

# THE PIPELINE

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE COMMISSION FOR TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

## **This Issue**

A Message from the Chair

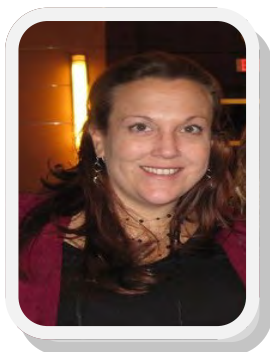
Winds of Change in Developmental Education

Presidential Perspective: Dr. Mark Erickson,  
Northhampton Community College

Commission name change approved

Commission Directorate Member to Lead *Campus Speak*

FROM  
THE  
CHAIR



I am excited to share the many projects that our commission has currently undertaken. We are working on two articles, one for ACPA Developments and the other to serve as a white paper for ACPA. The first article will be a series on open access and its impact on institutional practices. The second will be a piece on the role of developmental education in community colleges. In addition to these two current projects our commission monograph 'Working with students in community colleges: Contemporary strategies for bridging theory, research, and practice' is in its final edits with hopes to have printed copies available for purchase during convention 2014.

In addition to our research agenda the commission has continued to support the work of ACPA in the recruitment and retention of members from two-year institutions. We are excited to share that Ivy Tech Community College will be serving as our host institution for this year's convention reception. Along with our host institution, CAMPUSPEAK, Inc. will be our corporate sponsor and the Commission for Commuter Students and Adult Learners will be our commission co-host. We are very fortunate to have such generous partners in the community and hope that you will be able to join us at Convention 2014 in Indianapolis this year.

As always we are recruiting new members for

our directorate. This is a wonderful way to become more involved in ACPA and in our commission. Directorate members need to be members of ACPA and the commission. They need to be willing to work on a project connected with the work of the commission and they need to be available for bi-monthly conference calls. Our current projects include research and scholarship, social media and the commission website, our awards program, our commission newsletter, our convention programs, our upcoming blog, and

Thank you all for your continued support of the commission.

**Patty Munsch, Ph.D.**  
**Chair, Commission for Student Development in the Two-Year College 2012-2014**



Did you know that our Commission has a Facebook page? Join today! This is an easy way for you to interact with other members of the community college community, get convention updates, pose questions pertinent to things happening on your campus, and contribute to conversations about all things community colleges. .

# The Winds of Change in Developmental Education

Joy Walsh, Bessie Jeffries, and Lorri Shuber  
Butler County Community College

## **Context**

It's an exciting (if a bit daunting) time to be involved in the world of developmental education. Most of us have become accustomed to a quiet role. After all, we are poised somewhere between the secondary system and the higher education system, filling in the gaps for students who come to our open enrollment institutions and attempting to prepare them for success in traditional college courses. That quiet role has come to an end recently, with reports coming from Washington, D.C. with titles like, "Getting Past Go" (ECS, 2010), and "Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere" (Complete College America, 2012). States and institutions are looking closely at their trends and practices with an acute eye towards improvement, redesign, and in some cases, dramatic overhaul.

## **Institutional Responses**

Developmental education at Butler County Community College (BC3) is a collaborative affair. As in many other institutions, students with skills below college-entry level will work with counselors, tutors, and faculty members across a number of academic disciplines. While there has always been informal discussion and coordination across these avenues, the recent spotlight has had a clear positive impact: a developmental education ad hoc committee of the Faculty Organization was formed in 2012, and to date, the group has collected and discussed placement data, shared reports from state workshops and committees, endorsed changes to the Transitional Semester (a specifically designed schedule for students testing into all areas of developmental coursework), held workshops for tutors of developmental students, and provided the foundation for a presentation at a regional community college conference. In the three academic areas of Developmental Education, BC3 is witnessing improvements as well.

## **Curricular Responses**

The Developmental Writing syllabi were revised and updated with a focus on current research and best practice language in 2011. At the same time, textbooks were updated and coordinated among full-time and adjunct faculty, the departmental final exam grading criteria were standardized, and the placement exam cutoff scores were reviewed and adjusted. The success of these

changes is evident in the *BC3 College Report Card: Performance on College Goals* (Assessment, 2013), which shows BC3's percentage of course completion in the developmental writing area below the PA Aggregate in 2008 and 2009, but substantially above the PA Aggregate in 2011 and 2012.

Textbook review for the BC3 Developmental Reading course began during the spring of 2012, and changes were implemented in the fall of the same year. These changes included integration of reading and writing as well as the inclusion of the novel for study.

During the summer of 2013, a free Reading Workshop was offered to students needing brief review in reading strategies to succeed on the college placement exam. One report shows 78% of the students participating successfully tested into College Writing 101. Students were pleased with the experience and were highly motivated to move forward.

Developmental Math at BC3 consists of two courses: Prep Math (basic arithmetic) and Prep Algebra. After a two-year intensive study of Prep Algebra results and research on current trends in math redesign, a pilot course was designed for Fall 2012. The course is a mastery-based, flexible-paced curriculum, and results have been phenomenal.

75% of students passed at an A/B grades compared to the study rate of 43%. Attendance increased from 50% to 85%. Retention increased from 65% to 90%. One student completed both Prep Algebra and Intermediate Algebra in the same semester. Students with test and math anxiety reported being more relaxed in class and during exams. As one student said, "The class gave me hope that I could pass and not a fear of failure." The pilot was repeated in the Spring 2013 with the same results and has been expanded to Prep Math.

## **Conclusions**

While the tone of many of the large-scale reports and discussions may appear to be discouraging at best and alarming at worst, the current spotlight on developmental education is, in fact, an exciting opportunity for educators to "get it right." For those of us on the grass-roots level, the developmental student is not a statistic, but a veteran with head trauma, a family provider who struggles to make



## *Commission Updates*

**The Commission has officially changed our name to:**  
**The Commission for Two-Year Colleges**

### **Congratulations to our news directorate members**

- Joe Ginese: CUNY: Borough of Manhattan Community College
  - Joe Palnecia: Oakton Community College
  - Kim Linger: University of Phoenix
- Lisa Kichner: Terra State Community College
- Matthew K. Robison: Georgia Perimeter College
- A Mei-Yen Irelan: The Ohio State University

### **Congratulations Luke Davis**

Luke has been selected as the new  
Chief Executive Officer of Campus Speak.



# Presidential Perspective

Dr. Mark Erickson, President, Northampton Community College



**On July 12, 2012, Dr. Mark Erickson became the 4th President of Northampton Community College.**

**Dr. Erickson, prior to becoming president of Northampton Community College last July, you served as president of Wittenberg University for seven years. Why did you choose to move from a private 4-year liberal arts college to a community college?**

I enjoyed my years at Wittenberg very much, but it was time for a change. At Wittenberg, and earlier in my career at Lehigh University, some of the students I enjoyed working with the most were first-generation students. They faced some challenges other students didn't face. At Northampton 38% of our students are the first in their families to go to college. It is a thrill to see them overcome their fears and exceed beyond their expectations. I love that! I also have always been interested in ways in which colleges can work with businesses and community leaders to advance economic development. At Wittenberg and Lehigh I championed work that blurred the line between the college and the community, but at NCC serving the communities is core to our mission. And that is something Northampton does very well from helping manufacturing companies with research and development to developing new programs to meet local workforce needs. I also love the agility of community colleges. When we identify a community need, we can address it much more quickly than our four-year colleagues. I truly believe that the most innovative, important and interesting work in the next decade in higher education will start at community colleges. It will be exciting to be part of that.

**You've just completed your first year in office. Were there any surprises?**

During the interview process, I was struck by the lack of huge egos among the faculty and staff and by their genuine commitment to the students and to the community we serve. In an interview situation everyone is working hard to create a good impression, but I've found the culture lives up to that impression. The values are deeply ingrained. The biggest question in my mind when I came to NCC had to do with students. I am energized by working with students and love spending time with them, but since I was new to community colleges, I wondered if I would

connect with students at Northampton as well as I had the students at Lehigh and Wittenberg. Those fears were quickly put to rest, I love these students! I spent a night in the residence halls last fall. The conversation flowed freely, and it has ever since. One of the things I love about our students is that they don't have a sense of entitlement. They appreciate the opportunity to be here.

**Early in your career you were a residence hall director at Framingham State College in Massachusetts. You also worked in student affairs at the University of South Carolina and then as dean of students at Lehigh University. Are student needs different at community colleges than at four-year institutions?**

Students are students. They each have their own goals, their own gifts, and their own challenges. It's our job as educators to help them to grow. That's true no matter what the educational setting, but I think the way you go about it may be a little different. At many 4-year colleges and universities students are a captive audience because the vast majority live on campus. That's not the case at many community colleges, so staff have to be a bit more innovative to get students involved outside the classroom. I've been surprised at how active students are at Northampton given their job responsibilities and family commitments, but we put a lot of effort into programming. The more engaged students are, the more likely they are to persist to graduation, not to mention learning to function as part of a group and developing leadership skills that will serve them well later in life, so student life is every bit as important at community colleges as at 4-year colleges and universities.

**Based on what you've learned during your first year, what goals do you have going forward?**

There was a strategic plan in place when I arrived at NCC, and it's sound. What we've done this year is to identify what our top five priorities should be for the next two to three years in order, allowing us to focus our energy and resources where they matter most. The driving questions behind determining our areas of focus were, "*What are the characteristics of the highest performing 21<sup>st</sup> century community college? How can we best serve our students and our community?*" More than 1000 people were involved in the discussions, including trustees, students, faculty and staff, alumni and donors. It was exciting to see how engaged they were, how quickly they reached consensus and how energized they are about implementing the plan. What I'm perhaps most pleased about is that our plan includes clear timelines and metrics that will guide our progress and help us assess whether or not we've been successful. Like any dynamic plan, it isn't set in stone, but rather will continue to evolve as the world around us changes. It should be great fun!

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Butler County Community College

ends meet with minimum-wage jobs, or an underperforming high school student who needs and wants a real chance at a college education. Their failure is our failure, and their success is our success. State and institutional conversations and step-by-step changes at the most basic levels toward best practice can replace a “Bridge to Nowhere” with a “Bridge to the Future.”

## References

Assessment, Research, and Planning Division. (2013). *BC3 College Report Card: Performance on College Goals*. Butler, PA: Butler County Community College.

Complete College America. (2012). *Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere* Retrieved from the Complete College America website: [http://www.completecollege.org/resources\\_and\\_reports](http://www.completecollege.org/resources_and_reports)

The Education Commission of the States (ECS). (2012, January). *Getting Past Go: A National Public Policy Initiative to Improve Developmental Studies in Postsecondary Education*. Retrieved from the Getting Past Go website: <http://gettingpastgo.org>

*Joy Walsh, M.A., is an Associate Professor of Humanities and Social Sciences at Butler County Community College, in Butler, Pennsylvania. joy.walsh@bc3.edu*

*Bessie Jeffries, M.S.T., is an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at Butler County Community College, in Butler, Pennsylvania. bessie.jeffries@bc3.edu*

*Lorri Shuber, M. Ed., is an Instructor of Humanities and Social Sciences at Butler County Community College, in Butler, Pennsylvania. lorri.shuber@bc3.edu*



## Sponsored Programs

Congratulations to the following programs for being selected as Sponsored programs for the Commission on Two-Year Colleges.

Parents as Partners in two-year colleges

Promoting Student Success through Student-Faculty Interactions at Community College

Careers in Two-Year Colleges

***Program Session Times and Days will be announced in the Spring Issue of The Pipeline***

### **Calling All Graduate Students and New Professionals !!!**

***The Pipeline is looking for newsletter contributors***

- ◇ ***Get published!!***
- ◇ ***Get involved !!***
- ◇ ***Build your professional Portfolio!!***

***For more information contact Shammah Bermudez at SBERMUDEZ@DCCC.EDU***

## 2012-2013 Commission Leadership

2012-2014 Chair  
Patty Munsch Ph.D  
munschp@sunysuffolk.edu

2013-2014 Chair Elect  
Shammah J. Bermudez  
sbermudez@dccc.edu

## 2012-2013 Directorate Members

Deborah Anderson  
Elections  
danderson128@ivytech.edu

Kathy Hopkins Smith Ph.D  
Newsletter Contributor  
khopkins@pgcc.edu

Shammah Bermudez  
Newsletter/Website/Facebook  
sbermudez@dccc.edu

John J. Jamrogowicz  
Convention Programs  
John.jamrogowicz@tridenttech.edu

Jennifer Blackwell  
jblackw3@dtcc.edu  
Convention Programs

Chris Johnson  
Awards /Elections/Membership Recruitment  
ckjohnson@housing.ucsb.edu

Milbert O.Brown, Jr.  
mmbrown912@aol.com

Kari Kahler  
Newsletter Contributor  
kkahler@message.nmc.edu

Luke Davis  
Membership Recruitment  
Luke.davis@ptk.org

Lisa Kelsay  
Kelsay@morainevalley.edu

Michelle Dykes-Anderson Ed.D  
Michelle.dykes@kctcs.edu

Ardith Laverne Feroglia  
Website/Social Networking  
Ardith.laverne@gmail.com

Susan Edwards  
Awards, Newsletter Contributor  
Susan.edwards@ptk.org

Tamara Stevenson Ph.D.  
stevent@muohio.edu

Tara Fagan  
Webinar  
fagant@sunysuffolk.edu

Case Willoughby  
Newsletter  
Case.willoughby@bc3.edu

## 2012-2013 Advisory Board

Paulette Brower-Garrett  
Paulette.BrowerGarrett@csi.cuny.edu

Eboni Zamani-Gallaher  
Monograph Co-Editor  
ezamani@emich.edu

# NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION INFORMATION

The Commission on Student Development in the Two-Year College publishes an e-newsletter two times a year. The e-newsletter's purpose is to further the commission's mission by providing both a tool for communication as well as a resource for information relevant to student development in the two-year college.

For more information or to submit an article, please contact the editor Shammah Bermudez at [ThePipeline.ACPA@gmail.com](mailto:ThePipeline.ACPA@gmail.com)

Next submission priority deadline: January 30, 2014

## Submission Guidelines

- If you include references, please list them in APA format. The newsletter does not otherwise require exhaustive adherence to the APA standard.
- The newsletter welcomes a wide variety of submissions including relevant announcements, short articles about campus practice, opinion pieces, previews of upcoming presentations (i.e. Convention) and original research.
- Submissions are due in the form of a Microsoft Word document, .txt file, or other Microsoft Office-friendly format.
- If possible, send a photo relevant to your article, a picture of yourself, or a picture of your campus. —NEW—

## Article Topics

Though the newsletter welcomes various types of article submissions, the following types of articles and their individual requirements will be featured regularly.

### *Make a Difference* (500 word maximum/submission)

This section of the newsletter is an opportunity for you to talk about ways that community colleges or perhaps your own community college has made a difference in the lives of students, the community, or in the field. This article should also be tied into the theme of the next convention.

### *Best Practices in Community Colleges* (500 word maximum/submission)

This section can be used to inform fellow professionals on how to accomplish a certain task, develop a type of program, advise a certain type of student, or improve the functioning of their office through practices that the writer deems as exemplary.

### *News for Community Colleges* (750 word maximum/submission)

Given that current events and trends can have a direct impact on the work we do in student development, it is important for us to be knowledgeable about them in order to be prepared. This section of the newsletter allows article submissions to highlight or synthesize the national concerns that can affect us locally.

### *Professional Development* (250 word maximum/submission)

Sometimes we face the problem of not having enough resources relevant to the problems we face. However, sometimes we also have the problem of having too many resources and not enough time to sift through them in order to find the best information. This section is an opportunity for you to review articles, websites, or any other resource that would be helpful to professionals in the field.

### *Profile of a Community College Leader* (250 word maximum/submission)

Whether it be the director in your office or the president of your institution, we're looking to feature leaders in the field who have interesting stories about their time in the field and the contributions they've made. This may take the form of a biography or an interview.

### *Spotlight on a Convention Community College* (250 word maximum/submission)

This section simply features a community college in the host city of the upcoming convention. The article can discuss the history of the college as well as any achievements or programs that it might be known for locally.

Thanks for reading!