

Sign Language Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, March 20, 2014
Clearwater Campus, ES-104
4:00 pm

MEMBER ATTENDEES: The Honorable Bruce Boyer, Rosa Rodriguez, Mary Ann Ziegler

SPC ATTENDEES: Dr. Beth Carlson, Carol Downing, Krista Fusari, Mike Henry, Scott Lewis, Dr. Shirley Oakley, Marika Robinson, Jacob Wortock

INTERPRETERS: Gary Campbell, Golden Dawn Ricketts

Dr. Oakley called the meeting to order at 4:12 pm.

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Dr. Oakley welcomed everyone and had everyone introduce themselves.

II. MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

Dr. Oakley reviewed the minutes. Motion to approve minutes by Judge Boyer; seconded by Mary Ann Ziegler. All in favor; no one opposed. Minutes approved.

III. PROGRAM ASSESSMENT: Revised Program Learning Outcomes; Viability Report

Revised Program Learning Outcomes

Dr. Carlson, Carol Downing, Mike Henry, and Marika Robinson revised the old Program Learning Outcomes. They went from eight to five; using a grid to not just shorten them, but to make them more concise for what is actually being taught. Each PLO had to meet specific standards for what it would do, and what the students would learn and how they would learn it.

Viability Report

The Viability Report must be submitted yearly. Dr. Campbell and Dr. Oakley develop an action plan, decide who is responsible for the action and whether or not the plan was carried out. This year, back in December, we wanted to look at skill based pre- and post-assessments for each student so that we know what they're going to learn going in and what they've learned coming out so that they can make a smoother transition moving forward.

Scott Lewis, Franklin Smith and Marika Robinson are working on lab activities that promote student assessments and the early identification of INT majors. All in the SLIP program are responsible to develop and work on these activities throughout the year.

Mary Ann Ziegler said that Pinellas County Schools is about having their students learn ASL because although they're deaf, often times there is not a good role model for sign language in their family. She wondered if this pre- and post-test is something that PCS could look at as far as designing their own measurement. Dr. Carlson told Mary Ann that they certainly could, but if she's talking about deaf students, that she could give her access to a lot of more appropriate info based on the 5 C's (communication, cultures, connections, comparison, and communities). PCS is looking at developmental sequencing, so Mary Ann welcomes as much information as possible to share with her teachers.

The pre- and post-assessments have not been developed yet. Mike Henry said we start with a pilot program as an initial attempt and then go on from there.

Looking at the chart, we can see from fall 2012-2013 to fall 2013-2014 that we have gone down just a little bit. This gives us an idea of the classes we offer and the percent that are full and the percent face-to-face and blended and what we might project. We are headed to 16 in the Interpreter Program, so even if the numbers go down one or two, they're not what they were in 2008, which was 4 graduates from the program, so they have really gone up. Dr. Oakley said she had a student in her office yesterday that said that eight of her classmates and herself need Intro to Interpreting and have nothing else to take before they can proceed.

IV. INT AND ASL FACULTY POSITIONS

We have begun interviewing for a new INT instructor and a new ASL instructor. No decisions have been made yet, but we are excited to have two new full-time faculty in these departments. Congratulations to Dr. Beth Brightman, adjunct ASL instructor on completing her Ph.D.

V. FLORIDA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND: Mike Henry

The Florida School for the Deaf and Blind is located in St. Augustine, Florida. Mike handed out a fact sheet and is encouraging students to visit the campus for a day by giving contact hours. Mike said that he works with Rick Coleman, Coordinator of Outreach and Tours, and that he took 22 students last semester and the School gave them a grand tour. They have set it up where SPC students can go up Monday through Thursday for two daily tours at 9 am or 1 pm. The facility is wonderful! It is 80 acres, 45 large sophisticated buildings, and there are two separate campuses in reality; the School for the Blind and the School for the Deaf, and they share the 80 acres. Mike played a 3-minute video about the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind.

Mike said that depending on the tour (walking or by electric cart depending on how many students are participating), they may take students into the auditorium to see the deaf seniors practicing dance routines (they invite visiting students up on stage with them) and our students are surprised as some think of a school for the deaf under the old idea ... as an institutional setting especially when it comes to residential schools for the deaf. They live on campus Monday through Friday and go home for the weekend. The deaf students seem to develop a very positive self-image. Our students come back and they're enthused about what they've seen.

VI. INTERNSHIPS AND TALLAHASSEE: Carol Downing

Internships

We have breathed new life into the program thanks to the support of Amy Apicerno and now Jacob Wortock. We placed all 18 students and a handful have gone for their Bachelor's Degree at University of North Florida and USF. Another student from the internship experience got into USF's International Language Program to study ASL and BSL (British Sign Language). We have placed students in permanent positions in the school system and with interpreting agencies. We are looking at 16 students this year and now she can get on the phone a little earlier this year for placements, and we'll have a nice paper trail and be able to report on who's doing what, when, and where.

Mike Henry had a question about internships. He said that the last couple of years, we have done them all in the fall semester when most placements are available. He wondered if it would help to have flexibility to have some internships in the spring for a few students that weren't quite ready for fall internships. Carol said absolutely and this is being discussed, and we have assessments to make sure everyone is ready. We are going to be separating out the ones that are not ready. We have raised the bar and this is not a class you just take, but a class you earn.

Tallahassee

First, Carol thanked Rosa for taking 30 students (thanks to SPC Student Government who funded a bus for this trip) next Tuesday to go up to Tallahassee for Deaf Awareness Day. We're calling it the *Rally on Tally*, and what we're trying to do is get a licensure bill passed requiring a license for interpreters. There's a House bill and a Senate bill being considered and we're going up to basically send the message that it was needed five years ago, and it's time. The most obvious example of this is the interpreter at the Nelson Mandela memorial. He was not credentialed and had no professional license, and he should not have been on stage with all the Heads of State, but this is an extreme case. The other end of the spectrum is we need a professional license. We want to show our support of this bill not only for deaf community, but for the interpreting community as well. HCC, USF, Family Center on Deafness, and FRID have regions throughout the state and they are sending busloads of people. This is a very important event. The agenda has everything from a dance troupe to storytelling. The president of Florida Association of the Deaf and the president of the Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf will be the keynote speakers. Rosa has put together a flash mob, and it is already on the Silent Titans Facebook page! Carol also mentioned that as part of FRID, she would be assigned to meet with Senators and Congressmen as well. It will be a busy, busy day.

Judge Boyer asked if the legislative spectators would know what is being said. Rosa said that they would as we have signs so everybody can follow what they're signing.

FRID has been working very hard on this bill (HB 1125), and hopefully we will be successful.

VII. DeafTEC GRANT: Dr. Beth Carlson

We've had our first partner meeting this year at Lockheed Martin, a new partner. The entire Florida team (FSDB, SPC, Conmed Linvatec, Donna Lang and Gary Long) got together to discuss their concerns about getting more deaf people involved in the STEM initiative and given time constraints in schedules, particularly FSDB due to home/school communication and core standards. There is a lot of curriculum that deals with STEM in the public schools, but the pressure of what goes on in the public schools makes it difficult to focus on STEM. NTID and RIT attracts the cream of the crop in terms of deaf individuals in STEM programs, but in the typical Florida schools, you don't have the environment and number of students going into STEM careers. So the grant is shifting focus and the grant writers are asking for a 4-year renewal with new initiatives. Miami Dade is expected to offer a Project Access Workshop in the fall. Carol and Beth are going to Sacramento to present the Working Together Workshop at a pepnet 2/AHEAD Conference in July. Registration and airfare is being paid for by pepnet. Florida, California, Texas and NTID/RIT will all be presenting on behalf of DeafTEC. Florida wants to focus more on middle and high school students and offer STEM camps and is working with the literacy center at Safety Harbor to pull the kids together to offer more opportunities. At ZVRS, there are a lot of deaf people that have advanced degrees in technology. We hope to pull in these people to be role models to students in high school dual enrollment at NTID so we are trying to encourage more students in that direction. Again, the \$4.5 million grant is in the 4th year for Florida, Texas and California. There's a new partner in California.

Many positive directions are taking place as partners look carefully at the populations that we are working with.

The next phase of the grant may be to look at several aspects. Currently we need to do more training, so we need more outreach from those who are aware of DeafTEC. We work on sensitivity with deaf culture, working with deaf people, and technology access, and tips for working with deaf people.

Dr. Carlson said the idea is really to go out to train and then train the trainers and then they go out share all the materials they get for free with others so everything spreads. It's the constant contact that makes a difference. Dr. Carlson is hopeful that more contacts will lead to more training and hopes to get into Honeywell to encourage partnership like Lockheed Martin in Orlando which is now a trainer with several deaf employees.

SCREENING

Last year there was talk about a screening for ASL II students and there was actually a student who was to advance and the model didn't work because the model was too high level. ASL III is not enough to turn a student into an interpreter. One student quit the program last week. She said it was too much and she realized it wasn't for her. We are doing our best to support them, but Dr. Carlson said that we need to accept that this is going to happen and that it is probably a good thing. The consensus is that the screening is working.

Mary Ann Ziegler said facilitators of Sign Language who are not as skilled as an interpreter, but work with children that have a low cognitive level (IQ about 40), can communicate with a child that doesn't have an extensive vocabulary. Mary Ann said she has seen a very big jump in autistic deaf children. If, down the line, you'll all be working with students that want to be involved in deafness and deaf culture, but won't be interpreters and they want to work in the public school system, they could work with special needs children in the public school system.

Dr. Oakley asked what the credentials were for hiring for this type of position. Mary Ann said a high school diploma because they are like an assistant in the classroom and that passing a series of tests in terms of knowledge of academics and reading would be required. These are usually people that come into her office and have usually sent a video. Mary Ann, even though her signing is rusty, can tell someone who is good and someone who is not. If she is not comfortable with their skill set, she asks for a video of them keeping up with the evening news. If they can't keep up with that, Mary Ann would be uncomfortable with their signing and she would not recommend they be hired as an interpreter, but if they want to be an assistant in the class to gain experience, then that would work.

Dr. Oakley mentioned that in a few minutes we would be discussing a proposed Certificate Program in ASL to do this exact type of thing. We have approval to start the process, but the hardest part will be to prove the need. It is easy to show that interpreters are needed, but she's not sure how easy it will be to show that facilitators are needed.

VIII. NEW SLIP MARKETING PAMPHLET

Dr. Oakley said the pamphlet is in the draft stage and does need some updating. She thanked Carol for bringing some of the needed updates to her attention.

One of the photos shows the students that went on a field trip to Gallaudet University last year. They are now all graduates of the Interpreter Training Program. This trip was also funded by the SGA.

Judge Boyer said this is the fifth revision of drafts since he has been on the Board, and the President of the Pinellas County Deaf Services, Jerry Connor, has said that you need to reflect minorities in your photos. The very first photo used had only white children. It is proven that photos must have minorities to draw in minorities, and the current photo has only one minority. It was suggested that a group shot of the Silent Titans would be a great addition as it reflects the diversity of the program.

Dr. Oakley said that we talked about this pamphlet at our September meeting and just yesterday she received this draft. She pointed out the addition of the QR code and said that when students go to the lib guide, they will find faculty contact information, sequencing, the SLIP packet, and other resources such as FRID, etc. She said it wasn't easy to convince, but we think it's a plus!

Dr. Carlson wonders if the final draft could be sent to the Board and everyone was in agreement.

IX. ASL CERTIFICATE PROPOSAL

Dr. Oakley brought up the Bureau of Labor Statistics – Occupational Outlook – and said something like this could be used to show the need exists. She couldn't find one for ASL, but she did for Interpreting and Translators. If you look at the job outlook, a few years ago, it was 17%, and now it is 46%. She thinks that is a pretty good jump. We will need to find something similar to this to show that a need does exist. The consensus is that something like this can be found.

Students will go through ASL I, II, III and IV and Structure, but won't go into Interpreting, but probably Fingerspelling. Dr. Oakley asked for thoughts from the group. Marika thinks it's good to be certified. For example, maybe they're applying to a bank and it would be great to document and show proof that they know ASL.

Dr. Carlson said that when thinking of the students it tends to happen a lot where the next step is Interpreting, but they don't think they could be or want to be an interpreter. Unfortunately, we need to say goodbye to the students after they have taken 22 credit hours. Clearly, there is a need. Perhaps a survey at businesses or schools would be a good idea. Dr. Oakley has seen at least two students in last month looking for advisement as they don't want to continue into Interpreting, but they have all these classes and they are not sure what to do next. They would be excellent candidates for this type of certificate program. Mike Henry suggested it would be helpful if Mary Ann could write a letter indicating there is a need. Mary Ann said it is a very small in because deafness is a small group and then you superimpose on that the conditional handicap conditions. She said she has 4 or 5 interpreters at a center and she feels their skills are underutilized. They had a deaf family move into Pinellas County with 5 deaf children, all special needs. The position doesn't pay well, however, but perhaps making it a board item and creating a new job description would help.

There is no framework in the state college system because it doesn't exist in the State of Florida. It does exist in other states. Dr. Carlson mentioned South Carolina, North Carolina, California and New Jersey. Dr. Oakley said we could probably follow their pattern. Dr. Carlson said it would be very clear that this is not Interpreting, but you need the verbiage to state that you could facilitate in the hospital, work for the Coast Guard, the police, etc. just to be the go to person to help with comfort, ask if they could get them some water, and/or just basic communication to settle down a person. Carol said the addition of the Certificate Program also might beef up the dual enrolled high school students that are so motivated and are actually very good. The student might turn into an interpreter, maybe not.

Dr. Oakley took a moment to introduce Scott Lewis and said he teaches Fingerspelling and tutors in our ASL Lab.

Scott Lewis wanted to add something about dual enrollment high school students. He said his daughter was not allowed to take a class. Dr. Carlson said she had to pass PERT. Scott's daughter attended Calvary Baptist High School. The ASL school where she was taking it said she wasn't allowed. Dr. Carlson said we need to contact them. Scott said that his daughter has already graduated now and is attending UCF, majoring in speech therapy.

Dr. Oakley said that we need to show the need in various ways and convince the Board of Trustees, President, and Vice President and then from there we work on the framework. The sooner, the better is the consensus.

X. SPC INTERPRETER AVAILABILITY FOR CAMPUS EVENTS

At times we have been told that interpreters are not available. This appears to be an issue of funding and lack of interpreters.

One example is that PCS asks for a 72 hour notice for scheduling an interpreter. PCS tries very hard to satisfy all requests even those with less than a 72 hour notice, but those cannot be guaranteed. PCS goes to agencies to hire interpreters if necessary. If it is a public event on school property and sponsored by the school (i.e., the theater department), it is the responsibility of the school to provide an interpreter (if requested).

Scott had an experience where he was taking classes at SPC, but needed to observe classes held in public schools, but he couldn't use school interpreters. He needed to use SPC interpreters. With that process they said they were sorry but they couldn't do it that day, but they paid for an interpreter because he needed to observe that day.

Mary Ann Ziegler said if you are a rep of a school such as SPC that you would need to bring your own interpreter.

Dr. Carlson said she thinks it's a budgetary issue that needs to be addressed from a different perspective. They lost a C Print person and that person has not been replaced. She thinks that as faculty we won't change this, but it needs to go the top.!

Dr. Oakley asked if there was something the Advisory Board could do to help. Carol Downing suggested to the Advisory Board that a vendor list be put in place that would be the "go to" thus eliminating the chance of ever having to tell a student "No, we can't do it". The problem with vendors, per Mary Ann Ziegler, is the cost (\$60/hr is average) and vendors don't always have availability.

As soon as a vendor is required it comes out of a budget – the Provost's budget perhaps? The University of Texas and Austin Community College were recognized as role models as they have it budgeted in the right place.

Dr. Oakley said she knows this is an issue ... one not easily resolved.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

The addition of new board members was discussed. Mary Ann Ziegler does not have her replacement yet. Judge Boyer stated that in the real world with six months' notice, anyone can make a meeting if they really want to.

Judge Boyer suggested that the next e-mail state that if they do not attend, they will be removed from the Board.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 9, 2014, at the EPI Center. The meeting will begin at 4:30 pm and will be followed by the Advisory Committee Appreciation Event/Dinner at 6:00 pm. Krista will schedule and advise us of the meeting room.

XII. ADJOURN

This was Mary Ann Ziegler's last meeting. After 39 years in school system, Mary Ann is "graduating!" We all thanked her for her service to the Board and wished her well. The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 pm.