

# Meeting Minutes: Committee on English

## Minutes

### Academic Advisory Committee on English

January 30-31, 2003

Clarion Resort Buccaneer, Jekyll Island, GA

**Members in Attendance:** Erin Campbell (ABAC), David Roberts (Albany State), Robert Parham (Armstrong Atlantic), Joyce Peoples (Atlantic Metropolitan), Lillie Johnson (Augusta State), Stan Webb (Bainbridge), William Pasch (Clayton State), Michael Hannaford (Coastal Georgia), Barbara Hunt (Columbus State), Elizabeth Ragsdale (Darton), Dana Nevil (East Georgia), J. Fred Green (Floyd), Joyce Jenkins (Fort Valley State), Patricia Worrall (Gainesville), Kathleen Burk (Georgia Board of Regents), David Evans (Georgia College), Robert Kolker (Georgia Institute of Technology), Ted Wadley (Georgia Perimeter), Curtis Ricker (Georgia Southern), Gwen Jones (Georgia Southwestern), Robert Sattelmeyer (Georgia State), Mary Alice Money (Gordon), Laura Dabundo (Kennesaw State), Larry Mobley (Macon State), Carmine Palumbo (Middle Georgia), Thomas Austenfeld (North Georgia), Rose Metts (Savannah State), Carl McDonald (South Georgia), Kim Haimen-Korn (Southern Polytechnic), David Newton (West Georgia), Nelson Hilton (University of Georgia), Mark Smith (Valdosta State), Sharron Lawn (Waycross)

**Others in Attendance:** Dorothy Zinsmeister (Board of Regents), Sharon Gravett (Valdosta State)

### Thursday, January 30, 2003

Chair Elizabeth Ragsdale called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. After introductions, she thanked Nelson Hilton of UGA for his help in maintaining the committee's listserv. She also reminded the committee of its important function of giving input to the system office as well as helping our students through the networking this meeting allows.

Ragsdale introduced Kathleen Burk, the committee's liaison to the Board of Regents and the system office.

Burke addressed several points:

1. She distributed a hand-out so that each institution could update its list of active Regents' test raters.
2. She also distributed a sheet with each institution's rater attendance rates. In general, 5% of raters fail to show up at rating sessions, which creates a backlog for the raters who are present. She urged institutions to continue to work to ensure that raters who are unable to attend when scheduled to please notify the Regents' Testing Program Office or their coordinator.
3. She announced that in the spring there will probably be too many essays to grade for just two Saturdays. Several rating centers may open for a third Saturday.
4. She also distributed a sheet showing the ENGL 1101 and 1102 grade distributions for each institution.

Burk also reported on the two recommendations from this committee at last year's meeting:

1. The committee had asked that institutions not be held accountable for the Regents' Test scores for students who had not taken English classes at their institution. This recommendation went to the Vice Presidents, who then forwarded it to the Office of Strategic Research and Analysis. SRA responded that for

the Office of Educational Accountability report individual institutions were responsible for all their graduates, whether those graduates took those classes in residence at the institution or not. However, Burk reported that they will try to get this information for a separate report.

2. The committee had also recommended that other standardized test scores could be counted as fulfilling the Regents' Test requirement. This recommendation was sent to the Chief Academic Officers as well as to the Presidents, who were all in favor of this recommendation.

The committee then discussed which tests and which scores would be acceptable. For the essay test, an AP score over 3 has been shown to correlate to a 98% pass rate, and therefore should be acceptable. There was some discussion about the SAT II, the International Baccalaureate, and the Praxis I, but more data will need to be gathered. Dorothy Zinsmeister indicated that she would help to get PRAXIS I data. For the reading test, an SAT verbal score of 510 or higher was considered. The ACT score might also be acceptable, but no appropriate score was discussed.

The next step is to ask the BOR to implement these changes.

Next, Dorothy Zinsmeister, Senior Faculty Associate, of the system office discussed several issues with the committee:

1. Since the committee was discussing the Regents' Test, she posed several questions to consider: Is the test a valuable one? Is there a financial argument to keep or discard the test? Does the test match college teaching? Is it delivered at the right stage of a student's education? Do course grades correlate to Regents' scores?
2. She also spoke about the charge to all Academic Committees to examine their Area F guidelines, which have not been reconsidered since they were initially drafted before semester conversion. Each institution should examine whether its Area F is in compliance with these guidelines. If they are not, students may suffer as they transfer within the system. By the end of the current academic year, she would like to see a recommendation if these guidelines need to be modified.
3. She discussed the second charge to all Academic Committees that they begin to develop common course learning outcomes for the courses they share in the core curriculum. Clear outcomes will be helpful for faculty (especially new faculty and part-timers) as well as students.
4. She also discussed Comprehensive Program Review and its implementation on the system's campuses. She reemphasized that the system office is more interested in how program review is being carried out; it is up to individual institutions to make decisions about programs. However, she also said that institutions will be asked to review their core curriculum as a program.

Break 3-3:15

After the break, Ragsdale thanked Burk and Zinsmeister for their reports and their comments. Subcommittees then met to work on different projects. The meetings adjourned at 4:30.

That evening, the committee members enjoyed dinner and a relaxed evening together.

### **Friday, January 31**

After a continental breakfast, the meeting resumed at 9 a.m. The committee then broke back into subcommittees to complete their work from the previous afternoon.

Break 9:45-10:00

The meeting reconvened at 10 a.m., and the committee took care of elections to the Executive Committee. The following members were elected unanimously:

Chair: Joyce Jenkins

Chair-Elect: Thomas Austenfeld

Members at Large: Lillie Johnson (2-year term)

Carmine Palumbo (3-year term).

Jenkins announced that next year's committee meeting will be held January 29-30, 2004 at the Conference Center at Fort Valley State University.

Subcommittees next began their reports:

**Freshman Subcommittee** (Erin Campbell, reporter; Members: Bill Pasch, LaNelle Daniel, Mary Alice Money, Elizabeth Ragsdale, Bob Parham, Kim Haines-Korn, Rose Metts):

The subcommittee responded to the general charge for all Academic Advisory Committees to develop general outcomes for all core courses. Committee members had brought outcomes from their institutions; culling from those outcomes, the subcommittee proposed seven general learner outcomes for ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1102:

Students who complete ENGL 1101 and 1102 should:

- understand rhetorical contexts for their writing by establishing the writer's role, the audience, and the purpose of the project.
- use recursive processes that include collecting information, focusing, ordering, drafting, revising, and editing.
- approach writing as a way to think and communicate ideas to others, leading to effective writing.
- adjust writing to a variety of contexts, including electronic environments.
- demonstrate the techniques and skills of research, integration of source material, and documentation.
- read and respond to various texts for purposes of interpretation, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and judgment.
- use conventions of writing mechanics, usage, and style to communicate effectively for the given audience, purpose, and format.

The committee discussed these outcomes, particularly how to incorporate technology use; eventually outcome

#4 was modified to include electronic environments. The committee agreed to accept these outcomes as a draft and to share them with their own institutions for further suggestions.

**Sophomore Subcommittee** (Thomas Austenfeld, reporter; Members: Larry Mobley, Michael Hannaford, Barbara Hunt, Dave Roberts, Nelson Hilton, Michael Fisher):

Report of the Sophomore Sub-committee Charge: Can we identify shared outcomes of 2000-level literature survey courses based on a comparative reading of documents provided by member institutions?

Given the place of World Literature in Area F, the committee decided to focus its investigation on the system schools' learner outcomes for World Lit classes and defer the discussion of British and American lit.

Findings:

Almost all USG institutions

1. -name critical thinking, writing, and oral communication skills as desired outcomes
2. -name "aesthetic appreciation" of texts as an outcome.

These two student outcomes coincide with widely accepted General Education norms and are properly advanced by World Lit classes.

Almost all USG institutions

3. -describe the body of knowledge they want students to master in traditional terms, such as literary and historical periods, masterworks, great authors, etc. World Literature outcomes often expressly invoke ancillary disciplines (history, art, philosophy, religious studies) as aids in studying the culture from which texts arose. World Literature is more fully cognizant of being an interdisciplinary venture than British and American Literature.

Almost all USG institutions

4. -state "multicultural literacy" (or a variant thereof) as a student outcome. These classes aim to assist in values clarification and lead to a critical and comparative reflection of Western and non-Western values.

The committee wishes to add that learner outcomes should include

5. -a conscious attention to the fact that most texts in World Lit classes are translations and hence subject to distortion and interpretation of the original.

Rather than formulate mandatory learner outcomes at this time, the subcommittee proposes that these ~~five~~ items be considered guidelines from which to formulate learner outcomes.

**Major Programs Subcommittee** (Sheri Gravett, reporter; Members: Ted Wadley, Mark Smith, David Evans, Laura Dabundo, Gwen Jones, Dana Nevil, Lillie Johnson):

The subcommittee responded to the system office charge to examine Area F guidelines and to determine if these guidelines needed to be modified. Members from all institutions brought the Area F requirements from their programs. After examining these requirements, the subcommittee concluded that the Area F guidelines needed to be broader in order to allow institutions greater flexibility. The subcommittee rewrote the Area F guidelines as follows:

Area F consists of 18 hours in 1000-2000 courses related to English studies and other courses which may be prerequisite to high level major courses, distributed as follows:

1. foreign language courses at the level equivalent to the fourth semester, if not otherwise satisfied.
2. world literature or world literature-based humanities course, if not taken in another area.
3. other courses relevant to English studies.

The committee discussed the implications of these rewritten guidelines, including possible transfer difficulties among institutions that may have widely different Area F requirements. At the same time, committee members also expressed a desire to preserve the individuality of each institution's majors, which is seen as a strength.

The committee also decided to accept this proposal as a draft and conduct further discussions at our home institutions.

**Testing Subcommittee** (Curtis Ricker, reporter; Members: Joyce Jenkins, Carmine Palumbo, Patricia Worrell):

The subcommittee took a straw poll of the committee to ascertain sentiment about whether the Regents' Test should be eliminated. After a great deal of discussion, the committee decided that members should go back and discuss the Regents' Test with faculty members at their home institutions to get a better sense of what the general sentiment about the test is across the state.

The subcommittee also asked members to remind their home institutions of the following:

1. when reading Regents' essay tests, raters should remember that they are evaluating drafts.
2. institutions should remember to make use of the appeals system; currently, the subcommittee sees only around 15 appeals per semester.

The meeting concluded with some general discussion about how the committee should bring closure to some of the issues discussed:

- Should we continue to communicate on these issues via the listserv?
- Should we set up any phone discussions?
- Would it be possible to set up a chatroom?

As the meeting drew to a close, Joyce Jenkins extended the thanks of the committee to Elizabeth Ragsdale for a well-planned and executed meeting, which was heartily applauded by those present.

Jenkins also asked for committee members to begin thinking of agenda items for next year's meeting and to submit any items to her.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Gravett, Recorder

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