

Minutes of the Council of Allied Health in North Carolina

Wednesday, March 2 2005

General Administration Building

910 Raleigh Road

Chapel Hill, NC 27599

Office of the President, Board Rooms 1 and 2

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

I. Welcomes and Introductions

The Council meeting of the Allied Health in North Carolina began at 9:40 a.m.

Thomas Bacon, Chair for the Council of Allied Health in North Carolina asked attendees to introduce themselves and state what organization they were representing.

II. Approval of the January 5, 2005 Council Minutes

Bacon asked for the approval of the January 5, 2005 Council minutes. Minutes were approved. Bacon asked the presenters to begin their presentations on the major updates of their existing allied health programs and highlight new programs at their schools and institutions.

III. Presentation

Cathy Franklin-Griffin, Director of Program Services for the North Carolina Community College Systems. She distributed literature outlining the North Carolina Community College System's Curriculum Standards in the Health Sciences. All information on the programs can be located at www.ncccs.cc.nc.un and will be posted shortly on the new website address at www.nccommunitycollege.edu.

Franklin-Griffin indicated that North Carolina is the third largest community college system in the United States with 49 approved curriculum standards in the health sciences area by the State Board of Community Colleges.

Franklin-Griffin reported on the most recently approved and cutting edge programs. These included: the clinical trials research assistant associate degree program, the cytotechnology advanced certificate program, the polysomnography advanced certificate program, and the histotechnology associate degree program.

Franklin-Griffin stated that the polysomnography and histotechnology programs have gone to the State Board of Community Colleges for "future action" in February and will go "For Action" in March. An anticipated "marriage" of the biotechnology/nanotechnology and health sciences will produce new programs of study.

Joint initiatives include HealthCare Works! Coalition; Project Health; Criminal Background Checks.

Bacon interjected that on March 1, 2005 he attended the Joint Appropriations Committee of the General Assembly. President Broad and President Lancaster indicated that allied health and nursing programs would remain a high priority for the year. Broad and Lancaster stated they wanted to make it easier for students to enter into these curriculums. Bacon added that health science programs are a great way to build jobs and thus strengthen the economy of the state.

Bacon introduced Dr. Stephen Thomas the Dean of Allied Health Sciences at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. Thomas provided a handout on the departments and degrees offered at ECU. He indicated that there are nine departments with 560 students enrolled. Seventy percent of the students are graduate students with undergraduate enrollment increasing due to distance learning programs.

Thomas stated that ECU's Allied Health Sciences Department would be moving into in a new building on March 20, 2006. Information for the department is located at www.ecu.edu/ah.

Thomas explained that the Department of Clinical Laboratory Science was set up as a program for medical and physician assistant students. The department provides students with a good background as they go into medicine, especially in a fallback capacity if they are not accepted into medical schools or physician assistant programs. Areas of possible expansion include the molecular and forensic curriculums.

The Communication Sciences and Disorders Department started an Aud D program. Thomas explained that students can add an additional year to the Aud D for a Ph.D. degree. In the fall of 2004, the ECU Speech Pathology department took students from the University of Alaska who were looking for a Master's program.

Thomas added that ECU Health Services and Information Management Program had grown and became a distance-learning curriculum. ECU's occupational therapy program had its first graduates from the certificate in assisted technology program. The physical therapy department will be accepting the first class of doctoral physical therapy students (DPT) this fall and that the physician assistant studies program received money from the legislature for a cardiovascular center and will have a certification in the CD area soon. The rehabilitation studies program will have an on-line Ph.D. program this fall in rehabilitation counseling and will open up classes in the spring 2006.

Thomas concluded with ECU Allied Health Program recently joined several colleges and programs in a research rural community project to provide experiences for students and to meet the health care needs of individuals in the community. The university currently has a PT Clinic.

Lee McLean, the Chair of the Department of Allied Health Science at the University of

North Carolina at Chapel Hill spoke next. She provided a power point presentation and distributed handouts on the existing UNC programs at the university. McLean geared her presentation on what is new in the Department of Allied Health Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill programs. These programs included: the clinical laboratory science program's on-line certificate program for individuals who already are CLS certified starting this fall; the cytotechnology department's intensive certificate program in the molecular diagnostic area; the occupational science program's interviewing of faculty for the start of a Ph.D. program in the fall of 2006; the new DPT program, the on-line completer degree program designed for students who are practicing PTs (who had completed an MPT but who need to do additional course work); the radiologic sciences department current work on the construction of a consortium degree with other UNC system universities, the radiologic science on-line degree, and a new radiologist assistant program.

McLean explained that the rehabilitation counseling and psychology division had shut down temporarily due to budget cutbacks. Additional state funds were awarded in last year's legislative session specifically for this program with the understanding that emphasis of training would be on preparing counselors who have skill relating to the support of people with mental disabilities and mental disorder. McLean indicated that classes in this program would start this fall. She added that the speech and hearing sciences program is presently in the third year of it's Ph.D., and Au. D programs, and has a new on-line certificate program in auditory learning financed by the Alexander Graham Bell Grant funds.

Bacon introduced Sylvia Flack, the Dean of the School of Health Sciences at Winston Salem State University. Flack indicated that Winston-Salem State University has an Internet program for MLT's. The university's physical therapy program is a Master's program with the prospect of transitioning into a DPT. The occupational therapy program will transition in the fall to a Master's program. WSSU also offers a therapeutic recreational program and an exercise science and rehabilitation services program, which began in 2004. Flack added that WSSU has 500 students enrolled in allied health programs.

Flack indicated that WSSU is unique due to its many articulation agreements with community colleges, traditional colleges, and universities. Baptist Hospital had recently provided WSSU with 4.3 million dollars to accelerate their nursing program. WSSU's Community Health Education Program will start this fall and will be a feeder for the occupational and physical therapy programs. A pharmacy program will start in the fall of 2006. Flack stated she is presently working with McLean and Renner on the radiological science distance education program.

Flack indicated that the challenges and issues with new the creation of new programs include finding faculty, placement of students, facility space, and funding.

Bacon introduced Dr. Karen Lunnen, Head of the Physical Therapy Department at the Western Carolina University. Lunnen reviewed the status of allied health programs at WCU. Programs with highly competitive admissions and capped enrollment include athletic training (BS); communication disorders (MS); and physical therapy (MPT). Programs with strong enrollment include nutrition and dietetics (BS and internship); environmental health (BS); emergency medical care (BS); gerontology (an 18-hour certificate program at undergraduate and graduate levels); and the master of health science (MHS) with concentrations in nutrition, management, environmental health, education and gerontology. Two chronically under-enrolled programs have experienced recent growth; clinical laboratory science because of a new forensics minor and health information management, which currently has a capped enrollment of 16.

Lunnen indicated that WCU new programs consist of a bachelor's degree in athletic training; a gerontology certificate program at the undergraduate and graduate level; a forensics minor in the clinical laboratory sciences program; and the health systems administration bachelor's degree, which commences this fall. Lunnen stated that several of the health science programs and the engineering department are collaborating on the design of adaptive equipment devices. The physical therapy department has requested formal approval to plan both an entry level (pre-professional) and transitional (post-professional) Doctor of Physical Therapy degree. She added that WCU had received funding from KB Reynolds for their Human Movement Science Laboratory.

New programs under consideration at WCU include a consortium in radiologic science, respiratory science, occupational therapy, and a high-level health information management degree. On-going issues are availability of space, construction funding, student recruitment, clinical placement sites, and faculty recruitment and retention.

Tom Connelly, Dean of Cabarrus College of Health Science in Concord, North Carolina reported that Cabarrus initiated its CT MRI sequence this past January. The program is geared for currently employed students. The MRI program starts in the fall 2006 with the plan to build into a bachelor completion program in imaging.

The definitive plan for the graduate program will include using up to 15,000 square feet of unused space at Cabarrus College's new facility for graduate education. This space will be part of the large continuing education teaching and will allow their Educational Enhancement Center to offer more workshop and seminar type programs.

Cabarrus graduate program will concentrate on clinical education in nursing and in the area of faculty education. The college is focusing on the critical shortage of faculty in the allied health area and in nursing and will use these areas as part of a two-prong thrust for a master's program.

Bacon introduced Joy Renner, the director of Radiologic Science Division, DAHS, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Renner gave a power point presentation entitled: *Distance Learning BS Degree Consortium Program in Radiologic Science: Update*. Renner said that research from the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT), American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT), and the Sheps Center report on radiologic science workforce data formulate the idea of a plan of how to offer a baccalaureate level education for Radiologic Science professionals. This BS degree would be part of a consortium, and would not be an entry level BS, but a BS completion degree for individuals who are already RTs.

Renner stated that this BS degree consortium would develop a statewide network and encourage radiologic technologists to stay in North Carolina because of the educational opportunities available. The consortium provides a support and resource group to career minded RTs. The intent of the consortium would be to get individuals into master programs, then into faculty programs, and eventually into Ph.D. programs. The goal of the consortium would be to build a base for individual who are career minded and want to stay in the state. Each institution would establish admissions criteria. Renner added that consortium discussions with East Carolina University, Western Carolina University, UNC-Charlotte, Winston-Salem State University (and soon with Appalachian State University) had already commenced.

Renner added that the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is developing a radiologist assistant post-baccalaureate professional certificate for the fall of 2005. It will be a distance education program with on-campus components.

Renner's power point presentation on the BS degree in Radiologic Science from the UNC System consortium can be found on the Council of Allied Health in North Carolina's website at <http://www.alliedhealthcouncilnc.org>.

IV. Business of the Council: Discussion and Action

Bacon indicated that the Council's request for permanent funding to the General Assembly is in the AHEC budget request and is before the General Assembly. Bacon added that the Council had received help from the North Carolina Hospital Association in advancing its budget request to the Assembly. He added that the Duke Endowment ends this spring but that he remained cautiously optimistic and will keep member up to date with the budget's status. The Council had requested 350,000 for the year.

V. Reports

Alan Brown, the Council's Data Task Force Chair spoke on the Workforce Task Force Report. Brown directed Council members to a memo in their meeting literature, which listed the expert contacts for the previous six reports. He asked Council members for their input on how these reports are being used at their perspective institutions. Brown stated that knowing how organizations were using the data is important for the Council's visibility

and for funding purposes

Erin Fraher of the Sheps Center gave a power point report on the State of Allied Health Study. This report monitored newspaper listings from around the state for allied health job vacancies. The report presented data on the sheer number of those vacancies and the types of employers who had vacancies. The ten profession scrutinized included: occupational therapists, respiratory therapists, speech-language pathologists, medical laboratory technicians, medical technologists, nuclear medical technologists, PET technologists, pharmacy technicians, dental hygienists, and physician assistants. The report illustrated the time periods of February 1, 2004 - April 18, 2004 and September 5, 2004 - November 28, 2004. Fraher noted that advertisements between the two time periods remained significantly stable solidifying correct data collection. Fraher indicated that occupational therapists, respiratory therapists, and dental hygienist received the highest number of job posting.

Fraher's group adjusted the number of health professionals in a health profession by creating a vacancy index. This was done by taking the number of advertisements over the number of professionals in a field and multiplying this number by a 100.

Fraher explained that half of the advertisements for job postings came from hospitals. The presentation included a breakdown of job posting from across the state of North Carolina. The report's conclusion was that the highest demands for individuals lay within the therapy professions, with medical technicians in lower demand and nuclear medical technologists, physician assistant, and dental hygienist coming in the middle.

Fraher's power point presentation can be found on the Council of Allied Health in North Carolina's website at <http://www.alliedhealthcouncilnc.org>.

Dr. Patricia Porter, the Government Liaison for the Council of Allied Health in North Carolina gave a report on Federal and State Legislative activity affecting Allied Health Professions and on a workforce issue brought to the Council's attention. Porter reported on the demand for more speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists in early intervention programs as well as in services for persons with developmental disabilities and in assistive technology. The need for these professional became evident from private providers tasked with providing these services in North Carolina due to reorganization and reconfiguration of the system. Local mental health centers no longer can provide services but now manage the services. Private providers contacted the Department of Allied Sciences at UNC because they could not find OTs, SLPs, and PTs in these areas of intervention. Shortages for such professional also exist in the public school system.

Porter stated that a steering committee was convened by the Early Intervention Section of the DHHS to respond to this need. Porter along with Alan Brown, David Yoder, Duncan

Munn from Public Health Early Intervention and Anna DeKort Young (SP?) (the Public Health Early Intervention personnel preparation specialist) scrutinized the details that existed and were impressed by the critical nature of the need for OT, SLP, and PTs. Porter explained that the Early Intervention Agency will lose significant federal funding if it does not provide the services required of it within a certain span of time.

Porter said a larger group of representatives from the area of public schools, public health, private agencies, professional representatives, the Division of Medical Assistance, the Council of Allied Health in North Carolina, and several allied health training programs to examine and create priorities on how to address this issue. Goal setting will include how to decide and develop a plan on getting money for personnel preparation, examining gaps in rural areas, rates per service, and policy barriers to recruiting and maintaining these professionals in our state .

Porter directed Council members to a Legislative Update handout in their meeting materials. She discussed the bill H.R.670 known as the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Act of 2005 at <http://thomas.loc.gov/>. This bill is an amendment to two previous bills related to teacher recruitment and retention and provides for federal student loan cancellation for speech and language pathologists. Porter encouraged members to speak with their congressional contacts and express their support for this bill. Porter addressed the Allied Health Reinvestment Act, which effects Council members, employers, trainers, professional, and receivers of service and can be found at the web site listed above. and was part of the Council's handouts at the January 5, 2005 meeting.

She reported on House Bill 183 which will have an effect on Council members as it calls for an increase in geriatric care providers such as those found in the allied health professions and might mean more support for the allied health professions. She also discussed House Bill 287, the Occupational Therapist Licensure Changes and included a handout of what the Bill original started out as and what it proposes to become. Porter indicated that Council members have a letter in their handouts on the bill and a contact number if they want to comment on the proposed changes.

Yoder added that March 15, 2005 is the deadline for Council members to provide comments to the Occupational Therapist Association on Bill 287.

Porter indicated that the agencies, community colleges, and universities provide budget proposals to the General Assembly, which are not always accessible on the Internet. Within the agency budgets are requests support changes in early intervention funding for transportation and for payment if more than one professional in the home setting is providing therapy to a child. There has already been an agreement to increase rates for speech and language pathologists in early intervention to about \$75.00 an hour. These rates had been decreased last year. The increase in payment started March 1, 2005.

Porter added that AHEC has a few proposals in the University Medical School budget one being the inclusion of support for the Allied Health Council. Porter encouraged members to investigate the General Assembly website to examine bills, their status, schedules and the bill's relevant committee meetings.

Yoder told Council members that their meeting literature contained Council articles for use in their perspective newsletters. Yoder stated that Vivian Lail-Davis constructed information about the Council for the Council in their various publications, and that she conducted an over the net interview with Marge Ottofy for use in the CMA Journal. Yoder added that Lail-Davis is updating the Professional Association Booklet, which will be distributed at the May 3, 2005 meeting.

Yoder stated that he is still meeting with lobbyists and felt secure that the Council will receive full funding for the year. Yoder added that the Council's revised Guidelines can be found on the official website.

Fraher stated that Yoder and Tom Bacon met with Dan Gitterman to discuss the generation of data on the importance of allied health on the North Carolina economy. Aaron McKethen a research assistant at the School of Public Policy will work with Fraher on a report geared toward making the general assembly focus on allied health professions.

VI. Announcements

David Yoder announced that the next Council meeting is with the Association Presidents on will be held on **Tuesday, May 3, 2005 at the Friday Center.**

VII. Round Robin

David Wysocki announced that he is working on a federal scope of the Centers for Medicare Medicaid Services, particularly on Medicare coverage provisions. Wysocki stated that Medicare is going through a significant overhaul of their coverage determination for mobility assisted equipment or MAEs.

Medicaid put out their draft national coverage decision to potentially eliminate the old 1960s coverage description and will be taking public comments on this draft up until Monday, March 7, 2005. Wysocki indicated that he would try to supply the Council with coverage on this issue.

Jim Sadler announced that there would be a brief meeting after the Council meeting to discuss a baccalaureate degree in Respiratory Therapy.

Council Member Attendees:

Thomas Bacon
Allison Bordeaux
Rebecca Bullock
Bill Croft

Wayne Foster
Cathy Franklin-Griffin
Chastity Glover
Audrey Godwin
Kathryn E. Heilig
Leslie Jarema
Karen Luken
Carolyn Mayo
James C. Sadler
Martha S. Taylor

Council Staff/Consultants Attendees:

Alan Brown
Erin Fraher
Patricia Porter

Council Guests Attendees:

Judi Ashbaugh
Michelle Boyd
Tom Connelly
Dawn Grant
Elizabeth Haile
Linda Horton
Lou Ann Kernodle
Karen Lunnen
Rachel Mann
Lee McLean
Paige Michie
Nancy Porter
Debbie Ramey
Joshua Smith
Carolyn Taylor
David Wysocki

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