

ASPA News - July 1998

Issue Theme: "ASPA - Finding the Balance"

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Remarks from the Chair

*David J. Werner, Chancellor
Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville
ASPA Chair*

I appreciate the confidence the ASPA members have expressed in me by selecting me to be Chair of the Board of Directors. ASPA has been blessed with outstanding leadership in its short history. I will do my best to live up to the standards set by my predecessors.

I see two important goals for ASPA in the near future: increasing membership and enhancing communication with presidents, chancellors and provosts.

Increasing membership is important for several reasons. First, there is strength in numbers. The more members ASPA represents, the more forcefully it can speak on behalf of specialized and professional accreditors. Second, by increasing the number of members, ASPA generates

additional revenue to enhance member services and to minimize dues. Finally, additional members provide additional voices to speak on behalf of ASPA and accreditation.

Increasing communication with presidents, chancellors, and provosts is important, in my judgment, because many of them are hostile toward specialized and professional accreditation. I believe that much of their hostility stems from a lack of knowledge and from the filtering of accreditation information through deans and program directors who often misrepresent accreditation standards and requirements as a means of leveraging resources. Better-informed presidents and provosts will be more supportive presidents and provosts. For this reason, we will discuss this topic during the fall ASPA meeting. Look for it on the agenda for September 14, 1998.

Other topics for fall are discussed elsewhere in this newsletter. If you have additional topics to suggest, please contact the ASPA office.

I look forward to seeing you in San Jaun.

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Smile! You're on ASPA's Web Site

*Al Rudisill, Executive Director
National Association of Industrial Technology (NAIT)*

ASPA is developing a brand new Internet web page. The page can be viewed at **<http://nait.org/aspa>**. At this point, the page includes sections on: ASPA's Goals, Functions, and Purposes; Member Agencies; Officers; Newsletters; Code of Ethics; Calendar of Events; Information for New Members; and a link to the Council on Higher Education Accrediation (CHEA).

Content for the ASPA web page was provided by Cynthia Davenport, Executive Director of ASPA, while I did the HTML programming. The ASPA web site has been temporarily loaded as a sub-section of the NAIT web site. This will give the ASPA Board time to make decisions about long-term location and required support services.

The page already contains hot-links to the web-sites of your fellow accreditors. A mere click also allows you to send E-mail from the site to your colleagues, to members of the ASPA Board and to the ASPA office.

Although the site will be more widely publicized this fall, ASPA member agencies and friends of ASPA are encouraged to visit the site. Please suggest ways the web pages could be improved and expanded. The ASPA Board is also interested in member views regarding the level of importance and priority that ASPA should place on web site development and maintenance. Your reactions and suggestions should be addressed to Cynthia Davenport at aspacd@aol.com.

Are you glad you smiled??? We hope so. Please stop by to visit and let us know if you like what

you see so far.

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September Overview

The next ASPA meeting will be September 13-15, 1998 at The Ritz-Carlton, San Juan Hotel & Casino in San Juan Puerto Rico. **(Detailed information in the enclosed registration materials supplements this overview.)** Non-members and guests may register for ASPA meetings. ASPA conducts most of its business in open sessions.

Sunday: Meetings of Committees, Task Forces (TF) and some special sessions (see separate schedule). All registered participants are invited to ASPA's first "New Members Showcase," which will be followed by a reception.

Monday: Open meetings of the Board and Members, plus an informal "structured sharing" discussion of the possibility of developing common data elements for use by regional and specialized accreditation agencies. The Board will meet briefly in Executive Session to act on applications for membership. To minimize repetition, members are especially encouraged to be present for the Board meeting.

Tuesday: A full day of Professional Development on finding a workable balance between process and outcomes will be addressed from several different perspectives. Don't miss this session which is sure to be both lively and informative.

Early registration assists in better planning. All ASPA-member accreditors who register for the full meeting, with payment, by August 10, 1998 should plan to take advantage of the **\$50.00 "early bird" discount**.

Non-member accreditors and guests are also encouraged to register in early August. Full sets of meeting materials will be available on a first-come-first-served basis to those who register later than August 15.

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Striking a Balance Between Process and Outcomes

The ASPA Professional Development Committee will present "Striking a Balance Between Process and Outcomes" at the Fall meeting in Puerto Rico. The program will start at 8:30am. Keynote speaker, Donna M. Cowan, Associate Dean and Professor in the field of Family and Consumer Sciences, Iowa State University, will address outcomes from an institutional perspective.

Next you will hear from two panels of accreditors. Panel One, "Accreditors as Facilitators of

Outcomes Assessment," will focus on what the panelists' groups have done to facilitate institutions' efforts to develop meaningful outcomes assessment programs. Panel Two, "Assessing the Accreditation Process," will focus on what the panelists' groups have done to examine their own standards and the application of their standards in the area of outcomes.

Then, in a segment called "Looking at Language," members of several breakout groups will work together to review prepared prototype standards and focus on how the standard treats the balance between process and outcomes. The day will end about 4:30pm after a group wrap-up and feedback session. Guests are encouraged to register for the meeting and join members in this interactive session.

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The Vote is In... Elections were held at ASPA's Annual Meeting on March 6, 1998. Congratulations to all who were elected to terms running from July 1, 1998 - June 30, 2000.

Changes to the Board of Directors:

Chair: **David J. Werner**, chancellor, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. Dave is ASPA's first non-accreditor chair; we have already benefitted from his insight and ASPA is sure to be nourished by his leadership.

Vice-chair: **Betty J. Horton**, Director of Education & Accreditation, Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs replaces retiring vice-chair, **Daniel E. Dupree**, Executive Vice President, American Council for Construction Education.

Public Member: **Marga Rose Hancock**, Executive Vice President, American Institute of Architects Seattle. Ms. Rose Hancock replaces retiring public member, **Linda Perle** who served on the Board for four years.

Re-elected: ASPA will continue to benefit from the participation of our Immediate-past chair, **Carol L. Bobby**, Executive Director, Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs.

We also say good-by to **Joe Turner**, Computing Sciences Department, Clemson University. Joe served as a faculty member from a member-accredited program. His replacement faced circumstances which precluded service on the Board. The position will remain vacant until proposed bylaws changes are discussed this fall.

Also elected in March were:

Elaine Cuklanz, JRCNMT: Nuclear Medicine Technology, to chair the Membership Committee (2 years).

Pat Evans, CEPH: Public Health, to chair the Nominations Committee (1 year).

Kimberly Werner, ACPE: Pharmacy, to chair the Professional Development Committee (2 years).

Working with nominations submitted by members, ASPA's Committee on Nominations prepared a slate of 26 candidates for 14 positions. Here's a special **thank you** to those of you who agreed to allow your name to be placed on the ballot and to the Committee on Nominations for another job well-done. Your willingness to participate helps make ASPA strong and effective.

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Challenge Your Limits

Carol L. Bobby

ASPA Chair from 1996-98

Chair's Remarks made at ASPA Meeting on March 6, 1998

Hotel Inter-Continental; Chicago, IL

(edited for Newsletter)

Those of you who heard my remarks at the Fall 1997 ASPA meeting in Tucson, know that I admitted to you all that I had waited until I was on the airplane to think about what I would say to you in my chair's remarks. For this meeting, once again I managed to wait until the 11th hour to sit down and think about what it was I wanted to include in my chair's remarks to you, the members and guests of ASPA.

This meeting is my last official opportunity to address you from the chair's perspective. That should have made a difference because "last remarks" should always be profound, thought-provoking, and memorable. A lot of time, sweat and energy should have gone into this talk.

Instead, every time I thought I would sit down to focus on my remarks, I found myself coming up with a wide range of excuses to procrastinate. I found abundant excuses at home, and even more at work.

Well, eventually the 11th hour arrives and all the excuses are gone. When this happened, I realized that what I want to say is, after all, really very simple. What I need and want to say to you is simply "thank you."

That's right, I simply want to say "thank you" to each of you individually and to all of you collectively for giving me the opportunity to lead this organization for the past two years and for allowing me to grow into a more competent professional alongside ASPA.

Being allowed to chair this organization has been a highlight in my professional life. Many of you have heard me outline many of ASPA's accomplishments in my chair's remarks at past meetings. I take a lot of pride in these accomplishments. I am proud of this organization for

offering a strong collective voice for its members, the specialized accrediting agencies. Part of this pride comes from knowing that I have participated in many of ASPA's initiatives, such as.....

- The Regional/ASPA Task Force on Collaborative Site Visits
- CHEA's Task Force on Recognition
- The Task Force on Accreditation of the Health Professions Education
- Speaking on behalf of specialized accreditation at the State Department
- Meeting with our sister organization, the AAAC, in Montreal

But, now I want to tell you about the effect that my participation in ASPA has had on me personally and professionally.

In essence, I have been stretched - like this rubber band. I have learned to appreciate being stretched as a professional.

For instance, I have learned a lot about managing meetings and speaking in public. I have learned that I must stretch and be flexible in my thinking, especially when speaking on behalf of a diverse membership. In other words, I have learned that sometimes you must act as a representative of others even when you wish you could speak your own opinions for yourself.

I have learned that I must find my way around issues, thoughts and things - that sometimes you must go full circle in your thought processes in order to recognize that where you began is either where you should end or start fresh. Circular thinking is not always bad; sometimes it is clarifying.

I have learned that embracing ideas different from my own can create a package that is better and more solid than 1,000 ideas floating out there alone, i.e., that compromise can be satisfying.

Finally, I also learned some limits. Rubber bands and people do have limits. I was surprised at how far I could stretch, but I was even more surprised that I could learn when to say "enough."

And this is my challenge to each and everyone of you - allow yourselves to stretch a little more. Let's be flexible as we face new challenges in accreditation. Let's think our way around the hard issues and see if where we began is where we should still be. Let's embrace new and different ideas and see if our efforts hold together to create something solid and, if not, let's determine if we should let go.

I have used "we" and "us" for the past few challenges, but I want to end with a personal challenge to each of you. I leave my role as chair [on June 30]. I have already told you that this time as your chair has been gratifying, rewarding, and stimulating. And I have told you that the reward I feel is from my involvement at many different levels. Now I want to challenge all of you to consider how you could stretch yourself by participating at a higher level within ASPA.

For that reason, I am giving you each a gift. Call it a bribe, call it a farewell gift, or call it

something to remember me by. As you help yourself to a rubber band from one of these bags, remember that I am giving each of you a rubber band as a symbol of the gift you all gave to me when you elected me as your chair. You gave me an opportunity to stretch and grow professionally. I can only wish the same for each of you.

And this, folks, is my farewell fling..... (shoots the rubber band!)

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A Few Reminders

- Contact the ASPA Office if you are willing to help represent ASPA and specialized accreditation at meetings on an "as needed" basis.
- Submit information on any recent surveys or information gathering activities to Kayem Dunn for addition to the Survey Data Base.
- Applications for Membership in ASPA are due in the ASPA Office on August 1 for review at the Fall Meeting and on February 15 for review at the Spring Meeting.

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March Meeting Highlights

The ASPA Board and Membership met in Chicago, IL on March 6, 1998. Here are a few meeting highlights not covered elsewhere in this newsletter (The ASPA board and members will receive meeting minutes in a separate mailing; others may request a copy by contacting the ASPA office).

- **Proposal to Streamline ASPA:** Members endorsed the concept of taking steps to reduce the size of the Board, streamline ASPA's election process and make meetings less cumbersome. A proposed draft bylaws revision intended to implement these concepts has been prepared. The draft will be circulated to the board and members in early August with a cover memo from the Task Force. If action is taken in September, changes could begin to be phased in with the March 1999 elections.
- **Revised Strategic Plan:** Kayem Dunn, on behalf of the Executive Committee, reviewed the many things ASPA has accomplished since its first Strategic Plan was developed. She presented a much streamlined revised Plan which will continue to guide ASPA's activities and services.
- **CHEA Recognition Plans:** Following the discussion held in March, comments on CHEA's draft proposed recognition requirements (policy) were submitted. Members received copies of that letter which requested an opportunity to see a second draft of the policy document along with a to-be-developed procedures document.
- **One-Time-Only Invitation to New Members:** After the March meeting, a letter of invitation was sent to a baker's dozen of your fellow accreditors. These groups had

provided some degree of initial support for ASPA but were not current members. They were invited to become members of ASPA by accepting the ASPA *Code of Good Practice* and paying their annual dues. A formal application for membership is waived for those who join during FY98-99. Several groups have already responded positively to ASPA's invitation and others have made a firm commitment to discuss membership at their fall decision-making meeting. ASPA's fall meeting will include a new member showcase. Plan to attend and learn more about your newest colleagues.

- **New Spring Meeting Dates:** ASPA's spring meeting has been moved to late March/early April. The fall meeting will continue to be held the week following Labor Day week. Dates for 1999 are: March 28-30 at the Ritz-Carlton, Pentagon City - just a hop, skip and a jump from National airport. A site has not yet been selected for the fall meeting to be held on September 26-28. In the year 2000, meetings will be held on April 2-4 (in the Chicago area) and September 10-12.
- **Task Force (TF) and Committee Reports:** ASPA's task forces and committees reported to the membership on their many activities. The Audiences TF was thanked for its efforts and dissolved. The HEA TF will continue to monitor activities to reauthorize the Higher Education Act and will reply, from an educational perspective, to some of the issues addressed in the report of the Cost Commission.
- **Professional Development Session:** Validity and Reliability, the topic for the March professional development session, drew many guests to the meeting. Sally B. Pancrazio, Dean, College of Education, Illinois State University, spoke on "Accreditation Counts: Quality Indicators for Quality Programs" while Karen W. Kershenstein, Director, Accreditation and Eligibility Determination Division, US Department of Education, spoke on "Validity and Reliability - Flexing Within the Rules."

Both speeches received excellent reviews from those who heard them. Hard copies were sent to all members and registered guests following the meeting. You may like to know that Karen's speech was praised at the June meeting of DoE's NACIQI as being very helpful to agencies undergoing review.

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Time to Think *Cynthia A. Davenport, Executive Director*

ASPA

Talking or Thinking? - This headline, from the most recent issue of *Media E-Tips*, a one-page electronic newsletter by media specialist Al Rothstein, got me thinking. The article cautions against preparing a list of "talking points" when facing a media interview. Rothstein teaches the value of "thinking points" in his media training sessions. Preparing for interviews by using "thinking points" helps interviewees to show genuine concern, give thoughtful answers, build credibility, relate to the public, and be better prepared for surprise questions. Yes, it takes time to prepare by thinking rather than memorizing - but that's what makes the session work well.

As I talk to those who call the ASPA office or to folks I see at the assorted meetings I attend on

behalf of ASPA, I grow more and more aware of how the fast pace of life today has begun to interfere with our thinking time. People - and I include myself in this - are so busy "keeping up" and working on "projects," that it has become a true luxury to take time to think and consider and brainstorm.

Fax machines and e-mail do have advantages, but they also have unintended negative consequences. Just as they have increased the speed of communication, they have also worked against taking "time to think" before responding. I become more convinced each day that we need to schedule time to think - without phones or faxes or piles of items to read - just quiet time to think or strategize with peers.

One of the important services that ASPA provides to members is the chance to come together for a couple days twice a year and to "think" together about issues that impact specialized accreditation. Sometimes an action will emerge; sometimes more thinking is required; sometimes a decision not to act is the wisest choice. However, feedback from those of you who attend ASPA meetings says you place high value on this opportunity to discuss and to consider and to explore. You say you find the ASPA discussions helpful when you present issues to your own Commissions or Boards or Councils.

Because the meeting agendas are often full, "think" time is built into each meeting by including special sessions prior to the first day's reception and via a Structured Sharing session which offers a welcome change of pace between the Membership meeting and the combined meeting of the Board and Membership.

Our thoughtfulness has been evident since ASPA's formative years. The Member *Code of Good Practice* is widely referenced and continues to generate positive comments. Our thoughts on cooperation between Regional and Specialized Accreditors are reflected in *Collaborative Evaluations by Regional and Specialized Accrediting Agencies: Guidelines and Procedures*. This resource document, which grew out of an initiative between ASPA and Middle States Association, is also being widely used.

Some members of ASPA have never attended an ASPA meeting. Still others may have missed the past meeting or two because of conflicts or being just plain too busy. If you fit into either of these categories, you've missed some good "thinks" and ASPA has missed having your views expressed as it makes decisions.

If you have conflicts that preclude being at the fall meeting, I encourage you to review the list of future meeting dates. Mark your schedule now; try to block out some time to join your accreditation colleagues for a good group think. I promise that you and ASPA will both benefit.

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More on the Fall Agenda

In addition to items noted elsewhere in this newsletter, the following topics are scheduled for discussion on September 14, 1998. Contact the ASPA office with your request to place additional items on the agenda.

- **Update on CHEA's Recognition Plans:** After the March comment period, CHEA's Recognition TF reviewed all comments and developed a second draft of the Recognition Policy document. The TF also reviewed draft Recognition Procedures. As *ASPA News* goes to press, we are still waiting to hear whether the CHEA Board acted on the policy and procedures documents during a short public meeting added to the July 7-9 Board retreat. Carol Bobby (CACREP: Counseling) and Mac Detmer (CAAHEP: Allied Health) represented specialized accreditation on this TF. You should expect to hear more about the status of these CHEA documents at the fall ASPA meeting.
- **Projects and Reports:** Task Forces and Committees will report on their work and present recommendations for discussion. ASPA members will again receive activity updates and liaison reports from a wide range of groups with an interest in accreditation and education.
- **Structured Sharing:** We've said we want it. Do we really? We've spent years talking about it. Could we do it? Do what, you ask.... Could regional and specialized accreditation agencies use common data elements to collect data? What are the pros and cons of asking for data in the same format institutions use when they submit data to the U.S. Department of Education? To what extent do these data apply to programs or units?
As part of this discussion, you will receive a summary of the current data collection activities of accrediting agencies. Donna Gollnick, (NCATE: Teacher Education) and David Wolf (AACJC/WASC: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges) will serve as co-facilitators for what is sure to be a lively discussion.
- **New Member Showcase:** Harry Jonas (LCME: Medical Education), Nancy Randolph (CSWE: Social Work) and Alvin Rudisill, (NAIT: Industrial Technology) will update you on some of their current activities. NAIT joined ASPA last year; LCME and CSWE joined ASPA for 1998-99. Plan to attend this special, pre-reception session and welcome your newest ASPA colleagues.

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