



COMMISSION FOR ADULT LEARNERS

March 17, 2010

119 Outreach Building,

University Park

10:30 a.m.

Minutes

Attended: Keith Hillkirk—Chair, Martha Jordan, Bob Farrell, Joann Olson, Anna Griswold, Spencer Lewis, Karen Schultz, Sharon Christ, Amy Pancoast, Leslie Laing, and Judy Wills (recorder)

Joined by phone: Linda Higginson, Joel Rodney, Theodora Jankowski, Jane Owens, and Jacob Moore

Unable to attend: Lori Bechtel-Wherry, Karin Foley, and Michael Mahalik

- 1) Keith Hillkirk called the meeting to order.

Announcements

- a) Martha Jordan shared an article from the January 2010 ‘Penn Stater’ magazine featuring Anna Griswold.
 - b) Martha Jordan announced that enrollments of undergraduate degree-seeking adults have increased for the first time in eight years. Rachel Stover from Outreach Marketing and Communications will attend the June meeting to present data from the enrollment reports.
 - c) Martha Jordan reported that there were twelve proposals from eleven campuses for the Commission’s 2010 Incentive Grants. Total requests were approximately \$20,000. Ten initiatives were funded totaling \$8,000. Abstracts from the funded programs were shared with members. Judy Wills will forward electronically to those unable to attend the meeting or joining by phone.
 - d) Linda Higginson summarized the joint report given at the March 16 Faculty Senate meeting by the Senate’s Outreach and Student Life Committees. Eight recommendations developed to enhance the experience of adult learners were fully accepted. Martha Jordan will forward the link to the online report to Commission members.
- 2) Members approved minutes of the February 10, 2010, meeting by voice vote.
 - 3) Committee Reports
 - a) Faculty Engagement (Bob Farrell and Theodora Jankowski)
 - The committee formally delivered final draft of the faculty survey on attitudes toward working with adult learners and an implied consent form for survey participants. Martha Jordan has a meeting with Diagnostics Plus, a market

research company who has done prior work for the University, to develop a proposal for executing the survey. Once available the proposal will be shared with the Faculty Engagement committee for review, and then will be advanced to the Commission's sponsors for endorsement and possible funding.

- The committee also delivered the Faculty Handbook appendix, edited by Sandy Gleason. Bob Farrell will send Dr. Hillkirk the Student Handbook appendix electronically. Bob Farrell offered to continue on with the Commission and/or committee until the completion of this project.
- At their next meeting, the committee will determine future work and committee leadership.

b) Hendrick conference planning (Leslie Laing and Sharon Christ)

- The committee has confirmed pre-conference breakfast attended by featured speakers and Commission sponsors.
- Opening session will feature an adult learner panel discussion facilitated by Eric Hoover, writer for the 'Chronicle of Higher Education.' Four students will participate: one from World Campus, one from CE at UP, one veteran from University Park and one veteran from a campus.
- There will be six session choices for each of the three breakout sessions including 'Conversations with Chancellors' moderated by Bill Curley, a session on prior learning assessment (PLA) presented by Judith Wertheim from CAEL, a session showcasing three of the initiatives funded by the Commission's 2009 Incentive Grants, and a tentative panel discussion 'View from the Dean's Desk'.
- Nominations for the Commission's Annual Awards are open, and the nomination deadline is March 26, 2010. The awards, 'Superior Service to Adult Learners' and 'Outstanding Recruitment or Retention Program' will be presented during the lunch program at the conference.
- The date of the 2011 conference will be May, 16, 2011.

c) PLA

- The committee's requested changes to the 'It Shows' web site have been started by Outreach Marketing Communications (OMC). The committee will work with OMC on the rest of the content and once complete will work on appropriate links. Jane Owens will review changes at a future Commission meeting.
- The committee will try to build awareness of PLA at the DUS and Enrollment management conferences in the fall.

d) Nominating Committee (Sharon Christ)

- a) Sharon Christ announced two candidates for 2010-11 Chair Elect: Jane Owens and Anna Griswold. Additional names may be submitted by write-in on ballots.
- b) Judy Wills will send ballots to members electronically. Votes will be tabulated and results will be announced at the April 14 meeting.

4) Course Substitution Process—Evaluation (Sharon Christ)

- a) Sharon Christ reported on progress of a group gathered at the Commission's request to explore interest in adopting a University-wide electronic system for course substitutions. The report gave an overview of the evaluation, explanation of the current system, requirements for a new system, and recommendations.
- b) Members discussed how the project differs from the current Faculty Senate petition: Faculty Senate petition asks for waiver of policy and is centralized, whereas Course Substitution asks for exception to degree requirements and is decentralized. Karen Shultz noted that decentralization presents a potential barrier due to the difficulty in identifying a specific steward to take ownership of the process.
- c) Members suggested two options for moving forward with the initiative
 - (1) Advocate having a centralized steward University-wide to oversee the program and finding the resources to support it.
 - (2) Make a recommendation to colleges/campuses that a web-based process should be implemented.

Linda Higginson noted that either would support yesterday's adopted Faculty Senate recommendation to identify best practices for adult learners in degree seeking programs. Anna Griswold asked if the current documents used in the paper-based course substitution process have been gathered to look for common data. She suggested that using familiar data fields in any web-based template would help generate buy-in from colleges

- d) The group decided to move ahead with the option to recommend that an electronic petition system for course substitution be implemented and to advocate to the Commission sponsors for support in making the case for why the recommendation is adult-friendly.
Keith Hillkirk asked for volunteers to form an ad hoc group to draft a report and recommendations for sharing with the Commission's sponsors. Sharon Christ and Bob Farrell will write the report and share the at the April 14 meeting.

- 5) Adult SIT Recommendations (Martha Jordan). Martha Jordan shared a copy of the final report which will be presented to Dr. Craig Weidemann and Dr. Keith Hillkirk in April. The report was written by a group she and Bill Curley formed to guide the direction of adult learner initiatives at Penn State over the next five years.
 - a) The white paper is organized around five areas of focus:
 - Articulation Agreements, Transfer Guides and Community Colleges
 - Role of Adult Enrollment Coordinators (AECs)
 - Pre-Admission Degree Audits
 - Building Models of Programming
 - Market Study by Campus Regions (to be done by Outreach Marketing and Communications)
 - b) Jordan noted that once the eight recommendations made at yesterday's Faculty Senate meeting were reviewed, the Commission can explore how her group's recommendations fit and determine how the Commission can help advance the next steps from the Adult SIT recommendations.
 - c) Keith Hillkirk commented that the initiative around 'Articulation Agreements, Transfer Guides and Community Colleges' could be challenging based on traditional political issues surrounding this issue. Members will discuss with Dr.

- Pangborn during the June 9 lunch with the sponsors because he is involved in Act 50 discussions with University of Pittsburgh and Temple University.
- d) Next steps will be for members to review how Faculty Senate recommendations align with recommendations from the Adult SIT group. The topic will be revisited at the April 14 meeting.

6) The meeting was adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Wills