

THE PADE INFORMER

Pennsylvania Association of Developmental Educators

Volume 28, Issue 1

Fall 2008



President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

Warm greetings from central PA! Even though I know better, I have once again been surprised by how quickly we've arrived at the middle of fall semester! Ah, but what a beautiful time of the year...

As I enter the second year of my presidency my goal is to keep a steady hand at the helm and continue on course working to solidify the infrastructure of this wonderful organization. We made progress last year in several areas:

- A review of PADE organizational processes was initiated, one result of which was the upgrading of the computer and software for the Treasurer.
- Under the guidance of the chair of our elections committee, electronic voting was tested and then employed very successfully in last spring's election.

- Committee membership increased, accompanied by a renewed emphasis on committee activity and the development of annual goals.
- An evaluation of PADE regions and the institutions assigned to them was undertaken with a goal of producing a PADE map which not only delineates the regions but illustrates where institutions of higher education are located.
- The position of PADE Archivist was created and filled.

In addition, of course, PADE continued to provide foundational services to its membership by providing professional development opportunities through another excellent state conference, five strong regional conferences, an informative newsletter and a developing listserv.

Lest we become complacent, however, we must remember that at its roots PADE is a very organic organization. Its vitality and impact are driven by the energy of the individuals who voluntarily engage one another through its structure and processes. By its very nature it cannot be static and be successful. So while we accomplished a good deal last year, there is still much we must do:

- Committees need to continue to grow and become more active. The wonderful thing about committees is that they can provide a way for you to pursue your personal and professional interests while serving the larger community. In case you were not aware, membership for most committees does not require you to be on the board. So check out the committees' listing and descriptions in the Spring 2008 issue of the Informer and then get involved!
- Review of organizational processes needs to continue.

- The process of archiving PADE historical documents needs to begin.
- The PADE map needs to be finalized and made available on our website.

I do have a new initiative for the coming year and it relates to an issue that I have heard discussed repeatedly over the years. I think that it is time for PADE to evaluate its service to adjunct faculty throughout the state. There is a perception that the annual PADE conference may be too expensive for many adjunct budgets, for example. Since we have members in most of the institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania it seems that we should be able to find out directly from adjuncts how they view this issue. Toward this end, I am putting an Ad Hoc committee together to explore their perspective and am looking for volunteers to serve on it with me. If you are interested and willing to commit some time to this endeavor please contact me at rcw1@psu.edu.

As I have said before, PADE can only be as strong as its members make it. These are extraordinarily busy times and budgets are exceptionally tight. We are all working harder with fewer resources. It is precisely because of this that now, more than ever, we need to have a strong and active professional community. Whether we do or not depends directly on your willingness to become involved. I'm hoping our paths will cross in one or more of the many ways PADE makes it possible for you to personally benefit our students, our peers and our nation.

Wishing you the best whatever your endeavors this academic year.

Ron

Ron Williams
PADE President 2007-09

Have you checked our website lately?

www.pade-pa.org

Board of Directors 2008-2009



First Row: Henriette Evans, Mary Ann Klicka, Denise May, Elisa Cohen (Vice President), Donna Dickinson, Joan Monroe

Second Row: Pauline Chow, Jacintha Burke, Linda Dapcic Angst, Marie Ulmen, Sandee Zelenak, Deborah Hartzell, Linda Mininger (Secretary), Renee Starr (Treasurer), Karen Bingham

Back Row: Ron Williams (President), Sherry Eichert, Medea Rambish, Lou Tripodi, Raymond Houston, John Barrett, Michael Wityk

2008-09 Board Meetings

Friday, September 19, 2008
At 10:30 AM

Toftrees Conference Center, State College

Friday, November 14, 2008
At 10:30 AM

Holiday Inn- Harrisburg-Hershey, Grantville

Friday, February 6, 2008
At 10:30 AM

Toftrees Conference Center, State College

Wednesday, March 25, 2008
At 6:00 PM

PADE State Conference
Holiday Inn Harrisburg-Hershey, Grantville



“Helping under-prepared students prepare, prepared students advance, advanced students excel.”

OFFICERS

President, Ron Williams
Pennsylvania State University, University Park

Vice President, Elisa Cohen
Harrisburg Area Community College

Secretary, Linda Huber Mininger
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King's College

Northwestern Region Chair, Mike Wityk
Pennsylvania State University, University Park

Philadelphia Regional Co-Chairs, Joan Monroe and
Olympia Mitchell, Community College of Philadelphia

Southeastern Region Chair, Medea Rambish
Montgomery County Community College

Southwestern Region Co-Chairs, Janet James,
Chatham University and Sandee Zelenak,
Westmoreland County Community College

PADE Representatives

Board Appointed - Newsletter Editor
Henriette Evans, Pennsylvania College of
Technology

Board Appointed – PADE Archivist
Dr. Lou Tripodi, Clarion University (Emeritus)

Board Appointed - Web Site Editor
Linda Huber Mininger, Harrisburg Area Community
College

Two-Year Private Representative
Deborah Hartzell, Lackawanna College

Two-Year Public Representative
Linda Dapcic-Angst, Reading Area Community College

O. Pauline Chow, Harrisburg Area Community College

Sherry Eichert, Bucks County Community College

Denise May, Bucks County Community College

Marie Ulmen, Harrisburg Area Community College

Four-Year Public Representative
John Barrett, Bloomsburg University of PA

Linda Enseki, Pennsylvania State University, DuBois

Henriette Evans, Pennsylvania College of Technology

Four-Year Private Representative
Donna Dickinson, King's College

Ray Houston, Robert Morris University

1 vacant position

At-Large Representative
Dr. Lou Tripodi, Clarion University (Emeritus)

Sandee Zelenak, Westmoreland County Community
College

Karen Bingham, Clarion University of Pennsylvania

Web Site Editor Change

Due to additional duties as co-Principal Investigator from a recently awarded external grant, Paula Ford (Penn State Altoona) transitioned from the Board this summer after seven years of service. In addition to editing the website for nearly five years, Paula also served as editor for the PADE Informer for three. Paula has been such an active contributor to the Board that we were all saddened to see her step down. We wish her the best and know that we will continue to have the benefit of her contributions and support as a continuing member of PADE. ***Thanks, Paula!*** PADE website editing will now be handled by Linda Mininger.



PADE Regional Conferences

Engagement Topic at Northwest Regional Conference

Michael J. Wityk - Regional Chair

The Northwest Region hosted its one-day conference "From Theory to Practice: Engaging (and Empowering!) Our Students" on Friday, October 3, 2008 at The Toftrees Conference Center in State College. The program featured Shubha Kashyap and Mickey Bellet from the Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity at Penn State, University Park along with Darlene Young, Teresa Burkhart, Jacqueline Runkle and Dwayne Hunt from the Center for Academic Achievement at Penn State, Schuylkill. Opening remarks were graciously provided by PADE President, Ron Williams and PADE 2009 Conference Chair, Linda Dapcic-Angst. The conference was attended by 25 participants from 12 different institutions of higher education and included 7 new PADE members.

During the morning session, Shubha and Mickey presented an overview of a variety of techniques and activities designed to engage student voices in their institutions' academic support programs. The presenters invited the audience to define and evaluate their own sense of engagement and underscored the growing need for students to interact with the entire campus community in a manner that optimizes learning and emphasizes personal development. Shubha and Mickey reiterated the importance of students recognizing the correlation between assuming ownership of their education and future to their overall academic success and, in referencing research by Vincent Tinto, George Kuh and the National Survey of Student Engagement, provided participants with a number of strategies and ideas to integrate into their own program services.



Mickey, Michael and Shubha

The afternoon session provided the opportunity for attendees across various disciplines to actively participate in a reality-based dramatization of a trial. Darlene, Teresa, Jacqueline and Dwayne modeled 'Trial By Jury' as a way to engage their 1st-year students through role-playing and actual voting while simultaneously introducing key-ideas related to student responsibility and academic success. Following the demonstration, the presenters acknowledged the need for setting and communicating high expectations to students and invited the audience to adopt a version of 'Trial By Jury' as an effective and enjoyable way of doing so.



Dwayne, Theresa, Jacqueline and Darlene

For more information on this program and speakers, or to suggest topics for future conferences, contact Michael Wityk at mjw286@psu.edu.

Integrating Student Support Services Topic at Southeastern Regional Conference

Medea Rambish* – Regional Chair

The southeastern and Philadelphia regional workshop was held at Montgomery Community College's Blue Bell Campus on Friday, October 17, 2008.

The workshop's topic was Integrating Student Support Services, and Dr. Kristie Honeycutt Sullivan, a student services and learning community expert from Sandhills Community College, in Pinehurst, NC, was our guest speaker and breakout session presenter.

Breakout sessions included learning communities, discourse communities, quantitative literacy, integrating technology, peer mentoring and supplemental instruction, and summer bridge programs.

The workshop was well received by the participants. The next event in the region is the Developmental Educator's Summit, which will be held on November 7, 2008 at Community College of Philadelphia.

Thanks to all presenters and participants for a great workshop.



Dr. Kristie Honeycutt Sullivan

* Medea Rambish is our new Southeastern Regional Representative. Medea is the Director of Developmental Education and Learning Assistance at Montgomery Community College. She can be reached at mrambish@mc3.edu or 215-641-6637.

Northeast Regional Conference on Friday, November 21, 2008 at Bloomsburg University.

Conference Theme: "Enhancing the Millennial Students' Success: Centralized and Decentralized Developmental Education Environments, Programs and Pedagogies"

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Carmy Carranza, Professor at Indiana University Of Pennsylvania, Chair of the Department of Developmental Studies and Director of the Learning Enhancement Center, ACT 101 Program.

Keynote Title: Centralized vs. Decentralized Developmental Education Programs: Which Is More Effective?

There will also be four breakout sessions:

- Building on Dr. Carranza's theme, Anna Mary McHugh, Coordinator of Special Needs at Luzerne County Community College, will focus on the decentralized environment and its implications for Learning Centers and other student support services.
- Dr. Sharon Solloway, Associate Professor at Bloomsburg University's Department of Developmental Instruction, will discuss "Getting Mindfulness into the Curriculum at a Public University."
- Dr. James Stewart, Tutorial Coordinator at King's College, directs his discussion on the most visible academic support service – tutoring.
- John Barrett and Dr. Joan Dillon, Assistant Professors in the Department of Developmental Education at Bloomsburg University, teachers of developmental writing and reading, respectively, will team up to discuss the pedagogical challenges of the Millennial student.

Registration is \$25.00. Registration includes parking, continental breakfast and lunch. Participants can register by contacting **John Barrett**, jbarrett@bloomu.edu or **Jacintha Burke**, JacinthaBurke@kings.edu

Deadline: Tuesday, November 18th. The conference will begin at 9:00 am and run until 2:30 pm.

Research Corner – John Barrett, Bloomsburg University

Is it a Brave, or a Dumb, New World? – Reading The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Age Stupefies Young Americans and Jeopardizes Our Future by Mark Bauerlein

In my Composition course this year, I assigned the graphic novel, I Killed Adolf Hitler, by Jason. In this near-future dystopian novel, a hit man is hired by a time machine inventor to kill Adolph Hitler before the launching of World War II. The hit man fails at first, succeeds on a second try, then finds himself baffled that his action to dissect Hitler from the past has left his brutally violent world unchanged. My students offered the following explanations: “Someone else would have taken Hitler’s place,” and “We never learn from the past,” and “The past doesn’t matter that much anyway.” Well, I wondered, are they right, that the past serves this generation so little purpose? Is this hurdle toward the latest handheld, technological marvel demand, more and more, that students live exclusively in the present moment or risk a cultural identity crisis? Am I a stodgy, curmudgeon now, when I have aspired to be the cool and pop culturally savvy professor? Well, to find some answers, I assigned them a simple prompt for an essay: write about one historical event (the totality of history to choose from, mind you, *any* event that occurred *before* the student’s birth) and discuss how that event has, in some important way, shaped the student’s identity. When the essays came in, I was forced to accept how little, if at all, students considered, contemplated, or *knew* of, historical facts; how little *knowledge* seemed to register as an important thing for students to acquire. Only one essay out of 49 articulated a clear, without cliché, way history impacted the student. In fact, 48 out of 49 came to approximately the same conclusion regardless of event, and regardless of the accuracy in recounting that event – namely a version of ‘everything happens for a reason’ without anywhere suggesting what that reason might be.

How far has this digital age corroded students’ intellect? I picked up Bauerlein’s 2008 treatise on the subject in which he categorizes my students

as part of the “dumbest generation.” He states his aim this way: to measure “the intellectual condition of young Americans.” He directly blames digital technology for the steady, alarming decline in the young mind’s interest and ability to process and retain information. In his introduction, he offers this assessment:

“Instead of opening young American minds to the stores of civilization and science and politics, technology has contracted their horizon to themselves, to the social scene around them. . . . The fonts of knowledge are everywhere, but the rising generation is camped in the desert, passing stories, pictures, tunes, and texts back and forth, living off the thrill of peer attention. Meanwhile, their intellects refuse the cultural and civic inheritance that has made us what we are up to now.” [10]

The book’s chapters then present a heft of “the best and broadest” research to support this conclusion, an unsettling one for any educator, especially developmental educators whose daily mission relies so heavily on learning patterns and brain research. The list of sources is too cumbersome to highlight here, suffice it to say he did his research, and supports his conclusions admirably. The two areas that concern him most involve history and reading patterns. In a 2006 study by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute entitled, *The Coming Crisis in Citizenship: Higher Education’s Failure to Teach America’s History and Institutions*, more than “14,000 freshmen and seniors at 50 colleges” including Harvard, Stanford, Johns Hopkins and lesser known schools, were tested on basic, big picture American history. The average score was an F, 51.7 percent, for freshmen, and 53.2 percent, an F, for seniors. He cites a twenty year (1982-2002) study by the National Endowment for the Arts concerning the reading patterns of 60 million teens and young adults, which found that reading literature among 18-24 year olds declined by 28 percent. Bauerlein argues that “if all adults in the US followed the same pattern of decline, literary culture would collapse.”

Unfortunately, he too easily dismisses other books of late that herald an opposite conclusion regarding technology and the young mind. And he does come off sounding a bit too angry and curmudgeonly. Still, a few of his claims unnerve me, striking an Aha! confirmation of my own

experiences in the past few years. Will this decline in reading lead to the inevitable “the more you don’t read, the more you can’t read,” which naturally leads to ‘the more you can’t write’? Do scholars, like us, “accept the deterioration. . .without much regret”? Consider his exhortation:

The research compiled in the previous chapters piles gloomy fact upon gloomy fact, and it’s time to take it seriously. . . .Lunchroom conversations never drift into ideology, but Web photos pass nonstop from handheld to handheld. If parents and teachers and reporters don’t see it now, they’re blind. If they don’t respond, they’re unconscionable. [235]

Hyperbole aside, his challenge, and the research supporting it, is worth our serious consideration. By the way, that one essay in my Composition class that articulated a compelling and insightful conclusion about history and the individual was written by a high school junior taking a college course for fun and advancement. There *is* hope.

Send any comments, questions, suggestions in response to this column to jbarrett@bloomu.edu

Are you looking for resources on the web?

- Here is a link for a portal on **Learning Support Centers in Higher Education**. It is worth visiting:
<http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/~lsche/>
- **Conference on Basic Writing Fellowship:** \$500 will be awarded to support expenses to attend the conference in San Francisco in March 2009. Deadline for applications is December 1, 2008. For additional information, please contact Sonya L. Armstrong at sarmstrong@niu.edu

Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does!

William James

New Initiative

We are interested in **publishing summaries and reviews of the most recent research and literature in the field of developmental education.**

We welcome your own research, as well as readings and articles that you have found interesting and worth sharing. We believe that this is a great way to keep the membership informed on the best practices in the field and to engage into discussions in this field of education. For further information, please contact either Henriette Evans at hevans@pct.edu, or John Barrett at jbarrett@bloomu.edu



*Save the date
March 26-27*

P A D E 2009

**“Increasing the Odds
for Student Success.”**

Holiday Inn in Grantville, Pa.

*Check the PADE website for
additional postings*

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES

National Association of Developmental Educators, 33rd annual conference: “Where excellence blooms.” February 25 - 28, 2009. Greensboro, North Carolina. <http://cfcc.edu/ncade/nade2009/>

Pennsylvania Association of Developmental Educators 2009 Conference: “Increasing the odds for student success.” March 26-27, 2009. Harrisburg, PA. www.pade-pa.org

New York College Learning Skills Association. 32nd Annual Symposium on Developmental Education. March 29-31, 2009. www.nycls.org

The 2009 On Course National Conference. April 17-18, 2009. Raleigh, NC. www.oncourseworkshop.com

Kellogg Institute: Training and Certification of Developmental Educators. June 27-July 24, 2009. (30th Anniversary). Appalachian State University, Boone, NC. <http://www.ncde.appstate.edu/kellogg.htm>

The PADE Informer

This is your newsletter! What would you like to see in it? To submit an article or book review, please contact the editor, Henriette Evans, at hevans@pct.edu. All submissions should be sent as plain Word files.

Do you have an idea you would like to discuss? Feel free to call Henriette at (570) 320-2400 X7753.

Deadline for *The PADE Informer* - Spring 2009 issue is March 31, 2009.

Many thanks to all who submitted articles, photos and suggestions for this and future issues of the newsletter.