

Minutes of 2007
Annual Foreign Language Academic Advisory Committee
Jekyll Island, Georgia
April 16-17, 2007

Attendees:

Sheila McCoy- Chair, Georgia Highlands College
Trino J. Prados- Secretary, Middle Georgia College
Ellen Blossman- Chair Elect, Armstrong Atlantic University

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| Darren Broome | Gordon College |
| Lynne Bryan | Macon State College |
| James Chestnut | North College & State University |
| Dale S. Crandall | Gainesville State College |
| Jeniba Dart | East Georgia College |
| Victoria Dubriel | Fort Valley State University |
| Noel Fallows | University of Georgia |
| Dina Foster | Georgia Perimeter College |
| William Griffin | Kennesaw State University |
| Joyce Jenkins | Fort Valley State University |
| Joe Johnson | Clayton State University |
| Jacqueline Konan | Columbus State University |
| Nancy Mason | Dalton State College |
| Roger Noel | Georgia College & State University |
| Bernice Nuhfer-Halten | Southern Polytechnic State University |
| Donnie Richards | Georgia Southern University |
| Jana Sandarg | Augusta State University |
| Vicki Soady | Voldasta State University |
| Genevieve Watson | Darton College |

Special Attendees:

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| Susan Crooks | GA Department of Education |
| Rick Sutton (Liaison) | University System Office |

Recommendations and Endorsements

1. The Foreign Language Academic Advisory Committee recommends that proficiency in a foreign language be included as an essential skill in the USG core curriculum in order to meet the goals of the development of global competencies endorsed by the University System of Georgia. Furthermore, we recommend that proficiency in foreign languages be an integral component of international education in the 21st century.

2. The Foreign Language Academic Advisory Committee recommends that we enhance, expand and support modern language study abroad programs that provide upper level, in-country experiences in which students study for at least a month in a country where English is not the primary language. Such programs would provide for maximum development of linguistic and cultural competencies requisite in our increasingly global economy.

Monday, April 16, 2007

Chair Sheila McCoy called meeting to order at 8:30am

Meeting began with formal introductions.

Last year's minutes were approved on-line prior to the conference.

Summary of the agenda was distributed. The order of the agenda was changed and the first item of discussion was the expected outcomes from the strategic planning listed on the Board of Regents web-site. Bernice Nuhfer-Halten showed the committee the Strategic Planning Process. The committee in turn began discussion on the "customer service aspect" of the strategic process. In an effort to improve clientele contentment, the committee fears that academic standards may be sacrificed in order to meet students' non-academic exigencies. It was voiced that some professors have to produce excessively detailed syllabi. Terms like "Evidence Based Decision making" and "Standardizations" need clarification.

At this moment, Rick Sutton, clarified that in the drive to make the institutions more "customer based", academic standards had not been compromised. Last summer the Chancellor reorganized the lines of command for the institutions. Research institutions report directly to the Chancellor, the other four year institutions report to the executive vice chancellor. Georgia's two-year institutions report to the Chief Operating Officer. Rick noted that all academics had expressed these concerns and that is the reason there will always be oversight of academic integrity.

It was pointed out that due to a variety of circumstances, Gov. Perdue has now appointed 3/4 of the Board of Regents and that they are all concerned about education. The tenor of the discussions lately deals with different expectations of accountability. This could have an impact on the budget process, the Regents' tests and the strategic planning debate. At his point, Jim Chestnut asked if there are any pro-language or global people in place. Rick responded that there were and that furthermore there is a new emphasis to properly educate and train students with global preparation. The committee was pleased to hear of their commitment to higher education.

At this point, it was asked if there had been any discussions about undocumented students. It was noted that while there has been an expansion of academic

opportunities for legal residents, opportunities for undocumented students have been further curtailed.

Committee members questioned if the budget for FY08 can accommodate or further expand academic opportunities in general when so much of the budget is earmarked for Peach Care.

A question was asked how the Governor's office will plan future budget processes. There will be much greater attention to outcomes. A comment was made that the details have not been worked out. There seemed to be a mandate that the universities must cut costs. Some institutions have adopted costs cutting steps but have maintained their quality. Two universities are going through SACs reviews and this has helped ensure that academic standards are met.

It was noted that the cost cutting step could prove disadvantageous for two year university colleges because success is correlated with how many students graduate and transfer with associates' degrees. Many students simply transfer upon completion of their sophomore year. It was noted in response that these students who opt to transfer may not have all their credits accepted. It should be communicated to the students that if they graduate with an AA or AS, all their classes will transfer.

Immediately another issue arose. Programs that guarantee a set tuition rate for four years could undermine the two-year schools. One of the attractions of the two-year institutions is that their tuition rates are lower. In response it was noted that competition between the two year schools and the four year ones could be good. Middle Georgia College has merged with Georgia Aviation Technical College to offer four year degrees in aviation related fields.

It was noted that some institutions' drive for more technology further complicates matters. Again, success is perceived by numbers; how many students are matriculated in classes and what is the retention rate? If a student wants to take a specific class that is not offered by his or her institution, he or she will simply take a class online through another institution.

At this point it was requested that the Chancellor make a clarifying statement. What would be the best conduit to foster cooperation amongst the various institutions rather than competition?

Rick Sutton suggested that it would be up to faculty. More communications should be fostered amongst faculty members of the various institutions, such as the members of the Foreign Language Academic Advisory Committee do. We as faculty members should share information such as our experiences with outcomes assessments and models. What methods have worked best?

Again, concern and a little consternation were expressed towards what methods would be shared by the various institutions. What are the “best business models”? With this kind of customer based emphasis, the colleges and universities would be more vulnerable to lawsuits.

Rick Sutton said when it came to institutional issues the Board would support “academic integrity”.

The “Customer Service Initiative” topic arose. The ability to deliver a “product” sounds very un-academic. In response it was noted that it could mean improved advising for students. This could enable more students to achieve their diplomas in a timely manner, reducing operational costs in the process.

“What about the recalcitrant student who is not satisfied with the whole “college experience”? If the students’ disposition towards learning in the classroom is solely based on his or her environment, what will prevent him or her from succeeding? In response, Rick Sutton did acknowledge that the “customer” is not always right. The board supports academic integrity.

Perhaps it was a poor choice of words to use “Customer” as one of the FLAAC committee members noted. Rick Sutton says it means to serve the student, not to promote grade inflation. We can also address that with outcomes assessment and strategic planning. If we hear of any grade inflation, we as faculty can push back against it.

At this point Rick spoke to the committee about the American Diploma Project. It is a national effort. In summation, the project is a network coalition of various states dedicated to aligning curricula, standards, and outcome policies. It aims to create and strengthen exigencies for standards-based secondary school assessment data in admissions and contractual employment; help the various education departments in revising and/or improving their current standards-based systems; and develop national graduation benchmarks in disciplines that all may use to calibrate the quality of their outcomes.

One of the committee members suggested that would make the regents’ exam redundant. We hear talk that it will be phased out but the decision seems to modify and not drop. It was mentioned to the committee that subcommittees have been formed to address this issue. One recommendation put forward was to dispense with the Regents exam if students negotiate ENGL 1101 and 1102 with an A or a B. For the moment, the institutions are allowed a limited number of exceptions. For those students who fail a second time, they must enroll in some remediation course.

It was asked at this point who put the tests together. Could those who are in charge of the test design gear their developments towards assessment?

At this point Rick Sutton went on to talk of other matters: approval and authorities with the Board of Regents. The Board would like to see decision making pushed back to lower levels in deciding promotions. Recommendations came back from various academic advisory committees suggesting that the Board should relinquish responsibility for promotion. They would no longer be presented with the packets. The Board very rarely denies a promotion. However, staff reviews have caught errors that result in promotions not handled properly. The Board, in effect, tells the institutions that these are matters best dealt at the institutional level.

At this point, some in the committee inquired the impact for granting tenure. Would it be based on how post-tenure reviews are done? In response to the question, it was mentioned that Georgia Gwinnet does not offer tenure. In lieu of tenure it offers its faculty higher salaries. This brought about a discussion whether in the future the state of Georgia will some day switch to the Georgia Gwinnet model.

In response, Rick Sutton said Georgia Gwinnet is geared toward technological innovation. The institution is really trying to attract the best faculty and thus the higher salaries. To justify the high pay, it was decided that all the faculty positions would be non-tenure. That procedure and its effects are still under review.

At this point discussions turned to the new VPAA Dr. Sandra Stone's approval process of academic programs. Some in the committee thought that the new majors made the system cumbersome. Why offer new majors that seem to overlap? Offering new majors that have a small demand does not allow the others to take the full advantages of the present majors offered.

It was mentioned that Dr. Stone wants to streamline the process and engage the various academic advisory committees to review relevant proposals. The content experts of the various committees should help advise the processes. Also, this would spark debate about the liaison structure. There would be more hands-on contact between the various AAC's and the BOR. This will invigorate the committees.

The committee moved on to the topic of Strategic Planning. Rick Sutton had mentioned back in September about the Chancellor's new strategic plan. In summary, the strategic plan would encompass the review of the undergraduate and transferring experience and increased system capacity. Also the plan will prepare Georgia to take control of its future in the global economy, provide value for life-long learning and integration of competencies at all levels. The Chancellor asked the presidents of the various institutions to nominate groups to serve, study and implement the plans. In January the proposals went to the board for approval but have not yet been approved. Discussions within the BOR dealt with renewing

excellence in undergraduate study. Special emphasis was put on to the students' 21st century needs.

In discussing this topic Rick Sutton mentioned that there must be consistency with transferability based on a common system of set competencies. The various institutions and academic advisory committees should not just talk about courses in "boxes" but actually look at students' competencies and allow each school to determine the commonly shared outcomes. We as faculty and the administrators should work with students in different ways. This, it was observed, would set up a big debate in the system, a point to which Rick Sutton agreed. What are the competencies? Rick responded by saying the strategic plan will be addressing this issue and even though the list of things to do to reach this end is an involved process, it will be manageable.

One item on the list that was and is being studied is global literacy. That immediately sparked an impassioned discussion about the role of foreign languages in global literacy. How can the institutions come up with a shared set of competencies when global literacy can mean many different things to the schools? How do students achieve it? For some institutions that could mean the quality of their courses. For others, it is the quality of exchange programs. The conclusion is that each institution will be able to work on particular areas. Many possibilities will afford themselves to the various colleges and universities.

At this juncture, one of the committee members pointed out that there is inconsistency with the global literacy mandate when so many study abroad programs are under-funded. The discussion then became a little impassioned when it was mentioned that various schools seem to charge "double tuition" in order for the student to receive study abroad credit and when the measure of success is how many of its own students are in study abroad programs. This was of particular concern because most study abroad students will join a program from other institutions. At this point Jim Chestnut suggested that we need voices on the relevant committee that is in charge of global literacy. Rick Sutton said that this effort will be interdisciplinary.

At this point Chair Sheila McCoy called for a break at 11:10am. Committee returns at 11:30. As Chair Sheila McCoy re-adjourned the committee, she adjusted the order of the agenda to meet the scheduling needs of the committee.

Discussions turned to SB.529. This denies services for students not legally in the country. The Board of Regents has taken no action on this issue. It was at this moment one of the committee members noted that all the universities should have been opposed to the state bill. Rick Sutton said that there are other interpretations of the law and that states that have passed similar laws have been able to accommodate said students. But, yes, granting in-state tuition benefit will be denied to undocumented students.

At this juncture, Susan Crooks from the Department of education spoke to the committee. There is support for elementary programs. She thanked the committee and the BOR for its support. The state is refunding to various schools \$300 for media and technology. Also, these funds are to be spent at the principal's discretion.

Next item up for discussion was the high school initiative "American Diploma Project". Of the 83,000 students who graduated from the program, 52,000 had taken foreign languages. It was further mentioned that foreign language is recommended in the college prep tracks. Then it was mentioned within the committee that foreign language should be part of the curriculum for the college prep lines. If they were not to complete any foreign language, the students would be ineligible to go to any Georgia college or university unless they complete a compensatory course at college level.

It was also discussed amongst committee members the role technical schools could play in achieving the competencies for global literacy mentioned earlier. Technical and vocational students as well should achieve proficiency in language if Georgia plans to compete and function in an increasingly more globalized economy. Acquisition and proficiency of a foreign language are considered skills. Committee members asked why foreign languages are not part of the vocational track.

Rick Sutton mentioned that the BOR could stand up for this. Already the Chamber of Commerce supports the idea. In response one of the committee members mentioned how the restructuring of mathematics has dampened any initiative towards languages. Now there is a move towards science. Of course members of the FLAAC committee would never go against the teaching of these core skills but they do lament that foreign language programs suffer at the expense of these other subjects.

At this point it was noted that no real initiative towards foreign language in high schools or vocational schools would come about until foreign language becomes mandatory in middle school. Until the state of Georgia has a comprehensive middle school program, foreign language will not be a core subject for high school under the current administration.

In response to that observation, a committee member noted that CPC deficiencies would die and that could be bad for the two year institutions.

The committee at this point began to talk about American Sign Language and whether it could serve as a substitute for foreign language in the curriculum. One member claimed that it does already count for college prep programs as a foreign language along with ESL.

Immediately the vast majority of the committee members agreed that under no circumstances should ASL be accepted in lieu of foreign languages. One committee member did say that it could be an option for students with learning disabilities. Again, the vast majority of the committee was not persuaded.

At this moment after consulting with the committee, the Chair changed the order of the agenda and formed a nominating committee to elect the new secretary for the 2008 Foreign Language Advisory Committee conference. Also, the Chair articulated the committee's position on where to hold the next conference. The committee will do whatever it decides by majority vote, unless changes are mandated from above.

At 12:30pm, Chair Sheila McCoy, adjourned the committee for lunch.

At 2:00, the committee reconvened. At this point Susan Crooks continued her report to the FLAAC.

Susan Crooks said that she would send the listserv a copy of the latest Best Practices report. The Georgia performance standards are done. It shows what students can do upon completion of each level. Susan Crooks later gives the committee numbers of students enrolled. Jim Chestnut noted that Latin has had a big drop. It was then noted that Chinese language numbers seemed low and that the Chinese government is actively trying to promote Chinese in the system. Currently 11 institutions teach Chinese.

At this point, Donnie Richards brought up the issue of the CLEP exams. After surveying the various institutions, some schools allow a minimum score of 50-65. Some will accept 65 above the 1001 level or in other words not exempt 1001. Those who do allow 1001 and 1002 exemption six hours are granted.

One of Donnie Richards's questions was who sets the standard? Do language departments and divisions set the standards or is it some other body like the registrars office? Donnie Richards suggested that at the very least, the various departments and divisions should be consulted. They should also share information with the academic units.

At this point one of the committee members noted that many students are placed in 1002 or above and then want retro-credit for 1001 or 1002 if they take the CLEP exam. No retro-credit should be or will be given, according to the committee.

At this moment it was noted that the system of CLEP exams is an institutional problem and should be discussed further on the listserv. One member of the committee concluded that all registrars should be on the same page. Rick Sutton

agreed and said it would be helpful if there were a repository for information. The issue is too big to be discussed in one day.

At this point Dina Foster asked if all CLEP credits will transfer and if we could get a system-wide policy for CLEP. Lynne Bryan commented that if the student receives an AA degree, even with CLEP awarded credits, their transcripts must be accepted.

At this juncture a motion is made by Bernice Nuhfer-Halten to choose a venue for the 2008 conference in a more central location. William Griffin seconded the motion. Sheila McCoy opened the discussion of the motion.

Donnie Richards said it would be hard to search and set dates for hotels around the state. It would be better to return to Jekyll for the 2008 conference and that future attendees who want to change future venues have research prepared on what locations would be viable. At this juncture Jim Chestnut made clear his opposition to one-day meetings, especially since there are a plethora of topics to discuss in respect to foreign languages

Bernice Nuhfer-Halten withdrew her motion. Donnie Richards made a motion for the committee to return to the Days Inn at Jekyll for the 2008 conference and that a volunteer research a host city to be considered for the 2009 meeting and beyond.

Vicky Soady seconded the motion. Sheila McCoy opened the floor to debate. Upon hearing no debate, Sheila McCoy put the motion up for vote. Seventeen members voted for the motion with a show of hands. Motion carried.

At this juncture, Jana Sandarg, made a motion to hold the meeting for the 14th and 15th of April 2008. Joe Johnson seconded the motion. Chair Sheila McCoy opened the floor to discussion. Upon hearing no discussion, Sheila McCoy put the motion up for vote. Of the nineteen members present, fourteen members voted for the motion with a show of hands. Motion carried.

The Chair asked the nominating committee who it nominated for the 2008 secretary. Nominating committee nominated Jana Sandarg. The Chair opened the floor to discussion. Upon hearing no discussion, Sheila McCoy put the nomination up for vote. The committee unanimously voted yes and Jana Sandarg becomes the secretary-elect.

Upon completion of this particular committee business, the discussions turned to Study Abroad programs. What would constitute a critical language? Chinese is considered a critical language and the Chinese government actively helps students with funds. Bernice Nuhfer-Halten said that more conversational courses should be offered for study abroad.

At this point, the Chair asked the committee if there were any announcements. Jana Sandarg announced the dates for the next FLAG conference and explained the wonderful opportunities of how college foreign language professors can interact and exchange ideas with the K-12 instructors.

At this point Jim Chestnut called for proposals for the March 27th and 28th South East Coastal Conference in Language and Literature at Georgia southern University. He also mentioned the Costal Review Journal.

Afterwards, Bernice Nuhfer-Halten posed a question to the committee. “Do we require a physical language lab experience?” Of the members present eight require lab. Of those eight, the instructors take their classes to a language lab.

From this point, the topic turned to study abroad. Vicki Soady talked about the program in Guadalajara, Mexico that is run through Valdosta State University. One of the things that makes this program so unique is that students teach ESL classes to the natives. The program lasts for five weeks. For more information e-mail Vicky Soady.

Jana Sandarg said her program does not fit the small model. The University of Salamanca has increased its tuition fees. Also, she stated that the only students who count for her program are students enrolled at Augusta State University.

Rick Sutton commented that the BOR policy is not to charge students “double tuition”. He went on to show us the web-site for study abroad. He explained to us that study abroad is not funded like the academics. He mentioned that the instructor ought to be paid though the instructional cost is considered discretionary spending.

Lynn Bryan commented on the need to develop incentives programs for the summer which have a different funding formula than the academic year.

At this point the Chair adjourned the meeting for the day at 5:00pm.

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Chair Sheila McCoy called meeting to order at 8:30am

Committee made its first recommendation: The Foreign Language Academic Advisory Committee recommends that proficiency in a foreign language be included as an essential skill in the USG core curriculum in order to meet the goals of the development of global competencies endorsed by the University System of Georgia. Furthermore, we recommend that proficiency in foreign languages be an integral component of international education in the 21st century.

Nancy Mason made a motion to adopt the recommendation. Dale Crandall seconded the motion. Sheila McCoy opened the floor to discussion. Upon hearing no discussion, Sheila McCoy put the motion up for vote. Of the nineteen members present, fourteen members voted for the motion with a show of hands. Motion carried.

From this point the topic moved to assessment outcomes. A sub-committee was formed to review the USG system outcomes for future discussion. Jim Chestnut, Darren Groome, William Griffin and Jacqueline Konan were asked to volunteer to serve. They accepted the assignment.

Trino Prados gave a brief presentation of SACS assessment outcomes experiences at Middle Georgia College. He showed common foreign language division outcomes, Spanish learning outcomes and results of outcomes. He also explained the year long process to achieve assessment. At the end of the presentation he offered to share with the committee any relevant information.

At this moment the agenda topic changed to E-core. Jim Chestnut mentioned one course is for Japanese. E-core is envisioned as a resource for home bound students. Many of the FLAAC members expressed concerns about on-line classes. Many commented that while they may be useful, especially as a last resort, nothing can really replace the in-class interactive, dynamic discussions.

At this moment Jim Chestnut proceeded to tell us about the French collaborative effort amongst various institutions. Different schools offer different classes such as business French, grammar, civilization classes, and upper-level French. Even though there may be disadvantages with online classes, they allow EFT institutions room for other professors. Students at small programs can network with others.

Finally, FLAAC considered its second recommendation: The Foreign Language Academic Advisory Committee recommends that we enhance, expand and support modern language study abroad programs that provide upper level, in-country experiences in which students study for at least a month in a country where English is not the primary language. Such programs would provide for maximum development of linguistic and cultural competencies, requisite in our increasingly global economy.

Lynne Bryan made a motion to adopt the second recommendation. Jana Sandarg seconded the motion. The Chair opened the floor to discussion. Upon hearing no discussion, Sheila McCoy put the motion up for vote. Of the nineteen members present, fourteen members voted for the motion with a show of hands. Motion carried.

The meeting is then adjourned until next year. The 2007 Annual Foreign

Language Academic Advisory Committee ended at 11:35am.

Minutes approved by majority vote on Monday, May 14, 2007.