



Commission for Adult Learners  
October 13, 2010  
324 Outreach Building, University Park  
10:30 a.m.  
Minutes

Attended: Ann Williams (Chair), Jane Ashton, Martha Aynardi, Lori Bechtel-Wherry, Paul deGatego (by phone), Beth Ann Delaney (by phone), Gloria Deschler, Armand Dotsey (by phone), Anna Griswold, Linda Higginson, Keith Hillkirk, Martha Jordan, Leslie Laing, Gary Lawler, Jane Owens, Amy Pancoast, Karen Pollack, Careen Yarnal, and Judy Wills (Recorder)

Unable to attend: Spencer Lewis, Karen Sones, Rachel Stover, Debra Strausfogel

- 1) Ann Williams called the meeting to order and opened the floor to announcements.
  - a) Linda Higginson reported a pending Faculty Senate proposal on Foreign Language admissions requirements that would require students to make up the deficit. The discussion centered on whether the make-up course(s) would be used towards graduation requirements or not. The group discussed how to recommend revising the policy to eliminate ambiguity. Motion was made and carried to ask Careen Yarnal as Faculty Senate Liaison request language to be added for students to receive credit for the semester fulfilling the deficient requirement.
  - b) Armand Dotsey suggested having the Commission involved in opportunities with potential for recruiting adults such as the Homecoming parade.
  - c) Martha Jordan, Jane Owens, and Bill Curley will present session on Prior Learning Assessment at the CAEL Conference November 10-12. Representatives from the University of Wisconsin will also attend the conference. Jordan and Owens will meet around Wisconsin's PLA initiatives.
- 2) Minutes from September 8, 2010 were approved by voice vote.
- 3) Committee reports and Faculty Senate Recommendations progress discussion.
  - a) Faculty Engagement—Lori Bechtel-Wherry and Keith Hillkirk
    - (1) The committee met October 7 by phone and Jane Owens participated to discuss credit by exam and portfolio review.
      - Owens feels that there are good policies in place at the University in regard to credit by exam particularly; however, assessment of prior learning via both exams and portfolio is underutilized. One major concern is that there is unevenness across campuses and within a particular campus in regard to the level of awareness and understanding of the process.

- Jane also explained that the credit by portfolio process is more complicated than credit by exam.
  - Jane was asked about the involvement of Continuing Education at campuses in prior learning assessment. Jane responded that there is unevenness here as well as campus to campus.
  - Jane noted that credit by exam, in her experience and opinion, is more doable than credit by portfolio. She suggested that our committee focus its energies on credit by exam.
- (2) Owens also contacted CAEL and has learned that while they do not have a publication on ways of incentivizing faculty, there is available evidence on the positive effects on students when they receive credit for prior learning
  - (3) The committee discussed the work that is going on at the University of Wisconsin that is funded by the Lumina Foundation.
  - (4) The committee talked about the critical importance of faculty buy-in if prior learning assessment is to increase at Penn State.
    - In order to achieve this, we will need to be able to provide practical and workable examples.
    - Paul deGateno also noted that training will be essential.
    - Martha Aynardi noted that Terry Speicher at Berks is using credit by exam in the engineering program. Aynardi will inquire and gather information on their work.
  - (5) Committee members will follow-up on action items before the next phone meeting.
    - Jane Owens will provide a list of where credit by exam is being currently used at Penn State.
    - Martha Aynardi will obtain more information on how credit by exam is being utilized at Penn State Berks.
    - Deb Straussfogel will look into CLEP and provide additional information to the committee

b) Financial Aid Task Force—Anna Griswold

1. Additional members joined the task force: Paula Pierce, Carolyn Julian, Nate Porter, and Sarah Zipf. An additional student liaison may be added.
2. Rachel Stover suggested working with Jennie Ishler in Outreach Marketing to assemble data that informs current environment that impacts financial aid to adult learners. Stover will obtain information from World Campus surveys; Griswold will share profile information for adult student aid recipients at a future Commission meeting.
3. The committee discussed prospective issues that they might examine and which have implications for a student's financial aid:

- Alternate course delivery approaches and how this impacts delivery of financial aid to students.
- What do we know about academic progress and success of adult aid recipients?
- Could adult students benefit from developing an ‘academic plan’?
- How accessible are learning centers for adult students; and is there a virtual ‘learning center’ for students who study full-time on-line (only 50% of courses taken by adult students are RI courses)
- Develop new ideas to support efforts for fund-raising targeted for scholarships to adult students; and new ideas for broadening financial aid services

c) Hendrick Conference Planning—Leslie Laing

The group met September 29. New members and new conference planner and marketing liaison were welcomed. Conference date is May 16, 2011.

- Laing presented proposed conference themes and asked members to send preference or selections to her via email by October 20.
- The committee discussed possible keynote speaker Laura Perner, of the University of Pennsylvania to speak about “forces that limit educational attainment for traditionally underrepresented groups” They also discussed having a panel of experts speaking about work on the Faculty Senate recommendations or offering the Chancellor’s Panel or Academic Dean session to the broader audience.
- The committee suggested having a session or speaker with a military focus. They suggested inviting Dr. Ted Boner of the Center for Deployment to speak.
- Based on positive feedback from a similar session at the 2010 conference, Laing asked the Commission for suggested chancellors to invite for a panel session.
- The committee discussed various ways to allow campus Adult Enrollment Coordinators (AECs) to network at the conference.

d) Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)—Jane Owens

- The committee will coordinate with the Faculty Engagement committee on areas of the Faculty Senate Recommendations that overlap.
- An advisory group set up by Wayne Smutz has been set up around PLA. The task force will be led by Owens, Jordan, and Betsy Esposito.
- The committee will continue to work on building awareness of PLA throughout the university.

Committee chairs reminded to have draft reports ready for November meeting and recommendations ready by December 7 due date for Dr. Weidemann’s office.

4) Updates—

- a) Rachel Stover was unable to attend, but sent draft elements for Adult Learner snapshot. Members should review and send suggestions for additions or changes to Rachel Stover, copying Judy Wills, by November 3.
- b) Ann Williams, Keith Hillkirk, and Martha Jordan will meet with Dr. Pangborn, Karen Schultz, Cathy Schwab, and Shelie Waite to discuss the e-Petition for course substitution developed by the Faculty Engagement Committee.
- c) Martha Jordan reported that the Faculty Survey language has been finalized. The survey will be conducted in two parts: pilot on Altoona, Lehigh Valley, and Schuylkill campuses in fall 2010, then a University-wide rollout in spring 2011 after analyzing pilot results and making any necessary revisions.
- d) Martha Jordan will conduct regional meetings of campus Adult Enrollment Coordinators on October 25 in New Kensington and October 27 in Lehigh Valley. Summary report will be shared at the November meeting.
- e) Martha Jordan announced that the annual ‘Shirley Hendrick Award’, funded by Outreach, has become a President’s Award. Jordan and Judy Wills will manage marketing and administration of the award and the Commission’s Nominating committee will review nominations and select award winner. Process must be completed by February 2011. Details will be shared at a later meeting.
- f) Ann Williams asked members to extend time of the November 10 meeting to 1:00 p.m. on their calendars to allow for necessary committee work on Faculty Senate Recommendation work.

5) The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Wills