Committee on Philosophy in Two-Year Colleges

2013-2014 Membership

Thomas Urban, chair (2016)
Robert Boyd (2016)
A.J. Kreider (2016)
Rick Mayock (2014)
Alexandra Perry (2016)
Basil Smith (2015)
Anthony Thomas (2014)
Mark Thorsby (2014)
Donna Werner (2015)
Kristen Zbikowski (2015)

September 26, 2014
To: Amy Ferrer, Executive Director, APA
From: Thomas Urban, PhD – Chair, Philosophy in Two-Year Colleges Committee
RE: Annual Committee Report 2013-2014

2013-2014 Committee Members

Thomas Urban – Chair [2016]
   Robert Boyd [2016]
   A.J. Kreider [2016]
   Rick Maycock [2014]
   Alexandra Perry [2016]
   Basil Smith [2015]
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   Donna J. Werner [2015]
   Kristin Zbikowski [2015]

Daw-Nay Evans, Chair – Committee on Teaching Philosophy [2015] ex officio

2013-2014 marked the first year in recent memory that the Philosophy in Two-Year Colleges Committee participated with sponsored sessions at all three APA Divisional Meetings. This practice will continue in 2014-2015. 2013-2014 is also the first full year that our committee is associated with both the Committee on Teaching Philosophy and the Academic Career Opportunities and Placement Committee, with our chair serving as an ex officio member on each committee. This dual association better reflects the concerns of our two-year college programs which are not only teaching oriented, but also subject to staffing challenges ranging from serious credentialing issues to an excessive dependence on adjunct faculty at many two-year institutions. It is our committee’s hope that we will be able to partner with these other committees on initiatives that promise improvement for student success and faculty satisfaction.

Alongside our participation at Divisional Meetings, the Two-Year College Committee has voted in favor of establishing a Two-Year College Newsletter that will report on committee initiatives and feature professional articles by Philosophy faculty specific to the two-year college teaching, learning, and professional environment. It was the consensus of committee members that having a newsletter will encourage two-year college faculty across the nation to become more involved in the APA. Face to face meetings of committee members were held in Baltimore and Chicago to work through questions on how best to craft the newsletter, and were later reviewed via Email. The planned launch date for the Newsletter is Fall 2015.

The following is an account of our committee’s participation at the three Divisional Meetings.

Eastern Division – Baltimore, MD

APA Committee Session: How to Obtain a Position at the Community College
   Arranged by the APA Committee on Philosophy in Two-Year Colleges

   Chair: Thomas Urban, Houston Community College, Emeritus
   Panel Speakers: A.J. Kreider – Miami-Dade Community College
                  Mark A. Thorsby – Lone Star Community College

Professor Thorsby was unable to attend this meeting due to an unexpected, last-minute cut in his available travel monies. However, Professor A.J. Kreider took the lead in presenting an overview of the ins and outs of obtaining a two-year/community college job to a full room of graduate students, junior faculty, and senior two-year college faculty. The chair added to this presentation and more importantly, those faculty members in the audience joined the conversation. All told, there were 20 interested APA members at this engaging session. Afterwards, the chair received additional questions via Email from both graduate students and faculty who attended, faculty inquiries on how to join the committee.
Central Division – Chicago, IL

1. APA Committee Session: How to Obtain a Position at the Community College
   Arranged by the APA Committee on Philosophy in Two-Year Colleges

   Chair: Bill Hartmann (St. Louis Community College)
   Panel Speakers: Kristen L. Zbikowski (Hibbing Community College)
                   Basil Smith (Saddleback College)
                   Anthony Thomas (Kishwaukee College)
                   Aaron Champene (St. Louis Community College)
                   Thomas Urban (Emeritus - Houston Community College)

2. APA Committee Session: Advocacy and Leadership in Community College Philosophy
   Programs - Credentialing, Curriculum, and Faculty Support
   Arranged by the APA Committee on Philosophy in Two-Year Colleges

   Chair: Thomas Urban (Emeritus - Houston Community College)
   Panel Speakers: Kristen L. Zbikowski (Hibbing Community College)
                   Basil Smith (Saddleback College)
                   Anthony Thomas (Kishwaukee College)
                   Bill Hartmann (St. Louis Community College)

Attendance at both sessions at the Central Division was less than the committee had hoped it would be, which has prompted plans to craft more engaging titles for the February 2015 meeting in St. Louis. At the same time, the discussions were lively and those who did attend expressed their appreciation.

Pacific Division – San Diego, CA

APA Committee Session: Advocacy and Leadership in Community College Philosophy
   Programs - Hiring, Curriculum, and Faculty Support
   Arranged by the APA Committee on Philosophy in Two-Year Colleges

   Chair: Robert Boyd (Fresno City College)
   Panel Speakers: Rick Mayock (West Los Angeles College)
                   Wendell Stephenson (Fresno City College)
                   Kerry Ybarra (Fresno City College)

Session Chair Robert Boyd reported the following: “Sadly our session had only six people attend. Alexandra Perry (Marietta College) had an emergency occur so she was not able to join us. There was one graduate student who is considering a teaching career at two year schools and one guy who teaches at a community college in Long Beach. As a result, we tailored the first part to address the questions the student from Syracuse had. We then talked about some of the curriculum issues face those of us teaching philosophy in California. One thing everyone agreed on was that we need to do a better job attracting APA attendees to our session. Everyone thought the title of our session was a major drawback. It neither invited grad students nor philosophy instructors from two-year schools. It was suggested that instead of having the session under one heading to break it down to sessions on getting hired at two year schools, curriculum issues, etc. We also talked about the newsletter -- everyone really liked the idea. Rich Mayock actually presented a paper on the role of a philosopher in the community. It might be a potential piece for the newsletter.”