Western Washington University  
M.Ed. in Adult and Higher Education  
Advisory Board Committee Meeting  
December 5, 2014  
Viking Union Room 567

Minutes

In attendance: Joseph Anderson, Jackie Baker-Sennett, Mikhail Burstein, Sam Cheung, Sondra Cuban, Effie Eisses, Gabe Gossett, Stan Goto, Gail Goulet, Sherry Haskins, Kathi Hiyane-Brown, Jon Kerr, Craig Lewis, Marcia Leister, Steve Monroe, Trula Nicholas, Ted Pratt, Shar Sarte Prince, John Purdie, Shevell Thibou, Christina Van Wingerden, Rudy Vendiola, Greg Winter, Cameron Wuhr, Melina Zahalka  
By Phone: Michael Smith  
Not present: Mariam Rashid

Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome by Sondra Cuban and short introduction done by each member present and on speaker phone.

Announcements

Dr. Sondra Cuban gave a short overview of:

- The work done over the last year to set the new direction in the Adult & Higher Education (AHE) Program. She asked members to help reflect on this direction for improving all aspects of the program to meet the professional needs of Washington State.
- A breakdown of the meeting as:
  1. short presentations by her and Dr. Stan Goto followed by a short Q & A session (reminded members that a summary and longer report with more detail is provided in their packets);
  2. then breaking out into small groups which members can choose according to their areas of interest and expertise, in order
  3. the group suggestions and recommendations can be used as action points to implement into the program.

Presentations

A presentation of the AHE program by Dr. Sondra Cuban highlighted:

- AHE program is interdisciplinary (crossing subject boundaries to deliver programming that reaches different groups in different settings), represented by all members from different fields and the program alumni present
- AHE program is inquiry based with not only the practice to theory piece but also policies, research and evaluation
- Students develop questions, dialogue about these in seminars, conduct research and create cases that grapple with real dilemmas in the field, connecting these to policies. We think this is what it takes to make leaders in this complex environment.
- Program website visual created in Fall 2013 to emphasize:
1. Social justice aims and shared leadership to understand organizational power and implement equity in educational settings;
2. An inquiry based approach to learning that allows students to investigate problems related to lifelong education and social issues;
3. Reflecting on and expression of self-knowledge and identity to develop cultural competence to deal with increasing diversity, internationalization and globalization;
4. Educational capital that builds students’ capabilities including academic literacy, information literacy and critical literacy.

- AHE Learning Outcomes changed so students gain valuable, actionable knowledge. These outcomes based on professional standards for best practices in the discipline (integrated across the curriculum and evident in objectives of AHE core course syllabi).
- AHE Learning Outcomes embody the program mission and professional practice (showed AHE program mission and Woodring College of Education mission) emphasizing how the program mission aligns to Woodring’s mission and University mission by focusing on inclusion, diversity and equity.
- Directions the AHE program is moving:
  1. Program retitled from Continuing & College Education to Adult & Higher Education; bringing in two routes – one for Higher Education and one for Adult Education
  2. Want to recruit diverse student bodies which will improve quality of community
  3. Bringing in two research courses and making Field Experience a program requirement
  4. Want to build programmatically on our guiding principles of a community of practice; creating partnerships to bring the local community into our work and building students’ social capital.

A presentation by Dr. Stan Goto highlighted the AHE 518 course he taught summer14. The AHE 518 Mentoring and Advising class illustrates how students engage in these AHE learning outcomes: Research and Evaluation, Adult Learning Theories, Diversity and Social Justice, Leadership. The class also illustrates these program characteristics: self-discovery, flexibility, community, skill-applicability (Shaw, Hilleray, Lough 2014).

A needs assessment conducted by AHE 518 students found career trajectory to be a noteworthy variable among AHE students. Trajectory is determined by prior work + career goal(s). The predominant types of career trajectories in AHE are (in order of frequency):
- Education => Education
- External => Education
- External => External
- Education => External

Another important variable among AHE students: Years between undergrad and graduate school. Most AHE students have worked less than 5 years in a career-oriented position. A smaller percentage of students has worked 11-20 years. This represents a bimodal distribution of professional experience levels.

There were no questions after the presentations.
Group Work and Action Points

Sondra reviewed the process for members to break out into the five groups about building on community of practice. Members were encouraged to input and ask questions about what they thought would be important to their group area. Sondra explained that poster paper and markers were provided so each group could record their recommendations and action points. The five groups were entitled Advocacy on Issues, ABE (no one chose this group), Curriculum & Teaching, Higher Education and Professional Development. Following are the summarized recommendations and action points recorded and then presented by each group:

**Advocacy on Issues Group** members were Misha Burstein, Gabe Gossett, Trula Nicholas, Ted Pratt, Shar Sarte Prince, Greg Winter and Melina Zahalka. They found three primary topics--the need to support and grow self-advocacy skills, the need for diversity in staff and student populations, and the need for community connection within the program. Summary of the action points is:

- Assessment of the program (specifically in the AHE 518 mentoring course Summer 2014) and it's participants is useful and appreciated
- Changing trajectories, the incorporation of social justice in an academic setting, anxiety around transitions (lack of empowerment, a need to learn how to self advocate before advocating for others) are weighty and meaningful issues for graduate students and programs
- A group member mentioned being singled out to answer for "what seemed like all people of color" because of her ethnic background and appearance--stated it created a feeling of pressure in the classroom setting. A lack of diversity in the classroom can feel "outing" for underrepresented learners.
- Questions arose about how to start a program that encourages diversity--such as, "does this ONE person represent all minorities?"
- Group agreed that diversity within faculty equals expertise on diversity issues, growth of trust, buy-in, and inclusion.
- A group member mentioned that being of color often creates a sense of being a "spy" within the administration.
- Advocacy is broad-based, despite being individualized
- Social justice is a means to understand and support diversity
- Students should work in the community more--theory to practice
- On member reported a perception of a lack of awareness in the community--community leaders don't know about diverse elements in the community
- Advocacy begins at the individual, grows to the local, and beyond…this makes service learning most powerful. Field Experience as a program requirement is a fantastic change
- Reflection on experience creates transformation and connection with the community
- Self-evaluations on the field experience would be beneficial to the program and individual

**Curriculum & Teaching Group** members were Joseph Anderson, Jackie Baker-Sennett, Sam Cheung, Sherry Haskins, Shevell Thibou, Christina Van Wingerden and Rudy Vendiola. Summary of the action points is:

- Community
- Infusing Cultural Components
- Globalization
- Workforce Development
- Design for Universal Learning
- Online Teaching/Innovative/Engaging Students

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Higher Education Group members were Stan Goto, Kathi Hiyane-Brown, Marcia Leister, Craig Lewis, John Purdie, and Michael Smith. Summary of the actions points is:

- Need for doctoral program that is flexible; mindful of resource requirements
- Need for collaboration among disciplines
- Need to connect coursework with work experience; integrate inquiry into all coursework; development of research questions integrated into coursework in answering a question, doing participatory action research
- Emphasis on leadership training, organization development/implementing systemic change and business/management
- Understanding culture of Higher Ed system and Community College organization and culture; negotiating when it’s resistant to change
- Educators as leaders
- Internship

Professional Development Group members were Effie Eisses, Gail Goulet, Jon Kerr, Steve Monroe and Cameron Wuhr. Summary of the actions points is:

- Change in Environment of Adult Education/Policy Shift w/Dev. Ed
- Incorporate Assessment,
- Employability Skills
- Applying and Preparation for the Workforce
- Implementing to Teach Soft Skills

Sondra Cuban passed around a Sign-Up sheet for any members who want to be contacted for another meeting later this year to help guide implementation of above group recommendations and action points.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30pm. Next meeting to be announced.