



February 19, 2014  
324 Outreach Building, University Park  
10:30 a.m.  
Minutes

Attended: Paula Milone-Nuzzo, Chair; Paula Hogard, Martha Jordan, Apryl Kadish, Leslie Laing, Maria Schmidt, Pat Shope, and Judy Wills

By Polycom or Phone: Francis Achampong, Diane Chamberlin, Sueann Doran, Gary Lawler, Albert Lozano-Nieto, Paula Pierce, Kevin Snider, Ken Thigpen

Unable to attend: Jamie Campbell, Durell Johnson, Sonya Leitzell, Bert McBrayer, Mike McNeese, Sherry Robinson, Terry Speicher

Guests: Lauren Rosenthal, intern, Office of Veterans Programs; Renee Thornton-Roop, Veterans Counselor/Certifying Official, Office of Veterans Programs; Ted Timmerman, Associate Director, Office of Veterans Programs; Dr. Craig Weideman, Vice President of Outreach and Vice Provost for Online Education and Commission sponsor

1) Paula Milone-Nuzzo called the meeting to order and opened the floor for announcements.

Martha Jordan noted the timeline for elections for 2015-16 Chairperson. The nominations committee will present a slate at the March meeting. Then ballots will go out electronically and results will be announced at the April meeting. Gary Lawler will lead the nominations as past chair.

2) Services for Veterans and Certifying Officials Survey update

a) Services for Veterans-Renee Thornton-Roop, MSW, LSW, Veterans Counselor and Certifying Official provided an update on services available beyond certifying educational benefits.

i) Currently there are 924 certified veterans and dependents at University Park, and 1,622 through World Campus. There are 3,928 University-wide.

ii) All staff at the University Park office are veterans; three are certified social workers. The office also has twenty work-study staff to serve as peer counselors and serve walk-ins. Ted Timmerman oversees the work-study students.

iii) Services provided include advocacy with the Veterans Administration, tutorials on applying for benefits, and internal referrals to admissions, registrar and bursar.

iv) The office maintains a LISTSERV to share employment opportunities, internship postings, etc. Ted Timmerman will send information on how to opt into the

LISTSERV to Judy Wills for sharing with members.

**Update:** Ted Timmerman, Associate Director, Penn State's Office of Veterans Programs, sent this after the meeting:

“Concerning the Listserv discussed at this morning's meeting, here is the link to our website: <http://equity.psu.edu/veterans/>

On the left is a menu. Click on On-line Forms, and the second entry under Administrative Forms is for the Listserv. Directions are on the form. Feel free to send this to the campuses or commission members as you deem appropriate.”

- v) The office serves as liaison with Army Concurrent Admissions Program (ConAP) and Marine Leadership Scholarship Program (LSP.)
- vi) Wills will send copy of the handout showing a complete listing of services with draft notes.
- vii) Questions raised by members:
  - (1) Is the employment outlook improving? Somewhat, many opportunities referred through the LISTSERV are in the STEM fields and have very specific criteria.
  - (2) What are the greatest needs at intake? Financial aid is top need, followed by need for referral to support/resources.
  - (3) Is there an express line set up to avoid placing active military students on hold when they have limited access to place phone calls? Thornton-Roop will bring this up at a World Campus Military Team meeting.
  - (4) Is there sufficient additional financial aid available? The office does not currently track this.
- b) Certifying Officials Survey Update-Sueann Doran reviewed the recent survey of Certifying Officials conducted by the Military Support Services Committee.
  - i) The survey looked at the veteran climate across the University. The committee sent the survey to thirty-seven Certifying Officials at twenty-one campuses (did not include World Campus, law school, medical school, or technical campuses) and received seventeen responses.
  - ii) The survey looked at
    - (1) additional roles of certifying officials—largest response was financial aid. Sometimes this is a small piece of someone’s varied tasks. Suggestion was raised to examine at an administrative level how the role is assigned.
    - (2) their reporting line—most were in admissions/enrollment management.

- (3) number of veterans served—range was from 20-1,574 per office.
  - (4) additional services provided and partnering offices—highest partnered with Student Affairs. Some campuses did not provide services beyond certifying benefits. Seven out of ten have a Veterans organization on campus. Suggestion was raised to raise the concern where services are not available to sponsor Damon Sims, with recommendation of possible shared resources among campuses.
  - (5) Challenges and barriers; and suggested services to make available.
- iii) Survey results will be used to inform recommendations for improving/expanding services for veterans and a planned committee survey of veteran students and the committee will also present a session at the Hendrick conference in May.
  - iv) Doran will share breakdown of results with members who have interest and will provide Wills with slides to send with the draft minutes.
- 3) Internal Communications - Dr. Craig Weidemann led discussion on the importance of making the new President and Provost aware of the work of the Commission and how to position the Commission's work and needs of adult learners as priority when considering policies of impact.
- a) Weidemann suggested looking at the Center for Sustainability's model to gain visibility, support, funding, and leadership for initiatives. Themes are evolving and are still iterative. Enrollment numbers for adults and importance of this population need to be conveyed while priorities are being developed.
  - b) The group discussed how to get our message to the right stakeholders. We need to be careful to define unique needs of and barriers for adults and provide a business case of how supporting adults will benefit the University and the state. Need to provide data of the tremendous size of the adult population across the University. Suggestion was made to take a look at the new President's history for precedent on related matters.
  - c) Consider leveraging chancellors and deans to garnish information to determine a way to unify the University's unique campus structure.
  - d) Suggestion was raised to channel messages through sponsors, submitting updates periodically and after key Commission meetings. Need to get sponsors to discuss as a group and provide them with ongoing talking points for President's Council. Suggestion also was raised to ask Provost Jones to include adult learners in his updates. Weidemann suggested asking Mike Dooris to get adult learners added to the slide deck in progress for strategic planning. Milone-Nuzzo agreed to discuss data needs with Provost Jones at a meeting she has with him next week.
  - e) Need to develop information to share preliminarily which will be informative yet succinct to avoid getting lost among volume of early requests as the new President takes office.
  - f) The executive committee will discuss a plan: will be data driven, will present business

case of impact, how to best route message. Francis Achampong will send information on national needs and Pat Shope will provide link to Lumina information.

#### 4) Updates and Committee reports

##### a) University-wide updates

- i) Penn State Mont Alto Student veteran leaders from Penn State Mont Alto recently attended the 2014 Student Veterans of America (SVA) National Conference in Phoenix, and their student veteran chapter was chosen as one of six top groups to participate in SVA's 2nd Annual Business Plan Competition.

Based on the premise that student veteran leaders are social entrepreneurs working to build, develop and sustain thriving campus student veterans' organizations, SVA and the Military Family Research Institute (MFRI) at Purdue University have created a leadership curriculum that helps student veterans approach the management of their chapters as business leaders-with a strong foundation in strategic planning , understanding campus culture, budgeting resources and implementing sustainability measures . The curriculum provides training and consultation to help student veteran leaders create business plans, which they are then encouraged to submit as part of SVA's chapter grants program.

Students worked closely with a program specialist from MFRI to refine their plans and develop formal presentations. At the conference, student representatives from Penn State Mont Alto presented a business plan pitch to a panel of corporate judges, who asked tough questions and gave the students targeted feedback and were commended for displaying tremendous initiative, dedication and leadership. The group was encouraged to submit their plan as part of SVA's chapter grants program.

- ii) Penn State New Kensington-Kevin Snider shared an update about work in progress with Special Operations Online Blended Initiative around educational opportunities for active military in strategic forces. There are sticking points common to all adult learners such as PLA, etc.
- iii) Leslie Laing conducted the third annual adult learner focus groups on February 17. Six administrators met with twenty-five students who had been provided with questionnaires in advance. Laing will provide summary of results at a future meeting.

##### b) Reports

- i) Faculty Senate Liaison-No report
- ii) Awards and Recognitions Committee—Paula Pierce announced that the 2014 Shirley Hendrick award recipient had been selected and notified. The award will be presented March 24 at the Faculty/Staff Awards Reception. The recipient will also be recognized and will present accomplishments at the Hendrick conference in May. Per University protocol, the recipient name is held confidential until announced by University Relations.

The committee focus will shift to soliciting nominations for the annual recognitions program and again plans to ask Paula Milone-Nuzzo to send request for nominations to contacts for forwarding through targeted LISTSERVs.

- iii) Hendrick Conference Planning Committee-Apryl Kadish reported that the committee is confirming content, web site edits and logistics to be on target to open registration in early March. Dr. Roxanne Gonzales, President of Granite State College in New Hampshire has accepted invitation to deliver the keynote address. All Commission committees will present sessions, and space will be reserved for updates around the PLA Task Force Recommendations, when available. The Shirley Hendrick Award recipient will share accomplishments during the opening session. The committee will recommend a registration fee for approval at the Executive Committee meeting. The committee seeks a volunteer to co-present with Martha Jordan during an optional pre-conference session ‘Commission for Adult Learners 101: Who We Are and How You Can Help.’
- iv) Military Support Services Committee-Sueann Doran reported that the committee is reviewing potential questions for the veteran student survey and plan to select ten questions from across identified categories Doran will contact Martha Jordan for clarification on contacting the Student Affairs Research and Assessment Office for guidance on next steps for the survey.
- v) Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Committee—Pat Shope reported that the BSB Credit by Exam pilot is in its final stages. IST is also ready to engage and the committee is considering where to go next with the pilot. The group is also seeking technical help with the planned webinars. Shope will participate in a session around PLA, badges, and competency based education at the Hendrick conference and is also presenting at an upcoming conference in Brandywine.

The committee is looking at faculty engagement triggers for PLA.

5) The group approved minutes of December 18, 2013 by voice vote.

6) Paula Milone-Nuzzo adjourned the meeting at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Judy Wills

An equal opportunity University