



**September 17, 2014**

207 The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel

10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Minutes

**Attended:** Ken Thigpen, Chair; Francis Achampong, JoAnne Carrick, Diane Chamberlin, Sueann Doran, Peter Forster, Martha Jordan, Apryl Kadish, Leslie Laing, Sonya Leitzell, Albert Lozano-Nieto, Bert McBrayer, Brooke Repine, Sherry Robinson, Maria Schmidt, Beth Seymour, Pat Shope, Terry Speicher, Judy Wills (Recorder), and Ken Womack

**Sponsors attending:** Craig Weidemann, Marcus Whitehurst

**Guest:** Daad Rizk

**Unable to attend:** Kelly Austin, Jamie Campbell, Paula Milone-Nuzzo

1. Welcome and call to order, Dr. Kenneth Thigpen, Chair
  - a. Thigpen invited attendees to introduce themselves and give brief background of their interest in adult learner advocacy
  - b. Announcements
    - i. Reminder to consider nominating an adult learner for the Distinguished Alumni Award. Judy Wills will resend nominations packet.
    - ii. Thigpen, Francis Achampong, Diane Chamberlin, Martha Jordan, and Wills will attend a luncheon among the Board of Trustees and University commissions on September 19. Representatives from the Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Equity (CLGBTE); the Commission on Racial/Ethnic Diversity (CORED); and the Commission for Women (CFW) will also attend.
  - c. Review Teams for the *Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State*
    - i. Thigpen recognized the CAL representatives working on the project: Chamberlin, Sueann Doran, Jordan, Sonya Leitzell, and Albert Lozano-Nieto.
    - ii. Jordan noted that this is the first time CAL was asked to participate, giving perspective to how adult learners are perceived University-wide.
    - iii. Target timeframe for the group to report on the project is December 2014.
  - d. Members voted to approve the minutes of May 14, 2014 as submitted.
2. Commission goals for 2014-15, Ken Thigpen and Martha Jordan
  - a. Thigpen reviewed the goals and objectives for the 2014-15 Commission:
    - Formulate a strategic plan for the Commission that builds on President Barron's six areas of focus, specifically focusing on issues of affordability and accessibility for adult learners.
    - Maintain and enhance communication with constituencies: Refine and continue a strategic communication report distributed quarterly, and Meet regularly with our sponsors to provide updates and receive input.
    - Continue to develop a financial literacy website as a tool for adult learners.

- Monitor progress on prior learning assessment.
- Begin to monitor new academic programs designed to serve adult learners.
- Monitor progress of the General Education Task Force, especially as it relates to engaged scholarship.
- Support a team to review the “Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State.”
- Organize and host the annual Hendrick Best Practices for Adult Learners Conference. The event will be Tuesday, May 12, 2015.
- Continue to support transition and retention for military and veteran learners at Penn State.
- Recognize and honor those who support the adult learner community through the Shirley Hendrick Award for a Senior Administrator and Distinguished Alumni Award nominations of outstanding adult student alumni.

The objectives can be refined according to discussion and suggestion of sponsors and members.

3. Report from September 16 meeting with sponsors’ meeting –Thigpen

- i. Went over the official “charge” to the Commission point by point
- ii. Recommendation: Monitor work of the Penn State Enhanced Education Pathway Committee, formed at the end of August. This committee was charged by the provost to broadly consider and investigate a number of strategies to advance President Barron’s priority of access to and affordability of a Penn State education. While much of this focuses on the conditions of traditional aged students, some specific suggestions to be addressed are meaningful for adult students, including these:
  - Integration of World Campus opportunities to potentially provide lower-cost and remote access to courses e.g., over the summer;
  - Enhancement and improved integration of campus programs into our pool of institutional offerings;
  - Opportunities to further differentiate costs at different campus locations through more aggressive tuition setting strategies;
  - Commission could look student services and programs applicable to the adult learner experience
- iii. Damon Sims offered to bring recent data regarding adult learners to the Commission
- iv. What does engaged scholarship mean for adults? How is this expectation being addressed at specific locations. Commission will consult with Beth Seymour, as a current member of the Commission, and liaison to Outreach Committee of Faculty Senate
- v. Sponsors encouraged development of Web-site with easy access to financial literacy for adult students
- vi. Commission should compile and analyze data regarding retention and time to degree for adult students; look at goals of adult students, since these may not be the same as for traditional aged students; meaning of this data will vary

- depending on motivation for learning at PSU; look at goals
- vii. We might want to look specifically at programs like “ALEKS”, which offers low-cost or no-cost leg-up for adults students
  - viii. Advocate for scholarships and other financial aid that should be made available for adults learners
  - ix. The new automated course substitution process, which was initiated by a CAL report, has begun, with apparent success. Commission should monitor the effectiveness of this system and analyze available data as it emerges.

Craig Weidemann responded;

Noted these objectives align with President Barron’s areas of focus, especially Access and Affordability and student career success and economic development.

Relayed that the sponsors will recommend elevating CAL to become a Presidential Commission. He cited examples of CAL’s success in getting things done: Initiatives around Financial Literacy, Prior Learning Assessment, and Course Substitution Request System.

Noted a recent Penn State Market Study in Pittsburgh among adult learners that may be of interest to reference.

Suggested looking at creative ways to engage adult learners.

Suggested inviting Government Relations to discuss regulatory issues at the state and federal level and how CAL can advocate for the adult learner.

Marcus Whitehurst responded:

Asked CAL to consider what impact it can have on a University-wide level, especially as a new Provost and new President develop the overall strategic plan. Also suggested CAL to consider where the University has the most impact on adult learners.

Encouraged openness to infuse resources into the Diversity Framework, especially Challenge 3 and to continue to look at demographic breakdown for the fact sheet

Agreed with the importance of all the CAL committees and suggested looking at the language used for Military Support Services to consider inclusion of ‘Veterans’ in its name.

- b. Adult Learner Fact Sheet document
  - i. Current plan is to update three times yearly: September, January, and May.
  - ii. The document is single page, double-sided. The front presents information about adult learners, and the back presents how CAL serves the adult learner population.
  - iii. The current edition is a refinement of the draft shared at the May 14, 2014 meeting.
  - iv. Suggestions from attendees for future editions included breaking down data by

academic unit, highlighting military/veteran numbers, sharing scholarship and institutional support information, and incorporating student success stories.

- c. Dr. Barron's six major topics of focus are embedded in the CAL objectives for 2014-15. Dr. Barron will attend the beginning of our December 17 meeting. Weidemann agreed to take CAL key issues to Barron's office prior to the meeting.
4. University-wide updates on Adult Learner initiatives
    - a. Leslie Laing noted some military/veterans events at University Park.
      - i. The November 15 home football game will be the annual Military Appreciation Tailgate. Details are available at <http://news.psu.edu/story/326825/2014/09/18/administration/penn-state-military-appreciation-efforts-grow-significantly>
      - ii. There will be a staging of BASETRACK Live which is a multimedia production that raises awareness, promotes communication, and focuses national attention on the issues facing returning veterans at Eisenhower Auditorium on October 29. Details are available at <https://cpa.psu.edu/events/basetrack-live>.
      - iii. There will be an ART-illery Papermaking Workshop on October 14 -16: Artist Patrick Sargent guides students, veterans, and the community at large through a workshop wherein paper is made using military uniforms, which are shredded, pulped, and prepared for art making. The free workshop will explore our collective association with warfare. Participants own their history and make something good out of the past. Resultant work to be exhibited in the Pasquerilla Spiritual Center as well as several residence halls. This project is supported by Adult Learner Services within Student Affairs.
    - b. Sueann Doran gave an update on the free course in mathematics offered, for adults who want to brush up on their basic skills in conjunction with the Central Intermediate Unit #10 (CIU #10). Information is available at <http://dubois.psu.edu/33533.htm>
    - c. Francis Achampong reported that the Veteran's Center at Penn State Mont Alto was unveiled at a ribbon cutting ceremony on September. Information and history is available at <http://montalto.psu.edu/34932.htm>.
  5. Committee and Task Force introductions, Ken Thigpen
    - a. Access and Affordability Task Force – Francis Achampong will lead the group. Members are Kelly Austin, Jamie Campbell, Jo Anne Carrick, Brooke Repine, and Ken Womack.
    - b. Awards and Recognitions – Diane Chamberlin will lead the group. Members are Martha Jordan, Paula Milone-Nuzzo, and Maria Schmidt.
    - c. Hendrick Conference Planning – Judy Wills will lead the group. Members are Apryl Kadish and Bert McBrayer.
    - d. Military Support Services – Sueann Doran will lead the group. Members are Leslie Laing, Sonya Leitzell, and Sherry Robinson.
    - e. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) – Pat Shope will lead this group. Members are Peter Forster, Albert Lozano-Nieto, Beth Seymour, and Terry Speicher.
    - f. All working committees are also open to volunteer members who have interest.

6. The group broke into committees for breakout discussion during lunch to set the top subcommittee objectives for the year.
7. Report back from committees with top objectives for the year:
  - a. Access and Affordability Task Force
    - i. Address barriers to access and affordability for adult undergraduate students and put forth strategies to address them. Each member was assigned or volunteered for a particular barrier and how to address it: Rising tuition and fees, obstacles to obtaining credit for PLA, transfer credit evaluation system that is not customer friendly, financial literacy limitations, academic preparedness issues, and limited program portfolios.
    - ii. Give a progress report at our October and November CAL meetings.
    - iii. Finalize the narrative in December and start working on the strategies to address the barriers in January
    - iv. Spring 2015 target timeframes: present bullet points in February, start working on drafts in March, and finalize them in April. Then report to the sponsors in May at the final meeting of the academic year.
  - b. Awards and Recognition
    - i. Hendrick award criteria have been changed to reflect a focus on innovation and entrepreneurial or visionary leadership. The criteria have been updated on the website.
    - ii. Nominees for the Shirley Hendrick award are being asked to prepare to present at the Hendrick conference this year.
    - iii. Efforts will be made to thoroughly broadcast the call for nominations via a variety of listservs and by communication with various committees for sharing at meetings, etc. CAL members were requested to spread the word throughout their own units and departments. Additionally, members serving on the Diversity Framework committee were asked to keep the Hendrick award in mind as they review campuses and units in case best practices surface that warrant a nomination.
  - c. Hendrick Conference Planning
    - i. Work closely with the Awards and Recognition committee to host presentations from Shirley Hendrick award recipient and invited nominees.
    - ii. Surpass 2014 attendance numbers and increase number of attendees from campuses.
    - iii. Identify a keynote speaker whose topic speaks to the mission and goals of the Commission and one or more of the subcommittees.
  - d. Military Support Services –
    - i. Review University Student Satisfaction Survey results from Spring 2014 for relevancy to veteran students. If it is determined that more data is needed, the committee will work with Student Affairs Research and Assessment to distribute the survey developed by the 2013/2014 Military Support Services Committee.
    - ii. Determine and create a list of best practice, support services, and programs that are needed to support veterans.
    - iii. Review Dr. Barron's six major topics as they apply to military and veteran students.

- iv. Propose a session at the 2015 Hendrick Conference based on information from survey results and best practices, support services, and programs that are needed to support veterans.
  - e. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)
    - i. Assisting the Director with the selection of campus/department PLA liaisons,
    - ii. Working with General Education credits,
    - iii. Supporting the work of Assessment in establishing learning outcomes for all courses.
8. Thigpen adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

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