

ACCE Journal

Journal of the
Association of
Community and
Continuing Education

Summer 2014

From the President

by Valentina Purtell – ACCE President

Dear Colleagues,

It has been an honor to serve as your president for the past year! For the field of noncredit education, this has been a year of unprecedented changes which will significantly impact how we do business. These are the changes which will have the potential for restoring access of adults to critical educational programs and for providing them with clearly delineated pathways to their future as college students and productive workers, so let's take the uncertainty as an opportunity.

The next year's state budget promises equalization of the CDCP rate with the credit rate. This initiative, besides bringing additional financial resources, sends a strong message of the important role noncredit instruction plays in the California Community College System. One of my colleagues had an accurate way of describing the field of noncredit education by calling it the portal to education. Indeed, noncredit programs often serve as the first encounter with academia. It's important not to cut corners and to make the first impression count!

Through AB 86, we have been granted a unique opportunity to work closely with the colleagues from the credit programs, K-12, and community partners to build a consistent, comprehensive, and effective

system of adult education. Although the work of the regional consortia is still in its initial planning stages, at the ACCE annual conference, we caught a glimpse of the types of innovative partnerships that are being developed in various regions of the state. Most importantly, we are building relationships which hold stronger and last longer than regulatory structures.

To paraphrase a well-known expression, it takes a village to educate one person. In a nutshell, this statement describes the Student Success Support Program (SSSP). The program encompasses essential elements to ensure students' reaching their goals successfully – assessment, orientation, advisement, and educational planning. The ACCE Board members who joined the statewide SSSP noncredit taskforce are working hard to design services and outcomes which will be most meaningful to the noncredit student. There is a potential for additional financial resources to help colleges implement the SSSP services.

I think you caught the drift – a storm of changes leading to amazing opportunities is the foreseeable forecast for the future of noncredit. I can't think of anyone more suited to lead us through these exciting but challenging times than Donna Burns, the incoming ACCE President. Donna's expertise, experience, diplomacy, and other leadership qualities are admired by all who had a chance to work with her. Once again, I would like to express my appreciation for the ACCE Board members. Their ability to

juggle the responsibilities of their demanding jobs and move our organization forward is incredible. I admire their unceasing dedication to strengthening the noncredit education and their passion for what they do at their home colleges. You are more than colleagues and friends, you have become my family!

Warm wishes for a successful and productive year leading to a bright future!

Valentina

AB86 Work Underway; July Deliverables Approaching

by Donna Burns – ACCE First Vice President/President Elect



Many ACCE members have jumped with both feet into their local regional consortium planning process for adult education. A total of 70 regional consortia of community college districts, school districts, and other partners have been formed statewide. Funds have been approved and technicalities of grant

paperwork are being finished up so that funding can be released.

In the meantime, local teams have busily engaged with Objectives 1, 2, and 4, which are due in their “in process” form by July 31 of this year. Objective 1 asks each consortium to describe for its region, in data charts and narrative form, the education and services currently provided in adult education by adult schools, community colleges, and non-district partners in each of the five program areas identified in AB 86. These five areas are ABE/ASE, ESL/Immigrant Education, Short-Term Vocational Education, Education for Adults with Disabilities, and Apprenticeship. Objective 2 asks each consortium to describe, in data charts and narrative form, the need for adult education in its region. Objective 4 asks each consortium to develop plans to address the gaps between “what is” and “what is needed” to serve the needs of adults in its region.

These objectives are described in the Regional Consortium Plan Template found in Appendix C of the Certification of Eligibility document, which can be found on the AB 86 website: ab86.cccco.edu. These documents are available to the public and should be accessed by all who work with adult learners.

The coming summer will be particularly intense as consortia finish their first draft comprehensive plans, due in October. Please continue to go to ab86.cccco.edu as the source for technical assistance, forms,

archived and live webinars, and other helpful information. A number of other forums are being offered by other interested organizations throughout the state as well (just as we held a session at our ACCE conference); these may be helpful sources of ideas and discussions among folks “on the ground” who are doing the regional work.

As has been emphasized in past articles and discussions, this is a lot of work, but the potential benefits to our adult learners and educational systems are well worth the effort. Best wishes as you keep up the good work!

ACCE Membership Spotlight

by Jarek Janio – ACCE 2nd Vice President



Dear ACCE Members,

It is my pleasure to announce a new and greatly improved ACCE web site. Please take a look to see slides from our yearly conference, read about how you can become an officer on the ACCE Board and check membership information. You can also access presentations and other files from past events. We have created a private login tab, which we plan to use to

collect payments starting the new fiscal year. As always, please send us your comments: <http://www.acceonline.org/>

In April, I went with Valentina to the Capitol Hill in Sacramento to testify on behalf of the Academic Senate about current issues regarding AB 86, a legislation designed to create and maintain stronger linkages between adult schools and community colleges noncredit institutions. In my testimony I stated that although the timeline set by the legislature for the AB 86 is adequate, we may have to wait for the results considering the differences between the two systems and the shortage of full time faculty in noncredit. In the meantime local academic senates are to work on stronger ties with credit programs, broader implementation of progress indicators and study the existing models of service for adult students. Transition programs and professional development need to be in the center of the AB 86 planning process as well.

Also in April, with help from Valentina, Cathryn Neiswender, and Bob Pacheco from MiraCosta, we coordinated the first Student Learning Outcome (SLO) Networking group symposium at North Orange County Community College District. The event was attended by 34 faculty, researchers, SLO coordinators, and administrators from 22 colleges from throughout California. We discussed topics related to SLOs implementation, assessment, and data collection.

As this year is winding down, I wish you all great summer.

Jarek



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

What you gain from ACCE membership

- Representation at the regional, state and national levels.
- A quarterly newsletter, statewide college and membership directory, discount rates to attend both regional workshops and the annual conference.
- Legislative liaison and analysis.
- Affiliation with other professional organizations.
- Support and mentoring from an experienced network of professionals.

You can inquire about ACCE membership at: <http://acceonline.org> . Cost for this year's membership remains unchanged: \$60.00 per year per person, but if there are three or more people from the same site, the membership fee drops to \$53.00 per person.

Noncredit SSSP Workgroup Begins

By Liza Becker – ACCE Continuing Education Council Leader

I am happy to report that the Chancellor's Office has formed an ad hoc workgroup to review the Student Success and Support Plan (SSSP) and make recommendations for a funding formula. The implementation for credit SSSP begins in fall of 2014, with some districts piloting this summer. Noncredit is currently in transition and projected to implement a new SSSP formula in 2015-16 (SSSP Funding, Guideline, pp. 7-8). ACCE has been anxiously waiting to establish the group so we can provide input such critical aspects as core services, funding formula, and data elements that are specific to noncredit policy and issues.

The primary responsibilities of the advisory committee includes developing an SSSP noncredit funding formula, revising and updating the plan, and reviewing MIS reporting areas in order to make the necessary edits. Chris Graillat, who is from the Student Services and Special Programs division of the Chancellor's Office, is spearheading the committee's formation and initial stages of planning.

The team's membership constitutes a cross-section of noncredit program representatives, several of them members of ACCE including co-chair Vaniethia Hubbard from SCE NOCCCD representing SSSP Advisory, Julia Vercelli from Santa Ana College representing counseling faculty, Brian Ellison from San Diego CCD representing CIOs, Mia Ruiz from Cuesta CCD representing CCCMPA, Jasmine Ruys from College of the Canyons representing Registrars & Admissions Officers, and yours truly (Liza Becker) from Mt. San Antonio College representing ACCE.

We all welcome your input, just as you may have provided it at the 2013 ACCE fall

workshop, when Anna Garza and Vaniethia Hubbard facilitated a conference call session with Dr. Deborah Sheldon from the Chancellor's Office. The questions and themes that emerged during that session are helping to guide the coming discussions, which are scheduled to begin in July.

We will continue to solicit your input as the committee is charged with specific tasks to address the issues and policy. If you have any issues or concerns that you would like to provide in advance, please do not hesitate to contact me at LBecker@mtsac.edu / 909-274-5233, or any of the other ACCE members on our task force.



Community Education Intensive English Program

By Trudy Dellimagine

The Intensive English Program (IEP) at Cerritos College Community Education is an innovative program designed for international students who want to develop the language skills they need to begin their academic studies in the United States. The IEP is a unique collaboration of various Cerritos College departments, including, Community Education, the Office of International Student Services, the Office of Career and Assessment Services, and instructional divisions.



Students will study English in a student-centered environment where they will be fully immersed into the English language and American culture. Each session of the Cerritos College's IEP is eight weeks in length (2 months) and provides over 20+ hours of Intensive English language training each week. Upon entering the program, students will be assessed and then assigned into a group (level 1 or level 2/3). Classes are held Monday through Thursday each week, and instruction is customized to student's levels – students are taken from where they are at with the English language and are helped to effectively learn quickly how to improve their writing, reading, grammar and speaking abilities. Students are also provided other opportunities outside of the classroom to practice what they are learning, such as field trips and conversation time with American students.

Throughout the time of the program and upon the initial registration of the student, the IEP at Cerritos College provides

personalized attention and support to all student participants. Class sizes are small, so that students get individualized help from instructors. The International Student Center staff and the Community Education staff are available to assist students from the moment they join the program - helping during their studies with Cerritos College, and making the student transfer to the credit program at Cerritos College or another transfer school easy. Cerritos College Community Education staff is available to the student every step of the way!

Cerritos College's highly qualified faculty and staff are dedicated to making the student's learning and cultural experience rewarding. Upon successfully completing the IEP, the students will have the opportunity to transition into their major field of study at Cerritos College and then later transfer to a University of California (UC) or California State University (USC) or any university of their choice.

The IEP program is ALL-INCLUSIVE. For the program cost students receive course tuition, 20+ hours of direct instruction per week, assessment testing, orientation, all books & class materials, use of the language lab, access to other school resources (such as the library, supplemental language workshops, tutors, etc.), a field trip, and a certificate of completion. Student applications are accepted before each session begins. For more program information and costs, visit the Cerritos College Community Education website at www.cerritos.edu/isc.



Forward Thinking: What's Next For Community Education?

*An Interview with Nihal Parthasarathi,
Founder of CourseHorse By Michael
Hegglund*

As we look out at the sweeping changes taking place in both K-12 and higher education, new standards and platforms are emerging to create greater efficiencies in how we operate.

- In K-12 nationally, the shift to Common Core is designed to create a comprehensive set of academic standards in Language Arts and Math to ensure we have a uniform way of measuring what young students know.
- For those working in adult education in California, AB86's primary goal lies in regionally unifying adult schools and community colleges to create streamlined learning pathways for students to move through more easily.
- Recently, the State of California awarded a \$16.9M grant to Foothill-De Anza and Butte-Glenn Community College Districts for the development of a statewide online learning portal that would offer credit-based courses

and programs through a common course management system.

At the core of these initiatives, we are witnessing a dramatic transformation. While K-12, adult schools, and colleges will continue to be distinctly local in terms of the communities they serve and programs they offer, the potential exists for a level of connectedness we've never seen before through the use of shared standards and learning platforms. If these trends offer a window to the future, what might this hold for community education professionals as we begin to imagine what we'll look like moving forward?

I recently asked **Nihal Parthasarathi, Founder of CourseHorse**, an educational technology company whose platform is designed to help enrichment education providers fill seats and connect students to local classes, for his thoughts on lifelong learning, the future of education, and the challenges/opportunities ahead:

Q: What does lifelong learning mean to you? What was the most recent class you took?

A: I'm a big believer that people can and should be consistently improving themselves over time, and lifelong learning represents a clear and direct path towards continuous personal and professional improvement. For working professionals, lifelong learning is a way to advance in existing careers or to build new skills to transition into new professions. For recreational learners, it

offers the chance to discover new passions, or to hone skills in existing pursuits. Focused, supported learning serves an important purpose in everyone's life -- it represents the power to help us discover the best of ourselves.

Most recently, I took a web design class at a continuing education department at the City University of NY (CUNY) Community College. I don't come from a computer science background, but working in the technology field, I collaborate with our engineering team on a regular basis. This class has enabled to me ask better questions and develop clearer expectations, making me better at my job.



Q: What do you see are some of the more relevant technology trends that have the potential to impact how we as community education programs operate?

A: The Continuing Education industry is operating within a period of significant change. Technology has impacted almost every aspect, from the class structure and delivery model to student acquisition. The most disruptive technology trend

facing continuing education is the advancement of online courses, whether self-paced courses that students can take on their own, or live-online classes that connect students and instructor remotely. That said, I firmly believe that while online education will become an increasingly important part of the overall mix, a very healthy and thriving future exists for high-quality in-person education. In our research, we've found that a majority of students continue to prefer in-person learning for a few key reasons: it leads to higher levels of follow-through, increases valuable and unpredictable face-to-face interactions between instructors and students, and delivers a community-based, social experience that can only come in-person.

A second important trend is the proliferation of easy-to-use online tools that simplify day-to-day operations and allow CE providers to more efficiently utilize their limited time. Nearly every manual task now has an inexpensive online tool that can help. From modern email service providers that help you manage and segment your email lists, to low-cost teacher timesheet and tracking tools and easy invoice generation and management suites, education professionals have myriad web and mobile apps at their disposal. Investing a little time to identify third party services that can help creates more hours in the day, which is critical for small departments.

The availability of these tools underlies the third major trend -- accessibility of data. The most successful education professionals we work with are increasingly making decisions based on data. For example, by analyzing not only which classes students are enrolling in, but also which ones they are clicking on and not signing up for, administrators can get to the core of what drives enrollment and determine the lifetime value of a particular student. We've found that simple changes in schedule, location and even image choice can have a surprisingly dramatic impact and the web-based environment we now operate within allows this data to be collected, analyzed and acted upon.

Q: So much of the current news cycle is dominated by how online learning will 'democratize education' by reducing cost which, in turn, will result in greater levels of access for students. Your online platform, though, seems to take a different approach by working with schools directly to create a shared marketplace to connect students to local on-campus classes. What is your vision for democratizing education?



A: For me, democratizing education means providing people with a clear and robust picture of the education options available to them so that they can make an informed decision based on their personal needs and selection criteria. As the ROI of traditional undergrad and graduate degree programs becomes increasingly nebulous, we expect more and more interest in shorter duration, practical skills-based classes -- the very type that CE providers are market leaders in.

Online education is certainly exciting in its promise to increase access to coursework and to improve the quality of the education by providing complementary tools for classroom courses. However, there is still quite a bit of progress to be made for these programs to be considered true alternatives. For all of the excitement around online education (and MOOCs in particular), the growth rate for online education has dropped to its lowest rate in a decade. Research has shown that while many students have successfully started an online class, the vast majority of MOOC students (around 90%) don't finish the class, and around 80% already have college degrees, which calls into question the ability of these programs to truly reach new audiences.

One trend I am particularly optimistic about is the hybrid model that combines the online and offline worlds. Though these programs are also still in their infancy, they present an exciting

opportunity to take advantage of the best of both online and offline education.

Q: Many community education programs have extremely limited marketing budgets, and those dollars are often consumed by producing a print catalog that drives enrollment. What kinds of cost-effective strategies can we employ that complement what we already do and open our programs to new audiences?

A: While marketing budgets for CE institutions are small, expectations and competition are high, making the need for effective marketing more important than ever. Most CE providers we work with still spend the majority of their marketing budget on print catalogs, though they are increasingly reducing spend in favor of digital alternatives that offer more transparency into the ROI of their spend and efforts.

We believe that the best forms of marketing are clear, transparent and performance-based. Why spend money on something if it's impossible to clearly identify whether it's working or not? At CourseHorse, we've built our business around this core belief and have introduced a model for CE providers to increase enrollment with no out-of-pocket expense or design/production burden.

One important recommendation we make to many CE providers is to view their unsold seats as a valuable marketing

resource. Most CE providers we've spoken with are running their classes at 60-70% capacity. The incremental cost of hosting additional students is low, yet those empty seats can be used to generate additional exposure for your programs. Examples include using empty seats to reward frequent students, or attracting local writers and bloggers who can help get the word out about your programs.

In addition, we recommend that CE providers maintain a waitlist for every class as well as a 'wishlist' function on their websites to allow students to identify classes of interest. We've found that the most common reason prospective students don't take a class is that the schedule doesn't work for them, even though they're still very interested in the program. Use this opportunity to capture their email address, segment them into a relevant email list and remarket to them until schedules align.

Q: How can emerging technology platforms, such as CourseHorse, help give us real-time insights about our students and class trends that would allow us to make quicker, more informed decisions?

A: In our conversations with our schools, the most common questions we receive revolve around programming selection. Deciding which classes to offer, when, and how to price them is an incredibly difficult challenge when CE providers don't have enough data available to them.

This is where data from resources like CourseHorse can be instructive. Aggregating data from thousands of schools and millions of students across the country helps identify meaningful trends and insights that can help CE providers develop the best possible programming for their communities. Useful reports that we provide freely to our partner schools can help them understand the seasonality of course categories, local popularity of specific subjects, best time and day or week to run a class, and pricing sensitivity.



Q: What piece of advice would you give to community education professionals when it comes to adopting new technologies?

A: The sheer quantity of new technologies available to CE professionals can be overwhelming, yet the stakes have also never been higher. For CE departments to not only survive but flourish, providers should embrace new technologies and view them as exciting opportunities to deliver a better education to more students than ever before.

The most successful educators we work with have fostered a flexible and iterative culture of experimentation. Hiring staff

that are comfortable with technology is important, but so is creating an environment that expects and rewards trying new things responsibly. Each new semester should bring new efforts that have the potential to move your institution forward.

In adopting any new technology, CE providers should be very clear from the outset what the goals and key performance indicators are for the effort, so that they can evaluate its success. Fortunately, many of these new technologies focus on providing the data and measurement needed to make the informed decisions that are best for your department. When new efforts prove effective, double down on them; when they fail to meet expectations, understand why and consider other options. At CourseHorse, we embrace a culture of 'failing fast' so that every new thing we try, whether successful or not, has a clear and actionable outcome that teaches the company about how best to move forward.



SANTA ANA
COLLEGE



Bi-Annual Student Leadership Conference

The bi-annual Leadership Conference was held May 21st, 2014 promoting student participation and providing workshops and information on leadership skills and educational opportunities. The main goal of this conference is to provide transitional information, hope, inspiration, and educational opportunities to the audience.

“We did it again!” the Student Development Program Coordinator, Robin Storti said, “We had a wonderful turnout at our Bi-annual Leadership conference. We had attendance of 270 people at Phillips Hall on the Santa Ana College Campus on May 21st 2014. The Conference is open to the public but is mainly attended by students from SACSCCE and SAC students (in the last year we have also had student from Lincoln Center attending).”

The Conference is facilitated by the Leadership students (students in the white t-shirts in the photos) as part of the curriculum of the Leadership Basics class offered at SACSCCE (Santa Ana College School of Continuing Education) each semester. Each conference has a keynote speaker and ends with campus tours of Santa Ana College. It is an opportunity for students see the possibility of the next step no matter where they are in the process.

Pictures of Spring 2014 Leadership Conference!



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ACCE is dedicated to develop and promote desirable policies, practices, and support for the educational constituencies within the Association and to promote professional growth of the membership.

Membership information: <http://acceonline.org/membership.cfm>

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