Student Services

N E W S

Student Services Conference

Balmy 80-degree weather and a plethora of spring flowers greeted participants who attended the second annual Student Services Conference in Atlanta on March 27 and 28. The theme of this year's conference, "Student Success," was touched on throughout the 1 1/2 day conference.

The turnout was impressive: A group of 45 staff from 16 CAAHE institutions and IPD participated, staying at the Hyatt Regency Suites in Marietta, located adjacent to Shorter College's School of Professional Programs where the conference was held.

Dr. Steve Preston—a training consultant, SPP adjunct faculty member and Division Director for the Georgia Center for School Restructuring—got the conference off to a rousing start with an interactive workshop on "Workplace Strategies for the Student Services Professional." Dr. Preston used force field analysis to show participants how to identify and seek so-

lutions to problems in the workplace.

Attendees chose from two tracks of workshops on a variety of topics this year. Presenters included Audrey Hahn and Barbara Benson, IWU. Gwen Rivkin and Mark Reinholz, CSU; Tandy Elisala, UOP; Susan Milne and Joe Cordell, Shorter College; Kristen Vedder, IPD; Mark Gibbs, Montreat College; Royce Ann Collins, Baker University; Karen Hanson, CSU; and Amy Landau, IPD.

Roundtable discussions were held during catered lunches on both Friday and Saturday on issues of importance to student services, including assessment of prior learning, student retention, staffing, CAAHE articulation, financial aid, and student services processes.

Amy Landau, former Coordinator of Student Services for Shorter College and now an IPD representative, followed up on Dr. Preston's opening presentation on Saturday morning with a session on "Developing

Specific Strategies for Your Team." Workshop attendees took the first step toward problem resolution by

writing a problem statement to help them focus on setting goals for improvement.

The conference ended on a high note with participants sharing personal success stories about their adult students.

Special thanks go to everyone at Shorter College for hosting this year's event, to the planning committee for putting together a successful conference, to those who presented and facilitated the roundtable discussions, and to the CAAHE institutions and President Jerry Noble of IPD for supporting this important conference.

Student Services Committees Now Forming

Participants at the Student Services Conference expressed interest in forming CAAHE committees on student retention, staffing for student services, and student services procedures. CAAHE bylaws encourage each of the Commissions to organize committees when they have an ongoing issue to investigate or a task/goal to accomplish. A standing committee is formed when there is substantial interest in a topic. A task force is formed for short-term projects.

In order for a task force or committee to be recognized within CAAHE, a proposal must be presented to the Executive Committee, which will approve it and establish its size, duties and tenure. The proposal should include information on the committee membership, terms of office, purpose, whether any support from CAAHE is needed, and a plan of how the task force or committee will operate, e.g. via teleconference, e-mail, meetings, etc.

Once written, the proposal can be presented to the CAAHE Executive Committee at the CAAHE Conference in Milwaukee in June. Since CAAHE is not able to provide significant financial support, each committee member needs to ensure his or her institution will provide support for any travel or other expenditures.

Anyone who is interested in forming or serving on a task force or committee should contact Lori Schultz, Educational Counselor at Cardinal Stritch University and Chair of the CAAHE Student Services Commission.
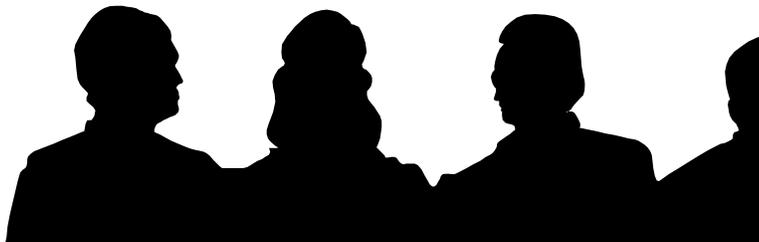
Betty Lamb, Director of Student Services from Belhaven College

ACE/PONSI Changes Name

ACE's Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction (ACE/PONSI) has been changed to the ACE College Credit Recommendation Service. Under its new moniker, the credit service will continue to evaluate college-level courses offered by corporations, associations, labor unions, government agencies, and training providers for college and university transfer credit.

ACE CCRS made credit recommendations for 374 courses from 30 organizations between April and August of 1997.

Using Technology to Expedite Student Admission

One day in the not-so-distant future, student transcripts will be transferred from one institution to another using the Internet and computer technology. The technology exists and is already available to the forward-moving institution.

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) has led the way in developing the standards. Several years ago AACRAO formed a committee to develop standards for the electronic data exchange of transcripts and other educational records. SPEEDE/ExPRESS was the result—a standard electronic format for educational data interchange developed by educational leaders who participated in a task force under the auspices of the American National Standards Institute.

ANSI coordinates national standards of all kinds for the United States. The Accredited Standards Committee of ANSI, and a further division of ANSI, X12, is the entity that deals specifically with electronic standards.

To better facilitate the transmission of electronic data in higher education, an EDI Server which serves as a computer clearing house was developed at the University of Texas in Austin. The EDI Server provides for a common method of security and identifying participants. (EDI refers to the "electronic transmission of standard business documents in a predefined format from one company's business computer application to its trading partner's business computer application.") Various measures were developed to ensure compliance with FERPA and to guard the security and privacy of electronically exchanged student records.

Further information on using SPEEDE/ExPRESS to transfer student records can be obtained through www.aacrao.com/technology/edi.html.

Patricia Vertucci, new Director of Student Services (left) at ODC, and Royce Ann Collins, Director of Student Services for Baker University.

# SACS Abandons Controversial Transfer Credit Policy

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) announced at its annual meeting on December 9, 1997, that it would discontinue using criteria which disallowed transfer credits from institutions accredited by Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology (ACCSCT), the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS), and the Council on Occupational Education (COE).

The policy was first questioned by the Department of Education in November 1995. Last year the Justice Department began investigating after several colleges with membership in the three national accrediting agencies filed complaints. All three agencies are recognized by the American Council on Education and the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation.

In September the Justice Department warned SACS that the criteria may be in violation of federal antitrust statutes. SACS accredits institutions of higher education in 11 southern states. Seven CAAHE institutions fall under SACS accreditation.
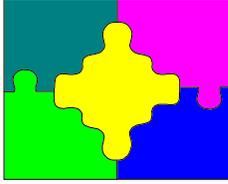
Association for Non-Traditional Students in Higher Education ANTSHE
2nd Annual Conference,
October 2-4, 1998,
San Diego, California
(Contact Marilyn Ryan,
Wichita State University,
University College
Box 6, 1845 Fairmount,
Wichita KS 67260-0006)

ACE-Alliance Conference,
"Distance and Diversity:
Adult Learners in the Next Millennium,"
October 8-10,
San Diego, California.
Call for Papers Deadline: May 18.
(Contact Carol Ann Franklin
(909) 793-2121, ext. 6018,
University of Redlands;
or e-mail franklin@uor.edu.)

Kingdom Class Advising

by Audrey Hahn & Barbara Benson,
Indiana Wesleyan University

In the spring of 1997, the Vice President of Adult and Professional Studies at Indiana Wesleyan University challenged each department to set its sights on excellence.

With this challenge in mind, our academic advisors began the task of developing a new advising model to better serve our students. Our mission was to promote academic excellence, to demonstrate integration of our faith in our work and to foster a supportive atmosphere for our students.

To develop this proactive academic advising model we incorporated several specific communication tools. The first tool was the development of a "caseload" model which assigns core groups to individual advisors by geographic region. This model encourages communication and tracking as well as presenting a method for measuring results.

The second tool was the development of an advisor/advisee contract. Often students are unaware of the benefits an advisor can contribute to their success. This contract outlines these benefits and the student's responsibilities which creates student awareness and accountability for completing degree requirements.

The final tool was the implementation of a structured communication model between advisor and advisee. A scheduled series of contacts are made with students throughout their time with IWU. These contacts include face to face meetings, phone contacts, class visits, as well as contact via mail. Contacts may even be increased when a student is identified as "at risk" by various indicators.

Using this new academic advising model has resulted in better communication between advisors and students and an increase in positive responses concerning advising in end-of-course surveys. Continued refinement of this model should ensure excellence in our task of serving students.

The CEU — Documenting Professional Training

by Deanna Boe, Institute for Professional Development

Almost everyone has heard of Continuing Education Units (CEUs), but few know where the CEU originated or what it stands for. Is the CEU merely a quantifier of time or does it also represent the quality of an instructional program? The answer may depend in part on when the training course was completed.

The International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET, formerly the Council on the CEU) is the organization that stands behind the CEU. At its annual meeting in Scottsdale last fall, IACET announced that it would be "raising the bar" for CEU certification standards. From this point forward, CEU provider authorization will only be granted for courses that include a "formal assessment of learning outcomes." All previously authorized CEU sponsors and certified providers will be recognized until their expiration dates (CEU authorization is granted to an organization for five years).

The CEU dates back to 1968 when a national task force was created to develop a way to measure and record individual participation in noncollegiate learning activities. Today the CEU also means that the organization that grants CEU's has gone through a peer review of its practices and adheres to CEU Criteria and Guidelines.

Since 1991 IACET has offered a Certified Provider Program which reviews and approves organizations which adhere to its criteria. Any organization which offers continuing education or training programs may apply for

certification. To be certified, the organization must meet specific administrative, programmatic and evaluative criteria. Certified providers include business, industry, trade and professional associations, colleges and universities, government agencies, public service organizations, hospitals and health service organizations.

One Continuing Education Unit represents ten contact hours of instruction, which do not include time involved in meals, breaks, etc. The CEU also represents a specific level of program quality: to become an authorized

provider, the sponsoring organization must demonstrate that the program is "rigorous enough and long enough to be of significant educational experience." Programs that are too company-specific—which are primarily related to the organization's internal policies and procedures— are not eligible for CEU credit. The CEU logo can only be used by organizations authorized by IACET.

When CEU credit is awarded, a permanent record must be established by the organization for the individual and a transcript of that record must be made available upon request. Permanent records are maintained by the sponsoring institution or contracted for separately through the International Registry for Continuing Education and Training.

IPD recommends that CAAHE institutions offering Assessment of Documented Learning accept the CEU as reliable documentation for classroom instructional hours and conduct its own assessment of the course's aca-

demic content and educational significance. The award of credit should be based on consideration of a combination of elements: a learning outcomes statement written by the student, the nature and level of the course content, and the length of the course, using the recommended guideline of 20 contact hours equals one credit.

If you would like further information, you may contact IACET Headquarters at (202) 857-1122. Publications may be ordered through the International Association for Continuing Education and Training, Department 3087, Washington, DC 20042-3087. Publications available include:

The Continuing Education Unit Criteria and Guidelines, Fifth Edition (1993)
Non-members pay $9.50 (plus postage) per copy.

The Continuing Education Guide: The CEU and Other Professional Development Criteria (1994)
Non-members pay $21.95 per copy.

A Practical Handbook for Assessing Learning Outcomes in Continuing Education and Training (1991)
Non-members pay $21.95 per copy.

A Great Idea Takes Shape —
Shorter College's Student Executive Council

One of the hits of the Student Services Conference was a presentation about SPP's Student Executive Council, an innovative and unique new program at Shorter College.

Susan Milne, SPP's Coordinator of Student Services, Joe Cordell, President of the Student Executive Council, Marguerite Barta, Vice President, and three Council members shared information about why the Council was formed, Council by-laws which will be presented to all class reps for a vote, and how the Council plans to contribute to the success of SPP through its activities.

The Council grew out of a suggestion from SACS that Shorter needed a formalized process for SPP student input into the College's decision making process.

The Council members work closely with Susan Milne and will meet regularly with the Dean of SPP, Dr. Merrill Douglass. A member of the Council attends every student orientation to welcome new adult learners into the program. The Council also meets with Shorter College President Dr. Larry McSwain annually and the Board of Trustees bi-annually.

All who attended this session were touched and impressed by the enthusiasm, dedication and professionalism of the students. Cordell, a real estate executive, has played a major role in getting the Council off to a great start. Congratulations to SPP and Student Executive Council members. We look forward to learning more as the Council moves forward with its plans.

CASEE Update Available

The University of Phoenix Prior Learning Assessment Center recently announced that the new edition of the CASEE Guide (Catalog of Articulation Agreements and Extrainstitutional Evaluations) will be available soon. The CASEE guide is a comprehensive listing of articulation agreements between UOP and educational institutions, corporations and training agencies. A limited number of guides will be available at no cost through IPD. If you would like a copy of the two-volume set, please call Deanna Boe (602) 966-7982 ext. 1088.

Lori Schultz and son, Elijah Taylor Schultz-Vermillion—at five weeks, our youngest conference participant!

An Overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act

by Tandy Elisala, University of Phoenix
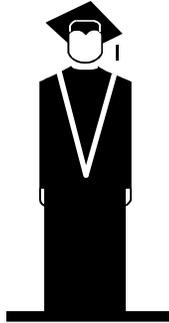
The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was passed by Congress in order to ensure certain freedoms to residents of the US who are living with an impairment of a major life function. The principles of ADA ensure that barriers to success and opportunity will no longer stand in the way of those with disabilities. The Act states that society should seek to accommodate them in a manner that focuses on their ability, not their disability.

If a disability poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, that fact may be taken into account in determining what, if any, accommodation is appropriate. Students are not exempt from having to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct and Behavior policies - regardless of the disability.

While every situation is unique, schools should have a general model of compliance including policies, procedures and processes for handling ADA. These policies should include establishing an ADA Contact/Officer, determining what reasonable accommodation is, what documentation will be required, the accommodation negotiation, grievance and agreement process.

Financial Aid Update

by Kristen Vedder
Institute for Professional Development

What is the process students follow to obtain financial aid? What kind of funding is available for our students? These and many more questions related to financial aid were answered during the Financial Aid update at this year's conference. The discussion began with a review of a flowchart illustrating the basic process in completing a student's financial aid file. The audience was cautioned that this process can vary depending on the institution's policies and procedures.

The various forms of Title IV funding were also discussed, including the type of funding and characteristics that make each program unique. Participants were again cautioned-not all institutions participate in every Title IV program. In addition, some of the institutions in the IPD consortium participate in State Grant programs. These programs vary significantly depending on the state eligibility criteria and policies.

The session concluded with a discussion of joint considerations for the Financial Aid Department and Student Services Department. The major considerations include:

- New Curriculum
- Curriculum Changes/Updates
- Course Waivers/Withdrawals
- Program Withdrawals
- Individual Student's Academic Plan
- Attendance Tracking/Follow up
- Satisfactory Academic Progress

When faced with the above changes, the participants agreed that the key to success in both departments is timely and accurate communication.

For more information, or a copy of the materials distributed during the presentation, please contact Kristen Vedder at (918) 459-6790.

FERPA '98 —
Minimizing Your Risks!

Check these dates and cities—Half day workshops on the Family Education Rights & Privacy Act may be coming to your area: June 9—Washington DC; June 16 - Indianapolis IN; June 18 - Kansas City MO; July 13 - Atlanta, GA. For information, call (202) 293-9161 or e-mail to meetings@aacrao.nche.edu.

Test Scores for CLEP Exams

If your institution accepts the ACE minimum test scores for College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) examinations, it is recognizing a "C" grade as acceptable for transfer. If your institution requires a higher minimum passing score than that recommended by ACE, it is setting a higher standard for CLEP transfer credit than it does for transfer credit from another institution.

The ACE minimum test scores are normed against college courses. A representative sample of college students complete the examination; then test scores are equated against students who earned a C for the course to determine the minimum passing score.

TRANSITIONS

We will miss **Kristi Mathia**, Director of Student Services for Fontbonne College's OP-TIONS program, who will be leaving the OP-TIONS Program on July 1 to assume her new position as Assistant to the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs. Thank you, Kristi, for your dedication and service—you have been a real asset to the program.

Welcome to **Jeff Helpling** (Indianapolis) and **Vickie Faust** (Fort Wayne), new Academic Advisors for IWU's Division of Adult and Professional Studies; and to **Amy Crawford** and **Cathy Latimore**, new Education Specialists for ENC's LEAD program.

Congratulations to **Phyllis Jones**, who recently joined Shorter College's SPP program as a Student Services Advisor and quickly moved into the position of Assistant Registrar for the adult program.

Would you like to help us keep track of comings, goings and promotions in Student Services? Drop us a line (or fax) and we'll publish the information in our next newsletter!