

ASPA NEWS

ASSOCIATION OF SPECIALIZED & PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITORS

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM OUTCOMES: THE "DRIVERS" AND THE "DRIVEN"

JANUARY 2006

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Their significant efforts have been directed toward studying the implications of proposed changes on the specialized accrediting community and its varied stakeholders, developing and submitting multiple editions of comments and suggestions for change that will foster good accreditation practice, participating in numerous meetings and conference calls to discuss ASPA's point of view with legislators, lobbyists, and the CHEA Committee on Recognition, and keeping the ASPA membership apprised of the issues.

As I write this message, we do not know the outcome of these efforts, though there may be closure on at least one front shortly after you receive this newsletter.

In addition to the activities related to recognition, a variety of other activities have occurred since my last message:

- We had a successful Fall meeting in Portland, OR. Among the many topics discussed at the meeting was the suggestion (which I made) that ASPA develop a glossary of terms used by accreditors to describe status, reports, etc. as a way of facilitating communication amongst ourselves and with our communities of interest. I hope to have something more concrete to discuss with you at the Spring 2006 meeting.
- The Bylaws Revision Task Force has developed proposals for amendments to the ASPA *Bylaws*. Relatively little comment was received following circulation of the first draft; hopefully, this is an indication that the proposed changes are acceptable. The final draft will be circulated at least 30 days prior to the Spring meeting in Chicago. I hope that a representative of each member organization will be at the meeting for this important business on Monday, March 27.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

By MARY JANE HARRIS, CAPTE: PHYSICAL THERAPY;
CHAIR, ASPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear Colleagues:

Well, I don't know about you, but I cannot believe that it is 2006 already. I don't know where all of the past six months have gone, but I do know that a good portion of the time was devoted to addressing the myriad of issues related to recognition. The ASPA Recognition Issues Committee (RIC) has done a yeoman's job of keeping abreast of the Higher Education Act (HEA) reauthorization process and the CHEA Committee on Recognition criteria revision process – both of which have come to a head during the past few months.

- The Board of Directors met to plan for spring activities as well as for the Fall 2006 meeting, part of which will include joint programming with the executive directors of the Council for Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC).
- The "Unmet Needs" task force and the Professional Development sub-committees continued their work toward meeting the needs of the membership.

And, if all of that weren't enough, Cynthia Davenport has represented ASPA at several meetings and continues to maintain the ASPA office efficiently and effectively. Information from her, elsewhere in this newsletter, gives a sense of her many activities.

So, it's been a busy six months and I expect that the next six months will offer continued opportunities for us to represent specialized accreditation to the larger community. Best wishes for a healthy, happy and prosperous 2006! U

ASPA MEETS MEMBERS' NEEDS

Letters, We Write Letters (Adapted with a nod of thanks to the 1950s Perry Como Show)

ASPA's Fall 2005 meeting opened on with "Sharing and Learning: A Medley of Issues Facing Accreditors." The rich exchange of ideas resulted several steps that ASPA has taken to meet member needs, including letters to the US Department of Education and to the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

A letter sent to US Secretary of Education Spellings presented member concerns about "regulatory creep." ASPA members are distressed when they see significant changes in the interpretation and application of existing criteria for recognition of accrediting agencies when there has not been any opportunity for comment by those affected. They are also concerned when they do not receive any official notice from the Department of Education staff about such changes.

Letters to CHEA addressed member concerns about issues connected to the CHEA Almanac and to information provided to the public through the CHEA database of accredited institutions and programs. In addition, comprehensive comments prepared by ASPA's Recognition Issues Committee and endorsed by the members were submitted on Draft Two of the CHEA *Recognition Policy and Procedures*.

Copies of the letters were distributed to members via the ASPA email list and are available in the list archives. If you are a member of ASPA and have misplaced your user name and password for access to the archives, please contact the ASPA office for assistance.

Your membership in ASPA enables ASPA to speak with a unified voice on behalf of specialized accreditation. By standing together, you enable ASPA to meet its motto of "Enhancing quality in higher education through specialized and professional accreditation." U

2006 Compensation Survey and Accreditation Profile Database

Based on discussion and input from the Fall 2005 meeting, ASPA's compensation survey will be streamlined and conducted in Spring 2006 using an on-line data-gathering instrument. This survey predates ASPA by many years and has served as a valuable source of information for specialized accreditors and their boards. All specialized accrediting organizations - both members and non - can expect to hear more about this survey during the next month.

The survey of "funding" sources will not be repeated in 2006 because that information was collected in 2004 and updated in 2005 as part of the new ASPA Accreditation Profile database. All participants were asked to review and revise their profiles and three new profiles were added to the database. Download instructions were sent to all participants in November 2005. If you have not yet downloaded your new and improved data file or need a bit of training in how to use the database, please contact the ASPA office. U

Recognition Status of ASPA Members:

ASPA currently has 50 members, most of whom are recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or the US Secretary of Education (USDE) or both. Some accreditors are not eligible for recognition by USDE, others are not eligible for recognition by CHEA, and a few are not eligible for recognition by either. All members of ASPA have endorsed the ASPA-member *Code of Good Practice* which continues to serve as the corner-stone of membership in ASPA.

Currently USDE lists 62 recognized accrediting organizations; 61% of the 51 recognized groups on the National / Specialized list are members of ASPA. And currently CHEA lists 60 recognized accrediting organizations; 73% of the 52 recognized groups on the National / Specialized lists are members of ASPA.

What follows is an example of the kind of information that can be compiled from data in the ASPA Accreditation Profile database.

- ❖ 76% of ASPA members are recognized by CHEA: Recognized = 38; not recognized = 12
- ❖ 62% of ASPA members are recognized by USDE: Recognized= 31; not recognized = 19
- ❖ 30% of the 50 ASPA members are recognized by CHEA only = 15
- ❖ 16% of the members are recognized by USDE only = 8
- ❖ 46% of the members are recognized by both CHEA and USDE = 23
- ❖ 8% of the members are not recognized by either CHEA or USDE = 4 U

Three-Year Plan

The ASPA Board is developing a revised three-year plan. A preliminary draft will be presented to members for discussion at the Spring 2006 meeting. Revisions will be made based on comments received and the plan will be forwarded to members for endorsement at the Fall 2006 meeting.

In November 2005, Harrison Coerver spoke at an Association Forum of Chicagoland event, *Strategy and the Association Executive: Not Another Strategic Planning Session*. His primary message was to tell big associations that they need to specialize – i.e., to focus on the most important things they do best and not try to be all things to all people. Even though ASPA is very specialized already, as we look to the future, it will be important to clarify what ASPA does best to meet member needs. Members may want to focus on those strengths rather than diverting limited resources or diluting volunteer energy in ways that might offer less overall value. U

PRESENTERS IN PORTLAND

ASPA held its Fall 2005 meeting at The Benson Hotel in Portland, Oregon on September 11-13. ASPA was pleased to welcome a number of special guests who contributed to the program.

Sherril Gelmon, Professor of Public Health, Portland State University, presented an Accreditation Showcase on *The PSU Portfolio: An Electronic Vehicle for Self-Study* and was also a participant in the professional development program on *Public Information and Confidentiality*.

The following individuals, along with ASPA board vice-chair, Paul Gaston, provost, Kent State University, discussed *Ensuring Quality in the Face of Dwindling Resources: States, Institutions and Accreditors*:

- * Paul Lingenfelter, Executive Director, the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO)

- * Albert E. Johnson, Jr., Associate Executive Director, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
- * Willard Kniep, Provost & VP for Academic Affairs, Pacific University, Forest Grove, OR
- * Maureen Budetti, Director, Student Aid Policy, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU)

William Keppler, President, The National College of Naturopathic Medicine, joined the ASPA Professional Development committee as facilitator for the Fall 2005 program: *Help Without Harm: Finding the Balance Between Public Information and Confidentiality*. In addition to Sherril Gelmon (PSU) and Maureen Budetti (NAICU), the following individuals participated in the program:

- * Judith Watkins, VP for Accreditation Services, Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
- * Donna Gollnick, Senior Vice President, NCATE: Teacher Education
- * Laura Rasar King, Executive Director, CEPH: Public Health
- * Susanne Shaw, Executive Director, ACEJMC: Journalism and Mass Communications
- * Don Simmons, Director, Education and Research, AVMA-COE: Veterinary Medicine
- * A representative of USDE had a last-minute conflict and was unable to attend the meeting. U

SPRING 2006 - CHICAGO

Registration: Now is the time to make plans to join your specialized accreditation colleagues in Chicago for the March 26-28, 2006 Spring ASPA meeting. The meeting will be held at the Allerton Crowne Plaze hotel, located at 701 North Michigan Avenue. Additional information about the hotel and a registration form for the meeting are enclosed with this mailing and are also available in the MEETINGS section of the ASPA web site: www.aspa-usa.org.

New Mailing Address: To receive the early bird discount, your registration must be sent to the ASPA Management office by February 27. To avoid delays, please alert your accounting office to send the registration fee to the new mailing address which is 216 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 625; Chicago, IL 60606.

Call for Agenda Items: Contact the ASPA office or a member of the board by mid-February to request that a topic be added to the Spring 2006 meeting agenda.

SPRING 2006 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM - MONDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 27 AND TUESDAY MORNING, MARCH 28, 2006

The assessment of program outcomes is a ubiquitous expectation among accrediting agencies, national organizations that recognize accreditors, and state and local entities that grant operating authority to institutions and programs. Accredited programs are “driven” by multiple “drivers” to perform qualitative and quantitative outcomes assessment, although what constitutes outcomes and how they are measured and implemented vary greatly among the “drivers.” In addition, few accreditors seem to coordinate their required outcomes measures with those of other agencies or with state/institutional requirements.

The professional development session for the Spring 2006 ASPA program will bring together the “drivers” who expect accredited programs to perform outcomes assessment and the “driven,” the accredited institutions and programs required to perform outcomes assessment based, at least in part, on the expectations of multiple “drivers.” We invite you to attend a series of fascinating and interactive sessions featuring representatives from the US Department of Education, CHEA, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, specialized/professional accrediting agencies, and institutions and programs accredited by these agencies.

The first session will begin on Monday, March 27 at 1:00 pm with an overview of assessment methodology, followed by a series of interactive panel and ASPA member discussions on the various levels of assessment. During the Tuesday morning session, representatives of the national and state organizations, accreditors, and institutions and programs will come together to address ways in which the “drivers” and the “driven” can work cooperatively to achieve common goals of programmatic outcomes assessment.

The Spring Professional Development Committee has designed an exciting program that addresses items two through five of the ASPA-Member *Code of Good Practice* – see www.aspa-usa.org. To introduce the program, we have invited Old Dominion colleagues Marty Smith Sharpe, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research and Assessment, and J. Worth Pickering, Director of University Assessment, to provide an overview of assessment methodology and to facilitate the panel discussions for the program. Marty and Worth have presented on outcomes assessment at numerous professional conferences.

Marty Smith Sharpe is the member of the Provost’s senior staff who oversees the institutional research function at Old Dominion. Marty and her staff prepare the University’s responses to state and federal reporting requirements, coordinate its response to accountability measures such as SCHEV’s Reports on Institutional Effectiveness, and manage its official enrollment projections. Marty also coordinates University-wide and college-level planning and accreditation processes, including those of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). In addition to her position at Old Dominion, Marty consults with colleges and universities and serves as a commissioner for MACTE (Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education).

J. Worth Pickering is responsible for tracking retention, attrition, and graduation rates at Old Dominion. He works with the University’s assessment program, which includes the freshman survey used to identify entering students at risk for academic difficulties and/or attrition. Worth is also involved in many of the data collection efforts that utilize surveys and focus group studies.

The Spring Professional Development Committee is excited about this program, and is certain it will assist all who attend in gaining a better understanding of the ubiquitous world of outcomes assessment. We look forward to seeing you in Chicago on March 27 and 28, 2006! U

Note: The Spring ProD sub-committee is co-chaired by Gretchen Warner, MACTE: Montessori, and includes Jenny Gunderman, CACREP: Counseling, Elisa Zuber, CAPTE: Physical Therapy and George Payan, CAHIIM: Health Information. Comments or suggestions may be forwarded to any member of the committee via the ASPA office.

LOOKING AHEAD TO FALL 2006 IN DENVER - ASPA PROD PRESENTS “GOOD PRACTICE IN SITE VISITOR TRAINING”

Effective training of volunteer site visitors is critical to the success of accreditation on-site reviews. As accreditors, we cringe when we hear a “rogue site visitor” story. We all know that the skill, knowledge, and courtesy of the site visit team can be a positive influence on the relationship between the accrediting organization and the program undergoing the evaluation visit. But helping team members learn to represent our organizations effectively is an on-going challenge for all of us.

The Fall 2006 ASPA Professional Development (ProD) program will focus on attracting and training volunteer leaders in peer review activities.

The ASPA-member *Code of Good Practice* will help frame the discussion of issues that arise during training and while on-site. How do site visitors apply standards in a consistent manner while not stifling innovation or interfering with a unique institutional mission? If conflicts between standards and state or local laws emerge, how should the conflict be addressed - and when? How can a team address serious compliance issues on-site without turning into the accreditation police?

The Fall ProD sub-committee, Martha O'Connor (co-chair) CCE: Chiropractic, Ron Leighton ASLA: Landscape Architecture, Amy Eganey ABHES: Health Education Schools and Greg Boyer ACPE: Pharmacy, would welcome hearing your comments, questions and suggestions as they turn this topic into a "can't be missed" program for Fall 2006. U

Note: this program will be presented on Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning, September 11-12, 2006 at The Brown Palace Hotel in Denver, CO. Registration information for this meeting will be available in mid-July 2006.

DONNA GOLLNICK JOINS ASPA BOARD

Donna M. Gollnick continues her service to ASPA in a new role as a member of the ASPA Board of Directors. Donna is Senior Vice President of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) where she oversees accreditation activities. In this role she staffs the Unit Accreditation Board, which determines the accreditation status of professional education units. She assists institutions in preparing for accreditation visits, trains and assigns Board of Examiners teams to conduct on-site reviews, and writes articles and handbooks on the accreditation process. Donna also writes about multicultural education and has worked with other educators to ensure that national accreditation standards include requirements for teachers and other school personnel to be prepared to help all students learn.

Donna has worked in Washington, DC for over 25 years; before that she taught in secondary schools in Carmel and South Bend, Indiana. Donna has been recognized by Purdue University as one of its distinguished alumni, received an Advocate for Justice Award from the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and is a past-president of the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME). She also chaired ASPA's first Professional Development Committee in 1993.

Donna was appointed to the ASPA Board in Fall 2005 to fill a vacancy created when Karen Hart accepted a different staff position at the American Dental Association that took her out of accreditation.

We wish Karen well in her new position and welcome Donna to the ASPA Board. U

SPRING 2006 PROGRAM SCHEDULE AND HIGHLIGHTS:

Sunday:

The meeting will convene at 1:00pm for ASPA members and at 2:30pm for non-members; the ASPA Board of Directors will meet at 11:30am in a closed meeting to make final preparations for the meeting and review any membership applications.

- 1-2pm – Members Only Meeting (closed to non-members)
- 2:30-4pm – "ASPA meets AQIP: Focus on Quality and Implications for Specialized Accreditation" with Stephen D. Spangehl, Director of AQIP: Academic Quality Improvement Program - <http://www.aqip.org/>
- 4pm – Accreditation Showcase: Global Accreditation Center for Project Management, Joseph Zerby, Accreditation Programs Administrator
- 4:30pm – Legal Issues in Accreditation with Doug Carlson, partner, Wildman, Harrold, Allen & Dixon, Chicago
- 5:15-6:30pm - Reception

Monday:

- 7:45am – Continental Breakfast
- 8:30-11:30am - ASPA Member Business meeting - open to all attendees - this session will include elections, action on proposed *Bylaws* changes, discussion of ASPA's new three-year plan, and reports from officers and committees
- 11:45-1:00pm - Lunch
- 1:00-4:30pm - Professional Development – Assessing Program Outcomes - part I (see related article on page 4 & enclosed agenda)
- 4:45pm - Board of Directors - open meeting
- 5:15-6:30pm – Reception

Tuesday:

- 7:45am - Continental Breakfast
- 8:30am - Professional Development - part II
- noon - meeting adjourns U

ASHA TURNS 40

What does *The Sound of Music* have in common with the accreditation of graduate education programs in audiology and speech-language pathology? Both emerged onto the national scene in 1965. And just as we are still singing the Rogers and Hammerstein melodies, so, too, the establishment of accreditation has enabled thousands of students and professionals in the discipline of communication sciences and disorders to enjoy the assurance of strong national standards guiding their preparation.

Since the first accreditations were awarded in 1965 to master's programs at the University of Kansas, Auburn University, Case Western Reserve University, and the University of Oklahoma, 264 universities and colleges have participated in the accreditation of master's and clinical doctoral programs on their campuses. The intent of accreditation—to protect the interests of students, benefit the public, and improve the quality of teaching, learning, research, and professional practice—continues to be met today.

Accredited programs in audiology and in speech-language pathology prepare graduates to enter the professions with appropriate entry-level skills in assessment, treatment, and management activities across clinical populations. Today, 359 programs within 249 institutions have achieved and maintain accreditation status with the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA). Such status reflects a specific aim of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA): "to promote appropriate academic and clinical preparation of individuals entering the discipline of human communication sciences and disorders." Through the development and application of standards for graduate education programs, accreditation promotes the benefits of continuous quality improvement to programs, professionals, and the public. Graduate education programs are evaluated in relation to their own established goals and mission, and in relation to students' opportunities to acquire nationally established knowledge and skills for entry into practice.

In addition, ASHA's commitment to accreditation has itself been recognized. Since 1964 and 1967, respectively, the academic accreditation program has enjoyed continuous national recognition by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and its predecessors and by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

Of course, much has changed since the 60s. Ever since, ASHA's accreditation standards have been regularly reviewed and updated, with major revisions in 1976, 1992, and 1999. Even now, the CAA is conducting peer review of proposed revisions to the current standards. Such trends as the emergence of professional doctoral degree programs in audiology make such a review a particular priority.

Like most accrediting associations, the CAA of ASHA depends on thousands of colleagues, the faculty, clinical supervisors, students, and volunteers that have contributed to the legacy of quality education in the professions of audiology and speech-language pathology. Without them, ASHA never would have been able to "Climb Every Mountain" in its path for the past 40 years! U

Adapted for ASPANews by Paul Gaston from an Article by Amy Wohlert and Tess Kirsch

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