



Turning Points in American History
Advisory Board Meeting
Monday, January 10, 2011

In Attendance:

- Academic Historians: Susan Ouellette
- Academic Educators: David Shiman, Janet Bossange
- History & Social Science Educators, gr 3-16: Alison Levy,
- Local Education Agency Curriculum Coordinators: Stuart Weiss, Gwen Carmolli
- Librarians: Diane Pawlusiak, Claire Buckley
- Museum Educators: Victoria Hughes
- Partners: Hannah Weisman, Cynthia Char, Geoff Burghardt
- TAH Co-Directors: Elise Guyette, Scott McLaughlin
- TAH Program Coordinator: Megan Bridges

Not in Attendance:

- Academic Historians: Dan O'Neil
- History & Social Science, gr 3-16: Brent Sclafani, Adam Popkin, Colin Ducolon
- Museum Educators: Tess Taylor, AJ McDonald
- Champlain Valley Educator Development Center: Darlene Worth

#1 Introductions - All

- See "In Attendance" above.

#2 Approve October Minutes

- Motion to be accepted as written by Janet, seconded by Claire
- Motion accepted by all in attendance

#3 Website & Tracking System – Geoff Burghardt

- Part of grant requirements is to track users of website
- As of Jan 9th, approximately 1,000 users, 4,000 page views
- Google Analytics shows us what people are looking at, where they are coming from, what browser people are using
- Google Analytics is free and attached to every single page of website

- New website features: search feature is on every page, blog with different articles etc., “Ask a Master Teacher” – questions will go to a contact form and the with answers will appear on the blog, local Vermont museum section – all searchable, categorized, and tagged
- Want to keep the website professional, user friendly, and attractive
- Easy to navigate with different organization buckets with different categories
- Working to allow people to have multiple registrations in one form
- Can people find out what they registered for afterwards? -Participants do get a receipt email confirming their registration or they should email Megan with questions.
- Adam Popkin gave some feedback about how many credits available and how do teachers get them?
- Can we link syllabus to the event descriptions so teachers can view syllabus?
- Can the registration form remember participants? – No the form is specific to an event, browsers can be set up to automatically to fill out forms, but the website is not set up for that.
- As part of the registration process, the teachers are asked to fill out a Survey Monkey survey which they are sent a link to when the register for an event and in their confirmation email.
- Where do people who teach at a college or university student/faculty sign up? Need to add a higher ed faculty/staff as well as adjust the higher ed category. Will send updates to Geoff for updating.
- Is there a place for feedback? - Contact Us Form under About Us and in link on bottom of page

#4 Project Achievements & Recruiting – Scott & Elise

- Biggest challenge was getting the office set up, advisory board members/partners/contractors organized, get first events going
- Launching website was a big accomplishment for the fall
- Calendar was established and has been maintained
- Working to prepare consultants and partners further ahead of each program
- Will be preparing the 2011-2012 calendar in the coming months
- First event was Nov. 2nd – Revolutionary War Scholar-led Seminar. Received good feedback and are learning from our first event.
- Second event was Dec. 8th – Poetics of Place. Went very well, smoothly. Learning from the event planning/executing process.
- First Primary Source Study group will be taking place at the end of January.
- People are signing up at the last minute to some extent
- What are our target #s? – Target numbers are what were put into the grant but will likely be achieved in year 2 or year 3.
- Can we link tighter with professors who are teaching methods classes to college students?
- No cost for participants unless they want to take a series for graduate credit which is \$120 per credit hour. *Should advertise the price for graduate credit because it’s a good price.
- Sending posters for different events to librarians, curriculum coordinators
- Do participants need to attend all 5 PSSGs?

- Created a worksheet for Museum Workshops and for Lecturers/Discussions (Socratic Seminars) to hold presenters accountable and help them focus in on their presentations.
- Helpful for what is useful for teachers and what they are looking for in order to change classroom practice.
- Have already identified with the presenters on 1/21 what the primary sources will be and how they will use them with the teachers.
- Will run discussion session with presenter/lecturer as a Socratic Seminar, participants need to be prepared by doing the readings ahead of time. Discuss readings with lecturer for 1 ½ hours.
- Learned a lot from the first scholar-led seminar – better preparation for everyone: teachers, presenters, TAH staff
- New evaluation sheet that has been sent to the presenters so they know how they are being evaluated by participants

Publicity & Recruiting

- Email list with MailChimp
- Over 1100 names on our list
- Need to open up publicity to other VT State and Private Colleges, and Upstate NY teachers, etc.
- Publicity at different conferences (NEAA and VASS)
- Facebook and NING Social Studies, CVEC
- Curriculum Coordinators and Librarians, etc.
- Hoping to have a greater impact for the summer institutes, etc.
- Questions and suggestions:
- New England Museum Association
- Language Arts Teachers? How do we reach them? Vermont Reads, BCTA, NCTE
- State Dept. of Education in NY – Conference on History?
- NEHTA (New England History Teachers Association)?
- New England League of Middle Schools?

#5 Evaluation Process – Cynthia Char

- External Evaluator for the project
- What do evaluators do? What are the objectives for year 1? Implications for design of the project – impact vs. # of participants
- Head of an education evaluation firm in Montpelier
- Trained as a developmental psychologist – help people develop programs, curricula, wide range of groups
- Likes to work with groups in the proposal writing stage – began with Turning Points in the proposal writing stage
- Summative Evaluation - People typically think about outcomes when they think about evaluators – often a key requirement, bottom line what is going to come out of this – end result
- Formative evaluation – do studies and get feedback early in the project in order to refine the design and have a bigger impact

- Processor Evaluation/Implementation – understand the nature of the thing you are putting in place and how people receive that information – sense of intervention and context
- Front End Assessment – what evidence do you have that this is necessary or good to do. Scott and Elise did this before the grant proposal was written.
- Tension between quantitative data and qualitative data
- Numbers vs. data collected through observation, student work, interviews, etc.
- What’s our best bet to lay out our yearly program of evaluation while paying attention to what’s important to the funder.
- How research program is laid out based on program and it’s evolution over 3-5 years
- Teacher content knowledge - requirement by the Federal gov’t to track, pre and post tests for teacher content knowledge
- Had to come up with a reasonable pretest based on different valid instruments (AP Tests, etc.)
- Challenge with pretest is that signing up for events is sort of a “rolling admission” program. Teachers have been taken the pretest from Oct. thru May.
- How many rounds of pre and posttests need to be administered because of the schedule and the nature of registrations?
- We don’t know which individuals will continue in Year Two, Year Three, etc.
- What is the program designed to do? What are the outcomes? How do you study it?
- Feedback forms are being given to participants at each event which will be added to the research Cindy is doing – what does it tell us about aspects that are working as well as needs of the teachers/participants?
- Early work on logic models on theories of action
- Looking at demographics – who are coming first, early adopters? Certain grades, certain schools, certain history background?
- In future years, we’ll be looking more at the online community and partnerships between school districts and museums.
- Nature and Structure of Project – Menu approach of program development. Participants can pick and choose from a rich array of offerings. Participants are encouraged to pick what works for them. Advantageous for participants but unique as a professional development model.
- Can pick one seminar from a group – assets and limitations to that approach
- We lose a little of the breadth of the historical reference that we want teachers to gain as stated in the grant proposal.
- Doesn’t allow for a lot of follow up and engagement with the ideas learned.
- Primary Source Study Group is a good example of more mainstream professional development programs – five classes, clear ideas of what do to between sessions in the classroom
- A number of different partners – bring out strengths of each partner, different perspectives, adds to complexity of the project
- What are the specific outcomes we hope to achieve? Increase in knowledge, learn new techniques in the classroom, etc. Complexity is heightened because of varying programs.
- Makes sense to loosen expectations in order to launch the program and increase the numbers, get the word out.

- What are people not getting a stipend or graduate credit expecting? What are our expectations for them and them for us? What is the value we are offering?
- What is the project striving for? Goals and expectations?

#6 Switching Back to a Series – Discussion

- We lost a little of the cohesiveness of the program when we let people sign up for the seminars individually.
- Should we still allow people to “dip in” in some events and keep some as cohesive events?
- Benefits of creating something about what you learned from each event – should we require participants to submit a lesson plan, etc.?
- We do require lessons to be submitted for Primary Source Study Group, Book Group, National Field Study, Local Field Study (depends on # attended), and to receive a stipend for hours attended.
- Teacher Leader – added creating curricula to the requirements for Teacher Leaders
- Working with a teacher on creating curricula for 5th grade, and two teachers writing curricula on Lincoln Hill in Hinesburg
- Do we want to make Local Field study a week long institute? – In summer having everything in a week or two if it’s required to attend all.
- People who want graduate credit for scholar-led seminars are required to go to all three seminars.
- We need to work on disseminating information regarding graduate credit and stipends in order to facilitate the number of people signing up for a series all together
- Should we require a follow up for each seminar? Should we require someone attend all seminars in a series/package?
- Difficult to get professional development time during the school year – hard for teachers to get out of school for so many different days/times.
- Post reflections, discussions as a virtual follow up?
- Do teachers teach all the different subject matters?
- Some teachers are just looking to maintain licensure and will go regardless of their teaching the subject matter.
- Can participants create their own “menu” of events to satisfy their own needs and still reach a certain number of hours and provide a lesson plan, etc.?
- Flexibility in year one was important because there wasn’t an opportunity for long term planning, more opportunity for a required series’ in years 2 and 3.
- Series’ also foster collegial feelings and help people feel less isolated
- A lot of schools are deciding their professional development strategies in April/May – need to get new brochure out in April
- Can we do PSSG after school?
- Should we tweak Scholar-led Seminar name? Workshops?

#7 Finances – Scott

- Year 1 Budget was put together for grant proposal
- Have new projected actual expense for Year One

- Personnel expenses will likely all be spent except for Substitute Teacher reimbursements because of lower numbers
- Travel money will likely all be spent (National Mtg. in DC)
- Supplies – some office materials purchased will last for life of the grant which is why we are over a bit in office supplies,
- Contractual obligations – will be over a little for museum educators and under in advisory committee meeting, added more to the National Field Study
- Other – end with a surplus
- Graduate Credit – make a small amount of money on the graduate credits (\$120 charged by participants, \$95 by St. Mikes, \$25 surplus for extra books, etc.)
- Teacher Stipends – expected a big surplus
- Budget feels good – end with a surplus overall with projected costs so far
- State contract for book buying to look into
- Job of the Advisory Board is to keep us on track

#8 What's Coming – Elise

- Jan 21st – Scholar-led Seminar
- Jan 27th – Primary Source Study Group
- Feb 24th – Book Study Group
- March 18th – Educator-led Seminar
- April 1st – Scholar-led Seminar
- June 26th – July 3rd – National Field Study
- July & August – Local Field Study
- Should we mail brochures, posters? Is that more effective than email?

#9 Recommendations - Elise

- When should we plan events? Should we plan events on in-service days?

#10 Invoices, MOU's & W9s for Stipends - Scott

- Please fill out invoices for today's meeting