presentation available on the campus web site.

d) Is there a need for a stronger connection with the campus AECs?
   - Reps indicated that a strong relationship already exists at their campuses.

e) Do you have any ideas to increase veterans' enrollment? Targeted marketing?
   - Through Con App (Concurrent Application), the military recruiter explains educational benefits and a recruit can choose affiliate with a specific university. The university gets contact information, the intended campus, and date of enrollment. Ted Timmerman's office compiles information on the prospects and sends an email after basic training. Prospects are then put into his outreach system for future contacts.
   - At the York campus, staff was able to connect with a veteran student with the new veterans' group and may develop a veterans' program/information session to be delivered next Veteran's Day.

f) Do any offices do programming for veterans once they are enrolled?
   - Adult orientation includes any veterans information
   - Veterans are honored at a Veterans' Day reception at a ceremony and luncheon.
   - Campuses have veterans' clubs or organizations.

5) The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Wills

Faculty Engagement Committee Meeting
17 November 2009, via Polycom

Summary of topics discussed and actions taken:

1. Status Reports

a. Questionnaire: S. Gleason reported that, as of now, the questionnaire has not been approved. She thinks money may be available from the Social Science Research Institute to finance delivery and analysis of results. In any event, she thinks the data should go into a data bank with cross-tabs, since the more options for data analysis the better. Further, she thinks we should run the survey past Keith Hillkirk to see what he wants to do. He might want to meet with S. Gleason and Blannie Bowen during the December Chancellor's meeting at UPark. Lori Bechtel might also want to be part of that group. Perhaps having K. Hillkirk suggest the survey to B. Bowen would be the best idea. In this case, S. Gleason sees a Spring 2010 date for instituting the survey "optimistic." If the Provost's office does not wish to sponsor the survey, Gleason suggests we might want to do a "quick and dirty" delivery through Survey Monkey.

b. Faculty Handbook

S. Gleason has not taken the Handbook forward as she indicates that it needs "major revision."

c. Student handbook—

Committee members were reminded to forward additions or corrections to R. Farrell and T. Jankowski

2. New Business

a. CE courses offered only at University Park

Laura Swinyer provided detailed information on the procedure surrounding CE courses offered at UPark at various times. Her main concern seemed to be that, initially, attendance in these courses was restricted to adult students. Recently, however, a much smaller number of seats were initially reserved for adult students thus allowing larger numbers of traditional aged students—to include athletes—into the class. This change in policy has let to the courses being numerically dominated by traditional aged rather than adult students. L Swinyer's concern is that the numerical dominance of traditional aged students has resulted in these courses being now "geared toward" this group. She feels the pace is too rapid for adult students, and CE faculty often use textbooks with which tutors are not familiar. She is also concerned that the traditional aged students "take up" too much of the faculty members' time, thus decreasing the time adult students have to speak with faculty. Since faculty teaching these CE courses are primarily adjuncts who do not have offices, and only teach one night per week, the adult students feel that they are being deprived of learning opportunities. L. Swinyer would like the Commission to look into this situation with one possible result being that a larger portion of seats would be reserved for adult students at the time of initial registration

b. Mentors

L. Swinyer indicated that a mentoring system in which more experienced adult students mentored younger ones might be helpful. She suggested this concept might be within Leslie Laing's bailiwick

Meeting terminated due to failure of the audio portion of polycom.

Items to be placed on the Commission and/or Executive Committee Meeting Agendas:

In light of the polycom failure, T. Jankowski communicated with L. Swinyer via e-mail regarding the two issues she raised. The substance of that communication was as follows**:**

1. CE courses: I suggested that, as a place to start, L. Swinyer daft a statement of the problems adult students are having with CE courses and a proposal that she would like the committee and commission to endorse and put forward. The Faculty Engagement committee can discuss this proposal at our next meeting with a view to putting it forward to the Commission as a whole.

2. Adult Student Mentors: Before the committee or the Commission supports this, theoretically, good idea, we would need to know whether or not we have a system of this nature at University Park now? If not, then I do not think (though I may be wrong) that it is within the commission's mandate to start up the program. It may be. as you suggest, part of the mandate of Leslie Laing's office. In any event, I think the issue—to have it, or to support it—should be presented to the commission as a whole to discuss as necessary.

Submitted by: Theodora Jankowski

Prior Learning Assessment Committee
December 2, 2009, by phone

Summary of topics discussed and actions items:
Detailed discussion of recommended enhancements to Penn State website, the It Shows page, other admissions and adult learner pages, regarding links to the new brochure: College Credit for Prior Learning Experiences
Our suggestions are divided into two categories: pages within Outreach for which we can somewhat easily request changes and those pages/links external to Outreach which may require support from Commission members or sponsors

Items to be placed on the Commission and/or Executive Committee Meeting Agendas:
Brief discussion of how to best proceed with our suggestions

Hendrick Best Practices for Adult Learners
2009-10 Conference Planning Committee

Commission update for December 9, 2009

The Hendrick Committee met on December 2.

Conference Theme is **Innovation 2010: Opportunities for the New Decade** and is scheduled for Conference Monday, May 10. 2010. The registration fee has been set at $79. The Penn State Federal Credit Union has agreed to sponsor a mini notebook for our conference giveaway.

The opening panel with Adult Learners will be facilitated by Eric Hoover, Senior Reporter for The Chronicle for Higher Ed. One of the longer breakout sessions on Prior Learning Assessment will be facilitated by Judy Wertheim, CAEL and it has not yet been determined if the keynote will also provide a session. Brenda Harms, Stamats.

Breakout – 1 will be 45 minutes, Breakout 2 will be 60 minutes breakout session 3 will either be 45 or 60 minutes depending on the call for proposal responses. The Luncheon with Awards and Keynote address will run from 1:00 to 3:00 like last year.

The Committee would like to invite our two student reps, Jacob and Laura to serve on the opening student panel. We are working on identifying a Continuing Ed and World Campus students to participate as well.

We are also proposing a few new ideas:

Chancellors Session: and will ask Keith Hillkirk, Ann Williams and Lori Bechtel-Wherry for participation in this event.

Academic or Associate Deans participation: it was suggested that we invited the deans to be panelists instead of facilitators. The committee will provide suggestions or questions for panelists and submit via email to Leslie and Sharon prior to the January 6 planning meeting.

Videotaping remarks from President Spanier- a pre-recorded message about the importance of Adult Learners at our institution to share at the conference due to the Road Scholar Tour.

Going Green: reducing the burden of copying conference materials is currently being investigated and we may be able to email to participants or post items online. There will still be a few documents and the agenda that will be included as hard copies in the conference folders.

We are updating last year's online evaluation (Survey Monkey) and will be incorporating the paper breakout session evals into the overall online conference evaluation.

Our next meeting scheduled for this **January 6.**
Respectfully submitted,
Leslie A. Laing, Chair