

ASPA News - July 2004

Issue Theme: "*Standards Revision: Everybody Does It*"

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Saying Hello

By: Mary Jane Harris, CAPTE: Physical Therapy; Chair, ASPA Board of Directors

Dear ASPA Members:

It is with some trepidation, considerable humility, and a deep sense of honor, that I assume my role as Chair of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors. As I do so, I'd like to thank you for your confidence in me and offer my promise to do my best on ASPA's behalf.

Taking on a leadership role in ASPA at this time is just a bit daunting, if only because many of you have been involved in accreditation and in ASPA longer than I have.

More importantly, though, it is because ASPA stands at a crossroads in its history and is faced with many issues that will need to be addressed in the coming years. The ASPA Board of Directors has been discussing many of these issues, as has the membership, for some time. We will continue to do so. I invite all of you to contribute to the discussion and to the decisions about ASPA's future.

We will also continue to work on the larger issues facing the accreditation community in general, and especially those that may affect the specialized and professional accreditation community. Certainly, reauthorization of the Higher Education Act will continue to present us with

opportunities to act on your behalf as we work with others to influence, to the extent possible, the direction that reauthorization might take vis á vis expectations for recognition by USDE. Additionally, as the Council for Higher Education Accreditation Committee on Recognition continues its process of “standards review,” we will continue to participate in that discussion.

The Board of Directors and I look forward to a productive year and welcome your contributions as well.

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Saying Goodbye

by Olive M. Kimball, NAACLS: Clinical Laboratory Sciences

My term as Chair of the ASPA Board ends on July 1. During my time in this role, I have come to a new appreciation of ASPA’s membership. Thank you for giving me that opportunity.

As members of ASPA, we engage in activities to improve our own understanding and activities in the accreditation arena. However, many of our organizational efforts are directed toward improving the processes of accreditation in general. A former Board member refers to this as the “art and science” of specialized and professional accreditation. Another art at which I think we excel is the art of communicating to other higher education entities. This is an art, however, that must be continually renewed. We never reach a point that allows us to rest on our past successes and this will continue to be a challenge for ASPA in the future.

Over the years and through many activities, what I have valued most is the interaction with my ASPA colleagues who are dedicated and knowledgeable professionals, always willing to share both expertise and experience. These interactions have been the most valuable perks of my own ASPA membership; I look forward to their continuation in the future.

Just as we welcome Mary Jane Harris to her new role as Chair of the Board (see related article), we also bid farewell to Ann O’Neill who has left ASPA and accreditation to go back to academia. She will serve as Dean, School of Library and Information Management at Emporia State University in Emporia Kansas but hopes to continue working in accreditation in some way. We wish her the best.

New members of the ASPA Board (see related article) are Don Simmons, Veterinary Medicine, and Karen Hart, Dental Accreditation. Both have been active ASPA members for many years. Don was appointed by the Board to fill out Ann’s term. Karen was elected to the Board at the Spring 2004 meeting. She has served as chair of the very active and productive *Recognition Issues Committee*.

During the past five years, I served ASPA first as Treasurer and then as Board Chair. These experiences have enriched my professional life and, because of that, I expect to continue to serve ASPA in other ways. During the past two years we began serious discussions about the future direction of ASPA and I believe that many exciting opportunities lie ahead. The stage is set for

ASPA to move forward, but it will take the efforts and the expertise of all of us to do so.

The stage is also set for a great fall meeting in Indianapolis on September 12-14. I hope to see you there. I'll be wearing my "member" hat.

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"Getting to Know You.."

Feel free to hum that famous tune from "The King and I" as you learn a bit more about the two newest members of the ASPA Board of Directors.

Karen M. Hart – accreditor member (Dentistry): Karen is the Director of the Commission on Dental Accreditation and has been on the CDA staff since 1985. She is responsible for the administration and management of the Commission's national accreditation program for approximately 1350 dental and dental-related education programs Committee.

Before Karen joined the Commission staff, she was with the Arizona Department of Education as a Program Development Specialist for Health Occupations Education and an In-service Teacher-Educator. She was also a faculty member at Phoenix College. Karen holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Vocational Education and a Masters degree in Education / Human Relations and Behavior from Northern Arizona University.

In addition to her many work accomplishments, Karen is also a busy mom. She and her husband, Bob, have a 15 year old daughter, Katie, and a nine year old son, John. Katie, plays high school volleyball and John plays on two baseball teams. A proud smile lights up Karen's face when she talks about her children and her husband. Bob owns and operates a custom cabinet business in the Chicagoland area. No matter how busy this family is, they still find time to vacation together at least twice a year. "Vacationing together keeps us close," says Karen, "it's the time we catch-up, laugh, dream and plan for the future."

Don Simmons – accreditor member (Veterinary Medicine): Don is the Director of the Division of Education and Research of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and has held that position since 1996. Prior to joining the AVMA, Don served on the faculty at North Carolina State University for 17 years, and following completion of a one year American Council on Education Administrative Fellows Program was Head of the Department of Veterinary Science at Pennsylvania State University for eight years.

Don's wife Cheryl is a practicing veterinarian who works in a companion animal clinic and operates a "house call veterinary practice." Outside of the practice and accreditation arenas, Don and Cheryl are kept busy with sophomores—one in college and one in high school. Everyone likes to travel and build family memories. Further, Don says, "we are antique collectors, gardeners and avid readers."

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Fall Schedules and Forms

ASPA's Fall 2004 meeting will start at 4 pm Sunday, Sept. 12, 2004, and end at 4 pm Tuesday. Schedules and registration forms are enclosed and are also available from the MEETINGS section of the ASPA web site: www.aspa-usa.org.

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Looking Ahead - ASPA's Fall Meeting

"We must all hang together," said Benjamin Franklin at the signing of the Declaration of Independence, "or most assuredly we shall all hang separately."

Your ASPA Board of Directors has taken steps to turn the Fall 2004 ASPA meeting into an exciting time for accreditors to come together to discuss many important national issues. Members view ASPA meetings as an important way of learning what their specialized / professional colleagues think about current topics.

Learning from each other will begin on Sunday afternoon when ABET: Engineering presents the Accreditation Showcase at 4:00 p.m.

Items on the Monday agenda for fall include:

- Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA)
- The "Value" of Recognition - both CHEA's COR process and that of the US Secretary of Education
- Professional Doctorates
- The accreditation recommendations of the IOM report: *In the Nation's Compelling Interest: Ensuring Diversity in the Health Care Workforce*
- Addressing Institutional Change (in the context of for-profit, multi-campus institutions and changes in funding of state / public institutions)

Policy issues will also be a focus of the Fall meeting. If the second draft of CHEA's proposed revised COR *Recognition of Accrediting Organizations Policy and Procedures* is not available for discussion, those at the meeting will outline concepts to be included in ASPA policy statements on topics such as:

- Distance Learning
- Student Achievement
- Transfer of Credit
- Public Disclosure / Confidentiality
- Number of Accrediting Agencies
- Diploma / Accreditation Mills

Based on input from attendees, statements will be developed for action at a future meeting.

ASPA's Recognition Issues Committee (RIC) has suggested that policy or principle statements such as these will further document ASPA's commitment to good accreditation practice and be helpful to our communities of interest.

Round table discussions focused on each of these topics are planned for the Fall 2004 meeting. Your participation will help ASPA represent its members well. The members of RIC look forward to seeing you at the meeting and hearing your ideas!

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Professional Development - Fall 2004

Standards Revision: Everybody Does It - Panacea or Pandemonium?

Although every accrediting agency needs to review and revise its accreditation standards, each must consider when to do it, who to involve, how to do it and how often. Scheduled to be held at The Westin Indianapolis, the Fall 2004 ASPA Professional Development program will help agencies evaluate their own review processes and provide tips and examples for how we can all become more effective and efficient as we go about this necessary business that sets the stage for quality education and reliable accreditation.

This program addresses both Sections 1 and 2 of the ASPA-Member Code of Good Practice, 1: Pursues its mission, goals and objectives, and conducts its operations in a trustworthy manner and 2: Maximizes service, productivity, and effectiveness in the accreditation relationship.

Join us on Tuesday, September 14, when expert facilitator Frank J. Sabatine, Dean, School of Extended Education, Ball State University, will guide the discussion of a program designed to be both interactive and practical. Come prepared to share and learn. Leave with ideas you can implement when your standards are next revised.

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Professional Development - Spring 2005

Validity and Reliability of Standards and Processes -- How do You Know? Why do You Care?

Plans are underway for the Spring 2005 ASPA Professional Development program to be held in the Washington, DC area in conjunction with ASPA's annual meeting from April 3-5. The program will build on the Fall 2004 topic of revision and implementation of accreditation standards.

The Spring 2005 program will focus on strategies to enhance the reliability and validity of evaluation processes used in determining a program's compliance with accreditation standards.

Based on attendee feedback, the committee is designing a program that includes an expert on determining reliability and validity in evaluation processes. Members of ASPA will also share their views of good practice.

As always, there will be plenty of opportunity for debate and discussion. Now is the time to suggest elements you'd like to see included in the program. Please contact the ASPA office or any member of the Spring Professional Development Committee: Susan Sweet (AOA: Osteopathic Medicine), Jenny Gunderman (CACREP:Counseling), Gretchen Warner (MACTE: Montessori) or Lisa Zuber (CAPTE: Physical Therapy). We look forward to seeing you in the Washington, DC area next spring.

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Spring 2004 Highlights

Professional Development:

How do you work effectively with a “gold?” Build trust with a “green?” Talk so an “orange” can hear you? Tap into the warmth and caring of a “blue?” What steps can you take to minimize the potential of future legal problems as you interview candidates for a new position in your office?

The answers to these and many other questions were covered in the Spring 2004 ASPA Professional Development program: “*What’s Your Color ” and Other Human Resource Questions* presented on March 29-30, 2004. Janet Bezner, PeakCare, Inc., started with her highly entertaining and interactive *Color Profiles*. Richard Lehr, RGL Consultants, used the colors in his *Navigating Human Resource Issues*. He gave a wide range of practical guidance and pointed out the strengths and challenges likely to face certain colors.

Once again, the committee that planned the program (Susan Sweet, AOA: Osteopathic Medicine; Gretchen Warner, MACTE: Montessori; and Lisa Zuber: CAPTE: Physical Therapy) was treated to KUDOs and much thanks from those at the meeting. One attendee wrote: “I didn’t think this session would be that relevant because we have an HR department. But both sessions were excellent. Janet’s session was fun, but very helpful as well. Richard provided some great tips especially for interviewing. Overall, an excellent program.”

COR Draft One:

Paul Gaston, ASPA vice-chair and Provost, Kent State University, used his expert facilitation skills to help ASPA members identify issues and articulate reasons for concerns with CHEA’s Committee on Recognition (COR) document, *Draft One: Recognition of Accrediting Organizations Policy and Procedures*. The raw materials from working groups were used to develop ASPA’s response to CHEA.

During meetings held in mid-May and early July, responses from many constituencies were discussed by COR. COR’s initial timetable indicates that a second draft should be ready for

circulation this fall. It is too soon to know whether the next draft will be available for review during the ASPA meeting in Indianapolis, but the meeting is being designed to allow time for group discussion if possible

. Number of ASPA Meetings:

A panel discussion on the merits of one versus the current two ASPA meetings per year was held on Monday, March 29. Speaking for one meeting were panel members Ann O'Neill, ALA: Library, Rick Coscarelli, NAIT: Industrial Technology, and Susan Sweet, AOA: Osteopathic Medicine. The two meeting panel included, Mary Jane Harris, CAPTE: Physical Therapy, Joanne Greathouse, JRCERT: Radiologic Technology, and Greg Boyer, ACPE: Pharmacy. The ASPA Board of Directors considered the information presented, as well as additional information from a meeting rotation survey.

At present ASPA will continue with two meetings a year and spring meetings will continue to rotate between Chicago and the DC area. The Board was not willing to have every spring election occur in the same city and believed that some wise choices had been made when ASPA was first established.

ASPA Assets:

Review of ASPA's accomplishments and discussion of ASPA's future continued at the Spring 2004 meeting. Member responses to the question "What does ASPA have now that it didn't have ten years ago?" ranged from the nitty gritty to more philosophical elements. They included: 501(c)(3) status; finances and reserves; about 50 members; an executive director with a knowledge of accreditation; volunteers who are "engaged" with the organization; procedures and policies; respect within the higher education community; a web site with many useful resources; a management contingency plan; a continued commitment to professional development for accreditors (preserved from the 1970s); and the ability to function as one point of contact for those seeking information about specialized accreditation.

ASPA Services and Reasons for Membership:

Those at the Spring 2004 meeting reviewed responses to questions about the most important reasons why organizations belong to ASPA and the most important services ASPA provides to members. Following member discussion, the Board appointed a small task force to look at possible unmet needs that might be addressed on behalf of members. The task force may have a preliminary report at the Fall 2004 meeting and a more comprehensive one next spring.

Reasons for Membership in ASPA:

- ASPA is the only unified, national voice that solely represents specialized accreditation; we want to contribute to that voice for and support the importance of specialized accreditation; a strong common voice on important issues is essential
- Net-working & interaction with our peers; to participate in the community of specialized

accreditors; to know what others are doing; to have the opportunity and means to improve our own performance

- Professional Development – ASPA programs offer opportunities to learn from other accreditors, educators and other experts; programs related to the ASPA-member *Code of Good Practice* are helpful
- Source of up to date information on pertinent issues; a way to stay informed about the broad issues (beyond our field) and important developments in accreditation
- Representation with and to broader communities
- Added credibility with institutional personnel

The most important services ASPA provides:

- Interaction with peers at meetings; chances to network at conferences
- Professional Development – the only source of programming specific to specialized accreditation
- ASPA-member *Code of Good Practice* (Ethics); information about good accreditation practices; forum to discuss pros and cons of potential changes
- Monitors issues and represents specialized accreditation to the higher education and other broad communities (includes attending meetings and written representation); gives members a voice on federal legislation and recognition issues
- Creates work groups around specific issues; helps focus issues and responses; serves as a unifying voice for specialized and professional accreditors
- Data Collection: Conducts projects and offers services such as the ASPA e-mail list; the compensation and funding surveys; the ASPA Accreditation Profile/Compendium project
- Works to enhance credibility/image of accreditation in general and specialized accreditation in particular

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Update on Reauthorization of the HEA

The Congress considers amendments to (or reauthorizes) the Higher Education Act of 1965 every five (5) years. The most recent HEA reauthorization was acted upon in 1998. In keeping with the five-year renewal, reauthorization should have occurred in 2003, but a one-year extension was granted. Preliminary review of the HEA is currently underway in Washington but no action is expected until after the November elections. The main focus of the accreditation community is on topics such as transfer of credit, accountability (which includes disclosure), distance education and student achievement. The HEA also addresses student financial aid and many topics beyond accreditation which makes the reauthorization of great interest to a wide range of constituencies.

On May 5, 2004, House Bill 4283 was introduced. This bill contains many provisions that are highly objectionable to the higher education and accrediting communities. ASPA members are working with their respective government affairs staff members and ASPA is also working with

the Council on Higher Education Accreditation on the issues as they arise.

ASPA was one of 44 higher education organizations that signed-on to a letter submitted by ACE President David Ward in opposition to the Bill. Ward stated that the forty-five associations could not support the bill in its current form. The full text of the letter and its extensive attachments is available at www.acenet.edu/hena/pdf/2004_05_26_HR4283.pdf.

CHEA signed on to the ACE letter but also wrote its own letter and included an attachment that addressed all 27 of the accreditation-related provisions of HR 4283. The CHEA attachment cites the location of these 27 concerns in the bill and the current HEA law, and states the CHEA view on the proposal. It is available on the CHEA website at www.chea.org/Government/HEA/CHEA_LtrAttach_HR4283.pdf

Since then ASPA has continued to work with the specialized accreditation community and a coalition of government affairs experts to address the more troubling “accreditation parts” of HR 4283. More information will be available from ASPA during July. Based on progress to date, experienced sources say that reauthorization of the HEA is highly unlikely to be completed by the end of 2004.

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Accreditation Profile: CAPTE: Physical Therapy

By Paul Gaston, Provost, Kent State University and member, ASPA Board of Directors

Pull a muscle in your arm? Feel a twinge in your leg? Recovering from surgery? Chances are, you'll receive a prescription for physical therapy. And if you do, there are accreditation colleagues working to ensure that the education received by your caregivers is well up to standard.

The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), now located in the DC area following more than 25 years in New York City, can trace its lineage to 1928, when the APTA first published a list of approved schools. But the history of the “new” Commission more properly begins in 1976, when the APTA withdrew from a collaborative accrediting arrangement with the American Medical Association in order to establish an independent agency. When the AMA discontinued the accreditation of PT programs in 1983, CAPTE became the sole recognized accrediting agency for physical therapy.

Two episodes proved particularly memorable in this history. In the 1980's, resistance to the APTA's support for post-baccalaureate PT education led the APTA House of Delegates in 1989 to assign CAPTE “sole responsibility for development, review, revision and enforcement of the evaluative criteria.” Then, in the 1990's, CAPTE's expanding commitment to the accreditation of programs internationally confronted fundamental differences in the education and practice of physical therapists elsewhere. Hence, CAPTE has now largely withdrawn from international

accreditation activities.

Through the years, the mission of CAPTE has remained consistent: the assurance of quality in entry-level physical therapy education. But recent strategic planning has led to a sharper statement emphasizing continuous improvement responsive to evolving “education, research, and practice.”

The current executive director, Mary Jane Harris, is a graduate of Ithaca College and the University of Pittsburgh. After practicing as a PT for more than 10 years, she served as an academic administrator in the field for 15 years before joining the Department of Accreditation at APTA in 1994. She has served as director since 2000.

Programs in physical therapy operate within all types of institutions, from small, private religious colleges, such as Dominican College of Blauvelt, to public doctoral/research-extensive universities, such as Ohio State, to single-purpose institutions, such as the University of St. Augustine for Health Science. All told, CAPTE accredits 204 PT programs and 243 PTA programs in the US and three remaining PT programs internationally, in Canada, Scotland, and the United Kingdom.

In place of an annual meeting for program representatives, CAPTE assists the APTA with three meetings each year for physical therapy educators. When accreditation issues make their way to the agendas, CAPTE is ready. In fact, Mary Jane sometimes refers to such meetings as "a three ring circus" - both literally (there are three groups engaged in different activities) and figuratively (there is always a lot going on everywhere).

According to Mary Jane, the influence of ASPA appears in what CAPTE has learned from other accreditors. “CAPTE does not function today as it did when I joined the staff in 1994; many of the improvements that we have made started as ideas discussed at ASPA meetings.”

Now, about that twinge.

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