

## Minutes

Political Science Regents' Advisory Committee annual meeting

DoubleTree Hotel, Savannah, Georgia

November 13, 2014

### Those Present:

Matthew Hipps (Chair), Dalton State University  
Thomas Rotnem (Secretary), Southern Polytechnic State University  
Peter Brecke, Georgia Institute of Technology  
Kris Beck, Gordon State College  
Sarah Kuck, Darton State College  
Joe Njoroge, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College  
Brooke Miller, Middle Georgia State College  
Dlynn Armstrong-Williams, University of North Georgia  
Tom Dolan, Columbus State University  
Jim Peterson, Valdosta State University  
Becky Sims, Georgia Highlands College  
Frank Pridemore, South Georgia State College  
Bob King, Georgia Perimeter College  
Ginger Durham, Board of Regents

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

The meeting began with some old business, i.e., a request from the Board of Regents for the group to create a document addressing the following issues:

- a) What is Political Science?
- b) How does undergraduate training in political science benefit students?
- c) How do political science graduates from Georgia universities benefit the state of Georgia?

A sub-committee composed of Matthew Hipps (Dalton State University), Peter Brecke (Georgia Institute of Technology), and Brooke Miller (Middle Georgia State College) will develop the document, with a draft to be created by February 1, 2015. The draft will be available for review by the entire group, thereafter, with a goal of final completion by February 15, 2015.

### New business items:

- a) The Board of Regents thanked the committee for its time and effort, especially for having evaluated 20 proposals during the summer term.

- b) Mention was made by the Chair of the Complete College Georgia, and its focus upon retention and graduation of our students. It was mentioned also that any new program that increases time to degree will not be viewed positively by the BoR.
- c) Attention then turned to Area F issues in political science; the question before the group was: Does Area F in all colleges and universities in the USG meet BoR Area F guidelines? The Chair further prompted all members to consider reviewing the various institutions' Area F curricula and, secondly, consider whether majors at all USG universities, having completed their Area F coursework, have received a "common experience." A general discussion ensued, concerning the BoR's Area F guidelines, as well as discussing the implications of changing said guidelines.

After much discussion, it was agreed that the Chair would send out a google-type document by December 1, 2014, in which each USG institution will be asked to input its Area F curriculum. (And, those that have more than one degree program will need to have those other programs included, as well.)

The second step would commence once the curricula were all available; a conversation via email will ensue as to what next steps to take, if any. Area F learning outcomes will also be discussed at some point.

- d) The committee then discussed the issue of eCore course offerings (POLS 1101) and their eventual integration into Banner at all USG universities, according to the BoR. The Chair informed the committee of a document circulated at the BoR Academic Affairs Chairs meeting, in which the eCore curriculum was criticized, including problems with course standards and quality, course review, etc. Afterwards, a general discussion ensued concerning eCore and potential problems associated with it, including such issues as the quality of open source textbooks, assessment issues and RPG data, etc. In the end, it was agreed that the committee would not be making a recommendation to the BoR regarding eCore offerings in political science.

Regardless, it was stated by the BoR representative that every student at every USG institution would have the opportunity to take courses through eCore as of Summer 2015. Additionally, the representative stated that institutions are given \$5,500 for each course, and the specific institution decides how much of that amount will be given to the faculty member. No less than \$1,200 per credit hour will be given to faculty members.

- e) Affordable Learning Georgia (ALG) Grants were discussed next. A variety of grant opportunities were mentioned. It was stated that more information is available at the following website: [affordablelearninggeorgia.org](http://affordablelearninggeorgia.org)

Discussion ensued about the role of the POLS RAC in developing an American Government textbook, to be used in the system. The Chair mentioned that an online space would be created to continue these deliberations.

f) Committee By-Laws: The Chair mentioned that no by-laws of the POLS RAC were found on the website. The Chair also mentioned he would be contacting former chairs of the committee for electronic or paper copies. If these cannot be found, then a committee would need to be formed to create them.

g) Review of Kennesaw State University's POLS 2401 Course Proposal

The committee discussed the proposal by KSU to add POLS 2401 "Global Issues" to its Core Area B course options; the committee unanimously supported the proposal, further declaring that the course meets global learning overlay requirements in the core.

h) Updates from USG Director of Faculty Development, Ginger Durham

The BoR representative discussed various initiatives for faculty development that are offered by the USG. She mentioned various critical initiatives that the USG is offering, in particular, those associated with Affordable Learning Georgia (ALG) grants, New Models Consortia, and Complete College Georgia, which include several incubator grants for faculty. The Chair advised all members present that he would be sending the link to these faculty development opportunities.

The BoR representative also advised committee members to review the following website for additional faculty development opportunities: [merlot.org](http://merlot.org)

i) The last order of business was the nomination and election of the Chair-elect, who will take over duties from Matthew Higgs after the next meeting in November 2015. Joe Njoroge nominated Tom Rotnem (Secy.) as the incoming Chair; hearing no other nominations, committee members elected the current Secretary as Chair-elect.

#### Announcements:

The BoR representative announced that there will be a workshop for new Deans and Chairs in Macon on January 30, 2015 and the cost would be \$30 to the individuals participating.

The Chair of the POLS RAC announced that the GPSA Executive Board meeting will take place from 4-6 p.m. Also, the GPSA President's Welcome Reception will take place in the Living Room from 6-7 p.m.

A motion to adjourn passed at 4:05 p.m.