

Multi-State Agricultural Literacy Research Committee (W-1006) Annual Meeting
April 21-24, 2010
Holiday Inn, Great Falls, Montana

Minutes – April 21, 2010

Meeting convened at 8:00 PM with the following present:

Members in attendance:

Nancy Irlbeck, Administrative Advisor, Colorado State University	nancy.irlbeck@colostate.edu
Jack Elliot, Texas A&M University	jelliot@tamu.edu
Carl Igo, Co-Chair, Montana State University,	cigo@montana.edu
Debra Spielmaker, Secretary, Utah State University	debra.spielmaker@usu.edu
Greg Thompson, Oregon State University	greg.thompson@orst.edu
Brian Warnick, Co-Chair, Utah State University	brian.warnick@usu.edu

Members Absent:

Robert Martin, Iowa State University	drmartin@iastate.edu
Eddie A. Moore, Michigan State University	mooreee@msu.edu
Monica Pastor, University of Arizona Extension (AITC)	mpastor@cals.arizona.edu
Kerry Schwartz, University of Arizona	kschwartz@ag.arizona.edu
Michael Swan, Washington State University	mswan@wsu.edu
Cary Trexler, University of California, Davis	cjtrexler@ucdavis.edu
Ania Wiczoreli, University of Hawaii	ania@hawaii.edu

Non-member University Ag Educators & Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) Directors/Members

John Valez, Oregon State University	john.valez@orst.edu
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Graduate Student

Shawn Anderson, Oregon State University	shawn.anderson@oregonstate.edu
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Agenda Items and Minutes

1. Brian Warnick began the meeting with a welcome and introductions. Nancy Irlbeck from Colorado State University was introduced and will be replacing Gary Straquadine, Utah State University as the committee administrative advisor. Jack Elliot announced that he would continue to participate with the research committee (W-1006) and would encourage Texas A&M faculty to be involved.
2. The minutes from April 21-23, 2009 were distributed and approved.
3. The committee reviewed the Multi-state Research Project Summary, W-1006: Agricultural Literacy Program of Work (research project plan, <http://lgu.umd.edu>), each member present reported on projects or research completed or conducted that met the objectives. It was discussed that this would be the final year of the W-1006 unless the group determined that they would like to continue (with a project extension) or prepare a new proposal to create a new agricultural literacy project.
4. Currently each state involved has a leadership role on one of the following project objectives: 1) Identify and describe the organizational structure of AITC State programs (UT) 2) Identify and describe components and practices, which correlate with AITC program success 3) Determine the relationship of AITC programs on learner outcomes (AZ has the leadership role for objective 2 and 3).
5. Committee Member Status Reports: Each member updated the group about their efforts in agricultural literacy over the past year.
 - a. Oregon: Greg Thompson (OSU) shared a flyer from and discussed the Oregon Summer Ag Institute (SAI) for K-12 teachers (a program partnership between of Oregon Ag Education Foundation and Oregon State University); the lessons generated from this program are posted on the Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) website. Greg discussed the course

schedule and the importance of the teacher farmer partnership that is part of the SAI. The project costs about \$50,000 each year, 25 teachers participated in the 2009 SAI. Greg mentioned that each teacher developed a lesson plan to earn credit for the SAI. Debra suggested that Greg go to a more reflective assessment, such as a portfolio. Shawn Anderson, OSU graduate student, conducted an evaluation of the 2008 SAI this past year. Shawn discussed the results of the SAI 2008 qualitative study which was designed to determine an increase in agricultural knowledge. Shawn is refocusing his research around agriculture literacy, and will present a paper on his research at this research meeting. The paper *A Qualitative Analysis of Teachers' Conceptions of Agriculture* will be posted on this website <http://www.agclassroom.org/consortium/research.htm>.

- b. Carl Igo (MSU) reported on that they held a Summer Ag Institute during the summer of 2009 at MSU. Eight teachers participated this year, a very diverse group K-12 educators, from a variety of disciplines, for his Summer AITC. Carl used the teacher participants as facilitators who then used Utah and Oklahoma AITC lessons to teach others. The teachers were encouraged to gather other materials to make their presentation. This worked very well. School and community gardens are becoming more popular in Montana and Carl will be investigating how to integrate with this effort. Dr. Igo also mentioned that MSU was working on an adult ag literacy study with community food coops and how much members will pay for food. A grant was also obtained to develop curriculum/lesson plans for wildlife fires in shrub brush ecosystems for high school ag teachers and middle school science teachers. Lastly Montana has a new AMS (Agriculture in Montana Schools) K-12 education coordinator, Lorri Brenanan, who he looks forward to working with.
- c. Dr. Jack Elliot at Texas A&M, just completed a full year at A&M and said that in terms of agricultural literacy “nothing and everything,” has been accomplished. Jack is working solely as an administrator in Extension. He mentioned that he would try to get agricultural literacy Extension work being done at his institution documented at the Experiment Station, not just within Extension. Departments are very compartmentalized at A&M and he said that there needs to be more integration to get the research documented. Jack mentioned that education and ag literacy is a priority for the new USDA agency, NIFA (National Institute of Food and Agriculture), so he thinks there will be funding available in this area, and feels like there needs to be more data captured from a wider group and adult education.
- d. Debra Spielmaker (USU) updated the group on the AITC state reports and the baseline data collected to meet Objective 1. Debra reviewed the 2008 and 2009 survey results and the 2009 questionnaire. The 2008 survey results are posted online (PowerPoint presentation) <http://www.agclassroom.org/consortium/reports.htm> and the 2009 results will be posted in June after the Agriculture in the Classroom Consortium annual meeting. She noted that 40 states completed a 2009 report, 42 reported in 2008. Highlights of the 2009 report revealed that about 80% had developed new classroom resources and that 98% of the resources developed were aligned or correlated with state or national standards. The 2009 survey asked state AITC contacts about other agricultural organizations that were conducting agricultural literacy programs in the respective states, and if they could estimate the number of staff and volunteers in these programs and the estimated number of teachers and students reached. Additional questions were asked about AITC state program interactions with STEM programs in their respective states, 40% had worked with STEM program in their respective states, revealing a need in this area. The reports have been gathered with a secured system using ColdFusion programming; this cumbersome system will be replaced with a database/spreadsheet survey made in GoogleDocs. The complete results are posted on <http://www.agclassroom.org/consortium/reports.htm>. Debra mentioned that if any W-1006 researcher needed any of the benchmark survey data she would be happy to provide it. Nancy asked about the potential to develop a database where researchers would have wider access and there could be wider dissemination. Brian and Debra said they could investigate to see how this might be accomplished, but that perhaps submitting agricultural literacy research from the Journal of Agricultural Education, American Association of Agricultural Educators to an

already existing educational database such as ERIC, might provide even greater access. Debra asked the group to please send her questions they would like to ask for the next survey no later than November 1, 2010. Debra discussed several Utah AITC educational initiatives currently underway, including 20 short (YouTube) career videos being developed with funding from a USDA SPECA grant and developing STEM integration materials for middle school science teachers. She suggested that others seek STEM funding to implement and improve projects for research. Debra mentioned that she was revising the USU - Food, Land & People online courses (elementary and secondary) to provide teachers with Utah State Office of Education credit or USU credit to increase teacher participation. Teachers are requesting licensing hours not university credit hours.

6. Brian Warnick asked committee members to meet at breakfast (7:30 AM) to discuss how the members wanted to proceed concerning a continuation of the W-1006. Dr. Irlbeck said she would contact the USDA to determine how the W-1006 could continue. She also shared that she felt the committee was doing important work and needed to seek out way to brand or get others to identify with this effort nationally/globally.

The committee adjourned at 9:45 PM

The committee reconvened at 7:30 AM, Wednesday, April 22, 2010

Greg suggested that we need to invite more people to the table. Look at multi-state grants and other funding sources. Jack asked about “the next step and what the mechanisms might be for increasing committee participation.” Brian added that we need the agricultural literacy (AITC) state coordinators to participate on the committee. The committee as asked to meet again at breakfast on Friday.

The committee adjourned 7:50 AM to attend research sessions.

The committee reconvened at 7:30 AM, Thursday, April 23, 2010

The discussion continued concerning how the research committee should proceed. Dr. Irlbeck said that she had heard back from Harriet Sypes at USDA and that we could request a continuance of the W-1006 for 1-2 years to complete research area projects and modify current objectives based on the research that had been conducted to complete the project purpose *or* propose a new agricultural literacy project with a new program of work with different objectives. The committee discussed the two options and agreed that it would be better to get a continuance to complete a meta analysis on objective 1 and modify objectives 2 and 3 as the research that has been conducted to measure these objectives is complete but has lead to new research questions. The group suggested the objectives be modified in the following way: (changes are underlined, deletions are shown as strikethroughs)

1. Continue developing an AITC baseline of knowledge and data, investigate a database program or the utilization of a current educational database, and complete a meta-analysis research report on the data collected between 2005 and 2010. Use these findings to influence and revise current agricultural literacy benchmarks and standards, resources, implementation methods and research as they relate to new national common core education standards (www.ccsso.org)
2. Identify those specific components and practices (including pedagogical strategies and curriculum materials) which correlate with AIITC measurable program success, as related to STEM initiatives.
3. ~~Determine the significant impacts (including agricultural literacy and academic achievement) of AITC measurable program success.~~
4. Investigate the certification of agricultural literacy resources and a logo to signify the certification.

The committee decided to get together for a conference call in May or June to finalize these objective changes prior to the submission of the annual committee report.

The meeting continued with a discussion about STEM initiatives and how STEM is an integration, of content, something agricultural education has been doing since its inception. Nancy mentioned STEM careers and suggested a certification logo for agricultural literacy. We discussed how this certification/logo could help to brand agricultural literacy. Debra mentioned that there have been some discussions at USDA to revisit agricultural benchmark and standards developed by Oklahoma State in 2002. This is something the committee may want to be involved in and Debra would let the committee know if there was an opportunity to be involved.

The committee adjourned 7:50 AM to attend other meetings, but will reconvene in May or June on a conference call to finalize the project continuance request and objective changes.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra Spielmaker, Secretary