

Association for Community Colleges

Minutes of the General Assembly of the Association for Community Colleges August 7th, 2004 in the Youth Hostel Pliskovica

The GA is opened by the Chairperson John Petersen, followed by a introductory round of the participants. The members present were: Maja Mezgec, Sabina Mikulin, Erik Jentges, Laszlo Dani, Horatio Rusu, Daniele Rosa, Vanja Perovsek, Giuseppe Ebraico, Thore Johansen, Tanja Wolf, Urska Novak, Michal Zimowski, Linda Jakobsone, Jan-Christoph Napierski, Conchi Gallego, Mjellma Mehmeti, Dasa Bolcina (17 persons)

Election to the chair of the assembly and of a secretary

Election of the chair of the GA, John Petersen proposes Conchi Gallego (approved by the members)
Election of the Secretary of the GA by Conchi Gallego, who suggests Erik Jentges (approved by the members)

Conchi Gallego presents the Agenda:

1. Election to the chair of the assembly and of a secretary
2. Statement of the chairperson of the board
3. Presentation and adopting of the accounts
4. Election of board members
5. Election of auditor
6. Proposals received and general debate
7. Site of next years GA
8. Any other business
9. Adopting the minutes

She then asks John Petersen to give an overview of the activities during the last year.

Statement of the chairperson of the Board

Organizational:

Members of the ACC: currently 400 members in 33 countries and aiming at 500 by the end of the year.

The Office in Aarhus was visited during the year by Dasa Bolcina, Rhisiart Talebot, Jan-Christoph Napierski, Mjellma Mehmeti and others, also schools are asking for advice and project consultancies. John is staffing the office and is currently employed for this. He thanked the EVS volunteer Hristina Raycheva from Bulgaria for her work during the four months she worked for the ACC.

Rites Tautskole in Latvia is run by an NGO in which the ACC is a co-founder. This Latvian NGO has been approved by the Latvian NGO-register on April 1st 2004, it has 21 Representatives of the Board, of which 7 are from the ACC (Siebren de Boer, Linda Jakobsone, John Petersen, Inese Ardone, Sandra Salmina, Dainis Lasmanis, Ieva Astahovska)

ACC has been registered as a printing house in Denmark, primarily for being able to issue the ACCent! Magazine. The first two issues came out in 2004, number 3 is expected in autumn 2004, representing the Challenges of Enlargement Community College.

Concerning the identity of the ACC, the question if the ACC intends to become a more political or an activity based organisation had been debated by the Board. As the fundraising for projects is decentralized, the Board decided that the ACC remains basically an activity-based NGO, with the exception regarding educational matters, where the lobbying will continue.

More well-defined guidelines for the communication and the work between committees and the Board and the Office will appear soon.

Activities:

The Youth 2004 and Youth 2005 projects are not carried out by the ACC, but there is a good cooperation with the Højskolen Østersøen (Folk High School Østersøen)

ACC is member of AWE (Association of World Education), a reapplication of the membership is intended

The Chairperson distributed a work-plan for the year 2004-2005 (see ANNEX) and explained the points mentioned in detail.

In order to emphasize the lobby work, the documentary made by the TCC (Transylvania Community College) which was aired on Europe by Satellite was mentioned. Also, the best lobby work is probably the motivation the participants receive from their participation in events, thus in the last year those where: ERCC, CECC, TCC, BCC, several Latvian events and the Snoghoj Seminar. Regarding the FECC (First European Community College), the growing number of supporters, including politicians, organisations, etc. is seen as a positive sign.

The problem of financial resources leads to a lack in human resources in the office.

Increased input has come from emails and e-groups.

Focusing on the office and its staff, the financing of the last year has been secured by the EU, the Council of Europe and some income was created through consultancies to educational institutions. There will be a new job-trainee in the office from now on.

Other activities included: CECC, BCC and the Snoghoj Seminar. There have been several staff and board meetings, and representations of members in different events and conferences. Also a programme for rural development with the Rites Tautskole was set up.

Future:

First European Community College (FECC)

Schools for Europe III

Transylvania Community College (TCC) 2005 (?)

European Rights Community College (ERCC) 2

European Rights Community College (ERCC) 3 (?)

Cornwall Community College 2005 (spring)

Demos Community College 2005

Bridging Community College in Spring 2005

Representations Community College (Berlin) in 2005 (?)

And more ideas are present

Presentation and adopting of the accounts

Conchi Gallego asks John Petersen to give the presentation of the Account (see ANNEX)

The Account is adopted without opposition

Election of board members

Conchi Gallego explains the procedure of the election of Board members, Substitute Board members and the auditor.

Three mandates are expiring this year: Linda Jakobsone, Jan-Christoph Napierski, Conchi Gallego. The Board has re-nominated them and there were no other nominations received from the members. The quorum agreed to re-elect the nominees with consensus.

The Board proposed Emma Yeoman and Laszlo Dani for substitute positions. Laszlo Dani candidates Erik Jentges, who accepts the candidate, Laszlo Dani steps back from election. There were no further nominations; Emma Yeoman and Erik Jentges are elected also with consensus.

Election of auditor

Lene Albrechtsen is re-elected unanimously for the position of auditor.

Proposals received and general debate

The Board proposed an amendment to the statutes:

14 (2) The chairperson together with either the deputy chairperson, the treasurer or the secretary are entitled to sign for the ACC.

14 (3) The board can authorize the committee to sign on behalf of the ACC in relation to the project. Every authorization has to contain a clear definition of the issues it applies to. Authorizations can only be given for the term of one project and with a maximum of one year. The Board reserves the right to withdraw authorizations at any time if the prevention of fraudulent use makes it necessary.

Before the authorized committee obliges the project by signature, it will inform the Board. Within two days after, the committee should send a copy of the obliging document to the Board.

After changes at two points, the amendment was adopted with consensus. The final approved version was approved with the remark that its grammar should be checked by an English proof-reader:

14 (2) The chairperson together with either the deputy chairperson, the treasurer or the secretary are entitled to sign for the ACC.

14 (3) The board can authorize the committees to sign on behalf of the ACC in relation to the project. Every authorization has to contain a clear definition of the issues it applies to. Authorizations can only be given for the term of one project and with a maximum of one year. The Board reserves the right to withdraw authorizations at any time if the prevention of misuse makes it necessary.

Before the authorized committee obliges the project by signature, it will inform the Board. Within two days after, the committee should send a copy of the obliging document to the Board.

General Debates

- Fundraising
- Involving members

Fundraising

Tanja Wolf made a powerpoint presentation about possible methods and techniques ACC could follow to improve its fundraising capabilities.

Summary of the power-point presentation:

Fund Raising and Finance - Current Problems

Problems: Money is project bound; Lack of money for administration; No reimbursement for traveling expenses; Organizers have to cover preparatory costs

Current situation in the office

Lack of staff and space (only one employee); chairman also responsible for administration; need to re-elect the same board members; no volunteer- coordinator/ no database that screens volunteers according to their skills and knowledge

Problem: Law

*The ACC wants to be a European Organization. But: no legal basis for that
What if someone from Hungary wants to donate money to an organization registered in Denmark?*

Proposals:

Establish professionalization of the office as a main goal:

Areas of work: Fund Raising/ Finance; PR/ Lobbying; Volunteer coordination/ HR; Project management

Interns (LEONARDO, AEDEE, AISEC, DAAD etc)

Levels of Fund Raising

Fund raising related to individual projects

Fund raising during community colleges (spreading awareness)

General fund raising for administration

Other sources of income: Services

Prepare seminars etc for folk high schools, schools and other organizations

Hiring a fund raiser and/or other professionals and rent them out to other NGOs

END OF PRESENTATION

Debate on fundraising and involving members

Suggestion of having working groups on the themes mentioned in the presentation, for example: fund-raising group, lobby group, etc. will be taken into consideration by the Board.

In order to involve more members and to facilitate their networking and their activities, the usage of the European CV or the EUROPASS to create a password-secured members database on the ACC Website have been discussed.

Several methods to network members to use their abilities and resources were thought through, such as yahoo-groups, forums, different websites and their potential in activating members on the local/regional level and to day-to-day activities.

Problems of a lack of a local level were acknowledged. As a result of the debate, it was agreed to try to establish task forces on certain topics, even linking them to Community College Events.

John Petersen gave a brief explanation of the content management website used by ACC.

Site of next years GA

The board is unable to point out exactly the place and date of the next GA, but it will communicate it as soon as possible.

Any other business

The board asks the GA to ratify the prolongation of ACC's AWE membership - it is approved.

The board asks the GA to ratify ACC's application to membership of European Association for Education of Adults (EAEA) - the GA approves it.

Ratification of partnerships with the involved organisations of Rites Tautskolen - the GA approves it.

Adopting the minutes

The minutes are approved by the GA.

Conchi Gallego closes the meeting.

Pliskovica, Slovenia
Saturday, 07 August 2004

Chair

Secretary

ANNEX:
Accounts
Work-Plan 2004-2005