



Washington Association of Collegiate Agriculture & Natural Resource Educators (WACANE)

Thursday December 11, 2014

Conference Call

3:30pm – 4:15pm

WACANE Members in Attendance:

Cindy Deffe, Spokane Community College; Andy Winnett, Walla Walla Community College; George Klein, Walla Walla Community College; Matt Williams, Walla Walla Community College; Melissa Holecek, Walla Walla Community College; Trent Ball, Yakima Valley Community College; Jason Selwitz, Walla Walla Community College

Others in Attendance:

Bill Griffith, Agriculture Center of Excellence; Lindsey Williams, Agriculture Center of Excellence; LaKatherine Stanger, Agriculture Center of Excellence

Welcome & Introductions

Bill Griffith, Agriculture Center of Excellence Director, welcomed WACANE members and thanked them for making time to call in to the meeting.

Recap Summer Conference

Bill reminded the group of the discussion from July's conference and requested feedback from participants. Not many in attendance on conference call that was present at the summer conference in July. Bill then moved on to current program enrollment statuses and asked for updates from everyone; specifically if there is a plan of action for improvement or how the Ag Center can step in to help with. Matt, WWCC, reported ag science programs are at or above the enrollment expectations. Melissa, WWCC, reported water resource program is below expectations but is growing in enrollments. Cindy, SCC, reported greenhouse program has a waiting list, and floral and landscape have a decrease in enrollments. Trent, YVCC, reported ag and ag transfers are up or maybe even doubled from same time last year, and enology program is steady with enrollments.

Bill asked the group how much support programs are receiving from their parent institution with recruiting and marketing for each program. Cindy reported for Spokane; the instructors handle their own recruiting and marketing for new students, with little support outside their departments. Matt and Melissa reported for Walla Walla; programs do their own recruiting for the most part as well, but they have expanded help through their college marketing department. Melissa mentioned the hassles, known across the state, of transfer students and undecided students being roped into the academic programs without being shown the

options in workforce education. Trent reported for Yakima; they have one recruiter for the entire school and they are spread thin across all the programs offered in Grandview.

The Ag Center has focused on social media marketing and the current Facebook page has increased the visibility with paid boosts. Lindsey has reached out to many college instructors, requesting information about individual programs to create and share posts on Facebook, and the quarterly newsletters. Some colleges have responded and have been spotlighted in these offerings and others have not. Bill stated that anyone on the call that wants their program highlighted in the quarterly newsletters or on Facebook need to send Lindsey information to share and the Ag Center will publish and market the information. Other assistance with program marketing is available as well; the Ag Center staff asks that instructors seeking help stay in contact for various marketing and recruitment opportunities the Center may have.

Bill reviewed the discussion regarding Articulation Agreements from the Summer Conference. He inquired if any programs have begun the journey or if any need assistance starting the agreements and collecting the information. Cindy has reached out to Washington State University and has yet to receive an answer or any additional information to get started. Melissa is interested in getting started on some agreements for Water, and Matt is finished with his agreements with Washington State University and is now looking for out of state universities to align with.

Industry partners are looking for educational programs with students for internships and skilled workers. Bill asked the group to share any relevant industry contacts with the Ag Center and other instructors to broaden the scope of employment for graduates. The Ag Center is hosting Precision Agriculture Seminars in January; Walla Walla-Jan12th & Yakima-Jan30th.

Feedback and Discussion

Bill asked ‘How can we help you and what can the Ag Center do for you?’ Yakima is not in dire need of anything in particular right now, but certainly wouldn’t turn down any additional help with boosting the program awareness with advertisements and recruitment efforts. Trent asked for some social media posts regarding enology programs, wine tasting, and special wine releases. Lindsey asked he stay in contact and send information to her with the available hours with the tasting room and she would take care of the posts. Cindy offered to send Bill the list of her Advisory Board members and their contact information for use by the Ag Center.

LaKatherine maintains the Ag Center job board and keeps it up to date as she has time. If anyone has internships or other jobs as it is related to Ag and Natural Resources, send the information to LaKatherine so she can post the information in a link.

Cindy requested help with partnering with local high school instructors to begin joining program advisory boards for a broader stretch of insight. George asked for contact information on Aquaculture for NOCTI field experts on a written exam. Lindsey shared Bellingham Techs instructor information for their Aquaculture program. Jason referred a contact from out of state and gave George the details.

Next Meeting

Detailed information will be sent out in a couple months with meeting dates and agenda.