

Regents' Committee on Learning Disorders
December 1, 2004
Georgia College & State University
DRAFT Minutes

Present: Anne Gormly, Chair; Noel Gregg, Sue Murphy, Margo Habiger, Cheryl Biggs, Ann Loyd, Mary Morris, Nancy Reed, John Colson, Carol Pope, Christopher Lee, Joseph Reuble, Frank Butler, Leslie Caldwell.

1. Anne Gormly began the meeting with a welcome, introductions, and a review of the agenda. New members included Christopher Lee, the new liaison at UGA, and Leslie Caldwell, the Regents Test Coordinator for the University System.
2. A motion to approve the minutes from the April 7, 2004 meeting was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.
3. The Center Directors provided a report of activities and issues since the last meeting. Dr. Mary Morris reported on staff changes at the Georgia State University Center; she also reported on the activities during 2003-2004. She noted that the number of evaluations completed as well as outside evaluations had declined; she attributed this decline to the fee increase. In response to questions, she agreed to look at the number of evaluations by institution and by enrollments. **Dr. Morris agreed to collect and report on this information at the Spring meeting.** She also indicated that while the number of Vocational Rehabilitation vouchers for evaluations is still low relative to other Centers, she expects to see an increase in the number as a result of a session that Wayne Akins conducted for service providers on the processes associated with these vouchers.

Dr. Noel Gregg reported that the University of Georgia Center has a new home within the Psychology Department and that this move was a good one for them. She indicated that Margo Habiger has left for another position and Dr. Christopher Lee has replaced her as the liaison. People at the Center are very excited about having him on board. There was much acclaim for Dr. Lee among committee members. She reported on activity since the last meeting in the spring. The activity is consistent with last year's figures. She indicated that they were working with Fort Valley State University to arrange a two-day visit for the purpose of evaluation and feedback. Noel proposed having psychologists from Spelman and Morehouse present to ACLD on issues around serving minority students. They presented at UGA and it was very informative.

Dr. Sue Murphy indicated that activity in the Georgia Southern University Center has been similar to last year and distributed data. She indicated that there has been a decline in the number of outside evaluations. She described a new role for an existing staff member and distributed an organizational chart. She described the priorities of the Center for this year; one of these priorities is to foster a working relationship between the school psychology program and the Center. She indicated that one issue of concern is the variable use of Vocational Rehabilitation services across the institutions; this is due in

part to the need to educate VR people better about the timelines and processes associated with evaluations. VR vouchers have increased at the Center.

4. Since the last meeting there have been two resignations from the committee: Janice Reid from Atlanta Metropolitan College and Cynthia Sellers from Fort Valley State University. After discussion, it was agreed that **Frank Butler** would contact Pete Silver (VPAA) at Savannah State University about a suitable person to serve on our committee. Similarly, **Frank Butler** will contact Cathy Rosmus from Georgia Southwestern State University about joining the Committee. **Nancy Reed** agreed to talk with Audrey Reid at Atlanta Metropolitan about joining our committee.

5. Dr. Gregg provided an update on the status of the Alternative Media Access Center (AMAC); the need for this service is both economic and proactive as possible lawsuits are likely as a result of institutions who are not making the legally required accommodations. The key is to secure some funding to pilot the Center using three institutions (Medical College of Georgia, Georgia Tech, and Gainesville College. One question raised was whether student technology fees could be used to purchase textbooks that would be scanned. There was a related discussion about the etext pending legislation and the inquiries that Tom Bower, a lobbyist, is making regarding issues associated with electronic texts. **Frank Butler** agreed to tell Tom Bower to call Anne Gormly and Del Dunn at UGA to discuss this issue from the perspective of a faculty member. Another suggestion was to talk with Louise McBee and use her talents to promote the benefits of state support for AMAC. **Frank Butler** will talk with Dan Papp about the AMAC proposal and possible strategies for securing funding. This funding would help stimulate grant funding as well. Dr. Gregg acknowledged the efforts of Carol Pope in getting the idea for this service off the ground. The committee applauded this proposal as innovative and efficient.

6. A question was raised about the need to update the website about the lists of IQ measures that are acceptable for evaluations. **Mary Morris** agreed to draft language for the revision and send it to Anne Gormly who will circulate it for review among committee members. Once consensus is achieved, **Frank Butler** will make sure the website is updated. Also, once the new members are confirmed, **Frank Butler** will make sure that the membership list for this committee is updated on the website.

7. The status of the BOR Survey of Services for Students with Disabilities was discussed. It was agreed that service providers would need to begin collecting information in July 2005; this data is important to collect and share across the System. A question was raised about whether this data might be appropriate for the System data mart or USG by the numbers. **Frank Butler** agreed to talk with Kathy Mayes Hudson about this. Mary Morris and Nancy Reed shared a copy of a revised version of the USG annual survey of services provided to students with disabilities. Several changes were suggested and **Nancy Reed** agreed to make these changes and share the revised survey with the Center directors who would share it with service providers to get their input. Since many service providers view this survey as a way to demonstrate all of their activity and not just that associated with students eligible for accommodations, it was

agreed that a cover letter acknowledging that this survey is assessing only a segment of their activity would be needed.

It was also agreed to inform service providers that the new survey format will be used to collect data beginning on July 1, 2005. They will be provided with a copy of the new format as soon as it is approved by the ACLD, so they will have time to make any necessary changes to their data collection procedures and forms. It was also agreed that both Student Affairs and Academic Affairs Vice Presidents should receive a copy of the compiled survey; it was agreed that the cover letter should be revised to provide more information to the vice presidents. Once the revised survey is ready for distribution, **Frank Butler** agreed to send it out to institutions under his name.

Another question raised was who would compile the data once it was collected; since this had been coordinated with help from Georgia State University under Kathleen Burk's tenure, Leslie Caldwell, also from Georgia State and now the new director for the Regents' Test, indicated that this function of compilation might continue as it had in the past.

8. A question was raised about the status of the approved changes in BOR policy on the Regents' Test procedures for students with test anxiety. While these changes have been made on the Regents' Test website they have not been made on the BOR website. **Frank Butler** indicated that he would make sure these changes are made.

9. The status of the subcommittee formed after last spring's meeting of the Regents' Committee on Learning Disorders regarding the Vocational Rehabilitation agreement was raised for discussion. According to Frank Butler, a draft version has been sent to the lawyers for DTAE for review. He also indicated that he has been in conversation with people from DOL and will continue these conversations; he indicated that he would invite Center directors and other members of this committee to the next meeting they have. **Frank** will provide an update at our spring meeting.

10. The Official Guide to the Regents' Centers for Learning Disorders needs to be updated; **Nancy Reed** indicated that she would make the necessary changes and share a draft of these revisions with the Center Directors and staff.

11. After a review of the low number of students requesting the State Board of Education waiver for foreign language requirements for admission to a USG institution, a motion was made by John Colson and accepted by Carol Pope to extend this process for use with students seeking admission in fall 2005. The motion was unanimously accepted. Additional information on the total number of waivers given will be collected and presented at the spring meeting, at which time a recommendation to permanently accept these waivers may be considered. **Nancy Reed** agreed to contact the SBOE to obtain this information.

12. Since Wayne Akins could not attend due to a death in the family, the agenda item dealing with the retention tracking system was deferred to the spring meeting.

13. John Colson asked whether any progress was made in System level discussions to centralize certain disability services. Frank Butler indicated that this issue has not surfaced as of yet but may in future discussions. Any such change in these areas would only affect those “back office” functions associated with disability services and would not replace the face to face services provided to students. This is an issue that should be revisited at our spring meeting at which time **Frank Butler** would have had a chance to get more feedback from the System office.

14. Mary Morris raised a question about the need to have a grievance policy in place for students who disagree with decisions made by a Center. BOR policy technically covers the case where no specific grievance policy exists and allows individuals to appeal to the Board. Nonetheless, it was agreed that we needed to consider a policy statement about a procedure for grieving decisions. **Sue Murphy** agreed to draft a policy for discussion at our spring meeting.

15. Sue Murphy asked a question about what would be a suitable alternative format for the reading test for COMPASS. The problem is that some Learning Support staff are unfamiliar with the appropriate alternative accommodation and need to be reminded of this. **Leslie Caldwell** indicated that he would communicate this information to Learning Support personnel.

16. Sue Murphy indicated that several disability service providers have requested the use of video teleconferencing for feedbacks. Due to confidentiality and professional practices issues, this alternative to addressing time and distance issues will require careful consideration. Perhaps a pilot at Valdosta State University may provide more information.

It was agreed that the tentative date for the spring meeting would be in the week of March 14-16, 2005. **Members will check their calendars to determine which day works best and email this information to Anne Gormly.**