

ASPA News - January 2000

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Adding Value Through Technology - Remarks from the Chair

By David J. Werner, chair, ASPA Board of Directors; Chancellor, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Now that we have the Y2K and Millennium stuff behind us, we can turn our attention to what's really important—the spring ASPA meeting in Chicago. Mark your calendar to be in the Windy City, April 2-4.

The spring meeting is shaping up nicely. Part of the meeting will focus on ASPA business: elections, adopting a budget, setting dues, etc. But, the bulk of our time will be spent on current issues in accreditation and on professional development.

This meeting will have a lot of special Sunday activities. CHEA will host a special two-hour workshop on its common data project. For years, colleges and universities have wanted to have someone develop common data elements for accreditation. CHEA is doing it, and you'll want to be in Chicago to see what progress has been made and how it satisfies your agency's data needs. CHEA will be looking for feedback; let's be prepared to give it.

The Executive Committee has also planned a special members-only discussion with Mark Pelesh to discuss issues related to the validity and reliability of accreditation standards. You won't want to miss what is sure to be an informative session.

On Monday afternoon, following the business meeting, we will have sessions focusing on the varied roles played by the public and practitioner members of accrediting agency

governing boards. ASPA's public member (Marga Rose Hancock) and practitioner member (Barbara Brown Robinson) have each agreed to handle a session exploring the opportunities and challenges of involving public and practitioner members in accreditation activities. We'll find out what works, what doesn't, and how to improve on what we do.

Tuesday will again be devoted to professional development, with a focus on technology and distance education. Distance education is a bit like Y2K and the millennium—we've heard a lot of hype, but we know it's not going away. Everyone in higher education needs to be on top of this topic, and accreditors are no exception.

So, get your travel plans together and let's meet in Chicago. (The Cubs and White Sox will both be out of town, so you won't be tempted to cut out for an early-in-the-season baseball game. Even though Michigan Avenue will be open, we promise we won't ask you to check your credit cards at the door!)

I hope to see you in Chicago in April.

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"Teaching at a Distance" Handbook

If you register for the Spring 2000 ASPA meeting, prior to the meeting you will receive a copy of a new distance education handbook. The Professional Development Committee believes this useful resource will help set the stage for their spring program.

"Teaching at a Distance: A Handbook for Instructors" offers a concise, straight-forward, non-commercial introduction to distance education, complete with how-to suggestions and a very helpful glossary. Although the handbook, published by the League for Innovation in the Community College, is directed toward instructors, the committee believes that it will be of use to accreditors when reviewing educational programs that make use of distance technologies. Each of the seven chapters was written by a different author, all with solid distance-education credentials.

You may direct inquiries to the League for Innovation via their web site at www.league.org or by telephone at (949) 367-2884.

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Plan Now For Chicago

ASPA's next meeting will be held April 2-3-4, 2000 at the Regal Knickerbocker hotel in Chicago.

The theme of the meeting is: **Adding Value Through Technology**. An overview schedule for each day of the meeting – and meeting registration forms – are included with this mailing. Contact the ASPA office for additional copies.

Member Discount: ASPA members who register for the full meeting with payment before February 22, 2000 are eligible to deduct a \$50.00 early bird discount from the full meeting fees. Non-member accreditors and guests may also register for ASPA meetings which are open, except for a Sunday afternoon members-only session.

Hotel Rooms: A small block of rooms has been reserved at the Regal Knickerbocker hotel, located at 163 East Walton Place in Chicago, just north of Water Tower Place and east of Michigan Avenue. To reserve a room at the \$139/night ASPA group rate, call (312) 751-8100 prior to the room release date which is February 25, 2000. If you wish to extend your stay and if the hotel has rooms available, the ASPA rate will be in effect three days before and after the meeting.

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Fall 2000: ASPA Meeting With Regional Accreditors

By ASPA planning committee chair, Betty J. Horton, COA-NA: Nurse Anesthesia, ASPA Vice-chair

The planning committees for ASPA and the regional accreditors have chosen "Cooperation for Quality" as the theme for the August 27-29, 2000 combined meeting of the groups in New Orleans, LA. This event will mark the first time that the specialized and regional accrediting communities have met jointly since the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA) disbanded in 1993. As noted by Olive Kimball, ASPA's Treasurer, "The idea of the two groups getting together after all of these years to talk about streamlining accreditation for the benefit of learners is very exciting."

Joint sessions will include: (1) an orientation for novice accreditors on Sunday afternoon; (2) a full Monday morning schedule devoted to the value of accreditation and using it to improve educational programs and institutions; (3) ample opportunity for networking with

colleagues in specialized and regional accreditation during meal functions and receptions.

Time has also been designated for ASPA and the regional accreditors to meet independently during the Fall meeting. In addition to allowing time for ASPA to conduct its business meeting on Monday afternoon, this plan will preserve time for the popular ASPA professional development session on Tuesday. The schedule also provides essential time for the regional accreditors to address issues of importance to their relatively new group.

David Werner, ASPA Chair, has challenged each of ASPA's member agencies to be well represented at the Fall 2000 meeting. "All the regional accreditors will attend this special meeting," he says. "I would like to see each of ASPA's member agencies represented too. We need a strong presence to be able to dialogue effectively in joint sessions about the issues of cooperation and quality."

Registration fees for the Fall 2000 meeting will be held steady at \$395 for the voting representative of an ASPA member agency, less a \$50 early bird discount. Non-member registration fees also remain unchanged at \$595 per person. Attendees who are not ASPA members are not eligible for a discount.

However – as a special incentive to encourage ASPA member accreditors to bring a greater number of people to this meeting – the ASPA Executive Committee is pleased to announce a reduction in registration fees for all additional people from member agencies. For this meeting only, the fee for each additional registrant has been reduced by \$150 to a fee of \$195 each. The \$50 early bird discount also applies to this rate, resulting in a bargain "additional person" registration fee of \$145. The lower fee, when combined with a bargain hotel rate of \$99/night and reasonable travel costs from many cities to New Orleans, may make it possible for more members to include additional staff or Commissioners in this meeting without undue strain on travel budgets.

Mark your calendars now to attend the Fall 2000 meeting at the Hotel Monteleone, located in French Quarter in New Orleans. To accommodate travel schedules, the meeting will begin about 12 noon on Sunday, August 27, 2000, and end about 12 noon on Tuesday, August 29, 2000. The Planning Committee expects to have a detailed meeting agenda available by the Spring 2000 ASPA meeting.

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Fall 1999 Highlights: Atlanta

Making use of local resources contributed to the success of the September 1999 ASPA

meeting in Atlanta. The Monday afternoon program, Strategies for Improving Accreditation: "Let's Look at the Self-Study," included two panels.

First, representatives from a number of local institutions, all of whom had some direct experience with specialized accreditation self-studies, served as panel members in "So Tell Me What You REALLY Think." Members of the panel were: Dorcas Bowles, Dean, School of Social Work, Clark Atlanta University; Virginia Joslin, Director, Physician Assistant Program, Emory University; Sharon Nickols, Dean, Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Georgia; Stefanie Palma, Director, Physical Therapy Assistant Program, Gwinnett Technical Institute; and Biagio J. Vericella, Dean, School of Allied Health Sciences, Medical College of Georgia.

The second self-study segment, "Studying Our Selves: Re-Thinking Why We Do What We Do," included the following accreditor panelists: Facilitator, Milton Blood, AACSB: The International Association for Management Education; Robert Eaglen, LCME: Liaison Committee on Medical Education, Association of American Medical Colleges; Bernard Fryshman, AARTS: Association of Advanced Rabbinical and Talmudic Schools; Carol Moneymaker, ABHES: Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools; and Gerald D. Lord, SACS: The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Here are a few other highlights from the fall meeting. (*The ASPA board and members receive meeting minutes in a separate mailing; others may request a copy by contacting the ASPA office.*)

- **Member Showcase: Elliott Pavlos, (NAAB: Architecture) and Donald Simmons, (AVMA: Veterinary Medicine) gave an overview of their accreditation programs and current interests. This popular program segment helps member and non-member accreditors learn more about their accreditation colleagues. Having up-to-date information helps us all replace old information, myths or assumptions with facts. The Showcase precedes the Sunday evening reception, giving ample opportunity for continued one-on-one discussion.**
- **CCNE Joins ASPA: The ASPA Membership Committee reviewed the application for membership submitted by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The ASPA Board supported the Committee's recommendation and welcomed CCNE into membership. This brings to 45 the total number of ASPA member accreditors.**
- **Number of Specialized Site Visits: ASPA chair, David Werner, chancellor, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, has been working with specialized accreditors to study the number of site visits conducted by member and non-member accreditors to institutions listed in the Higher Education Directory. In Atlanta, Werner reviewed his findings to date, raised several issues that still need to be clarified and asked accreditors to review and submit corrections to the data for their field in an attempt to prevent either over or under reporting of visits. "This study gives us information**

that has been unavailable until now," said Werner. "Even though accreditation is not a static process, we want the data to be as accurate as possible." At this point, the data still indicate that very few universities have as many as five specialized accreditation visits each year.

- **Strategies for Change and Improvement: Carol Bobby (CACREP: Counseling)** led a discussion of this Report of the Task Force on Accreditation of Health Professions Education. This report, released late June 1999, has important implications for all accreditors, not just those in health-related fields. The report may be downloaded for free from the website at <http://futurehealth.ucsf.edu>.
- **Compensation and Funding Survey:** ASPA conducts these surveys at three-year intervals to assist specialized accreditors. Survey forms were distributed to specialized accreditors, both members and non-members. A summary of the results of the surveys will be presented at the Spring 2000 meeting. All who participated in the survey will receive the full report and analysis.
- **Monday Reception:** Because meeting attendees keep reporting that networking time with their peers is one very valuable reason for attending ASPA meetings, a one-hour wine and cheese reception was added to the schedule in Atlanta. Conversation was lively and folks lingered long after the bar had closed. A similar reception has been added to the spring meeting in Chicago.
- **Professional Development:** The Tuesday "Pro D" session had a specific link to the over-all meeting theme – *Living the ASPA Code of Good Practice*. In the morning, a panel composed of an institutional president, provost and regional and specialized accreditors addressed "Respecting Institutional Autonomy."

The following panelists explained their views of what institutional autonomy is and isn't.

- Paul L. Gaston, Provost, Kent State University
 - Keith Lovin, President, Maryville University of St. Louis
 - Jean Avnet Morse, MSA: Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education (regional accreditor)
 - Virginia Nieland, APTA: Physical Therapy, Specialized Accreditor (licensed profession)
 - Jeanne Patterson, CORE: Rehabilitation Counseling, Specialized Accreditor (non-licensed profession)
- **Professional development continued in the afternoon with: "A Fresh Look at Site Visitor Training."** Following a report on the results of a recent survey of training methods currently being used by ASPA member accreditors, two very different models of site visitor training were presented.
 - **Joanne Greathouse, JRCERT: Radiologic Technology** discussed large group

multi-day workshops.

- **Judy Skelton, Assistant Professor, Office of Academic Affairs, University of Kentucky College of Dentistry and Karen Hart, ADA: Dentistry, discussed a competency-based program of individual self-paced modules with an emphasis on expected outcomes, demonstrated calibration and the potential for web-based access.**

Evaluation feedback forms indicated that the committee had planned another on-target, informative session that met the needs of most attendees.

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CHEA Workshop in Chicago

Judith Eaton, president, Council for Higher Education Accreditation approached ASPA about hosting a workshop on the CHEA Common Data Project for accreditors at the Spring 2000 ASPA meeting. This two-hour workshop will be held on Sunday, April 2nd at the Regal Knickerbocker Hotel beginning at 11:30 a.m. The workshop will be a chance to discuss how the accreditors might make common data requests from institutions under review. Stop at the ASPA meeting registration desk to confirm the meeting room.

In response to requests to explore the feasibility of creating a core data set for accreditation purposes, CHEA created a Task Force on Common Data in 1998. Its charge was "to create a core institutional data set that is based on IPEDS as far as possible and that is oriented to evolving and future accreditation issues." The Task Force developed four documents which have already been distributed and which are also available in the "Issues and Commentary" section of the CHEA web-site: www.chea.org. 1) Analysis of Institutional and Programmatic Data Required by Accrediting Organizations; 2) Principles and Good Practices for Accreditation Data Collection; 3) Statement on the Use of IPEDS Conventions in Accreditation Data-Reporting; 4) Recommended Resource List of Data Elements For Which Common Definitions Are Available.

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(Here's How to Contact ASPA:

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