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POD Network News, May 15, 1986

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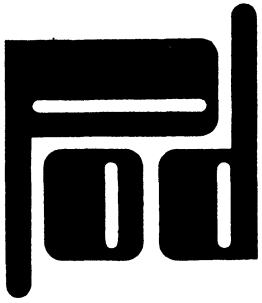
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NETWORK

PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK IN HIGHER EDUCATION

May 15, 1986

Dear POD Friends,

Here it is...the POD Newsletter you've been waiting for...the one that includes the conference details and registration forms. In fact, if I were you, I'd postpone reading my up-date on POD activities and turn immediately to the conference materials. They'll lift your spirits.

Assuming you took my advice, how about that for a conference agenda?! I have it from Marilla Svinicki that Thursday night's opening activities will be as thought-provoking, engaging, and stage-setting as ever. Actually, Marilla said "risky." I'm the one who thinks they're thought-provoking, engaging, and stage-setting. Either way, they're certain to be fun.

K. Patricia Cross will address the entire conference first thing Friday morning. I suspect you've been following her recent comments on "taking teaching seriously," so you already know that she's made at least one proposal for action that seems tailor-made for the POD Network. She has agreed to present and elaborate that proposal at the 1986 conference; we have promised that POD will get to work on it.

I dare say, the rest of the program has more than enough to keep us busy until Sunday noon. Clearly, there's a lot going on out there in the name of professional and organizational development, and I'm beginning to suspect that POD's second decade may be even more exciting than its first. For now, I'm fairly certain that we'll be hard-pressed this coming year to find another gathering of so many talented people with so many good ideas.

Also, be sure to look at the announcement for the pre-conference workshop, "College Teaching and the Development of Reasoning." The \$35.00 registration fee makes this a real bargain. If you can make the time, I can think of only one or two places where you might better spend it (e.g., a cruise in the Caribbean, a weekend in the mountains).

I could go on (and probably will over the coming months), but you have the preliminary conference program and can see for yourself. Remember, if you register now, there's money to be saved.

Meanwhile, I'll try to bring you up to date on other POD activities. The March meeting of the POD Core Committee was exciting, exhausting, and at least two days too short. Summarized below are items discussed and decisions made.

Interim Financial Report: On March 15th, the bottom lines in POD's

accounts were \$15,903.49 in the Executive Director account, \$1500.00 in the 1986 Conference account, and \$681.61 still in the 1985 Conference account. Of course, we have managed to spend some of that since then. Still, POD is in better financial shape than it was a few years back. I'll come back to this, but if you'd like to receive a copy of the interim financial report, please let me know.

1985 POD/NCSPOD Conference: The Core Committee took some time (probably not enough time) to thank Rusty Wadsworth and Bob Pierleoni for planning the 1985 Conference, which is best described as a smashing success. Of the 242 people who attended the conference, 120 registered as POD members, 56 as NCSPOD members, 4 as members of both organizations, 57 as nonmembers, and 5 as students. The "nonmembers" and "students" are now members of both POD and NCSPOD. The net POD conference income was \$9,251.05, which largely explains POD's current financial status. The conference evaluation report was both glowing and informative. Rusty and Bob deserve credit for the glowing part; Joyce Povlacs is to be thanked for the informative. Please let me know if you'd like to receive the complete financial report and/or evaluation report.

1987 POD/NCSPOD Conference: No doubt, there are some long-range planners among you who are already wondering about the 1987 conference. POD and NCSPOD have agreed to sponsor a joint conference in 1987. We have selected Olive Branch, Mississippi, as the 1987 conference site. Judy Aubrecht has volunteered to be POD's conference co-chair.

POD Goes High Tech: The Core Committee also decided that POD should buy a computer that can be passed from Executive Director to Executive Director. I will purchase said computer as soon as I find time to go shopping. That won't be this month, but it will be soon thereafter. Those of you who have offered to check on possible donations, please do so soon.

POD Requests U.S. Currency: You may have noticed that the conference materials request that all fees be paid in U.S. currency this year. This was a decision by the Core Committee at my urging. The "flexibility" of the exchange rate has been altogether more than I, at least, can handle. Watching \$30.00 checks turn into \$15.07 or \$12.70 is the smaller part of the problem; the larger part is determining how much money POD actually has at any given time. I apologize to Canadian members, because I suspect this will be an inconvenience for you. However, it has been a nightmare for me and, I think, not equitable for POD members. If you have a better idea on how to handle the problem, please let me know. Meanwhile, we'll appreciate it if you will pay membership dues and conference fees in U.S. currency.

POD Looks for New Projects (preferably worthwhile ones): POD's finances seem to have stabilized over the last four years...a welcome change from those earlier years when we always seemed to be at the brink of bankruptcy. This fortunate turn of events has taken some time to get used to, but it finally dawned on us that POD might be able to offer something besides moral support for worthwhile activities. In March, the Core Committee began to consider what those activities might be. Alas, our meeting was too short. We didn't even finish brainstorming possibilities, never mind discussing them. Still, I thought you might be curious about (and I think you should

know) what was mentioned. The following notes (remember, this was a brainstorming session) were submitted by the small groups:

- * Create a videotape library and distribution center
- * Offer support for research to be presented at POD conferences
- * Arrange satellite links to resource people during conferences
- * Develop workshops and materials to help POD members initiate "classroom research" on their campuses (e.g., model research designs, methodologies, instruments)
- * Support regional networks
- * "Awards" for contributions to instructional improvement (e.g., "best idea of 1986 award," "most creative failure award")
- * Develop a case study library of good ideas (e.g., workshop designs, TA training materials, ways in which administrators are supporting development activities)
- * As an organization, address issues around assessment (e.g., invite speaker to address conference; schedule sessions that focus on the use of assessment information rather than on instrumentation; ask someone from Alverno College to conduct pre-conference workshop on how assessment can improve learning and instruction)
- * Support graduate students who are blossoming POD people
- * Initiate and/or support research on sex differences on learning styles inventories; consider the implications
- * Develop teaching lab models for college teachers
- * Develop an up-dated, looseleaf handbook for faculty development
- * Sponsor workshops or consultation on how to organize new centers, budgets, personnel, etc.
- * Support for POD members to attend other conferences

In October, the Core Committee will continue its discussion of future directions and projects for POD. In fact, Core Committee members have agreed to meet an extra day. Meanwhile, I ask you to give this agenda item some thought and to let us know your reactions, suggestions, and ideas. Jot them down, send them to me, and I will distribute them to Core Committee members.

As you might imagine, the March Core Committee meeting was exhausting. There was too much on the agenda and too little time to do it. Yet, everything that had to be decided was decided...and by consensus. Such committed, persistent, careful and caring (not to mention, good-spirited) people are hard to find. The next time you run into a member of the Core Committee, you might join me in saying thank-you.

POD Membership Directory: The 1985-1986 POD Membership Directory is in the mail and on its way to you. If you don't receive your copy within a couple of weeks, please let me know.

POD Survey of Faculty Development Practices: The POD Survey findings will appear in the 1986 edition of To Improve the Academy. Meanwhile, we've had about 15 requests from POD members for data subsets (e.g., "private four-year colleges, 1000-2000 students," "state institutions nationally," "state schools in the Midwest, 8,000-12,000 students"). Remember, the data are here for the asking. Also, we're still hoping that some of you will volunteer to conduct follow-up investigations. If you're interested, please contact: Glenn Erickson, Director,

Instructional Development Program, 201 Chafee, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI 02881; Phone: 401/792-5078

Leadership for Educational Change, July 28-August 3, 1986, Bethel, Maine. This NTL Institute program promises that participants will build knowledge and skills in diagnosing organizational problems and devising solutions that will last; in using theories of change; in improving interpersonal relations and group leadership; in developing groups and teams; and in managing differences. That's a tall order for one week, but you probably won't find better candidates for making good on those promises than the program staff: Walter Sikes, Executive Director of the Center for Creative Change, and Jack Lindquist, President of Goddard College. (You remember, of course, that both Wally and Jack were there to help create POD. Need I say more?) Tuition for the program is \$635. For more information, please contact: NTL Institute, P.O. Box 9155, Rosslyn Station, Arlington, Virginia 22209; Phone: 703/527-1500.

Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants, November 16-18, 1986, Columbus, Ohio. Remember those conversations you had at POD meetings about the preparation and development of graduate teaching assistants? You'll be pleased to know that something has come of them. Ohio State University has announced this national conference in order to:

- * provide participants with access to materials, experiences, and research findings that address TA issues from multiple perspectives
- * address critical issues involved in the employment and education of TAs
- * consider the formation of a national cooperative of participating institutions that would regularly exchange resources for TA activities.

Registration for the conference will be limited to 350 people. Watch for the registration materials in May. If you're really eager, please contact: National TA Conference Planning Committee, Instructional Development and Evaluation, Ohio State University, Suite 60 Neilwood Gables, 2096 Neil Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43210; Phone: 614/422-3644.

That's all for now, but I'll be back in touch in August. Please send me any items you'd like to see included in the August Newsletter by July 31st. Remember to register for the 1986 POD Conference. And have a good summer!

Bette

Bette LaSere Erickson

NETWORK

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