

Minutes of the April 24th, 2014 of the Biology Academic Advisory Committee

Members present: Mark Farmer (chair, UGA), Donna Balding (Middle Georgia State), Matt Draud (Armstrong), Elissa Purnell (Savannah State), Donna Dougherty (Highlands), Rich Griner (Georgia Regents'), Jung Choi (GA Tech), Josie Moore (Darton State), Sheryl Shanholzer (GPC), Indiren Pillay (Georgia College), Julie Ballenger (Columbus State), Jerald Hendricks (Kennesaw), Steve Vives (Georgia Southern), Gene Mesco (Dalton College), Therese Poole (Georgia State)

- 1) Welcome and introductions
- 2) Approval of minutes from BAAC meeting April 1, 2013 – Approved unanimously
- 3) Introductory Biochemistry – New course for GA Perimeter (BCHM 2100) – Dr. Shanholzer presented the rationale for this new course. Will be listed both in Biology and Chemistry Area F as an option. Has been approved by the Chemistry AAC. Committee recommends that Organic Chemistry II NOT be a prerequisite for the course, as it will exceed the hours required in Area F. Discussion about transferability and whether or not the course should have a lab. Further discussion as to whether this should be changed to a 3000-level. A motion to accept was made and seconded, and approved unanimously.

Discussion shifted to a discussion of general transferability of Core courses at the various institutions. Stanley volunteered to set up a Dropbox with the various spreadsheets we have developed, and set up a spreadsheet for the core courses at each institution, to facilitate transfer of these required courses between campuses.

- 4) Proposed changes in AP Biology – Moving from content based to analytical skills/critical thinking. We discussed the meaning of a score of a 4 (or 5) and what it truly means. Does a score of 4 truly represent knowledge of the topics covered in BIOL 1107? Students would be better served by taking the majors sequence. Suggestions were made to consider giving credit for the non-majors sequence instead of majors. Dr. Choi explained the rationale for the revision for the test, and the new focus on the big ideas and concepts. However, content is also very important to provide a foundation for higher courses. This led to a discussion about content vs. central principles in the principles of biology sequence. Should we consider curriculum mapping? Need to set up another spreadsheet to share the basic principles and concepts covered in each of the core courses.
- 5) E-courses – Strictly online with no campus interaction for the lecture. UGA has presented a non-majors in this format, and will test a majors section. What is the outcome for students in online courses? The suggestion was made that we collect data as a group so we can discuss the

success of such online/hybrid courses. Do students in online courses succeed in subsequent courses? Problems with cheating were also discussed. An idea to arrange for proctoring at all system schools to facilitate online course test-taking was discussed. There is a designation for online courses that many colleges use. There was also discussion of various means of assessing mastery of the concepts in the courses.

- 6) E-texts and other online tools – Student response at UGA overwhelmingly positive. Faculty are also fairly supportive. Others echoed this sentiment. Computer access on campuses is widespread. Even with use of e-texts, the option of physical text is still an option. A discussion of OpenStax and various clicker systems followed (tophat.com). ExamSoft (learn.examssoft.com) – an anti-cheating testing system that eliminates the need for scantrons – was also discussed.
- 7) Four-year degrees to offer associate-level programs? Only GRU has heard these rumblings, but feels it is not as loud as before.
- 8) Elections – Past year chair – Mark Farmer, Chair – Theresa Stanley, Chair-elect election. Nomination for chair-elect – Indiren Pillay. His election was unanimous. Executive committee – Gene Mesco, Matt Draud, Steve Vives
- 9) Moved to adjourn. Seconded