

**CONSORTIUM FOR BELIZE EDUCATIONAL COOPERATION  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT  
WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY - BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY  
JUNE 27-29, 1996**

**Members Present**

Tracy Harrington <i>U.S. Co-chair</i>	Valdosta State University
Carlos Castillo <i>Belize Co-Chair</i>	Corozal Community College
Vernon Card	Belize Technical College
Cecil Reneau	Belize Technical College
Keith M. Miser	Colorado State University
Jose Mai	Corozal Community College
Tom Keene	Kennesaw State University
Dorothy Zinsmeister	Kennesaw State University
Vince Cooper	Metro Community College
Belizario Carballo	Muffles Junior College
Marcie Johnson	Murray State University
Paul Huntsberger	New Mexico State University
Tim Thompson	St. John's College
Julio Fernandez	SUNY-Cortland
Dorian Barrow	University College of Belize
Israel Cano	UCB-Belmopan Junior College
Betty Flinchum	University of North Florida
Mike Yots	University of West Florida
Donna Cheshire	Western Kentucky University
John Petersen	Western Kentucky University

**Institutions not represented:**

Belize College of Agriculture  
Belize Teachers' College  
School for International Training  
Stann Creek Ecumenical  
University of Montana

## **1.0 Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by co-chairs Carlos Castillo and Tracy Harrington. After the national anthems, host John Petersen introduced Dr. Robert Haynes, retiring Vice President for Academic Affairs at Western Kentucky University (WKU). In welcoming COBEC delegates to the WKU campus, Dr. Haynes underscored the importance of cooperative international education efforts and cited the critical role of faculty volunteers in advancing international programs.

## **2.0 Review of Minutes from Last Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held February 9-10, 1996, at UCB Belmopan Junior College were approved.

## **3.0 Action Issues**

### a. Public Relations Plan

Co-chair Harrington pointed out that information on the plan was unavailable because Cynthia Thompson was unable to attend this meeting.

### b. Newsletter

Editor Paul Huntsberger reported receipt of only one news item in response to the latest call for articles. With so little material, no spring edition was prepared. Delegates were encouraged to submit institutional reports no later than August 1, 1996, for the next issue of the newsletter.

### c. Brochure

Paul Huntsberger distributed samples of a revised

brochure, requesting additional examples of COBEC activities. Betty Flinchum noted the need for a clarification of COBEC's mission and goals. It was suggested that further discussion of this information be scheduled later. (See agenda item 16.)

d. PIER Report

Tracy Harrington explained that the committee appointed at the UCB-Belmopan meeting had surveyed U.S.

institutions to learn their experience of evaluating academic credit awarded by Belizean institutions. In addition, the committee is in the process of documenting the curricula offered by Belize's tertiary-level schools. The results will be submitted as an article for the *World Education News Report*. The committee also hopes for more accurate discussion of Belize in the PIER/ACRO Update.

Representatives suggested that COBEC might distribute this information on the World Wide Web and through mailings to admissions officers.

e. Tax Exempt Status

Tracy Harrington reported that a lawyer has been consulted regarding COBEC's application for tax-exempt status. The process involves some expense and a review of the organization's by-laws but is not difficult. Attorneys also advise incorporation in a state where COBEC is active--e.g., in Georgia rather than Texas. John Peterson moved to incorporate in Georgia; Tom Keene seconded, and the motion carried. Tracy Harrington asked John Petersen and Julio Fernandez to serve on the sub-committee to review the by-laws.

f. Tent Commandments

Betty Flinchum has revised the guidelines for use of COBEC-purchased tents. A copy of the more detailed instructions is attached.

g. Status of School for International Training (SIT)

For purposes of COBEC dues assessments and bi-national

activities, John Petersen moved to identify SIT as a U.S. institution. Donna Cheshire seconded; the motion carried.

#### h. Resubmission of UCB Small Grant Proposal

Dorian Barrow reported that the project had been accomplished; approval of the proposal had been granted but funds had not yet been awarded.

#### i. Library Acquisition Project

Jose Mai distributed a proposal to revise guidelines for the transfer of books from U.S. to Belizean partners. Points raised in discussion included the need to revise further so that the process begins with requests from Belizean institutions. This change, with an addendum detailing procedures for shipments, should be prepared for the next meeting. It was also recommended that a COBEC listserve be developed for communicating library acquisition needs as well as other items. Keith Miser volunteered to have Colorado State look into managing the listserve. [A copy of the proposal is attached.]

### **4.0 Treasurers' Reports**

a. Because Cynthia Thompson was unable to attend this meeting, the report on the Belize account was unavailable.

b. Paul Huntsberger reported a current balance of \$4,871.01

in the U.S. account. Paul projected a total of \$6200 when all membership dues are paid; after disbursements of \$750 to UCB for the small grant project and \$800 to Colorado State University, the balance is expected to be \$4650. The report was accepted.

### **5.0 Institutional Reports**

Representatives submitted the following:

#### **Colorado State University**

Thirty-seven Colorado State University students completed a

15 week course in Belize studying culture, natural resources, ecology, and tourism. They were complemented by two students from Belize as class members. Two advanced graduate students from the Student Affairs in Higher Education Program spent five weeks at the University College of Belize in an internship with the Director of Enrollment Service. They assisted UCB in the development of a student handbook and in plans for a women's program. Two Belizean students graduated from CSU in the College of Natural Resources. In fall 1996, four Belizean undergraduates and two graduate students will be enrolled at CSU.

### **Corozal Junior College**

Corozal Junior College will celebrate its tenth anniversary at the end of August. Events will include an ecumenical service, banquet and dance, sports competitions, a parade, and sales of souvenirs (t-shirts, pens, yearbook). Twelve computers at a cost of \$54,000 have been installed in the Computer Resource Center. In addition, the \$122,000 cafeteria project is completed and will be fully operational for next academic year.

### **Kennesaw State**

#### **University**

Kennesaw State--now a university--continues to work on the Tropical Ecology Program with UNF, UWF, Western Kentucky, and Murray State. A KSU biology professor, Dr. Army Lester, is working with Mr. Vincent Palacio of UCB to organize a Kellogg Foundation-funded study-travel program on community development.

### **Metropolitan Community College**

Since the February COBEC meeting, Metro has completed the Satellite Dish System located at the Center for Employment Training in Belize City, and on May 17th held an official ribbon cutting ceremony via satellite with officials from Belize and the U.S. in attendance. At the same time, the first televised staff development activity was conducted with one-way video/two-way audio. Metro is presently looking at ways to facilitate the completion of up-link

capabilities from Belize. Metro is poised to begin offering telecourses for credit via the distance learning network pending completion of the system. As in the past, Metro is still the Omaha area clearinghouse for books and equipment designated for Belize.

#### **Muffles College**

Muffles held its third graduation exercises on June 2, 1996, with 42 graduates in three programs: business administration, secretarial science, and general studies. All of the 1992 MJC graduates who continued their programs at UCB have accomplished their degrees in business administration. Registration of new students for 1996/1997 shows that MJC is filled to capacity. Adrian Leiva has returned from Valdosta after successfully completing a Master's Degree in Administration. He will resume his position as Assistant Dean on August 1, 1996. Four other MJC staff members are presently involved in the UNF/UCB master's program in Belize. Muffles remains interested in textbooks for the History of Western Civilization.

#### **Murray State University**

MSU is able to offer incentive grants in the form of waivers of the non-resident portion of tuition for students from Belize who enroll during 1996-97. The university hopes to welcome at least five students from Belize in the fall. Dean of Admissions Phil Bryan has responded to requests from ATLIB for a workshop on records and admissions procedures. Mr. Bryan and Mr. Israel Cano are corresponding by e-mail to schedule the workshop, perhaps in September 1996. In July, Dr. Mike Morgan, Director of Murray State's English Language Institute, is conducting a workshop at UCB for ESL teachers.

#### **New Mexico State University**

NMSU has signed a general agreement of cooperation with UCB and is negotiating an addendum to facilitate faculty exchanges. P.J. Shannon is completing the second year of a social work assignment, and two students are currently working on degrees at NMSU. Mr. Diego Bol has been admitted to NMSU, but financial issues have not yet been resolved.

#### **St. John's College**

In view of the questions raised by the PIER report, the name of St. John's College Sixth Form has been officially changed to St. John's College Junior College--"St. John's Junior College" for short. Belizean novelist Zee Edgell gave the seventh annual Signa Yorke Memorial Lecture. She spoke on her experience as a Belizean woman novelist and shared the outline of her novel in progress. Prior to the formal lecture, she commented on student presentations. Several faculty members are taking advantage of the UCB/UNF master's program. At the request of ATLIB Chair Israel Cano, St. John's College provided temporary display facilities, after UCB had made its selections, for books shipped from Colorado State. ATLIB members were invited to make their selections and all did. St. John's is in the process of establishing a link with the internet which should be operational by the beginning of the coming academic year. A Junior College graduate, Gilvano Swasey, won an international art competition sponsored by UNICEF and was awarded a scholarship to study at the New York Art Institute.

#### **State University of New York-Cortland**

SUNY-Cortland recently completed its fourth semester of an undergraduate Development Internship Program with student interns working successfully at UNICEF, the Department of Human Development's Division of Disability Services, BYCC, and subsequently at the YMCA. Three students will participate in the fall 1996 Development Internship Program. Three other students successfully completed the new student-teaching program in Belize which began mid-March and lasted until mid-June. A Belize elementary school teacher is now taking graduate courses at SUNY-Cortland.

#### **University College of Belize**

UCB has established a goal of 2000 students by the year 2000. It plans to expand enrollment through program diversification, growth in national campuses, and an invigorated outreach education program. New programs include primary education, nursing, natural resources management, accounting, and a revitalized Maturity Program. In process are A.A. degree programs in social work and computer studies and B.S. programs in tourism management and marine studies, all anticipated for 1997. Dorm construction for the marine research center is now

complete, and a 2-week mangrove workshop with the Smithsonian Institution is scheduled for the end of July. The Ministry of Education supports the concept of a Toledo Junior College to be managed by UCB as part of the national university network. In other expansion efforts, UCB is developing a pilot "university on wheels" for the Cayo District.

### **University of North Florida**

Through the Ministry of Education and the support of UCB and ATLIB, the University of North Florida is offering a certified M.Ed. in Advanced Study in Belize. The first session began June 26 with 62 students enrolled. UNF has placed five students in journalism internships with *The Amandila*, *The Reporter*, *The Observer*, *The Times*, and *The Pulse* (May 18-June 18). Twenty Belizean students are currently studying at UNF with scholarship support. A "Belize Day" will be held at UNF in October (dates to be determined). All COBEC members are invited. Dr. Tom Leonard of UNF will coordinate an interdisciplinary conference on Belizean Studies to be held in Belize next March.

### **University of West Florida**

Four Belizean students are now enrolled at UWF; three are receiving waivers or scholarships from the university, while one is a recent recipient of a State of Florida Afro-Caribbean Scholarship which provides a full non-Florida tuition waiver plus \$10,000 per year living expenses. Two Afro-Caribbean scholarships are expected to be available each year.

### **Valdosta State University**

Thirteen of VSU's 15 Belizean students were supported by university scholarships in 1995-96; 5 graduated. Fourteen new students are expected in fall 1996; all have been awarded VSU scholarships. The Departments of Primary Education and Special Education hosted two UCB faculty for the planning of collaborative projects. An exchange of business administrators will send the head of UCB's business department to Valdosta in August, while the VSU dean of business will visit Belize in fall of 1996. Other VSU



faculty members in finance will travel to UCB on exchange in January 1997. Political Science also saw faculty exchange in spring 1996, and a student will spend three weeks in Belize this summer to do research on politics, democracy, and multi-ethnic culture. A group of teachers, led by a Valdosta State professor of secondary education, will complete a 2-week professional development seminar in Belize next summer.

#### **7.0 Accessing COBEC Library Network**

Israel Cano reported that ATLIB is developing plans to network institutional libraries in Belize, with the hope that U.S. partner libraries will eventually be linked to this network, too.

#### **8.0 COBEC Institutional Organizational Charts**

To assist in the process of re-organization, the University College of Belize requests copies of other institutions' organizational charts. These should be sent to Dorian Barrow.

#### **9.0 Administration of Multi-Campus Universities**

As UCB extends the network of national campuses, administrators are interested in models from other multi-campus systems. Again, examples or other information should be sent to Dorian Barrow.

#### **10.0 Instructional Materials to Support Course Delivery**

Dorian reported that all UCB teaching faculty have been trying to participate in the moderation program organized through COBEC. Faculty are now interested in instructional materials (e.g., slides, overheads, films, workbooks, videotapes). It was recommended that Belizean faculty identify specific needs and communicate requests via COBEC representatives. Since Belize has received an OAS grant to implement e-mail linkages of all ATLIB institutions, such requests and responses should be much easier to communicate.

#### **11.0 Scholarships to COBEC Institutions from ATLIB**

Members are reminded that the severe reductions in scholarship programs funded by the U.S. government will leave many Belizean students without financial assistance. Organizations such as ATLIB and COBEC should strengthen efforts to address students' needs for financial aid.

Members present agreed that the 1996 College Night had been frustrating because students had arrived with the expectation of finding scholarship/financial aid offers. John Petersen moved that this event be replaced with a seminar or workshop designed to help representatives of ATLIB and COBEC institutions advise students on study in the United States. Donna Cheshire seconded; the motion carried.

The committee appointed to plan this workshop includes Tracy Harrington, Marcie Johnson, Dorothy Zinsmeister, Israel Cano, and Jose Mai.

#### **12.0 Process for Assessing Official Study Abroad Programs**

Especially with the recent construction of a dormitory for 30 people on Calabash Caye at the Marine Research Center, UCB hopes to attract groups of students from other countries. Discussion of how the facility might be promoted as a study abroad site included suggestions for an on-site director or other administrative support, development of courses for credit, organization of excursions and other activities, and oversight of student health and safety.

#### **13.0 Tropical Ecology Program**

Noting that the next Tropical Ecology Studies program is scheduled for the summer of 1997, with Murray State University's biology professor Terry Derting as director, Tom Keene and Dorothy Zinsmeister distributed a list of features necessary to the success of the program. The classification of SIT as primarily a U.S. organization [see agenda item 3.g.] will require that the program be based at another facility. Dorian Barrow emphasized that UCB, with other Belizean partners, would be interested in meeting the program's needs. Tracy Harrington pointed out that COBEC should be developing additional proposals for study abroad programs in Belize.

#### **14.0 Update on Bowen Apartment**

Betty Flinchum has mailed to all members a notice of the dates when the apartment remains available for rent, at nightly, weekly, or monthly rates. At this point, UNF may lose up to \$1500 if other institutions are not able to rent the apartment. John Peterson moved that COBEC agree to underwrite \$1500 if users don't pay the amount needed for UNF to break even; Tom Keene seconded, and the motion carried.

#### **15.0 Update of Student and Faculty Institutional Rosters**

Lists were circulated for corrections and additions; the revised rosters will be mailed to all members.

#### **16. COBEC Goals and Objectives (Discussed Day 1)**

Preparations for a new COBEC brochure prompted discussion of the organization's usefulness, recognition, goals and objectives. An extended consideration of these issues led to the following conclusions and recommendations:

- a. The work of COBEC is justified, but its aims and activities need to be clarified;
- b. There is a genuine need on the part of students in Belize for information on additional educational opportunities and financial aid availability;
- c. There is a continuing need for systematic and comprehensive planning of activities involving U.S. and Belizean partners--so that COBEC can most usefully serve as a clearinghouse of information for institutions as well as students;
- d. The value of COBEC needs to be publicized more clearly and broadly on our own campuses as well as in our countries.

The text of the COBEC brochure will be revised to incorporate more accurate statements of the goals and primary purpose of the organization.

#### **17.0 Other Business**

Betty Flinchum proposed that COBEC write a letter to the Ministry of Education to explain the importance of MoE support in approving requests from COBEC delegates, especially officers, to attend the organization's meetings. Cecil Reneau suggested that similar letters be addressed to the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, and Finance. Julio

Fernandez added to the mailing list all chief executive officers of member institutions--suggesting that the letters highlight the significance of COBEC and thank each institution for its contributions.

### **18.0 Venue/Dates for Next Meeting**

In discussion of COBEC meeting plans, it was suggested that meetings might be scheduled to coincide with other conferences on Belize (e.g., the interdisciplinary Belizean Studies conference to be held in Belize in spring 1997). After considering the practicality of a single annual meeting, the majority of delegates (15-2) voted to continue biannual meetings.

Belize Technical College has offered to host the next meeting. Tom Keene proposed that the date be set to precede the Belizean Studies Seminar organized by UNF. Betty Flinchum agreed to confirm the dates and to explore the possibilities of connections between the seminar and the COBEC meeting.

Colorado State University

1. 37 Colorado State University students completed a 15 week course in Belize studying culture, natural resources, ecology, and tourism. They were complemented by two students from Belize as class members.

2. Two advanced graduate students from the Student Affairs in Higher Education Program spent five weeks at the University College of Belize in an internship with the Director of Enrollment Service. They assisted UCB in the development of a student handbook and in plans for a women's program.

3. Two Belizean students graduated from CSU in the College of Natural Resources. In fall 1996, four Belizean undergraduates and two graduate students will be enrolled at CSU.

Corozal Junior College

1. Tenth Anniversary Celebration- end of August. Will include ecumenical service, banquet and dance, sports, parade. Also a sale of souvenirs (T-shirts, pens, yearbook).

2. 12 computers at a cost of \$54,000 already installed in the Computer Resource Center.

3. Cafeteria at a cost of \$122,000 completed and will be fully operational for next academic year.

Kennesaw State University

1. Continue to work on Tropical Ecology Program with UNF, UWF, Western Kentucky, and Murray State.

2. Biology professor, Dr. Lester, working with Mr. Vincent Palacio of UCB to organize a Kellogg Foundation-funded study-travel program on community development.

3. Kennesaw State is now a university.

Metro Community College

1. Since the February Cobec meeting, Metro Community College has completed the Satellite Dish System located at the Center for Employment Training in BZ City, and on May 17th held an official ribbon cutting ceremony via satellite with officials from Belize and the United States in attendance. At the same time, the first televised staff development activity was conducted with one-way video two-way audio. Metro is presently looking at ways to facilitate the completion of up-link capabilities from BZ.

2. Metro is poised to begin offering telecourses for credit via the distance learning network pending completion of the up-link system.

3. As in the past, Metro is still the Omaha area clearinghouse for books and equipment designated for Belize.

\*see attachments.

Muffles College

1. Held its third graduation exercises on June 2, 1996 with 42 graduates in three programs- business administration, secretarial science, and general studies. The latter two groups were for the first time. We have already regularized new students for 1996/1997 and are filled to capacity.

2. Adrian Leiva has returned from Valdesta after successfully completing a Master's Degree in Administration. He will resume his position as Assistant Dean on August 1, 1996.

3. Four of the members of our staff are presently involved in the Master's program being offered by UNF/UCB in Belize.

4. At our last meeting, we made a request for text books in History of Western Civilization but have had no response.

5. All our students from our first graduation class, 1992, who went on to UCB, graduated this year with a degree in business administration.

St. John's College

1. In view of the questions raised by the PIER report, we have officially changed the name of St. John's College Sixth Form to St. John's College Junior College- "St. John's Junior College" for short.

2. Belizian novelist, Zee Edgell, gave the seventh annual Signa Yorke Memorial Lecture. She spoke on her experience as a Belizian woman novelist and shared the outline of her novel in progress. Prior to the formal lecture, she commented on student presentations.

3. Several faculty members are taking advantage of the UCB/UNF master's program.

4. At the request of Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, ATLIB Chair, St. John's College provided temporary display facilities for the shipment of books from Colorado State after UCB had made its selections. ATLIB members were invited to make their selections and all did.

5. We are in the process of establishing a link with the internet which should be operational by the beginning of the coming academic year BTL willing.

6. A Junior College graduate, Gilvano Swasey, won an international art competition sponsored by UNICEF and was awarded a scholarship to study at the New York Art Institute.

#### State University New York-Cortland

1. S.U.N.Y.-Cortland recently completed its 4th semester of an undergraduate Development Internship Program with student interns working successfully at UNICEF Department of Human Developments Division of Disability Services and BYCC- and subsequently at the YMCA.

2. The only news item has to do with the launching of our student teaching program in Belize which began mid-March and lasted until mid-June. Three student teachers successfully completed the student teaching experience in Belize.

3. There are three students who will be in our fall '96 Development Internship Program.

4. A Belize elementary school teacher is now taking graduate courses at S.U.N.Y.-Cortland.

#### University College of Belize

### University of North Florida

1. MED in Advanced Study began June 26 and ended August 13. 62 students enrolled. Through the ministry of Education and the support of UCB and ATLIB, the University of North Florida is offering a certified MED in Advanced Study in Belize.

2. Study abroad programs in journalism. Five interns with The Amandila, The Reporter, The Observer, The Times, and The Pulse (May 18-June 18).

3. Scholarships for 20 Belizean students currently studying at UNF.

4. Dr. Tom Leonard of UNF will coordinate an interdisciplinary conference on "Belizian Studies" in March in Belize.

5. A "Belize Day" will be held at UNF in October (dates to be determined). All COBEC members are invited.

### University of West Florida

1. Belizian student count now at 4. Three are receiving financial aid (waivers/ scholarships). One is recent recipient of State of Florida Afro-Caribbean Scholarship- which provides full non-Florida tuition waiver plus \$10,000 per year living expenses.

2. We expect to have two Afro-Caribbean scholarships available each year.

### Valdesta State

1. Students: 95-96, 15; 5 graduated. 13 of the fifteen on VSU scholarships. \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Ed/Special Ed: Hosted two UCB faculty for planning-intention to collaborate.

2. Business: UCB heading toward Valdesta in August. VSU Dean going to Belize in fall of 1996. Faculty members to UCB as exchange in finance-January 1997.

3. Political Science: Exchange professor \_\_\_\_\_ Student doing research on politics/democracy/multi-\_\_\_\_ culture this summer for three weeks.

4. Seminar: Group of teachers going to a two week professional development seminar in summer of 1997, led by VSU professor of secondary Ed.