



Commission for Adult Learners  
February 8, 2012  
324 Outreach Building,  
University Park, PA  
10:30 a.m.  
Minutes

Attended: Anna Griswold, Chair, Lori Bechtel-Wherry, Gloria Deschler, Paula Hogard, Martha Jordan, Leslie Laing, Gary Lawler, Erica Kresovich-Rockey, Jane Owens, Paula Pierce, Pat Shope, Karen Sones, Rachel Stover, Judy Wills, Ken Womack

Attended by phone: Martha Aynardi, Ron McCarty, Renee Scheske, Ann Williams

Unable to attend: Jane Ashton, Paul deGategno, Beth Ann Delaney, Spencer Lewis, Paula Milone-Nuzzo, Karen Pollack, Tara Scales Williams, Kevin Snider, Deb Straussfogel

- 1) Anna Griswold called the meeting to order.
- 2) Announcements & Introductions
  - a) The April 11 meeting will be held at Penn State Hazleton in Chestnut Cottage. Polycom video conferencing will be available from 324 Outreach Building and additional locations as needed. Van will be available for travel from University Park. Judy Wills will send survey to members asking whether and how they plan to attend the meeting. Additional details will be shared at the March meeting.
  - b) Martha Jordan, Rachel Stover, and Jennifer Moore will present 'Data Utilization in Support of Adult Learners' IR interest group on Thursday, February 23, 2012, 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., in 508 Rider Building. Adobe Connect will be available.
  - c) Final results of the survey were received from IntelliQ and forwarded to Chairs of the Faculty Engagement and PLA committees for first analysis. Martha Jordan will follow-up status of Executive Summary.
  - d) Martha Jordan introduced Patricia Shope. Shope was recently hired in the Adult Learner Advocacy Office as Prior Learning Assessment Coordinator. Per the recently updated Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules, she will hold Ex-officio membership on the Commission and Executive Committee.
- 3) The group approved minutes of December 14, 2011 by consensus.
- 4) Financial Aid Update—Anna Griswold
  - a) Griswold reviewed 'Overview of Student Aid 2010-11: The Big Picture and a Review of Aid to Adult Learners.' (Attachment 1)

- b) Focus of the overview was mostly undergraduate level. Information shared included the following:
  - o All Student Assistance Funding at Penn State showing number of recipients and total dollars awarded for 2010-11.
  - o Breakdown by Types of student aid funding: loans, grants, scholarships, and work study
  - o Growth in Student Loans at Penn State comparing AY 1999-2000 and AY 2010-11
  - o Average Loan Debt for Graduating Seniors at Penn State compared to all four-year public schools.
  - o Resident tuition and fees verses growth in average aid awards from 2000-2010.
  - o Loan default rates at Penn State compared to all four-year public schools and national averages.
  - o Comparisons for adult aid recipients with all undergraduate aid recipients
  - o Pell Grant and First Generation College recipients.
- c) Higher unmet need of adults attributed to access to higher loan limits and lack of parent support.
- d) Discussion points
  - a) All statistics are from the University's Adult indicator and are parallel to Federal Student Aid definitions
  - b) For scholarships, many adult learners are half-time and award amounts may be proportional
  - c) Question was raised about whether follow-up information is available on ability to pay post-graduation. Griswold stated that would need to be extrapolated from industry information and loan debt. Some fields lack high salary but students can sign up for Income-Based repayment plans to better manage their loan repayment.
  - d) Some students may initially enroll in programs that are not realistically affordable given individual situations. This may be worsened by need for remediation.
    - (1) Should scholarships be more targeted, giving higher amounts to fewer students?
    - (2) Should potential savings if attending a campus with lower costs be emphasized when discussing alternatives?
    - (3) With reduced appropriations, will unmet need become overwhelming?
    - (4) Should general education requirements be completed at community colleges? This would be aligned with Core Council Recommendations, but could create ripple effects which are not always in the best interest of the University.
    - (5) Can alternative paths to a degree be mapped out and used to help with retention, possibly by increased articulation agreements?
  - e) Aynardi mentioned a report that cited difficulty getting credits to transfer. Griswold noted that seeing graduation rates and time to degree would be interesting. Rachel Stover will research and send to Griswold.
  - f) Griswold reported that the governor is forming a Commission for Higher Education.

- g) Paula Hogard noted there is a need to consider a safety net for students who need to stop-out when circumstances arise.
- 5) Review of proposal for alternate use of incentive grant funding for 2012 –
- a) Anna Griswold distributed draft proposal arising from Executive Committee discussion in December 2011(Attachment 1).
  - b) Historically, maximum award amounts were \$2,000 with campus match of \$1 for every \$2 grant funds received. The Awards and Executive Committees asked what would happen if the Commission awarded more substantive amounts and invited deliberate proposals, perhaps based on recent survey results and Core Council recommendations relative to adults.
  - c) Awarded programs have become singular to particular locations. The committees propose a year to revamp the awards criteria for 2012-13 and propose using the funds which would have been awarded in 2012 to sponsor workshops for regional clusters developed by Dr. Madlyn Hanes. The objective would be to generate ideas for 2013 proposal areas around strategic needs around the resultant workshop conversations.
  - d) The Commission would defer to the regional campuses to determine who would attend per meeting.
  - e) Question was raised about what role Dr. Hanes would have in each meeting. The Commission would take the proposal to sponsors for approval. Suggestion was made to then invite Dr. Hanes to kick-off each meeting in person or by video.
  - f) Subcommittee would form to coordinate logistics for meetings.
  - g) Concern was raised about impact on the 2013 Hendrick conference. Wills shared that for the 2010, 2011, and 2012 conferences, Incentive Grant recipients have presented in shared panels for one session. Suggestion was made to reserve a session to review the changes to the Incentive Grant program going forward.
  - h) The group considered whether grant amounts should increase. Consensus was that campus match was important to vest campuses in program success. Further suggestion was made that if collaborative initiatives were proposed among regions, campuses could split the required match.
  - i) Griswold stated that metrics would be important piece of the any new programs for measuring success and reporting to sponsors.
  - j) Paula Pierce asked for proposed timeline for the proposed workshops. Jordan suggested scheduling the regional cluster meetings in spring and summer of this year with the newly revised Call for Proposals going out in 2012-13 for awarding in 2013.
  - k) After sponsors approve the changes, the scheduled workshops will be announced on the Commission's web site when details emerge.
- 6) Committee reports
- a) Awards, Paula Pierce
    - (1) Shirley Hendrick Award recipient has been selected. Per University protocol, the recipient is kept confidential until Public Relations announces a few weeks prior to the Awards Reception. The committee reviewed six nominations and will contact nominators asking if two can

instead be considered for the Commission's Annual awards since they more closely align with criteria.

- (2) The committee will next call for nominations for the Annual Awards, which will be presented at the May 14 Hendrick Best Practices for Adult Learners Conference.
- b) Faculty Engagement, Martha Aynardi
- (1) The committee is developing an online training for faculty working with adults, with a goal to run as pilot during summer 2012.
  - (2) The committee will begin work on analyzing results of the IntelliQ survey.
  - (3) The committee sought feedback on the primer sent electronically before the meeting. Pat Shope will take a closer look. Shope's duties include developing a site or central repository for PLA information. Members can send feedback on the primer to Martha Aynardi.
  - (4) Gary Lawler shared that he and Nancy Herron are working on E2 update through ACUE. The structure is fine, but there are suggested updates for the language and process. Lawler will send electronically to Wills for distribution to members.
- c) Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), Jane Owens
- (1) In addition to shared points from the Faculty Engagement report, Owens would like to define work of each committee at today's Executive Committee meeting to avoid overlap and duplication of efforts.
- d) Hendrick Conference Planning , Judy Wills
- (1) Reminder of proposal deadline was recently sent. Deadline is February 10.
  - (2) The committee seeks photos of adult learners and programs from campuses to use during the morning Power Point program and will solicit campus AECs.
  - (3) Opening session will be a student panel moderated by a reporter from Outreach News Bureau. Registrants will have opportunity to pose questions for students on the online registration form. The committee still needs to identify a first year, commonwealth campus undergraduate for the panel. Members can submit recommendations to Wills by February 22.
  - (4) Confirmed sessions will include three Incentive Grant program directors from Penn State Abington, Penn State Brandywine, and University Park; moderated Chancellor's panel with Dr. Gary Lawler, Penn State Hazleton, Dr. Frances Achampong, Penn State Fayette, and Dr. David Gnage, Penn State Mount Alto; and the 2012 Shirley Hendrick Award Recipient.
  - (5) The invited keynote speaker has accepted and paperwork is in process with Risk Management. Requested topic is from recent article in Change Magazine, and other non-traditional ways for a traditional institution to serve adult learners.
  - (6) Penn State Harrisburg has confirmed interest and availability to host the 2013 conference. Members agreed the location would be a good fit. Lori Bechtel-Wherry indicated interest in hosting future conference at Penn State Altoona.

7) Griswold adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Judy Wills

**DRAFT**

Annually, the Commission for Adult Learners solicits proposals from the University community for initiatives and projects that serve the needs of recruiting or retaining adult learners. The call for proposals includes a suggested list of topics for which proposals should be oriented (technology, family activities, tutoring, newsletters, etc.). The Commission reviews all proposals and selects several to receive an incentive grant award for use in supporting the various proposed services and projects that support adult learners. The campus, college or unit is expected to match \$1 for every \$2 of the incentive grant awarded. While the Commission has made awards since 1999-2000 to some significant and sustainable initiatives, proposals received in recent years have not lent themselves to initiatives for which measurable impact can be determined. The Commission would like to step back and revisit its expectations for proposals in the future as well as the amount of the incentive grant awards. Would fewer but higher award amounts promote more substantive proposals for which success can be measured? Should the Commission require that proposals be oriented to ones that can be replicated across the University and become sustainable?

The Commission's Executive Committee is proposing that we not solicit incentive grant proposals for the 2011-12 year in order to reassess the awarding of future incentive grants. One example might be to consider three touch points of current importance to the University around which we might solicit future proposals: 1) Changes emanating from the Core Council reports, 2) The emphasis on adult learner completion, and 3) areas of need that might emerge from the Faculty Survey on adult learners. In order to further explore these three areas and identify other possible strategic areas for emphasis, the Executive Committee proposes that we use the incentive grant funding for 2011-12 to host cluster meetings across campuses that would bring together faculty and staff with interest in expanding their campuses' effectiveness in working with adult students, thinking strategically about both the needs and limitation of resources and seek ways to collaborate across campuses through the use of CAL incentive grants. We recommend working with Dr. Hanes to structure these meetings. We would welcome members of the Commission who might wish to volunteer to be a subcommittee to help develop a plan for initiating these meetings