In Attendance

Members Present:
Steve Kimmel – Child Care Resource and Referral Director
Shannon Alamia – Associate Director

KC Members Present:
Jud Curry – Assistant VP Instruction
Barbara Leach – Associate Dean Instruction
Chris Kipp – Early Childhood Instructor

Welcome and Introductions

Jud welcomes and thanks everyone for attending the Fall 2019 Early Childhood Education Advisory Committee meeting. He explains that Maria and him were able to attend the Gateways Conference and there is another event coming up. Barbara Leach introduces herself. She recently became a dean, however, has been at Kishwaukee College as an instructor for five years.

Approval of Spring 2019 Minutes

No objections present, minutes approved.

Fall 2019 Enrollment Update

Kishwaukee College is still facing a decline. There has been talk about the NIU factor. The focus is on trying to figure out what is going to be the new normal and to try and find ways to work with that. This presents a challenge for the college as a whole. ECE was up 24.7%, which is a change of 43 credit hours. There are 20 students in 111 and 25 in 161. The first eight weeks just finished. The vast majority of students in these selections are A.A.

Program Updates

Update on Gateways:
Jud and Barbara will be attending the next conference on November 1st. Gateways is trying to make ECE more competency based and less course approach. Learning needs to become the fix, while time needs to become the variable. There is discussion regarding some change to competency based learning at other universities. Competency based learning shows that the individual is developing the actual skill rather listening to a lecture.

Spring 2020 Course Offerings:
This spring, 110, 222, and 225 are going to be offered at Kishwaukee College. There was a bit of skepticism on whether or not students would actually enroll in these courses. It was asked how many students need to be enrolled in a class so that it does not need to be cancelled. Jud explained that usually a class needs eight
to ten students depending on the class. If it is a class that needs multiple sections that are running, it is normally cancelled. A number of classes were run with five, six, and even 7 students this semester.

Review of Final AAS Student Portfolios:

The ECE Advisory Committee members looked through the Final AAS Student Portfolios and couldn’t stress enough how well put together they thought the portfolios were.

Industry Updates

Projected Employer Needs:

The ECE Advisory Committee members stressed the need of individuals who will actually show up. There is a real teacher crisis that is to the point where it can be classified as an emergency. Some applicants are assistant teacher certified. Assistant teacher certified is at a Level 3 but they need applicants who are at a Level 4. This is because Level 3 is unable to be left alone in the classroom with the children. DeKalb County is on board with the Boston Basics and is working on getting it out there to the community. The schoolboard is now realizing how important it is. NIU is interested in creating some articulation with the Kishwaukee College ECE program.

Jud asked if there is any sense that the state is going to increase support for ECE teachers. Steve said that the reimbursement low. They are now surveying to find out what some of the issues are. Making scholarships more accessible. Rewarding those for staying at centers. The supply part is the issue. If reimbursement was higher, they would make more money and it would then in turn, make the career look more attractive. Teachers don’t make enough, let alone early childhood education.

Training and Certification Needs for Current Employees:

Like previously mentioned, a lot of the applicants are teacher assistants which are a Level 3. They are unable to be alone with children in the classroom. Employers need a Level 4. What separates a Level 3 from a Level 4 is that a Level 3 is required 10 hours of experience, while a Level 4 is required 100 hours of required experience.

Other Updates:

Steve asked if there is any chance of the spring offering courses becoming face-to-face. Hands on experience is a necessity in this field. Jud explained that the hybrid allows more hands on experience. Students are able to do assignments outside of class which will leave for more hands on learning during class time.

Chris asked if students coming out of KEC qualify for the Gateway Scholarship. The response was that the applicants for the scholarship must be employed for 90 days. She also asked if Dual-Enrollment was a possibility so that if a Junior takes the KEC course, they can enroll in some online classes at Kishwaukee College as a Senior.

Other

Jud would like to send out an email to those in the committee asking if there is anyone they know who would be interested in joining the committee, as well as to ask if someone is interested in being a co-chair.

Next meeting TBD