

COTA Meeting Minutes March 2007

Committee on Transfer and Articulation Missouri Department of Higher Education March 28, 2007

Participants: Evelyn Jorgenson, Jeanie Crain, Mike Grelle, Steve Lehmkuhle, Don Doucette, Marsha Drennon, James Scanlon, Steve Lehmkuhle, Arlen Dykstra, Kandis Smith

MDHE Staff: Hillary Fuhrman and Jeremy Kintzel

Chair Dr. Evelyn Jorgenson called the meeting to order at 2:08 p.m.

Consent Item

I. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Jeanie Crain and seconded by Don Doucette to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2007 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

II. Associate of Arts in Teaching Update

Dr. Doucette referenced an e-mail he had recently sent COTA members and MDHE staff containing the state-wide articulation agreement for the Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degree. Dr. Doucette briefly reviewed the background of the AAT and then described in further detail the articulation agreement that was drafted by a seven-member subcommittee of chief academic officers (CAOs) representing Southeast Missouri State University, the University of Missouri-Columbia, the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Metropolitan Community College, St. Louis Community College, Harris Stowe State University, and William Woods University.

Dr. Doucette noted that the agreement involves conditions of accepting the AAT degree, but no individual courses are specified. However, the AAT degree is attached to the articulation agreement, so there may be no dispute regarding what the agreement is concerning. Dr. Doucette reiterated that signatories would be expected to adhere to the stipulations of the articulation agreement, which would be preferable to maintaining multiple bilateral agreements.

Dr. Doucette explained that the next step in the implementation of the AAT is to take the articulation agreement to Missouri's four-year institutions, inviting them to become formal signatories. Dr. Doucette asked whether it would be best for a request letter to be sent to institutions from the Missouri Community College Association, the Coordinating Board, or from COTA. Dr. Jorgenson explained that the cross-sector membership of COTA might make this committee the ideal party for authorship of the letter, in contrast to a letter and articulation agreement addressed from two-year to four-year institutions.

1. Dr. Doucette also pointed out the "Dispute Resolution" section of the agreement, noting the significance of COTA's involvement in not only the development but also the implementation and administration of the AAT degree. Dr. Jorgenson responded that there is a sense of pride of ownership for COTA with the AAT, and other attendees were in agreement that this was an appropriate role for COTA.

Dr. Jeanie Crain inquired about the ED 205 course being offered as an elective, noting the potential for students having to repeat coursework. Dr. Doucette referred to the language in the agreement describing that electives should be selected carefully with the help of an academic advisor.

Dr. Jorgenson stated that COTA might consider providing institutions suggestions for potential outcome data to collect in regards to the AAT. Attendees discussed that comparing time-to-degree completion for native students with

those who transferred with an AAT would be meaningful; other potential performance measures included graduation rates and credit hours transferred. Mr. Jeremy Kintzel added that institutional research staff might also be good resources for identifying useful and meaningful data. Mr. Kintzel also pointed out potential difficulties, including the need for a consistent CIP code to be assigned statewide to the AAT, since program names are not collected by the state in completions data. Mr. Kintzel also reminded the committee that the MDHE does not currently receive student-level data from independent institutions. Dr. Doucette stated that the intent was for the AAT to replace all current teacher-education programs at participating two-year institutions, and that a consistent CIP or limited number of CIPs should be identifiable.

Mr. Kintzel was asked to compile a list of potential criteria to be measured in advance of the next COTA meeting. Attendees reflected that there is time to think about this issue, as students will not begin the AAT program until next year.

1. Dr. Doucette proposed a motion that the request letter be sent by COTA and Dr. Drennon seconded, after which the motion passed unanimously. Upon receipt of the letter MDHE staff will forward the cover letter, articulation agreement, and signatory page to all four-year presidents / chancellors and CAOs.

III. Advanced Credit Pilot Projects

Ms. Hillary Fuhrman provided the committee with an update from the most recent conversations with the Community College Research Center (CCRC). Mr. Kintzel described concerns the CCRC has, including the unavailability of certain data, payment mechanisms for students, and accessibility to dual credit classes (regardless of whether the courses are taken for college credit or not), particularly in regards to the consistency of “control groups” in the study. Furthermore, CCRC would prefer the courses in the study take place on college campuses, while most dual credit in Missouri occurs at the high school. Dr. Jorgenson explained that accessibility might be a real problem, particularly for smaller schools. With fewer course selections, smaller schools sometimes need to provide a class which students may choose to take for dual credit or not, in order to provide advanced credit opportunities at all.

Dr. Doucette expressed his concern that the project would encourage students to not follow current guidelines COTA has set for dual credit. Dr. James Scanlon stated his concern that grades might not be an accurate measure of student performance, which would affect the results of the study. Mr. Kintzel explained that other performance measures could be incorporated into the study, providing students were identified, including later enrollment, persistence, and completion in public Missouri colleges and universities. Other attendees expressed that a 3.0 GPA is now below the average for high school students, and that students with lower GPAs should be encouraged to concentrate on passing high school courses before adding college-level classes. Members agreed to view a formal proposal concerning this project, but Dr. Jorgenson stated that the likelihood of COTA going forward with this proposal was very slim.

Mr. Kintzel proceeded to update COTA on the Gateway to College project. Further conversations with St. Louis Community College – Florissant Valley staff clarified that the Gateway to College project is designed to be a sustainable program available to students not succeeding in the traditional high school classroom. The program would follow a cohort model, at least in the early term(s), similar to Upward Bound.

The developmental coursework taken would be for college credit, but would not be transferable, although an orientations course taken during the “foundations” term would be expected to be transferable elective college credit. Students would work concurrently on foundations credit and on high school coursework / equivalency, but would be required to pass standard placement testing or attain satisfactory completion of foundations / developmental coursework in order to transition into the mainstream degree-seeking student population. Mr. Kintzel also stated that the program would be no-cost to students until age 21 or the completion of high school credit, due to a combination of Gates Foundation and transferred K-12 funding, and that Gateway to College involvement would provide additional staff support for students. Finally, Mr. Kintzel stated that the Hazelwood district had been involved in planning for the program, and that SLCC-FV might be interested in a limited number of additional K-12 partners, but that difficulties in curriculum alignment would likely limit the participation of other districts.

Dr. Jorgenson inquired about the actions or involvement COTA was expected to take in relation to this project. Mr. Kintzel explained that if there were interest, COTA could ask SLCC-FV to submit a formal proposal. When Dr. Jorgenson asked if COTA had concerns about this project, Dr. Doucette explained his concerns that these projects are taking COTA further away from its mission. Dr. Jeanie Crain responded that this project could potentially affect

institutions to which the Gateway students eventually transfer, and suggested that any formal proposal from SLCC-FV reflect communication with likely destination institutions.

Mr. Kintzel was then asked to collect and distribute a formal proposal from SLCC in advance of COTA's next meeting.

IV. Advisory Council for COTA

Dr. Steve Lehmkuhle explained that the advisory council would provide an opportunity for COTA to receive feedback from counselors and advisors. A proposal for the council will be reviewed at the upcoming UM feeder conference and then offered to COTA at its next meeting. Dr. Crain asked about the difference between advisors and transfer officers, to which Dr. Lehmkuhle explained that the advisors and counselors see different issues day to day than the transfer officers do. Dr. Crain noted that advisors across institutions do not always agree, and Dr. Lehmkuhle noted that the council would at least be an opportunity for communication (and membership would rotate). Dr. Doucette said that the advisory council would be helpful in managing transfer-specific mandates in the higher education omnibus bill (Senate Bill 389), and Dr. Drennon added that they could support the development of agenda or areas of focus for future transfer conferences.

New Business

V. Recent legislation and Higher Education Steering Committee

Attendees discussed the potential impacts that SB 389 might have in directing COTA to perform new tasks. There was discussion surrounding potential responsibilities, in particular, the development of common expectations for entry-level collegiate work. Ms. Fuhrman informed the committee that the Commissioner of Higher Education had already begun working on this issue. She continued with an update for the committee on the development of a higher education steering committee. This group could potentially be composed of faculty and other content specialists from all disciplines with the intent to work on curriculum alignment with DESE in addition to the possible common course expectations. Dr. Lehmkuhle asked that administrators be kept informed, as the issues involved are larger than what faculty alone deal with.

COTA continued to discuss the difficulties of identifying and creating a committee before understanding the larger conceptual framework of the task(s). Dr. Lehmkuhle expressed the importance of structuring whatever tasks may follow this year's legislation in a way that allows for ownership on each campus. Some members were concerned that reacting to bills before they are passed suggests support for the legislation. Dr. Jorgenson suggested COTA think about forming a group that would address legislation, should it pass. Ms. Fuhrman said that while the steering committee would be initially focused in METS disciplines, current work underway at DESE, e.g. the development of revised grade-level expectations (GLEs) and end-of-course exams in core subjects, necessitated a framework for input from higher education.

Other

Attendees proposed that COTA's next meeting agenda include the subcommittee assigned the task of identifying transfer macro variables.

Dr. Jorgenson stated that she would not be able to attend COTA's next meeting, but an alternate should be able to hold the meeting in her place. Dr. Doucette also said he would be unable to attend, and COTA discussed potentially rescheduling the meeting as well as verifying current alternates.

Adjournment

Dr. Jorgenson adjourned the meeting at 3:26 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next COTA meeting is scheduled for April 26, 2007 at 12:00 p.m. at MDHE offices.