
Lycoming College AAEB Meeting Fall 2024

Call to order on Thursday, October 3rd at 1:03 pm by AAEB VP President Mike Ruddy

A meeting of the AAEB was held in person on October 3rd & 4th 2024. Attendees included Holly Andrews, Andy Bucke, Seth Burch, Joe Ciccone, Alyssa Correll, Reb Donohue, Sandi Gackebach, Mindy Gunn, Len Hahn, Meghan Jacobi, Kerri Kearney, Donald (DC) Keys, John Kneisly, Hank Knerr, Randy King, Sherry Macpherson, John Maina, Shauna McQuillen, Heather Myers, Lizzie Ritter, Tara Shaffer, Chris Spandoni, Jason Stamm, Melissa Stiles, Beckie Sweet, Erica Vargo, & Lillian Weekes

Welcome

VP Mike Ruddy announced that the meeting would move directly to President Trachte's address

College Address - President Kent C. Trachte

The search for a new president & some positive news

US News Analysis – still widely looked at & recognized in college rankings

In 2013, he became the 15th president, & we started the 2014 Strategic Plan process to be recognized as one of the top liberal arts colleges in the country.

Developed a number of metrics based off of the National Liberal Arts Rank:

- Student Measures
- Resource Measures
- Faculty Resource Breakdown

Student Measures

- ✓ Lyco Nat Lib Arts Rank Overall: 2016 & 2025 went from 164 to 100
- ✓ Grad & Retention: 21%: 2016 & 2025 went from 129 to 140
- ✓ Grad Performance (predicted grad rate by composition of student body): 10%: 2016 & 2025 went from 52 to 9
- ✓ Student Excellence: 5% (reduced from 7% to 5% & top 10% eliminated): 2020 & 2025 went from 172 to 78
- ✓ Social Mobility: 5% to 11%:
2020 & 2025 went from 25

to 7. Institutions higher near

us are Amherst College,
Williams College, &
Swathmore College

Q&A *quotes not verbatim

John Kneisly: What would be our expected graduation performance or number to exceed?

President: We'll provide that number.

Tara: Thoughts on the shift over the years with institutions closing or merging; does it impact us negatively or positively?

President: Only Birmingham Southern College has closed in the liberal arts category.

Denominator has shrunk by a few because there has to be enough liberal arts emphasis measured by majors. You'll see that the denominator has gotten smaller & we've moved up under resource measures.

Resource Measures

- ✓ Peer Assessment: 20%: 2016-2025 went from 146 to 142. We are working on this & inching our way up with more exposure by joining The Annapolis Group
- ✓ Faculty Resources: 20% to 15%; several variables eliminated. 2016-2025 went from 171 to 97
- ✓ Fiscal Resources: from 10% to 8%: 2016-2025 went from 194 to 100. Expenditures on educational functions per student by investing in new programs & invest in our faculty & academic quality
- ✓ Post Grad Outcomes: from 5% to 10%: 2021-2025 went from 190 to 151. No longer use alumni giving. Using debt at graduation, & high school to college grad salaries 5 years out

Faculty Resources Breakdown

- ✓ Faculty resources: 15% total: 2016-2025 went from 171 to 97. We have improved
- ✓ Student Faculty Ratios: 4%: 2016-2025 went from 197 to 115. We have a good student to faculty ratio
- ✓ Percent FT Faculty: 3%
- ✓ Faculty Salaries: 8%: 2016-2025 went from 143 to 96

Lycoming & LA (Liberal Arts) 25 Group

Every institution in higher education identifies a peer group against which they benchmark themselves

- ✓ 2016 tied for 24th
- ✓ 2015 passed 10 institutions
- ✓ Only one other college gained more movement 2015-2025
- ✓ Lycoming graduates can say that they graduated from a "Top 100" institution

Q&A

Tara Shaffer: Do you see us plateauing? More growth? Have we hit our stride?

President: Defined by my successor, faculty, & the board but with similar priorities, we should continue to move upwards to the top 80-90s.

John Kneisly: What are we going to do with these numbers? What's the goal?

President: We are starting to market the "Top 100". *US News* has a "Best Value" category & we are ranked 22nd. Outcomes, costs right, generous financial aide; we are definitely going to market this. Plus, making sure we deliver & help students be successful. Strengthen our retention in my final year so we outperform even more. Monitor the participation of men in higher ed.

Sherry Macpherson: New majors that enhances the liberal arts education. What would they be?

President: We are using a database from a consultant with real data on possible growth. You will hear more on this.

Successor - Search Committee

Role of the Trustees to pick & manage the person running the institution & be engaged in helping to set the overall strategy. We are working with search consultants & developing our profile statement on what we are looking for etc. My top priority is making it a smooth transition. Won't know until March.

Board Business

Intro of New Members

Minute Approval

No changes. Mike Ruddy asked for a motion. Len Hahn motioned with multiple seconds. Minutes are approved.

Treasurer's Report

Erica Vargo reported no transactions with a balance of \$3,040.85.

Motion for approval by Mike Ruddy. DC Keys motioned; John Maina seconded. Report approved.

New Business

AAEB Website – Amy Reyes

Alumni web page - we had an over complicated process to get to know the AAEB.

- ✓ New picture
- ✓ Paragraph on work
- ✓ Callout to join the AAEB & Awards
- ✓ Still include Alumni Spotlight & programs that benefit alum

- ✓ Faculty Spotlights
- ✓ Streamline changes so we do not have to go to web developer each time
- ✓ Survey to new members to fill out
- ✓ Minutes uploaded after AAEB approval; next meeting. Add a message on when made available

Letter Writing Campaign – admitted students

- Sent to 237 students from alumni volunteers
- 22 students enrolled (10%)

*Note to our competitive alum that there are some rules around paying for enrollment, etc.

Mock Interviews – Sophomore to Senior years

Help them develop skills to talk to professionals, provide resume & business attire feedback, etc.

Alumni & Homecoming Weekend

Alumni

- 10/9 Ironbound Farm + Cidery
- 11/7 Bald Birds Brewing Company Audubon
- 12/6 Rosko's
- 12/14 Santa Express
- 1/12 The Palestra – Women's & Men's Basketball

- Yuengling Tampa
- Naples FL
- Williamsburg VA
- Greater DC

Homecoming Events & AAEB Opportunities

- Registration Friday 2-9; Saturday 8:30-12:30
- Food Truck Festival Friday 5:00-9:00
- Tailgate Saturday 11:00-2:00; no football due to conference change & bye weekend (little impact on numbers attending)
- Beer & Pretzel Tent Friday 7:30-10:30 on the Quad
- Party at the Pub with DJ Lara
- Choir Read-Off

Spring Meeting is May 29-30

Committee Meetings

EVP Chip Edmonds Update

Welcome & asked the board what's on your minds?

Q&A

John Kneisly: Top 100 – President answered but inquiring about it with you too. What we'll do with it?

Chip E: We'll leverage it. From a marketing standpoint, investments, the transformative power of getting an education, best in value, & the endowment invested per student (\$10K not paid by the parents).

Meagan Jacobi: Sports programs; how are they doing?

Chip E: 40%-38% athletes. About 35% of the student body with 19 sports; newer ones being baseball & field hockey. Dedicating the football locker room to Steve Wiser, & added a new soccer, lacrosse, field hockey stadium so we have a powerful commitment to sports as part of our learning and school experience. Dollars received allowed football to go to Canada, soccer to Italy, & golf to Florida. And, the teams have had decent success, plus we have some new coaches.

Lizzie Ritter: How are academics doing?

Chip E: We try & evaluate everything. From students that have done well in high school to class rank to top 10%. Last year's freshman class were in the top 22%-23% with 1180s for their school boards.

Hank Knerr: Basin Street update?

Chip E: It's still every bit as viable. Pandemic slowed or derailed the timeline. Costs of construction went up, commercial real estate prices went down, capital availability tightened but many of the players are still at the table to make it happen. \$2.7M awarded at the federal level with 2 infrastructures at play – electrical & a Willow Street walkway. We are still committed to it & being able to provide our students' greatest needs like healthcare & behavioral services.

Cookie Weekes: Airport flight stoppage & how are we assisting?

Chip E: Resources are there to hopefully bring back a more robust commercial service. It will be some more years to train, get the equipment, etc., back to where it was pre-pandemic.

Williamsport did receive \$18M from ARPA (American Rescue Plan) so I think there is reason to be optimistic; the Chamber is involved, the business community is involved, & airlines like Southern Airways Express connects with some larger providers. Options like Penn State, Wilkes-Barre/ Scranton, Allentown, & Harrisburg are available too.

Mindy Gunn: Inquired about being on the new president's search list when time ran out for Chip to answer.

Alma Mater

Our history department has reviewed our alma mater & any Native American references on campus with faculty, & now with us. Dr. Chris Pearl & Dr. Cullen Chandler (also faculty chairperson), are historians who see patterns in history; how we live in tradition, & see new

ways to affiliate. We are being respectful of tradition, & taking our time to do this very carefully.

- ✓ Alma Mater: Words by Professor Helen B. Weidman
Music by J. Brahms, &
adapted by W.L. Maxson
- ✓ Lycoming, Fair Alma Mater by Dick Wolf
- ✓ Todd Preston, english department & marshal, helps with our programs & engaged the faculty council that some of the language may be problematic for how it represents indigenous people, North America, & Central PA
- ✓ A land acknowledgment statement was being worked on by Chris Pearl at the same time that honors the history & legacy of the indigenous people. Penn College of Technology & Susquehanna University are examples that have them
- ✓ Resolve problematic words like “tribal devotion” to become “faithful” but keep tune, meter, & rhyme
- ✓ Archive the stanza not used because we only sing the first one
- ✓ Changing some of the College’s images & iconography like the commencement mace which had a Great Plains Native American chief vs representing Central PA
- ✓ Able to keep warrior but moved away from native people & culture
- ✓ Awards have changed for example Pocahontas was from VA vs PA
- ✓ We have Native American history & anthropology classes that are already teaching the history – the college sits on a Native American town, etc
- ✓ Acknowledging the true history
- ✓ The land acknowledgment will be voted on by the faculty
- ✓ Alma mater never voted on; 2 versions from Dick Wolf & 1 from Walter McIver
- ✓ Consider a change to “thunderbird”
- ✓ Reviewing this with the community - PA is the only state in the Union that doesn’t have federal or state recognized Native Americans & there are 14 nations so it’s difficult to pinpoint
- ✓ Chieftain is much like warrior & not indigenous

Mock Interviews – Academic Center

Day 2 – October 4th

Call to Order at 9:12 by President Holly Andrews

New Academic Programs -

What’s on the academic horizon for the college.

- ✓ Dr. Sandy Kingery, Interim Provost & Spanish department for 28 years, is chairing a working group of faculty members during what could be next
- ✓ Consulting group pulled faculty, professors, & staff together to discuss
- ✓ Academic initiatives (in conjunction with the 2020 Strategic Plan) curricular issues:
 - 1.) Humanities Research Center – robust program planning:
 - ✓ undergraduate research conference with 72 students presenting,

- ✓ journals submitted for publication by students (12 articles by 10 institutions & 3 from Lyco)
- ✓ NEH Grant (\$150K) for a podcast series looking at the history of the College from all different perspectives
- 2.) Computer Science major – hired 2 professors, 17 majors with 30 incoming students
- 3.) Interdisciplinary Environmental Crime for students interested in sustainability
- 4.) Interdisciplinary Data Science - this major & minor is being reviewed by the curriculum committee & being marketed (data science & data analytics)
- 5.) Majors in the last 5 years
 - Performing Arts:
 - ✓ theatre & business
 - ✓ art & business
 - ✓ music & business
- 6.) Mathematical Finance major to Business
- 7.) Computational Physics
- 8.) Women's Studies – Gender Sexuality major
- 9.) Focusing on new academic programs & modifying existing:
 - Programs that increase our enrollment by 30-50 students
 - What fits with what we have here & our mission
 - Programs that demonstrate students demand but also strengthen our reputation & our commitment to academic excellence
 - Programs that are in person & in residence
 - Open to potential master programs & potential online programs
 - Perimeters are set up for a liberal arts education
 - Discussed with the Trustees, & they supported & encouraged administration to consult with a consulting firm
- 10.) Process to date:
 - Pulled together a working group of 5 from faculty members with different disciplinary areas – arts, natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, IMS, & business, & the VP of Advancement (Chip E.); all with different years of experience, from different locations, etc.
 - Group put out a faculty survey
 - Selected consultants Gray DI. They had an emphasis on liberal arts
 - Consultants defined our market & put together a metrics with software that determined a 180 mile radius from the campus; where 85% of our students come from
 - The software allows us to look at national & international data so we do not limit ourselves. It also allows us to go to specific countries & see what programs or majors students are looking at
 - 2 day workshop with 50 people:
 - ✓ The faculty side of the house included the most relevant to the faculty committee - the faculty executive council, career curriculum, budgets, enrollment committee; one person from each was represented

- ✓ From every division of the campus; the administrative cabinet, registrar, academic deans, marketing, & enrollment
- ✓ Day 1: looked at new academic programs
- ✓ Day 2: looked at existing academic programs
- 10.) Data PA Program rank looked at 1500 programs
 - 4 factors ranked:
 - ✓ Student Demand – how many kids are completing this at different institutions (online/in person), how many enroll & growth
 - ✓ Competitive intensity-how many programs there are, how many are offering (up or down), numbers enrolled, how many graduate with this degree, & the marketing costs which give a sense of demand
 - ✓ Job market – how many employed, job possibilities, jobs in the actual field, what are the wages, field growth, degree level, etc.
 - ✓ Degree fit – does this fit with a bachelors, masters, doctorate? We would need to be clear with students graduating on what further is needed like in the case of our partnering law degree, or by adding affiliations for masters or doctoral degree
- 11.) Scorecard – At the top was computer science, cyber security, data analytics/ data science, & engineering (more challenging due to spending, etc.)
- 12.) Top candidates to consider:
 - ✓ Exercise Science or Kinesiology/ Sports Management – part of biology/ health classes, business & communications side
 - ✓ Pre-Law (right now Political Science or Philosophy track is utilized)
 - ✓ Architecture (a bit harder to implement & expensive)
 - ✓ Accounting masters level
 - ✓ Artificial Intelligence – might start with a minor vs major
 - ✓ Education masters
 - ✓ Video Game Design
 - ✓ Environment Studies
 - ✓ Finance

*Not going to remove majors at this point. Consider non

profits, film producing,

human services

14.) Timeline:

- ✓ Working group meeting weekly
- ✓ Looking at where these might fit
- ✓ Pick top 3 or 4 in a few months
- ✓ Review another software platform from consultants that utilizes Lycoming's data & analyzes the ROI & costs
- ✓ Determine how many students would we expect, how many courses would we need, how many faculty members; new facilities or space needed, etc.
- ✓ Not cannibalize existing majors & students to hurt enrollment. Data has to fit into what we do here already
- ✓ Heavy science based but we are classified as a liberal arts & science intuition

- ✓ Fees – room a board, student activities fee, hybrid programs on or off campus; all things to be consider if we add masters programs

15.) Keeping in mind growing markets & federal/ state grants, etc.

Committee Reports

Communications & Career Services – various members

- Collaborating with Admissions & become better alumni ambassadors
- Engaging students with giveaways, etc., but keep the costs down
- Celebrate Silver Anniversaries 25 years too because alum have college- bound kids
- Career Advising – the staff is currently down & looking for candidates
- Alumni Spotlights – please send

Alumni Engagement – DC Keys

- Why Lyco? How this can roll into admissions
- Alumni Spotlight – encourage alum to send
- Restart a mentor program
- Parent campaign – parents have stayed plugged in even if their child hasn't given money for years. Leverage this: give money & students get a gourmet cookie
- Fall Warriorthon – participation was about the same but giving dollars were less. Discussed area code not coming up as Lycoming could be a factor. So looking into better software to engage
- Spring Warriorthon is February & fall campaign is still going on
- Giving Tuesday, December 3rd is later due to a late Thanksgiving. Going to do promos like give buttons & take pictures. Gifts of \$100 or more, or the monthly reoccurring gift, will be entered to win a Yeti cooler & koozies
- Days of Giving on April 8th & 9th. Competition challenges really drive the giving up
- Alumni Reunion Weekend is 0s & 5s anniversaries
- Senior Week possible participation ideas like an AAEB check-in table to learn about us
- PayPal & Venmo accounts, plus QR codes are setup for giving
- Graduation have AAEB members there to help usher, or help students & parents. Also come to champagne brunch
- Events – Lycoming still likes to coordinate all to make sure the events reach everyone & connect us
- Utilize some of our alum that have bigger social media followings (ie: Lycoming alumni LinkedIn page is fair play)

Recruitment & Recognition – Holly Andrews & Cookie Weekes

Buddy Knoebel 1965 –

Dr. James E. Douthat Outstanding Achievement Award

Larry Tischler 1967 –
Angela R. Kyte Outstanding Alumni Award

Melody (Johnson) Bradley 2011 – Taunia Oechslin Young Alumni Award

Richard Russell 1970 –
Dale V. Bower Service Award

Holly Andrews asked for a motion to approve these outstanding alumni. Sandi Gackenbach motioned; DC Keys seconded. Awards winners approved.

Adjournment

Holly Andrews motioned to adjourn meeting. Tara Shaffer motioned; Reb Donohue seconded, & the meeting was officially adjourned at 10:30.

Erica D. Vargo
Secretary

Date of approval