

Minutes of Learning Lab Department Meeting  
June 23, 2009  
1:00 in B1-28G

Attendance: Paul Bonila, Gail Chaskes, Jay Howard, Arlene Kline, Olympia Mitchell, John Nace, Xiaorong Peng, John Pinto, and Mary Ann Yannuzzi

Since quorum was not present initially, the approval of minutes was postponed.

**Announcements:**

- Vacation requests need to be given to M. Yannuzzi, especially for Summer 2 session, so any necessary staffing changes can be addressed.
- Fall Schedules – if you did not get a class list by e-mail, you can get a hard copy from M. Yannuzzi. She would like your requests by next week.

**Updates:**

- **SACC** –the merger with SACC was supposed to occur on July 1, 2009. However, the budget office needed more lead time. The staff of SACC will move to our department. Arnold DiBlasi will still be in charge of supplies. It is expected that we will probably meet as one large department by Fall in-service week. In the past, SACC did not typically hold department meetings. Although, we were initially led to believe that there was sufficient money for student tutors in SACC, we now learn that it is not the case. Since the college did not want to restrict SAAC hours, more money was always found. M. Yannuzzi raised the concern with Dean Cooper. Another issue raised by A. DiBlasi involves security. With 138 PC's, the area is somewhat crowded. In addition, there are personnel issues, in that some faculty work academic year while others are 12 month employees. We will also need to deal with issues such as students working on non-college related sites, such as FACEBOOK.
- **Science positions** – Dr. Ted Wong and Nicolina Contardo are the two finalists whose names were sent up to be interviewed by Dr. Curtis. It appears that the Department may be getting two full-time positions in the Science area. We do appreciate the prior contributions of Xiaorong Peng and Anna Seixas.
- **Service Hours** –
  1. M. Yannuzzi will be asking full-timers to do 3 or 4 part-time faculty observations in the Fall as service hours.
  2. College-wide service: some faculty are serving in other areas of the college. (e.g., J. Pinto attends ESL meetings, G. Chaskes sat on the Math Dept. Hiring Committee, M. Yannuzzi is on the Technology Coordinating Committee, etc.) It would be desirable for some of our faculty to attend English meetings, Developmental Ed. Meetings, and College Writing Meetings. In addition, we need a Federation Representative from both the full and part-time units, and we need a representative for the Faculty Council of Education. There will be a College Wide Task force starting up for Developmental Education, and the Learning Lab should be represented.

M. Yannuzzi is still on the DE Innovations Committee which worked on the curriculum for the 5-week English workshops that are being offered to former CAP A students. There will be 6 in Summer II and 6 in the fall. If students don't pass the placement, they can take a 3 week workshop and try again. If they still do not pass, they must go to Adult Basic Education. A task force met with Dr. Thompson, Dean Cooper and Dr. Gay. The task force also met with Dr. Curtis yesterday, and the dialogue was civil, but no apparent progress was made. One concern is that the number of ABE classes at the college have decreased substantially. According to someone who works in that division, there is a large waiting list.

There may be a possibility of resetting scores for Compass. Placement in 097 is mainly based on writing, not reading. A minigrant was given to analyze data this past Spring for 098; however, the report is not available yet. Paula White is planning 7 week Reading workshops for Spring 2010. There will be Learning Lab Study Groups for writing in Fall 2009, as well as for Reading, starting in Spring 2010. G. Chaskes mentioned that 5 week workshops for Math 016 students, with a Lab hour attached, will be starting in Summer II.

Funding for workshops comes from the College Fund as well as an anonymous donor, who contributed \$15,000. Paula White will be getting a half-time assistant to help in a month or so, as she and Yvonne King have a great deal of work to handle.

- **On-line Tutoring** – two tutors, Carl Laguerre from South Lab and Diane Dobkin from Central Lab will be meeting with Peter Margolis to learn about WEB study. They will be piloting on-line tutoring in SSII. J. Nace said that he would like to be informed in the future when Writing tutors are involved and that he is personally interested as well. G. Chaskes recommended that Carl's subjects be made public, so that he is not getting on-line requests for mathematics levels that he does not tutor.
- **Library/Learning Connection** – On Mondays and Tuesdays, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., tutoring functions move to the Library. During the Fall semester, this will be the case every evening. G. Chaskes suggested that for Fall, a college-wide announcement be made by the Dept. Head and/or the Tutor Coordinator informing the college community of the change in location for tutoring after 6. Appointments can still be made, either by a tutor who is free, or a Librarian. O. Mitchell raised a concern about Library staff supervising tutors and assuming functions that were previously Learning Lab responsibilities. M. Yannuzzi said that it is a long-term vision for SAAC, the Library and the Learning Lab to be together as a Learning Commons. At this time, there is no news of a Learning Commons at West Philly Regional Center. In fact, there is no library or SAAC there at this time.

#### **Discussion:**

- **Learning Communities** – The Learning Communities, which have been discussed previously, will begin in Fall 2009.

- **AN Seminars** – there will be 4 offered in Fall semester. They have a lab class and seminar class. Last fall, 4 were scheduled; however, only 2 ran.
- **YouthBuild** – Sandra Gonzales-Torres is in charge of the program. They will have 1 hour of Lab and one hour of seminar run by Lab faculty.
- **Math Workshops** – As mentioned above, new 5-week workshops, aimed at Math 016 students, will begin in SSII. A weekly lab hour, staffed by Lab faculty, is part of the program. It is hoped that students who retake the placement exam can place into Math 017.
- **Tutor Code of Conduct:** A recent situation, where a student apparently violated the tutor code of conduct, raised some issues. A hand-out, written on June 23rd, addressed the issue based on the tutor code of conduct that was given by the Dept. Head and used for the Audit in 2007. At the meeting, a new undated code of conduct was presented that was worded differently regarding the issue in question. It was suggested by G. Chaskes that good communication is needed such that all department members (including some who have served on the tutor committee), as well as the tutors, have the same clear knowledge and understanding of the “current” tutor code.

**Other:**

O. Mitchell mentioned that there is a new advising system, such that a counselor meets with a group of students, rather than one-on-one with each student to help them schedule classes. As a direct result of O. Mitchell’s information, G. Chaskes plans to see Jon Brown to talk about our CAP Math 016 classes with Lab hours. We want to insure that CAP Math 016 students are made aware of the five sections of CAP Math 016 that have a fourth Lab to help them succeed.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Chaskes