

Sign Language Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, September 6, 2012
4:30 pm

MEMBER ATTENDEES: The Honorable Bruce Boyer, Noel Cherasaro, Rich Engwall, Mary Ann Ziegler

SPC ATTENDEES: Crystal Blackburn, Fallon Brizendine, Dr. Martha Campbell, Dr. Beth Carlson, Jesse Coraggio, Rod Davis, Frona Elkes, Mike Henry, Debra Higgins, Rebecca Hill, Dr. Shirley Oakley, La'kesha O'Neal, Caylynn "KC" Pearson, Marika Robinson, Rosa Rodriguez

INTERPRETERS: Jodi Pesick, Golden Dawn Ricketts

Dr. Campbell called the meeting to order at 4:40 p.m. with introductions and a visual presentation of the new Sign Language Interpretation webpage.

Dr. Campbell then asked Rod Davis and La'kesha O'Neal to report on their recruitment efforts for the program.

Ms. O'Neal is recruiting students and helping identify internship and job placement opportunities. Dr. Campbell asked Rich Engwall to add La'kesha to the mailing list for Blossom events. La'kesha also stated she would be interested in any Pinellas County School Board events.

Dr. Campbell mentioned that Debbie Henry was at Gibbs High School last year teaching ASL I and II and that we really value our relationship with the public schools.

REVIEW OF FALL MINUTES:

Dr. Campbell said she wanted to take a brief look at the minutes from the fall 2011 meeting. She said we have done some reorganizing and we didn't meet in the spring.

We are in process of hiring a tutor (roving) to work with ASL students on various sites.

The technology fees are being utilized for updating equipment and we continue to update equipment in the lab at SP/G campus and we have just started at Gibbs HS.

Dr. Campbell mentioned that Sammie Elser regretted that she was not able to attend tonight's meeting. Dr. Campbell also welcomed Fallon Brizendine as SPC's newest full-time SLIP program faculty member and said that SPC was very thankful to have her.

Dr. Campbell stated the assessment report for the Sign Language Program has been reviewed and completed. She also said that Executive Summaries were enclosed in all packets handed out at the meeting.

Dr. Campbell congratulated Frona Elkes on her new state-wide position as the co-chair for the Florida Registry Interpreters for the Deaf's new initiative for emergency management interpreting. Dr. Campbell said that Frona has also been keeping up with changes in the QA tests as well as changes in certification.

Dr. Campbell said that about a year ago when we looked at the assessment report we knew that we had several challenges and one would be changes to the FRID exam and the QA and we also knew we needed to do some type of screening between ASL II and ASL III as ASL III is when students are actually entering the program and we knew we needed changes in curriculum. She is proud to say that 24 documents were filed last Friday for changes in the curriculum effective in the fall of 2013. The faculty also said they needed more time on task in ASL I and ASL II so classes have been lengthened. We've also looked again at the course sequencing to make sure that students can finish in a reasonable amount of the time and that the summer sessions are not so overloaded that we can't get students through program.

In Jack Humburg's absence, Dr. Campbell moved to accept last fall's minutes; the approval of the minutes was seconded by Judge Boyer.

However, 2nd page corrections – “There are 2 parts to the QA which are written and performed” ... should be, written and performance. “Students do well on the written portion, but continue the performance section” ... should be, “Students are required to take it for part of our program and they do well in that and they continue to prepare for the performance section.” Also, “Deaf Tech Grant” misspelled, should be ... “DeafTEC.”

Dr. Carlson reported on the status of the DeafTEC grant. At this point the grant is focusing on the K-12 connection and secondary connection, as well as workforce and training.

Dr. Campbell asked that with the corrections being noted and assuming they will be made, if she could have a second to the motion from Judge Boyer for approval. The motion was seconded.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW

Based on the 2011/2012 Comprehensive Program Review, we do know that we have increased enrollment including unduplicated headcount, even though there was a slight decrease in the summer, but that's not unusual because many of the Pell Grants are frequently not funded for summer. We are slowly starting to expand our number of graduates. Thanks to Dr. Coraggio's leadership, we have a Business Intelligence Data Program that can be accessed very quickly to access data related to specific program outcomes.

We have increasing enrollment demands in ASL courses. We offer almost as many ASL sections as Spanish sections. With the changes the Governor and the Legislature are making in the General Ed requirement, students are going to have to meet the foreign language requirement if they have not taken two years in high school before they can receive an AA degree. So, we will have increasing pressures on ASL courses.

While SPC's ASL classes generally have between 15 and 18 students per section, USF's ASL classes often have as many as 30 students. Our Interpreting courses at SPC usually have 8 students, while USF's interpreting classes have anywhere from 15-25 students per section. What we are seeing is enrollment pressures for these courses that are not expected to decline.

According to Dr. Campbell, the occupation profile shows a need for interpreters and we know that there is particular growing need in Tampa Bay area. We know that the median yearly income was \$43,000 for interpreters in 2010. We know that the employment trending information shows an increase in possible employment. We know that we have a number of major employers in the area: Sorensen, Z Video (also has a manufacturing plant on Cleveland Street), some religious organizations and the Pinellas County Public Schools as well.

Dr. Campbell encouraged Advisory Board members to review the 2011-2012 Assessment Report (emailed as PDF file to Advisory Board members).

CHANGES TO PROGRAM SEQUENCE EFFECTIVE FALL 2013

Dr. Shirley Oakley reviewed the changes to the program sequence that will be in effect fall 2013:

- Added ASL IV (2210C), which made ASL III a prerequisite for Structure (ASL 1300)
- Changed INT 1941 from Practicum to Introduction to Interpreting
- Eliminated Fingerspelling (to be included across the ASL curriculum)
- Moved Psychology or Sociology into the general education section and out of the support courses section
- Changed INT 1202 from Interpreting and Transliterating into Intermediate Interpreting (2 credits)
- Changed INT 1941 to Introduction to Transliterating

Some attendees expressed concerns about the deletion of Fingerspelling. Mike Henry said Fingerspelling is integral to ASL I, II, III, and IV classes and it will be progressively integrated to get more skills incorporated into classes more deliberately and will be addressed in all ASL classes. Beth Carlson said it was also a course that tended to hold people up because they put it off (although this was not the reason to remove it from program).

Crystal Blackburn thinks this change is wonderful. She felt strongly that one class with one teacher actually hinders the learning process and that several teachers each with different hands, fingers, shapes and styles will significantly improve understanding. She said fingerspelling was her weakness in the beginning and she likes this change a lot.

La'kesha O'Neal agreed with Crystal and stated that if she had had more fingerspelling and fingerspelling from different individuals, it would have been easier when she went out into the community to determine hand signals as it is not uncommon for five conversations to be taking place at one time and gestures do differ a little bit.

Rebecca Hill commented that she wholeheartedly agreed with what Crystal had said and that she was happy to see that the Intro to Interpreting and the Intro to Transliterating are two separate courses. Dr. Campbell said we thought it was important that the Transliterating go as last class of sequence, bringing the skills full-circle.

Dr. Campbell said that ASL III had not been prerequisite for many of these courses and now we've added ASL IV.

Beth Carlson said she teaches Structure voices off while students are learning linguistic concepts. She found more and more Structure students had only had ASL I and II with the previous course sequence, and some students felt they had been misdirected. She feels strongly that the more voice off instructions students have, the better off students will be and the students concur.

Dr. Campbell said we are very happy to have these changes. She appreciates all the efforts and thoughts that went into these making these significant changes in curriculum. We have been to USF to make sure all will articulate to USF. It was interesting to hear what USF is facing as the demand for their ASL classes increases. They have only two full-time faculty in Interpreting and four deaf people teaching ASL, but they are not full-time and they do not have a lab.

Judge Boyer had a question regarding the curriculum. On the Sign Language Interpretation page, it shows the total program hours as 72 hours for two year degree. Dr. Campbell said this is completed over seven semesters. Judge Boyer said he thought we spent a year or two, years ago, trying to get this down to 60 hours. Dr. Campbell said she believes there is a State Board rule for 72 hours framework. Dr. Campbell said this has been in place for at least five years. The AA program is 60 hours, but this is AS and it is 72 hours.

Dr. Oakley said with these changes, the SLIP packet under quick links will be updated and the website will also be updated once the changes are approved through CMI. These changes will be effective fall 2013. We will need to teach out Fingerspelling (so it will have to remain in curriculum for a while).

The textbooks have changed from *Master ASL* to *Signing Naturally* and are more consistent now with the courses that everyone teaches. Beth Carlson stated that *Master ASL* is what they use in the high schools.

INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Dr. Campbell said we are looking for internship opportunities and asked Fallon to provide an update on her needs since she works with placing the students in internships. Fallon said that Internship students will be placed with certified interpreters in various community settings. Some will be placed in educational settings and some in mainstream settings mostly with certified interpreters who will be their mentors. The internship will be based on the student's needs.

Dr. Campbell said she has met with Amy Apicerno and that she will be working with Fallon Brizendine as needed for support for placements.

Judge Boyer wanted to remind us all that interns are welcome in the court houses.

The Pinellas County Schools is now up to 30 full-time interpreters in the school system. We are now at the point with NCLB (No Child Left Behind) that we will not have any more self-contained classrooms for the deaf and all 100 of our kids will be mainstreamed eventually. Hiring interpreters is a high priority.

Dr. Campbell asked for questions or considerations that the committee would like to see made over this academic year:

PCS appreciates the Gibbs program and the fact that there is dual enrollment in the public school with the college but would like to see it at Pinellas Park High School where we have so many kids taking ASL as she thinks it would be such a win, win situation for us both. Dr. Campbell said it will not be at Gibbs this year as it has been discontinued and we are open to new opportunities. Part of the problem is that we're limited in high schools to how many dual enrollment/advanced placement classes we can offer. Dr. Campbell said she believes that is exactly what happened at Pinellas Park High School. Dr. Campbell said that Jeff Cesta (727-791-5970) does a lot of that negotiation for the college, and he would be aware of whether that has maxed out. PCS and Dr. Campbell both said it seems that it would be a natural fit.

There was no new business remaining so Dr. Campbell thanked everyone for their taking time out of their busy day to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:38 p.m.