

August 17, 2012 Advisory Meeting Minutes

Introductions:

- In attendance: Cindy Char, Elise Guyette, Wendy Hallock, Victoria Hughes, Lisa Italiano, Dan O'Neil Scott McLaughlin, David Shiman, Jane Williamson, Lauren Wooden
- Not in attendance: Claire Buckley, Gwen Carmolli, Colin Ducolon, Susan Ouellette, Adam Popkin, Brent Sclafani, Stuart Weiss

April Minutes:

Motion to approve April minutes with addition of Cindy Char "not in attendance."
All in agreement

Project Achievements:

- Scholar-led Seminar May 16, 2012
 - Held at Lake House in Grand Isle
 - Elizabeth Clark-Lewis - Theme was migration
 - Thirty-one participants in attendance
 - Three graduate students for the series.
 - Lisa Italiano and Reuben Jackson led a workshop connecting to music and poetry
 - Hannah Weisman integrated the art of Jacob Lawrence.
- Primary Source Study Groups Final Sessions
 - Revolutionary War Era
 - St. Albans; nice small group. (8 participants / 4 grad students)
 - This is the second year we offered this program.
 - Fourth session was a simulated journey from Hadley, Mass to the new State of Vermont to move into Settler's Cabin at Shelburne Museum. Wonderful experience. Planners took on personas to interact with participants along the journey.
 - Civil War Era
 - 17 participants. 5 Grad students
 - Culminated with an exhibit based on National History Day criteria.
 - Teachers report that they have a higher awareness of the time required for this type of project and will be more aware of the support that students need.
 - The exhibits have been used in classrooms and we have the set on loan to offer as examples.
 - Lesson plans were assigned too, which did not go as well.
 - Will do the same program at Sheldon Museum next year, but might replace required lesson plan with reflective writing.
- Participant Retreat
 - Seventeen participants
 - Lots of good feedback / we ask them to be critical.
 - PSSG participants want more time to talk to each other
 - Participants suggest using year 4 funds to offer more scholar-led seminars
 - Perhaps professors would volunteer to come to lecture and discuss with teachers, particularly professors with a service component / requirement.

(For evaluation Cindy Char suggests we include a description of how we modified and improved various aspects of the program.)

- National Field Studies in SC
 - Penn Center – National Historic site – First school for freed blacks during Civil War (Union hands)
 - Gullah culture from Western Africa
 - Delving into Reconstruction in that area. Reconstruction worked for a time – biracial government in South Carolina.
 - Vermont connections – Martha Johnson Peacham teacher. Loudon Langley Hinesburg – fought and stayed – delegate to 1868 SC Constitution that stands today.
 - Dr. Stephen Wise- historian / primary lecturer.
 - Emancipation Tree – where the Emancipation Proclamation was read for the first time. Steve Wise read.
 - Victoria Smalls facilitated the journey - grew up in South Carolina – Gullah community.
 - Assigned characters – interpret place through lens of characters. I am from / two voice poems.
 - Journals and prompts including poetry and sketching.
 - Reunion August 15th – participants shared lessons and journals.
 - Power of Place / Cultural continuity
 - Itinerary we built for Turning Points at Penn Center is being used by Vanderbilt and Yale.

- Local Field Studies in VT- This summer we switched from weekly Saturday programs; we designed three 3-day programs concentrated in a given era.
 - Rev War 16 participants / 6 Grad Students
 - Civil War & Reconstruction 10 participants / 4 Grad Students
 - 19th Century 9 participants / 5 Grad Students

 - Four / five cultural heritage organizations per series
 - One half day reserved for collegial discussions – each participant brings an outline of a lesson to revise with new methods.
 - End of program discussion extended beyond scheduled time as participants engaged in dialogue.
 - Focus on hands-on activities for teachers (constructed birch bark baskets, communicated by telegraph, etc.).
 - Participants that had never accessed local historical societies report plans to work with historical societies in their classrooms.
 - Lots of driving, but some teachers had never been to parts of the state and sparked a conversation about how geography affects culture.
 - Educators recommend same model for next year.
 - At August local field study, participant / intern Jason Barney presented a Photo Story 3 (Windows software) workshop, a program that he used during Turning Points internship.
 - In an hour session, participants each created a Photo Story project.
 - Participant Eric Fries product shared at meeting.
 - Can be used with students of varied abilities.
 - Berkshire Historical Society – Participants created a walking tour booklet on site. Each teacher included a component and walked away with a product to bring back to the classroom

Teacher Leader

- Brent Sclafani has been writing curriculum for Burlington School District during his retirement.
 - Last year - 5th grade - Revolutionary era, this year - 4th grade Vermont history, next year - 7th grade Civil War / Reconstruction RETN has a video of teachers who have piloted his work.
 - Connects American History to human rights standards / social justice lens.
 - Curriculum coordinator wants to share with all middle school teachers.
- Teacher Leader application from 1st grade teacher (Burlington School District) who would like to connect grades 1-3 for a grades 1-5; 7-8 continuum.

Internships:

- Jason Barney
 - Video and resources are on display at Swanton Historical Society.
 - Spoke at retreat about the impact internship has had on his teaching and students.
 - Summer school students completed historical experiment – walk the British route and archaeological survey to search for barracks.
 - Barracks not yet found, but students were engaged.
 - Will incorporate into his classroom.
- Deborah Ormsbee
 - Continues barn survey.
 - Developing curriculum for teachers to continue collecting resources for the survey.
- Wendy Hallock – Fleming Museum – will continue work in the autumn.
- Three participants are interested in looking into internship possibilities.

Mini-Grants:

- Jason Barney - collecting primary sources; would like to create an exhibit for Swanton Historical Society – will file for a mini-grant soon.

Lessons on the Website

- Lesson plans have been added to our website. <http://www.turningpointsinamericanhistory.org> – Use the Resources tab to select “Lesson Plans” – Sort by *Categories* (historic time periods) or *Grade Level* (elementary, middle, high school).
- Lessons are listed alphabetically by title within each category. The list contains Title, Topic, Category, Grade Level, and Summary.
- Click “View Details” to take a closer look at a lesson – this links to a page with an image (from the lesson in most cases), Title, Grade Level, Topic, Category, Overview (more detailed than summary), Skills (standards, including Common Core), and links to the lesson plan and connected resources.
 - Everything needed to teach the lesson is accessible from this site. There is a maximum file size limit, so sometimes the appendices are uploaded as separate files, especially when they contain images.
 - We have a uniform format. After Elise, Scott, and Susan have approved the lessons for content, Wendy makes adjustments and supplements as necessary to get the lesson plans uploaded.
- Advisory Feedback
 - Great Resource
 - Can we add a *Comments* field for teachers to leave feedback?
 - The Lesson Plans page is part of a data base; it might not be possible to insert a comment box within that page as would need to link to multiple places.
 - We do have a link on the page to “ask a master teacher,” but that is not necessarily a place people would comment.
 - Perhaps we can add a link to our blog with a specific page reserved for teacher comments.
 - What about a shout box?
 - We will contact web designer to inquire.
 - Ability to track the hits per page – Google Analytics
 - Brochures – Will add a note that downloadable lessons are available on the web page.
 - Newsletter – Can send word to check out the website for downloadable lesson plans – Mail Chimp account reaches 1,200 educators.

Evaluation Update

- Since April: Pre-test cut off at the end of April. Posttests began in May. Wendy and Laura are in close communication weekly to coordinate responses. Final round completed by hard copy at August local field study. A few waivers issued - 92% return rate. (86% also completed pre-test. Great matched set.)
- Data is collected. Analysts are synthesizing. Looking at what programs people actually took. Government cares about the “completers” (30+ hours). In addition to the content change scores, we can analyze the self-reported improvement of pedagogical skills / learning community, and how does that correlate to programs completed.
- Seven program components. We look at each and how do they weigh with increase in skills.
- Participant background – Reaching a broad range among all dimensions.
- Preliminary findings – 90% claiming an increase in content knowledge; 73% - useful to teachings. 76% more primary sources. 73% increasing perspectives.
- Will participants register for more sessions – 78% yes 15% maybe 1- no ; 5 – don’t know
- 99% worthwhile program to recommend.
- Developing content knowledge test for coming year. Half of the questions need to come from approved standardized tests. Looked at thousands with Amy from VHS. Elise and Scott review subset and assess difficulty. Scott and Elise then design questions for content not covered. Piloted tests twice with out of state teachers.
- Document-based tasks in primary source study groups. Participants asked to analyze the same primary source at the start of the first session and the end of the last session. Scott and Elise will assess these.

What’s Coming:

- National Field Study is full (waiting list). All other programs have space.
- 2012-2013 Brochure –
 - Suggest to make horse /weathervane smaller and put something on online component in its place.
 - Will highlight program connection to Common Core standards.
- New Teacher Leaders – Please make suggestions for projects or individuals

Finances:

- Budget projections.
- Surplus in personnel as substitute reimbursements are lower than projected.
- Contractual
 - National Field Study – permission to increase number of participants.
 - Permission to hire Wendy to polish the lesson plans for the web page.
- Training stipends
 - Deadline to file was August 15th.
 - We will begin to process next week.
 - Expect to pay approximately \$22,000 .
 - In addition to hours, participants are required to write a reflection, complete collegial work, and create a lesson.
- Travel – Year one, sent an extra person to DC conference. No conference in year two; Elise attended a regional conference with minimal travel expense.
- Internships – expect to pay 2-3,000 in year three.
- Will transfer excess stipend money into next year’s budget.

- No cost extension for year four.
 - Need to submit next summer.
 - Will discuss with Adam Bookman , DC contact throughout the year.
 - Project \$44,000
 - Continue conversation with participants to determine interest – how to allocate funds.
- South Burlington school district has been fabulous to work with for budget items. Processes requests quickly and maintains a dialogue about keeping our books accurate.
- January Seminar at UVM – This year we ran into some trouble with distinction as to whether this was a community event or UVM event. In order to have access to the space on our current budget, this year we will promote to students and faculty and order UVM food. Will promote early on campus. (Green Mountain Writing project has access to free space.)

Looking Forward:

- Sustainability: VASS conference – We have been getting teachers to submit proposals. Last year we represented half of the teachers. Hope to have more participants this year – Dec 7th at the Hilton in Burlington.
- National History Day theme next year is Turning Points
- Working on finishing RETN videos for year one. Completed edits. Need narration.
- Purpose of RETN videos – Through the narration, we are tying the video’s content to the SCIM-C strategy, showing the process and how to transfer to classroom. We highlight writing assignments. Short clips highlighting specific points.
- How does RETN Video tag to the web page? - link (to add) on the resources tab to video clips. Suggestion to clearly organize in a way that makes sense for teachers. Thinking about subtle design decisions in advance. – Stand-alone elements that don’t need to connect. Will think of headers.
- EDU2.0 – A number of teachers have taken to administrators. South Burlington has switched. Scott presented at Dynamic Landscapes last spring.
- Teachers suggested a private Facebook page for our participants.
- CVEDC – Meets monthly with curriculum developers. If there is interest, CVEDC will support an idea – advertise, send a flyer, if enough sign-ups, move forward. Online courses, classes with Saint Michaels, consultants, workshops. People can meet to discuss a proposal.
- Map with links to people who have been part of the project.
- Public libraries – free / open / Wi-Fi
- Monthly seminar series at Ethan Allen Homestead.
- After grant – River Deep – Vermont Dept. of Education will keep the content of our site after the grants. VASS will likely host. Other sites?
- Piggyback off Common Core implementation through literacy in history. Elise gave a workshop to 20 Burlington teachers analyzing primary source documents according to Common Core standards. Places as Complex Texts - Common Core Standards. Home page – Explicitly state we are teaching the common core standards. Will add to brochure and web page. Link to Common Core.
- Highlight the local resources that connect to national themes. Web site / lessons.
- Board replacements – Looking for a middle school teacher and possibly a librarian
- Study Groups – how best to use the model in our programs. Looking for a way to involve teachers more in the direction of the course. Might allow teachers to take the learning to their own schools when the grant is no longer funded. Teachers want more time to talk and less shifting between tasks.

INVOICES, MOU’S & W9 FORMS FOR STIPENDS – Collected

See you Wednesday, October 24th at 1:00 at Dupont Hall in Fort Ethan Allen!