

USG Arts & Sciences Deans Core Curriculum meeting  
Macon State University  
April 29, 2008, 10:00am  
Draft Notes  
(Chris Jespersen, North Georgia College & State University)

Presiding: Dorothy Leland, President Georgia College & State University

***Why do this?***

- 1) Current curriculum put into place over a decade ago. Need to review it from time to time. 2) BOR awareness of national studies (The World is Flat plus other works) that discuss 21<sup>st</sup> century learning outcomes, need to increase expectations for students. Citations posted on Strong Foundations website. 3) Accountability movement (e.g. Spellings Commission). Funding partners and external stakeholders concerned about what and how institutions are teaching students and how learning is demonstrated through assessment.

***What is the current status of the USG core?***

- 2) Brief review of the current 60 hours plus an examination of the seven general objectives (e.g. transferability, assessment measures, room for campus individualization, compelling and coherent framework, etc.)

***Where are things going? (Or Strategies for dealing with concerns expressed thus far.)***

- 3) Creation of five-person campus-based-committees (teams?) that will be tasked with eliciting feedback to take to the system level discussion. Good idea to have a few members elected. How to reduce travel required of these team members? Create five-or-six regionally-based workshops which will meet regularly. Timeline for completion of this project has already added a year to the process, and it is President Leland's "hope and belief" that is more time is needed to better develop the final recommendations that the process could be further slowed.

***Questions:***

- 4) *Why not study current core before undertaking revisions?* Process may result in core that looks very similar to what is already in place. Part of the process is the examination of what is working; no desire to remove or modify, necessarily, those aspects.
- 5) *Who will ultimately make decisions on content?* BOR ultimately makes decision based on what Dorothy Leland presents, and what that is comes from campus teams and Foundations committee members.
- 6) *What about transferability within the context of USG learning outcomes versus campus individualization?* Much of that will have to be determined at the committee level.
- 7) *What is the impact of creating courses that don't look like others at institutions outside of the USG, especially as it relates to graduate or professional school admissions?* That has to be a campus decision. Current core is not really a system-level curriculum; developed at the institutional level.

- 8) *What about the sciences and science tracks for different careers and admission to graduate schools?* That will be left to the schools and disciplinary committees. That may mean reducing the number of credit hours in the core.
- 9) *But isn't that taking things in the wrong direction, especially considering that students very likely change majors?* Good point to argue and include in the discussion.
- 10) *Can you provide a little more information on the Strong Foundations Committees?* One rep from every institution and one rep from the system-wide advisory committees (discipline specific e.g. Physics, and the A&S Deans Committee). VPAAAs and Presidents will also have opportunity for input.
- 11) *What lessons were learned from the semester conversion experience and what influence did those lessons have for the process this time?* Perception that there was not enough faculty input; too much was driven at system level, by bureaucrats, by committees. Other issue was that semester conversion would not affect funding, but it clearly did. Finally, one other issue relating to funding, Leland indicated that paramount for her is funding to assist faculty in course development. Susan Herbst understood this very clearly.
- 12) *Another question about importance of transferability.* Leland recognized how critical this is.
- 13) *How to reconcile flexibility of timeline versus Chancellor's statements about making progress in a timely fashion?* A pilot by a few institutions may be not only acceptable, but highly desirable.
- 14) *What about articulating a set of needs, data wise (RPG, etc.), to ask the BOR to get for the committees to review before they could about their business?* Some of that is already in place.
- 15) *Can you clarify role of academic advisory committees, especially in light of rotation of chairs on an annual basis?* That's why it is either the chair or the committee's designee.
- 16) *Another question about committees and composition.* Leland will need to balance out the committees for academic expertise and institutional representation.
- 17) *How do you map the various competencies considering that grades have been the primary input for decisions on transfer acceptance?* Should work very similarly to how it works now – through the course approval process at the system level.
- 18) *Another question regarding the specifics of assessment of core competencies.* Much of this will be worked out at the committee level. Need to make use of existing expertise in this area.
- 19) *Another question about transferability.* Recognition that no one wants a one thousand page document relating to what does or does not qualify for transfer credit. Answer is vague, but it has to be. Need to maintain flexibility. Minnesota example listed in citations.

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