

Sign Language Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, September 12, 2013
4:30 pm
Epicenter

MEMBER ATTENDEES: The Honorable Bruce Boyer, Julie Church, Vicky Fales, Chris Wagner, Mary Ann Ziegler

SPC ATTENDEES: Amy Apicerno, Dr. Martha Campbell, Dr. Beth Carlson, Carol Downing, Jennifer Francisco, Mike Henry, Scott Lewis, Dr. Shirley Oakley, Marika Robinson, Michele Sacco-Eanes, Anthony Verdeja

INTERPRETERS: Cynthia Bedient, Irma Fenley

WELCOME

The meeting was called to order promptly at 4:30 pm. Minutes were reviewed and discussed. Motion to approve minutes by Judge Boyer; seconded by Vicky Fales. All in favor, no one opposed. Minutes approved.

Dr. Campbell passed around a card to thank Jack Humburg for his service as the Chair for the Advisory Board. She also passed around a card for Sammie Elser (not present). We want to let her know that we are thinking about her.

INTRODUCTIONS

Dr. Oakley asked everyone to introduce themselves and tell a little about what they do.

NEW FULL-TIME, PART-TIME, AND RETURNING SLIP FACULTY

Dr. Campbell stated that there have been many changes in personnel and that new part-time faculty members were hired as a result of the changes in the part-time faculty ECH limit. There are many students who want to take Sign Language classes, so the classes are among the very first classes to fill at the College. Frona Elkes resigned and Carol Downing is our full-time Interpreting faculty. We also have new and returning part-time faculty:

New part-time faculty

Beth Brightman
Carmen Garcia
Scott Lewis
Alyssa Matiya
Tyree McIntosh
Tanesh Smith
Anthony Verdeja

Returning part-time faculty

Jennifer Francisco
Debbie Henry
Marika Robinson
Michele Sacco-Eanes
Sally Shortz
Michele Smith

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT: Revised Program Learning Outcomes; Viability Report

Dr. Campbell stated that we are a data driven institution. Student enrollment data for the report is for 2011-2012. The 2012-2013 data will be added. We continue to grow in enrollment, but enrollment is limited by the number of classes that we can offer. We offer roughly as many ASL classes as we do Spanish classes, including all of our Spanish online; this shows the growth and the interest in ASL.

We also regularly review the Unduplicated Headcount. Our performance metric rapidly changes. The Course Success Rate is a percentage of students that make A's, B's, and C's in our courses; this is consistently high – in the mid 80's—and includes all courses under the Sign Language Academic Organization: ASL I, II, III, and IV, Fingerspelling, Deaf Structure and the Interpreting classes.

Chris Wagner asked if there was a way to separate the students who take only ASL I and II for the foreign language requirement from the students that continue into the Interpreting Program. Dr. Campbell said we have been talking about the fact that ASL I and ASL II really probably need to go under Foreign Language, but not until she argues for another faculty member. There are good political reasons for keeping the ASL program within the SLIP program when it comes to arguing for faculty, but there are also good reasons for moving Sign Language into Foreign Language once we have one or two new faculty. Our ASL enrollment would certainly support other foreign language offerings.

Concerning total placement, in 2009-2010, 100% of our graduates were placed in the field. It's difficult to track students after they leave us.

In 2008, we had four SLIP graduates; in 2011/2012, we had 10 graduates. Our Internship class now will be our largest graduating class, and we are expecting another large graduating class next year.

Changes to PLOs

Dr. Campbell and Dr. Oakley attended curriculum workshops this summer. One workshop was about revising the PLOs (Program Learning Outcomes for our AS programs). The sign language program had eight PLOs; we are working to revise to five. Each of the PLOs must be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely. The idea is to get them simple, straight forward and measurable. We have a faculty committee (Mike, Beth, Marika, Carol, Mike, and Shirley) to work together to revise the PLOs.

Questions were asked to the group: What should our graduates be able to do? What kind of understandings will they need? What kind of proficiency would they have? What kind of knowledge would we want them to have about the deaf community? The wording of the PLOs was discussed; Marika Robinson reminded us about the respect for the individual differences within the community and how we teach our graduates to respect those differences.

Dr. Oakley said they took the original eight and revised because part of the goal is to have more concise major learning outcomes.

Dr. Campbell asked for a response to the first objective and requested that no one hesitate to be critical. Chris is comfortable with the first objective, but he wonders how do you measure the knowledge? A person could go and make contact for 20 hours to satisfy the school, but really how do we measure? Chris said that now the question is, "What is the minimum standard?" Do we have measurement systems in place because the Q&A's are going away? What are we going to use to measure? Dr. Campbell isn't sure of the answer, and said that while Chris is far more experienced, one of the things she has thought about is actually going to graduate/exit interviews so that maybe we could get a focus group of our students together in their last semester before graduation and asking them because these will have to be measureable. She believes this is a qualitative rather than a quantitative type of measurement so we would want to talk with students and bring them together in a focus group and see the changes from year to year.

Dr. Carlson said she thinks that it's important to understand that the PLOs are tied to the coursework. If students are studying and researching reading, they will be tested on that and will have to prove their knowledge from the reading, homework, etc.

Dr. Campbell said that not only do we have to have the course assessments, but we have to have some assessment for the program; we are moving in that direction.

The next question was about the examination of linguistic principles in order to integrate that knowledge into expressive and receptive ASL skills. Chris said he would probably ask how you would measure an examination of those linguistic principles. Much of that will happen in the class group performance because it is a performance so we would have to have a way of measuring. We are aiming high here because we want students to not only understand the linguistic principles but to apply them and integrate them; that is high up the food chain of educational principles. It's one thing to identify, but another thing to be able to apply it in both of these areas. That's going to be challenging too. A discussion about the importance of screening followed.

Jennifer Francisco is excited that program is growing and that we'll have more instructors, but is concerned about the consistency among all the instructors. Are we all teaching the same things? We need consistency. Dr. Campbell said these program goals will drive some of this as we're going to have to make sure that the each of the course objectives and the measurement of those objectives lead the student to the culmination of these principles.

Dr. Campbell also mentioned that we want students to apply the knowledge of the role and responsibility of the interpreter through supervised interpreting experiences in organizations which serve deaf and hearing clients. We've had internships for a long time and Carol has done a lot of work with our internship office identifying the types of interning opportunities which will promote that application of their knowledge. Again, we need to figure out how to measure this so we may be looking at a survey. Carol is working with the students on their portfolios and we may implement a type of focus group at that beginning of the internship. We will need to record the focus groups to see how students' application develops during their experiences and an understanding of the code of ethics. If students are going to succeed, they're going to need an advanced level of fluency and this is where Marika and ASL III and IV come in. Our new sequencing tries to integrate fingerspelling through ASL I, II, III, and IV, so we see a continuous building of the receptive and expressive skills.

Dr. Campbell asked for reactions, comments and/or suggestions for the new MLOs.

Vicky thinks that when talking about "clients", in the professional realm you will see the word "consumers". Also, she said that we are looking at licensure in the State of Florida and instead of using the term "deaf and hard of hearing"; we are actually switching following the National Association of the Deaf's recommendation of the phrase to "users of diverse sign language." She will send the exact phrase to Dr. Campbell.

Chris said he thinks it is important to stay on top of RID and NAD (they are now working together) regarding changes to make sure our program is current, especially in accreditation and new certification assessments.

Dr. Campbell said we probably need to send out the course outcomes for the Interpreting classes and update that language. Dr. Campbell asked Carol to remind her to do that as she can pull the MLOs out of her curriculum file and send them out so the language can be reviewed.

Michele asked if the learning objectives in each of the courses are the same. All course objectives are the same and they are in the SLIP repositories under curriculum files; these files can only be accessed on campus.

Dr. Campbell said that once the course objectives are established, how they are delivered and accessed is really up to the individual faculty member. We have been talking about the different ways those objectives may be being reached. There is a critical point in ASL II before students can move into ASL III and there needs to be a screening at the end of ASL II to provide students feedback about where they are in the development of their skills.

Jennifer thinks that maybe a good way to monitor student progress and their receptive and expressive skills would be to have all students set up “YouTube” accounts just for the SLIP program so they can post videos of themselves. Students already have video assignments from ASL I through IV so we could monitor them and see what skills they’re struggling with. We could also check to see what teachers students had and look at ways to improve consistency; all teachers could watch all the videos from ASL I to ASL IV.

Dr. Campbell thinks that’s a great idea and one of the things we might want to think about is that in another performance area which is musical performance. We have regular musical performances that are uploaded to the College’s YouTube website and students can learn about the musical programs through YouTube. We would have to be careful about which ones we post and we would have to be careful about student privacy. However, it would be a good way to promote a sign language program.

Dr. Carlson thinks there are other possibilities too. For example, it would be good to have the same exit test at the end of the classes so that we know exactly what everybody’s doing. If we got all our tests together we could pick and choose; finding a time to meet is the difficult part.

INTERNSHIPS: Carol Downing

Carol Downing has spent the past several weeks reviewing and restructuring the internship program. She has combined many existing great ideas that and added a few others from other interpreter training programs throughout the country. She has developed a packet that she has sent to all site mentors of our 18 interns.

The interns are placed as far away as Pasco and Sarasota. In Hillsborough County and Pasco County, interns are in the school systems and interpreting agencies. In Pinellas, they are in the Safety Harbor Public Library deaf literacy program. So far the reports have been positive. She was looking at the PLOs that mention that site mentors are grading the students. Also in the packet, students are informed that they have to prepare for the exit interview. So, the seed has been planted; we also discuss this issue in class. She meets once a week with the interns to update them on issues in the interpreting community and to hear student feedback about their internships.

Amy has Facebooked the SLIP program, used Twitter, and has also put articles in the Blue and White.

Carol also mentioned that it has not been easy placing students, because this is our biggest internship cohort ever. With the structured supervision that’s here and the expectations, she believes they are going to have a really successful semester.

Amy came to speak to the students; she sees us as a team and they see us as a team and this is the first time the program has ever worked with the College’s internship placement program.

Amy wanted to add that she has worked with a lot of different interns through a lot of different programs at this College and she has had the opportunity to be in both of the classes, but she also meets one-on-one with students to help them with their resumes. She is impressed with the professionalism and the passion these students have and while she is certainly not qualified to say anything about their skill level, she wishes that all of the students she works with were as passionate and professional. She also stated that Carol has gone above and beyond what faculty that work with internships typically do and that Carol’s planned site visits are truly remarkable; they take a lot of time and dedication.

Dr. Carlson wanted to add that she has had some of these students too, but since Carol has returned to SPC she has seen a huge difference in this group. One thing that stands out is their look of professionalism. They are very nicely dressed, hair coiffed, very professional appearance and posture, and just really nice. In the past, she doesn't remember such a dramatic change.

DEAFTEC GRANT: Dr. Beth Carlson

DeafTEC is a four year, \$4.5 million grant. Our partners are Austin Community College and two in California. One was Ohlone, but now it might be Pierce, and then the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind. These states all have the state schools involved. We are on the move in the sense that we've had a number of workshops. We will be going to CRID and we're also hoping to be able to work with some of the deaf students at the FAD workshop to help empower the students.

The training has been good and we would have liked more people at the corporate training. However, the questions were all good and those people were very happy, had great feedback, and they appreciated learning about how to work with deaf individuals and different careers. She is happy that Carol is helping with the grant.

Working Together is working with corporations and with individuals in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math education) careers and Project Access is for public speakers and high school teachers. Dr. Carlson asked Chris if he remembered in the past when Working Together was developed. It has been updated and the website has much information. We were at RIT and they actually had the Writing in the Disciplines workshop, which was very good. The emphasis was not to look at the difficulty STEM teachers have, but to look at the deaf student writing in an objective way. Attacking is often the case, but this workshop was about how to shift the perspective on the content by allowing deaf individuals to take on their own learning process in terms of growth and writing at that level. Many of the speakers were from Stanford; all info is on the website. The Developmental math people were also there; the same kind of approach was taken with them.

Beth added that she and Carol will be presenting at All College Day and that they also want to go to Miami Dade to present.

Jennifer Francisco inquired about the exit interviews. Carol said she hasn't set the panelists up yet, but she will be contacting people based on what she's seen in the files. She said she has seen names on random papers and that she will be focusing on that and that she would appreciate feedback on anything Jennifer thinks should be part of the exit interview because she knows that Jennifer was previously involved.

NEW CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTED FOR FALL 2013; SEQUENCE/WEBSITE SLIP PACKET

Dr. Oakley discussed the changes to the curriculum and sequencing. It was a huge project and it was implemented this fall. We will be adding news for the Sign Language/Interpreting program and a video to the website. We kept the old packet and added the new to the website. The new packet reflects the sequence changes. Students entering the program beginning fall 2013 will follow the new sequence. Dr. Oakley and Dr. Campbell met with all-campus advisors and presented the new sequence. Advisors were given an opportunity to ask questions.

The biggest change is the separation of Transliterating and Interpreting classes; also, we renamed Introduction to Interpreting instead of Practicum and added ASL IV. Fingerspelling was eliminated and will be integrated into the courses.

Dr. Oakley asked for any questions about the website. Barbara Wolter is our website person and makes changes when they are sent to her. She is very quick with changes and updates.

NEW SLIP MARKETING MATERIALS: PAMPHLETS, BOOKMARKS, AND “LIB GUIDES”

Dr. Oakley discussed the new pamphlets and bookmarks. These would be useful for Outreach events. We are now in the design process with the Marketing department and they will do a draft and we will add photos. We will have some bookmarks and “lib guides” that will have a QR code for the pamphlet.

Lib guides are interesting and have been developed by the library. “Lib” is short for library. We are going to put a QR code on the pamphlet and on the bookmark so students will be able to go directly to information on these library guides. Jenica Ibarra is our Communications person from the library so she will put together the initial lib guide. One will be for students/perspective students and will show resources; faculty will have access to add whatever they would like. This information has been sent to be to the full-time and part-time faculty so we can gather resources. Chris Wagner thinks video should be incorporated.

This is in very beginning stages and it not yet accessible to anyone, but we are going to add to it so students will be able to easily find information about the program.

Dr. Carlson said Jenica is very motivated. She sat with her for 30 minutes and she had something ready the next day.

NEW BUSINESS: COMMUNITY OUTREACH; WORKSHOPS

New Business

We requested a date for our spring meeting. We usually meet on Thursdays. March 13, 2014, is SPC’s spring break and the last week of March is the Pinellas County School spring break, so Thursday, March 20, 2014, is a good date. Debra will send out a “Save the Date” email.

We will plan to meet at 4:00 pm. Dr. Campbell said she will provide caffeine and snacks. The meeting will be at the Clearwater Campus; we will plan to use ES-104.

Community Outreach

Dr. Campbell said we remain committed to giving our students, in terms of our first program learning outcome, as much exposure to the variety of experiences in the deaf community as possible. We are committed to community outreach and she requested that if anyone has any events planned or if anyone would like students to come observe, please let us know. Vicky Fales said that SPC provided a test site for FRID in June. She expressed her appreciation.

She also mentioned that if anyone has a future need or just wants a group to observe in their place of business, that it would give students some experiences to better understand diversity. Judge Boyer has many times invited attendance at the Court house and Carol said she would make a plan to visit. Vicky Fales asked if SPC had anybody attending the Florida Association of the Deaf Conference in Tampa on October 17, 18, 19, and 20. Carol said we do not have a booth at the Conference, but we have 18 interns volunteering. Dr. Campbell said we will try to have the brochures done by then.

Chris suggested that we try to get the information about the interpreter program available. Carol said she would arrange to meet with Stacy and Sarah.

Julie Church from the Family Center on Deafness said that they are seeing a lot fewer SPC students then they used to see. They are seeing more HCC and USF students volunteering and doing internships. She said that the SPC students are usually new ASL students that need contact hours. She said that the Family Center has need for proficient signers in their tutoring programs and literacy programs.

Dr. Carlson works with the Silent Titans club and Julie said that she would open their facility for one of the Silent Titans meetings. They would love move involvement with SPC. Mike Henry asked Julie to email contact information and remind us that you would prefer ASL II students. While many of the programs require a high level of signing fluency, they have other programs with all kinds of levels of people in the deaf community.

Marika said that one problem is that many students don't know about the volunteer information and other organizations send us volunteer information, but we have not received one word or any contact from Julie's organization. Julie said that she would talk to their volunteer coordinator and get information to SPC.

Chris Wagner needs to understand what our policy is in terms of students going out into the field to do an interpreting job. He said they had a bad taste in the community years ago when instead of paying for an interpreter; some people would call colleges to get free interpreting. Chris asked if Carol remembered this. Carol said this is forbidden and her students are aware of this.

Dr. Carlson said that Cynthia Bedient gave us a list of agencies that she sends out for interpreter requests when we tell people that we're sorry, but we can't help.

Jennifer Francisco said that she thinks students who will become interns soon should be required to become members of the Silent Titans and actively prove their involvement. Carol said we actually require them to attend and interpret the meetings.

Jennifer Francisco said that at the University of Wisconsin, she was in education and they had an electronic file with her teaching included. She would post the videos and other people would see them. Carol said that gives her the idea to have students make their portfolios electronic next year.

Dr. Campbell said this program really keeps a strong emphasis on community. One of the problems she sees with some students is that when they enter any classroom, they tend to think about their learning alone. It is very difficult sometimes to talk with students about the importance of community because learners are not only responsible for their own learning, but for helping to provide the kind of environment where others can learn. When a student comes to her and starts complaining about the faculty member, one of the questions she asks is what they're doing to promote learning in the classroom and what their behaviors are that will promote that.

Anthony Verdeja arrived late and introduced himself and Chris Wagner commented that Anthony is one of the best.

Dr. Oakley discussed the workshops. She has been talking to Scott Lewis and Franklin Smith about putting together workshops for the department or for the tutors to teach those of us in the department some basic sign language skills.

Dr. Carlson said that the Silent Titans have a Facebook page and that many events are posted there. She said if requests are made, she can allow the board members on the FB site to post information. The first Silent Titans meeting is this Monday at 2 pm.

Carol mentioned that there is a play next Friday, September 20, 2013, at SPC at 7:30 pm in the Arts Auditorium; "Sir Slob and the Princess." It will be "shadow interpreted" and it has what she would call Bugs Bunny humor. Julie Church said they were bringing their kids from the Center.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:54 pm.