

ASPA News - July 2002

Issue Theme: "Accreditation Practice: Issues of Autonomy"

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Big Dreams: Incoming Chair Comments

By: Olive M. Kimball, NAACLS: Clinical Laboratory Sciences

I have appreciated the opportunity to serve as treasurer of ASPA over the past three years. Doing so has enabled me to ‘give back’ just a little for all the support and professional education that ASPA as an organization and, more specifically the members, have afforded me since 1993.

In 1993 I was just beginning a new career in accreditation management and had much to learn. From that famous August meeting in Phoenix when ASPA was formed, the ASPA meetings and my interactions with ASPA members and colleagues have done more to facilitate my learning than any other experiences.

During the years since that first Phoenix meeting, ASPA has had many outstanding leaders. ASPA has grown and, in many ways, has prospered.

We have attracted new members, developed additional alliances and stronger advocacy initiatives, and attained much broader recognition in the higher education community.

To be selected at this time as Chair of the Board of Directors is not only an honor but also a significant challenge. As ASPA approaches its tenth year, again I will count on your help as I follow in the steps of ASPA's earlier leaders. Working together, I am confident that we'll attain the dreams we originally conceived at that August 1993 meeting.

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Notes of Appreciation

By: Betty Horton, COA-NA: Nurse Anesthesia

As I complete my term as Chair, I want to thank the Board of Directors and Executive Director for focusing a great deal of energy into meeting the needs of members this year. I want to thank all of the ASPA members for sharing their knowledge and expertise with me and with each other. I have observed over the years that the willingness of individuals to give and take advice from respected colleagues is an inherent value within ASPA.

YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

Many of the activities of this fiscal year have focused on planning to fulfill ASPA's strategic plan and respond to members' needs. As Chair, I was involved in several of the events in addition to many telephone conference calls. These events included:

- A conference between the Board of Directors and Chairs of Committees to discuss coordinating efforts before the September 2001 ASPA meeting.
- An informal meeting of the Board of Directors after the September 2001 meeting to determine future action based on input from members.
- A face to face meeting in December 2001 of the Professional Development Committee to discuss comprehensive and long range planning. This meeting was in conjunction with the meeting of the U.S. Department of Education's National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity.
- An informal meeting of the Board of Directors on the last day of the April 2002 meeting to determine follow up action based on what was learned during the meeting.
- A meeting held in May 2002 for the current board officers to orient newly elected officers and plan future activities.

FAREWELL TO ASPA

I took the opportunity to bid farewell to ASPA at the April meeting since I would be retiring as Chair as well as from my job with the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs. My farewell was in the form of an analogy as follows:

Many years ago I worked as a Registered Nurse caring for mothers who were laboring to deliver their babies. I met some of the mothers when they entered the hospital, coached them through labor and joined them in celebrating the births of their babies. This was not possible in every case, however, since some mothers had not given birth before I was relieved from duty by another nurse at the end of my shift. Interestingly, I was never concerned about transferring my responsibility to the other nurse because I knew she was as equally prepared and committed as I was to helping a mother achieve her goals.

I thought of my past work with mothers when I was recently reminded that ASPA would celebrate its 10th birthday next year. In fact, I actually drew comparisons between these two experiences in my life - "birthing babies" and involvement with ASPA.

Over ten years ago, I assisted in the conception of ASPA by joining two of my colleagues in signing its articles of incorporation. During the early years I assisted in ASPA's labor as the organization grew and developed. I have also had the opportunity to help celebrate the fruits of ASPA's labor as it has become an organization of stature.

Last year I was elected to be ASPA's coach as Chair of the Board of Directors. Now the time is drawing short and my assigned shift as ASPA's coach will be over at the end of June. Interestingly, my feelings are similar to the times when another nurse relieved me from duty at the end of a shift. I feel no hesitation in transferring my responsibility to the next Chair because I know that Olive Kimball is just as prepared and committed as I have been to helping ASPA achieve its goals. I have no doubt that ASPA will continue to give birth multiple times to new ideas and new practices that ensure the quality of accreditation in the United States.

Thank you and keep up the good work!

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Saying Farewell

By: Marga Rose Hancock, public member, ASPA Board of Directors

At the Spring meeting in Chicago, the ASPA community bade farewell to three individuals completing terms on the Board of Directors effective June 2002, two of them also departing ASPA. Their colleagues expressed thanks and best wishes with a round of applause for each of these committed volunteers, recognizing their contributions to ASPA and to the art and science of specialized and professional accreditation.

Betty Horton, accreditor representative (COA-NA: Nurse Anesthesia) steps down from her 2001-02 term as ASPA Chair to enter retirement. In keeping with the ASPA tradition of recycling leadership, Betty returned to the Board for her most recent term, having served her first three-year term as Vice Chair beginning July 1, 1998. Betty found her chairing of the Fall 2000 (Y2K) planning committee particularly satisfying, in planning the program to bring together

ASPA with regional accreditors for the joint meeting held in New Orleans. Betty also notes that she became "part of ASPA immortality" when, as secretary in 1992, she along with others, signed documents to help form ASPA.

David Werner, Chancellor of SIUE and immediate past Chair of the ASPA Board, came aboard at the Spring 1997 meeting and served as chair for 3 years from July 1, 1998 to June 30, 2001. ASPA benefitted immeasurably from his participation, including his recently-published study of the actual number of site visits conducted by specialized accreditors to major institutions -- a successful effort to apply real measures to an area of sometimes unrealistic complaint. He has also proven a most effective ambassador for ASPA membership, noting with justifiable pleasure ASPA's growth in numbers.

He also championed measures to streamline ASPA governance to help achieve better management and strategic objectives. On leaving ASPA, David continues to apply his interest in educational quality and accreditation as a Public Member of the Committee on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association.

Kayem Dunn (FIDER: Interior Design), an accreditor representative, also has come back aboard for a second round of service on the ASPA Board. Like Betty, Kayem had her place at ASPA's beginnings, recalling the work with Sherill Gelmon, Carol Bobby, and others. As both activist and observer, Kayem has been part of ASPA's development, and notes that "we have exceeded our own expectations" as an organization, so that "ASPA has become a credible voice" on significant matters of educational quality. With her FIDER colleagues and in a generous and highly visible way, Kayem maintained her own and the organization's professional composure while engaged -- and ultimately prevailing -- in a lengthy and difficult legal proceeding that had significant implications for accreditation. You will continue to see Kayem as she serves ASPA in the role of member rather than Board member.

ASPA has had great good fortune in the commitment of such outstanding originators, role models, and strategic thinkers to the causes of specialized and professional accreditation.

The ASPA Board invites other colleagues leaving ASPA due to employment changes or retirement to notify Executive Director Cynthia Davenport by sending an e-mail message to her at aspacd@aol.com. We would like to be able to take a moment of our time together and/or make note in future issues of ASPA News to say farewell and show how much we appreciate the mutual value of our association in the ASPA community.

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Mark Your Calendars

FALL 2002 ASPA MEETING

Sunday-Monday-Tuesday
September 8-9-10, 2002

THE RITZ-CARLTON, CLEVELAND

1515 West Third Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44113-1403

To reserve a sleeping room at the
ASPA group rate of \$149 plus tax,
call: 216-623-1300 ext.22 or 1-800-241-3333

If the hotel has rooms available, the ASPA rate
will apply before and after 9/7-11/02.

Specify that you are attending the
ASPA Fall Meeting.

Hotel Room Block Release Date:
August 9, 2002

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ASPA Files Amicus Curiae Brief

Editor

Following the Spring 2002 ASPA meeting, ASPA, with the assistance of Chicago accreditation attorney, Douglas Carlson of Wildman, Harrold, Allen and Dixon, filed an amicus curiae brief in support of MEAC: The Midwifery Education Accreditation Council. A law suit was filed against MEAC, a private accrediting body, by a school that had been denied accreditation, citing Florida's Public Records Act. The plaintiff claims that MEAC, although located in Arizona, is subject to the Florida Public Records Act because two public agencies in Florida, the Florida Council of Licensed Midwifery and the Florida Department of Health, use or rely on certain decisions made by MEAC. The documents requested by the plaintiffs fall roughly into four categories: (1) documents relating to the plaintiff school, including the accreditation process and decision; (2) documents related to other Florida schools of midwifery accredited by MEAC; (3) documents related to schools of midwifery outside of Florida; and (4) other documents, such as correspondence between MEAC and its board of directors, that relate to MEAC generally, as opposed to particular schools.

Nearly all accrediting bodies with a national scope "do business" in Florida, and some Florida state departments or offices rely on the accreditation decisions. The often unilateral decision to rely on accreditation decisions by a state agency or some other body should not cause the accrediting agency to be treated as a public rather than a private entity. ASPA believes that a ruling stating that the Public Records Act applies to a private accrediting agency would have a serious chilling affect on the accreditation process and drastically limit the ability of many accreditors to do their jobs, perhaps in other states as well as in Florida. Accrediting bodies do not have subpoena power but rely on the willing disclosure of information which they then view

as confidential. Institutions, schools or programs would be less willing to disclose full and complete information if they believed it might end up in inappropriate hands.

The ASPA brief also cites real or potential conflicts between state and federal law, especially as related to the Higher Education Act as amended, FERPA Student Record Privacy, Peer Review/Quality Assurance Statutes, and issues of Patient Privacy. The full text of the brief has been posted in the "resources" section of the ASPA web site: www.aspa-usa.org. Because ASPA was permitted to file the amicus curiae brief, we were able to point out the most dangerous aspects of this case. A negative ruling could affect many accreditors, not only MEAC.

We will keep you informed as the case progresses.

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2002 Compensation and Funding Surveys

Editor

It's that time again! In late fall 2002, ASPA will survey specialized accreditors regarding the compensation of their top-level staff and the primary sources of agency funds. Every three years since 1996, ASPA has assisted the specialized accreditation community by conducting these surveys and publishing the results. All specialized accreditors - whether members of ASPA or not - are invited to participate in an effort to ensure that the resulting data will be as meaningful as possible.

ASPA management is exploring ways to make the survey easier to complete and more confidential. When the survey hits your desk or IN Box in late fall, please remember that, although ASPA conducts the surveys as a service to the accreditation community, the project cannot be successful without your participation. There is no other survey that addresses current salary structures and funding sources in a manner that shows current trends within specialized accreditation. Survey results will be available in Spring 2003. All participants will receive a FREE detailed analysis.

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Threats to Autonomy -- Keeping 800 Pound Gorillas in their Cages

Editor

Professional Development Day at the ASPA Fall Meeting.

The ASPA Professional Development Committee invites you to join us in Cleveland on Monday afternoon (September 9) and Tuesday morning (September 10) as we focus on issues of autonomy. The opening session will star Virginia Nieland, former Executive Director of CAPTE: Physical Therapy. Virginia's extensive experience with accreditation will allow her to give us a historical perspective on how and why autonomy became an issue with the Department of

Education and the COPA/CORPA/CHEA recognition processes. Many of you have missed Virginia since she retired a couple years ago. We hope you will welcome this opportunity to re-connect with a friend.

Following Virginia's insights, we will hear from representatives of the US Department of Education (ED) and the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) and from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Robert C. Andringa, President of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities and NACIQI chair, and John W. Barth, Director, Accreditation and State Liaison, US Department of Education, will provide some insight on current recognition requirements and potential concerns for the future connected to the autonomy of accrediting bodies from any parent or supporting associations. Judith Watkins, Vice President for Accreditation Services, along with a member of the CHEA Committee on Recognition, will address similar autonomy issues from CHEA's perspective.

The culminating event on Monday will be a live, un-televised debate on the issue of autonomy. Your accreditation colleagues (and maybe you!) will engage in a lively debate of the pros and cons of being independent, arms-length, etc. The debate resolution is: "Resolved - Best practice in specialized accreditation requires total autonomy of the accrediting body." You won't want to miss this session.

On Tuesday morning, the program turns from theory to practice. Panelists will discuss the specifics of accreditation structure and operations. They will share their successes or challenges on how parent associations affect issues such as budgeting, staffing, standards revision, and appeals of accreditation decisions. If your organization is considering some changes, or if you just want to find out how other agencies balance parent association influences, these panels will provide valuable insight and practical tips.

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My First Year in Accreditation

By: Bridget Larimer, APA: Psychology

It seemed I had been at the APA just a few weeks when ASPA's Executive Director, Cynthia Davenport, called me to get acquainted. By the end of the call, she had asked if I would be willing to keep a journal that could serve as raw material for an article on my first year in accreditation. "No problem," I replied, but then I began to wonder. How could I, a recent initiate to the world of accreditation, have anything of value to contribute? In response to my doubts, Cynthia insisted that she was interested in a newcomer's perspective. So please join me as I share some insights I have gained in my short time with the American Psychological Association (APA) Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation. I offer my reflections as an amateur's perspective, as reassurance to other new accreditors, and to bring a smile of remembrance to the face of the experienced accreditor.

I started as staff at the APA Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation in April 2001 as

the Manager of Communications and Policy Analysis. I was immediately confronted with many new challenges such as the development of new policies and publications, production of a CHEA recognition application, and improved office communications. I was also involved in Committee on Accreditation (CoA) meetings, Department of Education meetings, CHEA meetings and ASPA meetings. I knew little about accreditation issues and had to learn quickly.

Journal Entry - Day 1

Had accreditation orientation today. I'm feeling overwhelmed with all this new information. Where do I start?

My first task was to become oriented to the field, to establish a point of reference. As you know, it is important to understand accreditation from a broad historical context, as well as on a micro level. As I worked, many questions arose concerning the broad working of accreditation: What are its intentions? What are its central values? What are the roles and characteristics of accrediting bodies? Several resources provided me with enough background information to understand the broad workings of accreditation. In addition, I slowly gained perspective on more micro issues: What are the characteristics of the specialized accreditor? How did accreditation for psychology come to be? What were the forces that drove it into existence? How has it changed since its creation? What were the struggles over creating standards for accreditation? As I became better oriented, I began to recognize and understand a handful of themes.

Journal Entry - Day 5

I don't understand what anyone is talking about! Is everyone speaking in code? I think I need help.

My first experiences in accreditation led me to believe that I needed language lessons. Everyone seemed to speak in code. The acronyms came first - CORPA, COPA, CHEA, ASPA, USDE, and CoA. And then the catchy phrases that were used by regional accreditors and specialized accreditors alike -- self-study process, decision letter, site visit, site visitor, outcome evaluation, self-regulation, institutional integrity, public accountability, and quality assurance. I got the immediate sense that these words had similar meanings to many different accrediting bodies. Some accrediting bodies, including the CoA, distribute an actual glossary with its accrediting standards so that others can better understand accreditors' distinct vocabulary.

Journal Entry - Day 30

Unbelievably busy coordinating office communications. I am amazed at the amount of paperwork, emails, and phone calls that come in and out of this office!

I have been keenly aware of the amount of work it takes to accredit programs in an effective and efficient manner. Office communications, committee correspondence, site visit coordination, and communicating to the public are just a few crucial links in the process. Effective internal communication is vital to achieving the mission of your office. While each unit of the office works independently, it is important to have well-coordinated efforts. Any unit that works in isolation makes for an inefficient process.

To that end, communication with the general public is also vital for success. It is overwhelmingly clear that the general public is mystified by accreditation and has no clear sense of the mission of accrediting bodies. It is the accreditor's responsibility to effectively communicate to the public and to make clear the philosophies and practices followed.

Journal Entry - Day 60

Politics. Today I had my first experience with the politics of accreditation -- and survived.

I quickly realized that there is no room for politics in accreditation. I already envision the reader cringing as he or she reads the "p" word. It is one of those words that is often left unsaid. I became increasingly aware of the importance of keeping politics out of the process of accreditation. Independence and autonomy are clear themes at any USDE or CHEA review and they are vitally important for effective accreditation. The challenge for accrediting bodies is to maintain such independence while also effectively managing everything from program review and policy development to basic personnel issues. Accrediting bodies must continually monitor the effect that politics has on their daily activities and try to limit its impact.

Journal Entry - Day 90

I'm realizing how difficult it is to balance all the competing interests of accreditation. To try to find the right spot on the continuum. I think I'm learning how to walk the tight rope.

It is impossible not to take notice of tensions in the field of accreditation, some of which require a certain amount of balancing. Many of these issues can be placed on a continuum, and accrediting bodies must continue to address where they should fall on these important issues. Three major issues are described briefly below.

- ***Level of prescriptiveness:*** Each accrediting body must decide on how prescriptive to make their standards. These standards must be consistent enough to allow for quality control, while remaining flexible enough to encourage innovation. Similarly an accrediting body must make the accreditation process comprehensive among the various programs without making the process too overbearing. On that note, many accreditation bodies' guidelines do not contain a checklist of criteria. Rather, they identify and describe general domains that are considered essential to the success of any training program in the profession. While some accrediting bodies may require specific criteria for accreditation, other effective accrediting bodies are less prescriptive in their standards.
- ***Measuring quality:*** Another tension in the field deals with the measurement of quality. An accrediting body must measure quality, and the question of how to do so comes into play. Quality assurance is certainly at the heart of accreditation, and accrediting bodies often differ in their approach to measuring quality. While many accrediting bodies require specific data from programs that speak to quality, some do not. Because specialized accreditors all focus on a specific discipline or field, they are all concerned about quality and results.
- ***Chicken or egg:*** An accrediting body often must respond to the changing needs of its

respective field (i.e., psychology, acupuncture, nursing, or dentistry). Should the accrediting body be responsive to the field, or should the accrediting body lead the field? In my experience so far, an accrediting body must find a balance between being responsive to changing consensus within the profession while striving to define policies of quality assurance.

Journal Entry - Day 120

Still learning every day! Finding accreditation policies to be truly dynamic. Things seem to be in state of continual flux.

Accreditation is dynamic; it is a process of continual self-evaluation and improvement. Accreditation offices must continually refine the accreditation process, which may involve changing policy to appropriately coordinate with advances the field or changes in the recognition standards. The actual standards documents are dynamic living documents. And accreditation is affected by current events, technological advances, economic changes, and changes in higher education. The never-ending process of evaluation and change is a challenge.

Journal Entry - Day 200

Do I sink or do I swim? Appreciate how very willing others are to help. Have found many resources from which to learn. I think I am finally getting the hang of this!

Finally, as I reviewed my "journal" in preparing for this article, it became clear to me that I had learned what I know about accreditation only by truly immersing myself in the subject matter. The phrase "sink or swim" is apropos - I really had to dive in and get wet. Building on this metaphor, I've found that the field of accreditation has provided me with an exceptionally large pool in which to swim, with many resources and learning opportunities available to me if I was willing to pursue them.

To other new accreditors, I encourage you also to dive in and to use this "pool." It may not be a bottomless resource, but it is quite deep. Go to the NACIQI hearings. Attend the ASPA conferences. Engage with the folks at CHEA. Discuss the history of accreditation decisions. Swim in the pool. Likewise, I encourage the accreditation veterans to continue their efforts of outreach. This has been especially helpful to me throughout my first year. To all those who helped me stay afloat during my first year, I thank you. To those who are even newer to the field, perhaps I can throw you a line.

Today's Journal Entry

Where am I now? I continue to tap into my most valuable resources -- Office staff (an enormous help to any newbie), ASPA network (including the mentor program), and the casual conversations with my fellow accreditors. Now that logistics are more familiar, I'm thinking more theoretically. How is my work assuring quality? How is my work protecting the public? I work with that in mind. We'll see what my 2nd year bring...

ASPA thanks Bridget for sharing her comments. You may contact her at blarimer@apa.org.

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Highlights - Spring 2002 Meeting

Editor

Strategies to Improve Accreditation " In a two part session, Karen Kershenstein explored different ways to assess "Success with Respect to Student Achievement." Assisted by a panel of specialized accreditors and another panel of regional / national accreditors, Karen set a framework for the topic and facilitated discussion of varied assessment approaches. Her report based on this session is included in the [RESOURCES](#) section of this web site.

ASPA and AAAC Sign Protocol Agreement: During 2001, the Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada (AAAC) approached ASPA about signing a protocol agreement in recognition of the cooperation and analogous mandates of both organizations related to fostering excellence in higher education of professionals. The statement was approved by both organizations and signed following the Spring 2002 ASPA meeting.

"Handbook for Collaborative Reviews:" Jean Avnet Morse, executive director, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, presented the Handbook and requested ASPA's endorsement. The Handbook was revised from a more generic 1997 document developed by a special committee of regional and specialized accreditors. ASPA endorsed the Handbook for use by specialized accreditors working with Middle States. During June, Middle States distributed the final document to the presidents, chief academic officers and accreditation liaison officers of their institutions. See www.msache.org for more information.

Carol Griffiths Presents Accreditation Workshop: Carol Griffiths, chief, Accrediting Agency Evaluation Unit, US Department of Education, met with accreditors in a special "add-on" session. Following her remarks, the accreditors engaged Carol in a lively series of questions and answers that focused on student achievement, complaints, distance education, and scope of recognition, as well as issues related to monitoring and enforcement. Thank you, Carol, for this helpful session.

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Saying Welcome

Editor

Much of what ASPA is able to accomplish flows from the strong commitment and support of the many volunteers who actively serve as a member of a task force, ad hoc committee, standing committee or the Board of Directors. Each Spring, ASPA holds elections to fill open positions on the Board of Directors and Standing Committees. All terms began on July 1, 2002. In April 2002, the following three individuals were elected to terms on the ASPA Board.

- **Paul Gaston, Provost, Kent State University**, was elected for a three-year term to the chief academic officer position. Dr. Gaston's degrees are in English, a field which does not

have specialized accreditation. He has regional accreditation experience through his work as a consultant evaluator for North Central Association. Kent State University has schools or programs that are accredited by the following ASPA-member specialized accreditors: Art (NASAD); Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (ASHA); Business (AACSB); Counseling (CACREP); Clinical Psychology and School Psychology (APA); Rehabilitation Counseling (CORE); Interior Design (FIDER); Library and Information Studies (ALA); Music (NASM); Recreation and Parks (NRPA); Nursing (NLNAC); Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA); and Teacher Education (NCATE). E-Mail: pgaston@kent.edu; Web: www.kent.edu

- **Dort Bigg, Executive Director, ACAOM:** Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, was elected for a three-year term as a chief staff officer from a member accrediting agency. ACAOM has been a member of ASPA since 1993 when ASPA was formed. Most recently, Dort chaired the ASPA Membership Committee. E-Mail: 73352.2467@compuserve.com; Web: www.acaom.org
- **Ann O'Neill, Director, ALA Committee on Accreditation:** Library and Information Studies was elected for a one-year term as a chief staff officer from a member accrediting agency. ALA is also one of the founding members of ASPA. Most recently, Ann co-chaired the spring sub-committee of the ASPA Professional Development Committee. E-Mail: aoneill@ala.org; Web: www.ala.org/accreditation.html

Please join me in welcoming Ann, Dort and Paul as they assume their new ASPA positions and responsibilities as members of the Board. I also invite you to thank the following individuals for their new and on-going service as members of an ASPA Task Force or Committee.

- Membership Committee - Chair: Tess Kirsch, ASHA: Speech-Language-Hearing; Laurel McFarland, NASPAA: Public Affairs & Administration; Paul Walker, CCE: Chiropractic.
- Nominations Committee - Chair: Carol Bobby, CACREP: Counseling; Al Rudisill, NAIT: Industrial Technology; Joyce Urbeck, ACOE: Optometric Education.
- Professional Development Committee - Fall co-chair: Ron Leighton, ASLA: Landscape Architecture; Jenny Gunderman, CACREP: Counseling; Mary Jane Harris, CAPTE: Physical Therapy. Spring co-chair: Susan Sweet, AOA-BPE: Osteopathic Medicine; Karen O'Brien, ALA: Library and Information Studies; Lisa Zuber, CAPTE: Physical Therapy.
- Task Force on Recognition Issues - Chair: Karen Hart, ADA: Dentistry; Jennifer Butlin, CCNE: Nursing Education; Bernard Fryshman, AARTS: Rabbinical and Talmudic; Joanne Greathouse, JRCERT: Radiologic Technology; Samuel Hope, Arts Accreditation (Art&Design, Dance, Music, Theatre); Bridget Larimer, APA: Psychology.

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Update On ASPA Membership

By: Cynthia Davenport

Why isn't 'Group X' a member of ASPA? I've been asked this question much more often during the past two years. I always reply, "You'll need to ask them that question. If they meet the definitions and are following the ASPA Code of Good Practice, we'd be pleased to have them apply for membership."

ASPA had 47 members during the past fiscal year. The ASPA Board, in conjunction with the Membership Committee, reviewed and accepted membership applications from several accrediting bodies. AOA: Osteopathic Medicine and ARC-PA: Physicians Assistants were admitted into membership at the Spring 2001 meeting, while MACTE: Montessori Teacher Education was admitted into membership at the Fall 2001 meeting. In addition, after a year's absence, SAF: Forestry continued its ASPA membership.

ASPA's membership has grown at a modest but steady pace from 33 members in 1993-94, to an anticipated 48 or 49 members for 2002-03. TEAC: Teacher Education was accepted into membership at the Spring 2002 meeting and the Membership Committee anticipates reviewing one or perhaps two applications for fall.

If your specialized accrediting agency is not yet a member of ASPA, we invite you to consider applying for membership this year. Materials describing the application process are posted to the "Membership Info" section of the ASPA web site: www.aspa-usa.org. Applying is easy after a group has endorsed the ASPA Code of Good Practice. A short narrative states how the applicant meets the ASPA Code and the membership definitions. Applications to be reviewed at the Fall meeting are due by August 1st while applications to be reviewed at the Spring meeting are due by February 15th.

Contact the ASPA Office (773/ 525-2160) if you have questions about your eligibility or the application process.

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Pilot Test - Member Dialogue and Networking Sessions

Editor

At the Fall 2002 ASPA meeting, the Board will pilot test a new way of obtaining input from members on policy and other issues scheduled for Board action. All members are urged to attend the "**Member Dialogue with the Board**" session to be held from 8:30 - 10:00 a.m. on Monday morning. The session will be open to guests and it may also be used to gather input on proposals or work in progress. Committee or FYI reports will be discussed as time permits. If member votes are needed, they will occur during this session. All members have been informed of the proposed adjustment to the Monday morning schedule.

The ASPA Board of Directors works hard to meet the needs of members and to be responsive to comments received from members. While the Board knows that not every member is interested in the business meeting, the ASPA Bylaws require consultation with the membership on many

ASPA business matters. Even if such consultation were not mandatory, the Board believes consultation is part of what ensures that ASPA meets members' needs. Following the "dialogue" session, the Board will meet - in an open session - to discuss and take action. At the same time, anyone not interested in observing the board meeting may choose to go to a new "**Networking Session**" and participate in informal round-table discussions. Please contact Cynthia Davenport at the ASPA office if you would like to have a sign prepared for a topic you wish to discuss. Topics may also be proposed on-site.

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Fall 2002 Meeting

Editor

ASPA's Fall 2002 meeting will be held at The Ritz-Carlton, Cleveland, Ohio on Sunday - Tuesday, September 8-10. ASPA has negotiated a group rate of \$149 plus tax for sleeping rooms. To ensure a full set of meeting materials, registrations from members and guests should be received in the ASPA Management Office before August 7, 2002. Members may deduct \$50 from the registration fee if payment is mailed prior to August 2, 2002. Forms for members and guests are enclosed with this mailing. If you need a form, contact Diana at 312/ 630-9660 and she will fax it to you.

The Fall meeting will include the following in addition to other items mentioned elsewhere in this issue of ASPA News.

- **Board Planning Session** - On Sunday morning, the Board will meet with Task Force and Committee Chairs to discuss current activities and responsibilities. Committee suggestions will be considered as the Strategic Plan is revised for the Spring 2003 meeting.
- **Meeting for ASPA Members and Board** - Prior to the open sessions scheduled for Sunday afternoon, the members and board will meet in a closed session to discuss topics of current concern or interest. To ensure your issue will be addressed, please contact the ASPA office. Topics may also be raised during the session.
- **Accreditation Showcase** - This popular and informative session - held on Sunday afternoon - is open to all attendees. In an informal session, two of the newest members of ASPA will tell you what's keeping them busy, may raise issues of current concern and will respond to your questions. Plan on continuing your conversations at the reception immediately following this session.
 - MACTE: Montessori Teacher Education
 - TEAC: Teacher Education
- **Strategies to Improve Accreditation:** Steve Crow, Executive Director, The Higher Learning Commission of North Central Association, will be ASPA's keynote speaker at lunch on Monday, September 9. Steve has given much thought to issues of autonomy during the recent changes that resulted in the Higher Learning Commission. His topic will be: "Autonomy and Integrity in the Era of Collaboration and Cooperation."

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Collaboration in 21st Century Liberal Education - Register for Special Session at ASPA, Tuesday afternoon, September 10

By John Nichols, project director and AAC&U Senior Fellow; NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor; Saint Joseph's College (Indiana)

For the last two years, in various bulletins and newsletters from ASPA, you've been reading about a "Project on Accreditation & Assessment" sponsored by the Association of American Colleges & Universities" (AAC&U) and funded by Pew. The project involved the six regional accreditors, four specialized accreditors (AACSB, ABET, CCNE, and NCATE), and the heads of several higher education associations.

On Tuesday afternoon, September 10, 2002, at the close of the ASPA meeting in Cleveland, you are invited to a celebration of the completion of this project. Following lunch, provided by AAC&U, the results of the project will be presented and discussed in a two hour (1:30 to 3:30 p.m.) session. Your colleagues who participated in this project - Milton Blood, Kate Aberle, Jennifer Butlin, Marge Jackman, Joan Stanley, or Antoinette Mitchell - are enthusiastic about the results of the project. And that's what will be presented for your appraisal.

The image of the "apprentice professional's" undergraduate experience that has been developing for several years among the ranks of specialized accreditors has emerged from this project as a proposed model for 21st century liberal education as a collaboration between general education (liberal arts) and the major (or professional program). The project members worked out consensus statements on the 1) mission, 2) outcomes, 3) curriculum design principles, 4) pedagogy, and 5) assessment facets of this model.

The session will present the model, its rationale, and the ways it can flexibly articulate the five facets just mentioned. But slightly more than half the time will be given to discussion of HOW this model can really be implemented, by professional faculty on the one hand, and by accreditation site visit teams on the other. Project members and others who have had actual experience working with such integrated assessment of liberal and professional outcomes will share their experience. Thus, the planned session will address both theoretical (rationale) and practical (implementation) concerns about this model.

Using the sign-up sheet enclosed with this mailing, you are cordially invited to register for lunch and the Tuesday afternoon session. You may contact John Nichols at Nichols@staintjoe.edu for further information about this special add-on-session.M

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ASPA Board Drafts Mission Statement

Editor

Since its inception in 1993, ASPA has had goals and purposes which are part of the Articles of

Incorporation and the Bylaws. The goals are also posted on the ASPA web site. What ASPA has not had is a Mission Statement. The Board of Directors is drafting a statement and anticipates having it ready to circulate to the members prior to the Fall 2002 meeting. Whether it is adopted this fall or next year, it will be a nice “present” as we go into ASPA's tenth year.

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ASPA Ten Years Later

Editor

The ASPA Board of Directors is already making plans to celebrate ASPA's tenth year in existence. Betty Horton, ASPA's immediate past chair and your soon-to-be-retired colleague, will work with public board member, Marga Rose Hancock, to plan a special "Happy 10th Birthday" celebration for the Fall 2003 ASPA meeting. The meeting will be Sunday - Tuesday, September 7-9, 2003. You may want to mark those dates on your calendar now. Please feel free to share ideas for this event with either Betty or Marga directly or via the ASPA office.

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