

CONSORTIUM FOR BELIZE EDUCATIONAL COOPERATION (COBEC)
MINUTES OF THE FORTY FIRST BI-ANNUAL MEETING
July 30-31, 2010
Georgia Perimeter College, Atlanta Georgia

ATTENDANCE:

NAME	INSTITUTION
Miguel Montero	Corozal Junior College
Regina Mahim	Armstrong Atlantic State University
Carol J. Sapp	Georgia College and State University
Susan Ralph	Bainbridge College
Holley M. Roberts	Georgia College and State University
Lyndall Muschell	Georgia College and State University
Ismael Hoare	University of Belize
Cynthia Thompson	University of Belize
Dwight Call	Georgia College and State University
Tracy Harrington	Bainbridge College
Lupita Plum-Guclu	Kennesaw State University
Dan Paracka	Kennesaw State University
Mimi Chase	University of Indianapolis
Mary Ann Studer	Defiance College
Robin Kratzer	Defiance College
Kim Shackelford	University of Mississippi
Martha Bass	University of Mississippi
Lollie Vaughan	University of Mississippi
Lennette J. Ivy	University of Mississippi
Jim O'Donnell	New Mexico State University
Fred P. Carter	Western Kentucky University
Brenda Armstrong	Wesley Junior College
Alan F. Genitty	Ministry of Education and Youth(Belize)
Sharmayne Saunders	UWI Open Campus
Lisa Battaglino	Bridgewater State University
Jim Anderson	Armstrong Atlantic State University
Carly Wynne	Gainsville State College
Neal R. McCrillis	Columbus State University
Luis Canales	Murray State University
Adrian Leiva	Muffles Junior College
Beth Moore	Viterbo University
John Anderson	Georgia Perimeter College
Jose' Mai	Corozal Junior College
John Kempainen	University of North Florida

1.0 PRE-CONFERENCE PROFESSIONAL WORKSHOPS-JULY 29, 2010

The Belizean attendees were involved in two workshops facilitated by professors from GPC. Workshop no. 1 was on Becoming a Master teacher. The second workshop was on Critical Thinking in the classroom.

2.0 OPENING CEREMONIES

The Conference begun at 9.30 am with the singing of the national anthems of Belize and the USA.

John Anderson (GPC) introduced the President of Georgia Perimeter College, Dr. Anthony Tricoli, Who welcomed and addressed the COBEC representatives. Dr. Tricoli stated that there are one hundred and forty seven (147) countries represented in GPC. GPC has five campuses with a sixth campus online, they have been a member of COBEC since 2009. Dr. Tricoli cited one of his goals for GPC as: To create a transfer mission guarantee with universities in Belize for students from GPC. It is hoped that this can be accomplished by Spring 2011. Students can consider an international certificate associated with their Associate Degree. Students can transfer to any of the 39 Bachelor degree institutions tagged with GPC. TAG- transfer admission guarantee.

3.0 TRANSITION OF COBEC LEADERSHIP

Unfortunately both outgoing Co-Chairs were unable to be present at the conference.

4.0 NEW OFFICERS PRESENT THEIR VISION AND CHARGE FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS:

Dr. John Kemppainen reviewed the missions and goals of COBEC. (these can be seen on the COBEC web site) He also presented the vision and charge of the new executive officers for the next two years. These included the following:

- Training in counseling in Belize
- Joint partnership instead of one to one partnership.
- Newsletter to encourage sharing of information among COBEC institutions.

Jose Mai, Co-chair of COBEC offered thanks to the outgoing Co-Chairs and expressed his gratitude for being elected to the position. He shared some of his vision and thoughts for the organization, these include:

- Expansion of collaboration with greater emphasis on multilateral projects eg articulation, professional development, professional assistance in the development of ICT. (Information, Communication and technology)
- Making COBEC more visible in Belize and the USA, seeking international funding for projects.
- Having the Database in a centralized location, so that information can be shared.

5.0 KEYNOTE PRESENTATION- Dr. Linda Noble.

Dr. John Anderson introduced the keynote speaker, Dr. Noble, Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Affairs, Board of Regents, University System of Georgia. Dr. Noble shared on 'INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION : A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA.' Some of the salient points from her presentation are as follows:

- International Education is now widely accepted. The need for students to be globally competent is accepted and its importance recognized.
- Level of support and resources for international education has been reduced over the years, philosophically the strategic plan to enable students to access international education still in force.
- Many institutions have been long engaged in International Education.
- The work of International Education has to happen at the campus level.
- Some of the targets set by the Board of Regents: Increase Study Abroad participation from 21% to 28% by 2012. More students earning degrees in foreign language, broadening faculty expertise by their participation in work abroad.
- Challenge is to balance the tension between goals of study abroad program, and the present economic situation.
- Global learning and international participation is now used as part of teacher evaluation and consideration for tenure.

In the discussion following the Keynote Speech, it was mentioned how suitable Belize is for study abroad programs in a challenging financial climate- it is easily reached, the multiethnic nature of the country, and the cost of living is low.

6.0 REPORT FROM PARTNER SCHOOL PROJECTS IN BELIZE

6.1 Carly Wynne- Gainesville State College

Took 24 students to Belize in May 2010; Worked with Carol Babb and the MOE on the removal of corporal punishment from the primary schools; Would wish to work with 4 yr institutions which have teacher education programs.

- **Neal McCrillis Columbus State University in Alabama**
 - Have had Environmental science program in Belize; interested in music program in Belize to widen the music exposure of students in his college.
- **Luis Canales – Murray State University.**
 - Emphasized the collaborative approach in COBEC
- **Adrian Leiva- Muffles Junior College**
 - Small professional development projects, major project with NMSU where student interns are placed in primary schools in Belize.
- **Lisa Battaglino -Bridgewater State University, Massachusetts**
 - New to COBEC; became members of COBEC in Feb. 2010; but has been sending teaching interns to Belize in collaboration with SJCJC.; Gave 8 scholarships to students to attend

Bridgewater State University in September; Interested in broadening their collaborative efforts with the MOE and other schools.

- **Sharmayne Saunders-UWI Open Campus**

Seeking opportunities to share information on Online Distance Education Programs.

- **Allan Genitty Deputy chief Education Officer –Belize.**

Presented message from the Minister of Education in Belize, the Hon. Patrick Faber: The minister wants to know how the organization and ties can be strengthened; wants to visit COBEC schools to speak with president and others in charge of International Education; He wishes to foster agreements between MOE and COBEC institutions to facilitate more students attending these universities; MOE will provide funding to the extent of \$10,000.00 per Belizean student to attend COBEC institutions. He wants to know more about In State Tuition and the Latin American and Caribbean Scholarship Programs.

- **Brenda Armstrong- President of Wesley Junior College.**

Appealed for lecturers to take sabbatical in Belize to aid with teaching in hard to fill positions.
Eg. Music

- **Fred P. Carter - Western Kentucky University**

Would like to place teachers in Belize for international experience.

- **Jim Mcdonald –NMSU**

Agreement in force that for every student sent to Belize 12 credit hours is given for the use of faculty later on in NMSU, Also interested in placing music teachers for internship.

- **University of Mississippi**

Lollie Vaughan-interest in working with students with speech and language disorders.

Martha Bass - Health and Exercise Science-area of expertise

Kim Shackelford- Area of expertise is Child Welfare and Psychiatry-social work; Interested in getting more students in the Masters Program in social work, there are only a few such persons in Belize; Have had Study Abroad students in Belize in anthropology and ecology; Have worked with SHJC on service learning.

- **Mimi Chase –University of Indianapolis**

Worked with Galen University; Runs Study Abroad program, recruit students from USA to go to Galen University in Belize. A number of faculty members have been to Belize to teach.

- **Lupita Plum- Kennesaw State University**

Has collaboration with UB; teacher training, Marine Biology program, and Archaeology at a Mayan site. 36 students are involved in these three programs. She is also associated with AFLAC.

- **Tracey Harrington- Bainbridge College**

Teacher Education program in collaboration with Corozal Community College; Short programs of Study Abroad; Nursing Program to begin soon.

- **Dwight Call- GCSU**

Have had a number of Belizean graduates from that institution where students get Instate tuition. Studies in Environmental Science and Health Science in Study Abroad programs in Belize.

- **Cynthia Thompson University of Belize**
Has relationship with Kennesaw state university where teachers are trained and supervised in Belize, and faculty members get opportunity to study at Kennesaw State University.
- **Ismael Hoare- University of Belize**
Requests assistance in developing academic rigor, reviewing programs, restructuring programs using interdisciplinary approach and setting the framework for graduate programs.
- **Holley Roberts and lyndall Muschell- Georgia College and State University**
Placing of student teachers in primary school.
- **Susan Ralph- Bainbridge College**
Encouraged COBEC members to take at least one children's book whenever they are going to Belize and to contribute this to schools or the National Library Service.
- **Carol Sapp- GCSU**
Nursing- collaborating teaching teams Belize and USA
- **Regina Mahim- Armstrong Atlantic State University**
Has not yet established program for sending teachers abroad, would like expertise and help in establishing such a program.
 - **Beth Moore- Viterbo University**
Joint faculty development program in Belize with SJJC; Nursing program partnership with UB; Number of Belizean students in Vitterbo who receive In State tuition; CAFÉ workshop with joint facilitators from Belize and the USA.
- **John Anderson- Georgia Perimeter College**
Attempts to get students to Belize during spring break for study abroad in ecology has not been successful so far; Would like to see exchanges among geography students.
- **Jose Mai- Corozal Junior College**
Collaboration with 3 USA Colleges- Hastings, Bainbridge and Murray State University; Many students are involved in teacher training and do internship in the primary schools; A number of teachers from CJC are currently visiting Bainbridge college this summer.; There has been faculty coming from the states to do workshops with teachers in the primary schools.; Areas of need- professional development of faculty and the use of ICT in the classroom.
- **John Kemppainen-UNF**
Latin American Caribbean scholarship-gives in state tuition and a bit more; All Belizeans enrolled at UNF gets this; All colleges at UNF participate in the LACS program; Students from UNF also go down to Belize to do studies in nutrition and health; Has been exploring why the Fulbright scholarships are not available to Belizean students. Action-Send letters to State Senators to ask for a restoration of Fullbright scholarships to Belize.

6.2 REPORT FROM DEFIANCE COLLEGE- MARY ANN STUDER MCMASTER SCHOOL FOR ADVANCING HUMANITY.

- Has worked in Cambodia, Belize and Guatemala.
- Goals and outcomes-intercultural competence, ethical reasoning

- Outcomes from goals-students have a high level of preparedness for working in a different culture.
- Integrated Natural Resource Management as a framework for Interdisciplinary Research in Belize.
- Attempts to amass a body of work that forms an interdisciplinary project.
- Setting up soil analysis-anyone interested in this? Defiance College would be able to help.
- Creating reading literacy program, developing curriculum and adult computer literacy classes.
- Conclusion-effective community based research through applied academic expertise; development of a synergistic world perspective within students.

6.3 PRESENTATION: JOHN ANDERSON-PROFESSOR OF GEOLOGY/GEOGRAPHY,GPC.

The presentation addressed the question: **BELIZE DEMOGRAPHICS; WHERE HAS IT COME FROM AND WHAT WILL THE 2010 CENSUS TELL US?**

Some of the salient points are:

- Census day-May 12, 2010; What is the potential of Belize in terms of tertiary level education?
- Forecasted---15-24 years old in 2010- 20.1% -21.9%
- Population of Belize-forecasted numbers- 343,535, 323,192, 311,082, 291,000 depending on method used.
- Over 50% of 5-11 year olds are in the labour force in Toledo district
- Belize City has the highest percent of urban population in the country.

7.0 COBEC COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The delegates broke up into committees- CAFÉ, CFACT and Study Abroad.

8.0 BUSINESS MEETING

8.1 ESTABLISHING ATTENDANCE

The meeting was called to order by co-chairs Mr. Jose Mai and Dr. John Kemppainen who expressed concern about the number of members who were present for the business meeting and the concern as to whether a quorum is present or not. Twenty four members were in attendance and it was decided that a quorum was present.

8.2 ADDITION TO THE AGENDA

It was asked that the position of the Business Meeting in the Conference be a point of discussion to be added to the agenda.

8.3 ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

The agenda was presented on a motion from Cynthia Thompson, and seconded by Fred Carter.

9.0 MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING

The minutes were accepted on a motion by Beth Moore and seconded by Tracey Harrington.

10.0 REPORTS BY OFFICERS

10.1 Treasurer's Report

The U.S. report was shared by Susan Ralph. She reported that the balance in this account is \$19,306.23; Expenditure was \$1,320.82. The account also earned interest of \$110.41

The Belize account is still dormant and has a balance of \$3,464.00 Bze.

No questions were fielded regarding the accounts.

11.0 REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

11.1 College Administrators/Faculty Experience (CAFÉ)- Report by Adrian Leiva

The committee stated that documentation poor on this committee; The role of CAFÉ' was reviewed and it was decided that much more can be done with conferences in Belize to enhance the role of CAFÉ'. It was suggested that the first day of the winter conference be established as a pre-conference workshop to enable more faculty in Belize to benefit from professional development workshops. Suggestions given for workshops- faculty evaluation, developing a climate for research, developing excellence in teaching. These workshops will have facilitators from both the US and Belize. the finances for this pre-workshop will come from ATLIB, COBEC and the Ministry of Education. The steering committee for this will be those persons who met at the summer COBEC meeting. These recommendations were endorsed by the members present.

11.2 CFACT Committee Report -BETH MOORE

Six persons met on this committee, Jose Mai and Beth Moore are both retiring from this committee. Martha Bass and Miguel Montero will be the new co-chairs for this committee.

It was decided at the February meeting that the College Fair meeting should begin at 2.00pm in order to facilitate the students who live outside of Belize City. The decision was taken to use the former starting time of 4.30pm. It was suggested that ATLIB institutions should make arrangement for their students to attend the college fair at the former times.

The Counselor training aspect of CFACT needs to be activated. There is the possibility of it being part of the pre-conference workshop. Counseling workshops would be formulated for both counselors in the high school and the junior colleges. Belizean partners would identify the specific area of need for the workshop. It was suggested that the Counselor training aspect of CFACT should be incorporated into CAFÉ'. The decision was taken that CFACT will move ahead with their planning for the counselor training and be a strand in the pre-conference workshop.

The suggestion was made that COBEC should be more visible and tangible in Belize. COBEC should be more aggressive in getting publicity for the organization. Brenda Armstrong volunteered to take on the publicity of the work of COBEC. It was suggested that the publicity stint should incorporate recent graduates, 470 Belizean students have graduated so far from UNF.

11.3 Study Abroad Committee- Dwight Call

He suggested that Video conferencing to Belize and the US to share classes would be a good idea. UWI Open Campus would be able to facilitate this. Lisa Battaglino-Bridgewater State University will send out survey on list serve via Survey Monkey (a survey instrument) to find out what courses or areas of interest students are interested in pursuing in Study Abroad programs and Service Learning. The Peace Corp in Belize may have resources to help international education so it would be a good idea to invite a representative from that to the winter COBEC conference to share on resources that may be available for international cooperation in education. It should also be explored how credits can be banked, as done by KSU and NMSU, to enable Belizean faculty and students to access studies in the USA.

12.0 PRESENTATION BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI FOR ADMISSION TO COBEC.

The University of Mississippi made a presentation supporting their request for admission to COBEC. They highlighted some of their work in Belize-They have been working in the San Mateo community in San Pedro for the last five years, empowering the community to build their own roads etc.

Sacred Heart Junior College is the sponsoring institution for the acceptance of MSU. MSU has been involved with SHJC in the area of Service Learning.

Tracey Harrington moved for their acceptance, this was seconded by Dwight Call. The motion was accepted by all.

13.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 New COBEC Logo

Discussion ensued on the choice of a logo for COBEC. It was stated that the one voted on needed to define the acronym and eliminate the tag line-a Belizean global education network- it was also suggested that the tree in the circle above the word COBEC should be a picture of the mahogany tree.

13.2 Future Conferences

The Winter Conference will be held on February3-4, 2011, It will be hosted by UWI Open Campus. The College Fair will take place on February 2.

Summer conference: Gainsville State College indicated their interest in hosting the next summer conference.

13.3 Awards and Presentations

The Awards Committee is made up of Adrian Leiva only. Others are invited to join this committee.

The criteria for awards were outlined. Generated list of past awardees- Adrian asked others to look at the list and mention any names that have been omitted in order to update the list.

13.4 Scholarship Fund

The motion was made that a One-time scholarship fund of \$1000.00 US to a COBEC university is to be set up in the name of Martin Aird- The Martin Aird Memorial Scholarship.

The executive committee would do the selection of the student. The motion was passed.

13.4 Small Grant

Carly Wynne of GSU requested a small grant from COBEC to support a project she has been involved in. The title of the project is 'Collaborative Teacher Training in Positive, Non-Aggressive Classroom Management'. The sum requested was \$1,473.00. This motion was passed.

13.5 Order of COBEC meeting

A discussion ensued as to the best place to put the business meeting in the COBEC conference. It was decided that the report from all institutions need to be kept in place but this report could be sent out electronically before the meetings. Beth Moore made a motion for experimenting with a one day conference. The executive of COBEC was asked to discuss and experiment with a one day conference for next summer. This conference would include the pre-conference workshop for Belizean participants.

13.5 Adjournment

Gratitude was expressed to John Anderson and his team for hosting the summer conference. The meeting was adjourned at 12.10pm.

Respectfully submitted

Winsome Arana

COBEC Secretary