

Regents' Academic Advisory Committee on Foreign Languages
Minutes
April 11-12, 2005
Jekyll Island, Georgia

Monday, April 11, 2005

Jim Chesnut, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He asked for committee members to introduce themselves and sent around the official list of names and contact information for correction.

Those in attendance were Ellen Blossman, Armstrong Atlantic State University; Jana Sandarg, Augusta State University; Joe Johnson, Clayton College & State University; Patty Davis, Darton College; Martha Hughes (Secretary), East Georgia College; Sheila McCoy, Floyd College; Victoria Dubriel, Fort Valley State University; Joyce Jenkins (non-voting representative), Fort Valley State University; Dale Crandall, Gainesville College; Roger Noel, Georgia College & State University; David Shook (Chair-Elect), Georgia Institute of Technology; Dina Foster, Georgia Perimeter College; Donnie Richards, Georgia Southern University; Bruno Braunrot, Georgia State University; Bill Griffin, Kennesaw State University; Lynne Bryan, Macon State College; Trino Prados, Middle Georgia College; Jim Chesnut (Chair), North Georgia College & State University; Noel Fallows, University of Georgia; Denise Overfield, University of West Georgia; Viki Soady, Valdosta State University; Rick Sutton, University System Office.

Jim Chesnut announced that we would start with three presenters from the System Office: Ryan Thornton, Jessica Somers, and Rick Sutton.

1. Ryan Thornton. Online Language Courses.

Through an NSEP grant, courses from 1001 through 2002 have been developed over the past three years in Japanese, Chinese and Russian. Ryan explained that Horizon Wimba is a program that allows online group sessions, also called "a live classroom." Ryan played an archived presentation from Horizon Wimba on application sharing. He then demonstrated a lesson in Japanese with audiofiles, the white board feature, and audio interactions with students.

Discussion ensued about pre-course assessment instruments that would help determine which students might be successful in online courses. Ryan announced that students who finish the 1001-1002 sequence are eligible for a \$500 grant towards study abroad in the country of the language studied, and for students who finish the 2001-2002 sequence, a \$1000 grant towards study abroad is available.

Ryan answered questions, especially about the feasibility of shifting students from traditional courses to online courses. Rick Sutton stated that there are assessments of student performance as required by the grant, and that faculty are evaluated through traditional instruments.

2. Jessica Somers. WebCT Vista & GSAMS Update.

How do you know if your students are ready for online courses? There is a free website called SORT (Student Online Readiness Tool) that addresses this issue (<http://ALT.USG.EDU/SORT/>).

After giving a brief history, Jessica explained that Horizon Wimba is one of the best tools available for the teaching of foreign languages. The first offerings were made this fall through WebCT Vista.

Jessica then reviewed the statistics showing how much WebCT Vista use has increased in the System, as reported in the handout (for example: Vista has grown 600% since Fall 2003). She also reported that since Vista has been integrated with the Banner system, Galileo, registration, etc. can be pulled in.

After answering some questions about Respondus (one of the migration tools for going from WebCT to Vista) and the cost of Horizon Wimba, Jessica reported that GSAMS officially ends on June 30 of this year. However, BellSouth will not stop the system cold on that date, but will gradually make the transition until December 31, 2005, the last day of operation. The USG will be moving to video over the internet, a system that is dependent on the capabilities of high speed fiber optics.

There was discussion about IMOD (Interactive Multimedia Object Development), the integration of IMOD into WebCT, and FLO (Facilitating Learning Online), a ten-week course at Georgia State University that teaches faculty how to teach online.

Break from 10:15 to 10:35.

Jim asked for corrections to the minutes from the April 19-20, 2004, meeting. After minor changes, Sheila moved to approve the minutes as corrected and Denise seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Rick Sutton. System Update.

Rick reported that the budget process went smoothly in the recently adjourned General Assembly and noted that since November of 2001, the USG has experienced nine budget cuts totaling \$382 million dollars. But the current 1.8 billion dollar budget represents an 8.3% increase over last year with full funding for the enrollment formula. Foreign language courses are in Basket #3 in that formula, a designation of how many dollars a discipline brings in to the institution.

Once again, a 2% raise has been deferred until January.

Other issues:

1. A graduation rate task force was appointed last year and led by Provost Henry. The committee reported that the USG has a graduation rate of 53.7%. Best practices recommendations were included in the report. A target will be set for each institution. Studies of increased graduation and retention rates for foreign language students and study abroad students could be a way for FLAAC to strengthen its arguments concerning inclusion of foreign languages in the core.
2. GA 411 is a website portal that has information on going to college, including curricular planning, career planning, financial aid information, etc. A publicity campaign entitled “Education: Go Get It” has been designed to encourage Georgians to keep learning and to raise awareness statewide of the value of education.
3. Public hearings have been held on the issue of textbook pricing. Students don’t want to pay the publishers’ prices, but the publishers argue that textbooks are expensive to produce.
4. Two websites of particular interest to FL faculty:

www.merlot.org – An online database, divided by disciplines, of pedagogical exercises, peer reviewed.

www.lingnet.org – A Defense Language Institute site that works with a Learning Object Generator, or LOG (like IMOD). The site hosts the Global Language Online Support System (GLOSS) that is free at this website.
5. Statewide assessment includes the creation of a 35th institution and the opportunity for other System institutions to change name, mission, etc.
6. Rick offered study abroad briefing books to anyone interested.
7. Bernice Nuhfer-Halten has requested a collaborative approach to Arabic. The University of California at Berkeley has an internet-based program called “Language Without Walls”. But an online Arabic course will not be ready until at least Fall 2006.
8. The STARS program is still active, distributing about \$150,000 that is then matched by individual institutions. The funding has supported 560 students.
9. Year of Languages Resolution. After receiving support from Rick and his office, Senator Isakson has signed the resolution as a co-sponsor.

Denise asked if the double diversity, double numbers teachers' initiative proposed by Jan Kettlewell was funded. Rick responded that it was not, but that Dr. Kettlewell may be able to produce some funding out of discretionary funds. Also, some other sources are possible for at least a few pilot programs.

Jim asked how foreign languages generate money. Rick responded that the discipline of foreign languages is in Basket 3, a higher rating than most humanities disciplines, probably because it is a laboratory discipline.

Denise asked about the issue of reporting numbers of students. Rick suggested that faculty and administrators go to the Registrar, who reports to the CIR (Curriculum Inventory Report). The uniform date for reporting is Day 10 of the semester. Rick reminded the Committee that the CIR is extremely important since it is the basis of the funding formula.

Break for lunch from 12:00 to 1:30.

1. Jim called for nominations for secretary for 2005-2006. Sheila nominated Ellen Blossman. Lynne Bryan seconded the nomination. It was approved unanimously.
2. The date and location of the next meeting were discussed. The committee voted against combining the FLAAC meeting with the FLAG meeting. The committee voted for the dates of April 10-11 for 2006. As for the location, proposals for changing the site should be submitted at the 2006 meeting.
3. Jim asked that everyone read the letter enclosed in each packet from FLAG president Brandi Meeks. [Pause] In a brief report on FLAG, Jim said that the organization really needs support from post-secondary teachers. He mentioned some of the benefits of FLAG membership and urged FLAAC members to join.
4. The Year of Languages has been established in an attempt to raise the average American's awareness of the importance of foreign languages. Lynne announced that good ideas and materials can be found at the official website, www.yearoflanguages.org, or by going to ACTFL's website and clicking on "Year of Languages". Jim handed out to everyone a copy of Governor Perdue's proclamation on languages and offered everyone attending the meeting an ACTFL Year of Languages poster provided by FLAG.

AP Scores

Jim read Item #5 in Dorothy Zinsmeister's memo:

“The chief academic officers have established a subcommittee to look at institutional practices of awarding AP credit in various disciplines across the System. System-wide data have been collected, and we shall soon contact the Academic committees asking for recommendations on how to distill the wide range of practices across the System. If your Committee has already collected,

analyzed and discussed AP credit data for your discipline, I would be interested in your recommendations.”

Jim opened the floor for discussion about the desirability of having common AP scores, and a summary of that discussion follows:

Bill Griffin said that typically students who take AP placement exams are going to be majors. He added that he had never seen a 5.

Many committee members commented that they had never seen the AP policies listed by institution in the handout from the UGA Office of Institutional Effectiveness entitled “Advanced Placement Credits at USG Institutions, Fall 2004.”

Jim said the committee could make a recommendation for common scores, but the ultimate decision rests with individual departments.

Ellen said that students at AASU must make at least a C at the 3000 level to receive credit for lower levels.

Patty suggested that we should have common scores since we have common course descriptions for the 1000 level.

Donnie said no, that the decision should be departmental/institutional. If the BOR does not demand standardization, we should leave it the way it is. If we did decide to standardize scores, we would need to study tests, needs and scores carefully. We would need to appoint a subcommittee.

Lynne reiterated the concern that at the institutional level, the decision on policies for AP placement should be made by a committee of foreign language professors rather than administrators or registrars.

Bill mentioned the transfer issue and that all should grant AP credit equally, even though cut-off scores may differ from institution to institution. David noted that all courses are not equal. For example, UGA’s elementary language courses are four hours, and Georgia Tech’s are three hours.

Sheila raised the issue of the placement of native speakers and heritage speakers.

Dina and Viki voiced more concern about the interpretation of the CLEP scores than that of AP scores.

David suggested that the process of reporting policies be “cleaned up,” and that we should each look at our institution’s listed policies and talk to the appropriate source.

Viki suggested a subcommittee to discuss CLEP, native speakers, and AP scores and policies.

Jim summarized the discussion by saying that three issues seemed to be emerging:

1. The committee does not want to recommend common AP scores at this time.
2. The committee should appoint a subcommittee to look at AP and CLEP issues.
3. The committee should recommend that foreign language educators or faculty in general should be making these policies, not administrators.

Noel (Fallows) asked if there should be a review of institutional AP policies on an annual or a semi-annual basis, and Bill asked why it couldn't be done every five years. Viki said that the Registrar's office should contact faculty at least yearly concerning the accuracy of the AP reporting.

Donnie said that Georgia Southern checks yearly and that it only takes about ten minutes.

Martha read back the main points discussed concerning AP scores.

Jim asked for a show of hands of how many people did not know where the information on the official report came from. Several committee members raised their hands.

Denise suggested the following wording for Point #3 above:

We recommend that there be a consistent process for reporting AP scores and that individual academic units bear primary responsibility for the establishment of that process.

Donnie suggested that everyone familiarize himself or herself with the AP test. Jim offered a copy of the test for review.

Break from 3:10 to 3:20.

Effects of Budgetary Cuts

Jim read a list of effects of budgetary cuts that he had solicited by e-mail from the Committee, as requested by Dorothy Zinsmeister from the System Office:

1. Lack of funding for library resources
2. Less than adequate building maintenance (buildings with outdated heating and cooling)
3. Recruitment and retention of faculty given current salaries
4. The lack of adequate technology support for a successful distance-learning environment
5. Class size

Jim asked for other effects of budgetary cuts on quality issues in foreign languages. The following points were raised during discussion:

1. Lack of travel funds
2. The importance of small classes (ACTFL recommends a maximum of 16 in language classes)
3. Lack of budget for summer teaching, which leads to less student access to courses and affects faculty morale and productivity
4. New hires start at higher salaries than senior faculty
5. No money for equity adjustments
6. Difficulty hiring adjuncts and student assistants
7. Putting two levels of students in one class (for example, putting graduate students and undergraduate students together but with different requirements). Faculty are in essence teaching two different classes but are paid only for one.
8. Technology. Faculty are told to use technology but receive no financial or technical support.
9. Teaching load. No relief in terms of sabbatical.
10. Increased administrative responsibilities for faculty in growth programs
11. Instructional resources and support (for example, if the overhead doesn't work or the blackboards are pitted)
12. No release time for faculty creating and working on study abroad programs

Jim read the e-mail received from Elena Odio: "For budgetary reasons, GSW now has only a minor in foreign languages (the B.S. Ed. Program with a concentration in either French or Spanish was eliminated in 2003), only one professor teaching both French and Spanish full time (no part-timers), and no immediate plans to hire a second foreign language instructor."

There was also discussion about end-of-year budget issues. Because there is too much money in a short period of time, more budget planning and foresight are needed.

Top Three Issues

In response to Dorothy Zinsmeister's request, Jim asked for suggestions for the top three issues facing foreign languages.

1. Getting foreign languages listed in essential skills in the core
2. Class size
3. Workload. Faculty performance expectations are high, and we must be retrained for technology, but workload continues to rise.
4. Continuing problem of articulation between high school and college foreign language programs.

Jim announced that Elizabeth Webb was unable to attend the meeting, and her replacement from the DOE was also unable to attend.

Discussion ensued about Suggested Issue #1. Dale noted that English, math, history, and all other disciplines from high school are represented in the core, except for foreign languages, which is “strangely absent,” especially in light of the emphasis on internationalization within the USG.

Ellen asked about the question of hours, since there is only a certain number of hours in the core.

Sheila stated that we need to rethink the number of hours in the core. David said that the USG should be actively looking for ways to help students gain proficiency without adding hours to the core.

Bill raised the issue of how we would handle the number of students if we required foreign language of all students.

Viki said that we should not tie any proposal to include foreign languages in the core to a specific location in the core, but that we should mainly try to get the attention of the BOR and make the point that we have been left out.

Jim asked Viki and Sheila to draft a statement and present it to the committee the next day.

Suggested Issue #2: workload. David said that the quality of instruction is being negatively impacted by class size and workload. The committee decided to combine Suggested Issues #2 and #3.

Suggested Issue #4: articulation between high school and college foreign language courses. After discussion, it was decided that this issue needs to be addressed with the DOE. Bruno noted that articulation has preoccupied the BOR for years and asked if there is a report on those activities. Lynne agreed that there is a need for communication regarding the results of the P-16 articulation study.

Suggested Issue # 5: The lack of integration of foreign languages into international programs and studies (suggested by Patty).

After further discussion, the Committee decided on the following three issues as the most important ones facing the discipline of foreign languages:

1. Exclusion of six semester hours of foreign languages in the core
2. Increased class size and heavy workload
3. Lack of integration of foreign languages into international programs and studies

By-Laws

As requested by Dorothy Zinsmeister, the Committee approved the by-laws drafted by Jim and distributed via the listserv prior to the meeting. After discussion, Denise moved to approve the by-laws and Dale seconded. The motion passed unanimously. (A copy of the Committee's by-laws will be posted on the USG website.)

The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

Tuesday, April 12, 2005

Jim called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Those in attendance were Ellen Blossman, Jana Sandarg, Martha Hughes, Sheila McCoy, Victoria Dubriel, Joyce Jenkins, Dale Crandall, Roger Noel, David Shook, Dina Foster, Bruno Braunrot, Bill Griffin, Lynne Bryan, Trino Prados, Jim Chesnut, Noel Fallows, Denise Overfield, Viki Soady, and Rick Sutton.

Jim asked for volunteers for a subcommittee on the AP issue. Bill, Sheila, and Dina agreed to serve. Donnie Richards was appointed in absentia.

ASL

There are two major issues of concern:

1. Can ASL fulfill the CPC deficiency?
2. Can ASL fulfill the foreign language requirement?

Jana said that we can't separate the two issues.

Trino said that the same question arose at a previous college where he worked. The president declared that ASL would fulfill language requirements over objections from the faculty.

Bruno said that when this issue arose at his institution, he declared that ASL is "a worthy language but not a foreign one." The issue was dropped.

Jim commented that those opposed to sign language should not be viewed as unsympathetic to the hearing impaired. He also read a comment that Elizabeth Webb had sent that ASL does fulfill the two year foreign language requirement for high school students who are hearing impaired.

Sheila said that foreign languages have their own sign language. In the past, FLAAC accepted the argument that it is a worthy language but not a foreign language, and the committee voted against this proposal.

Trino said that at a previous school, students with learning disabilities were allowed to use ASL as a foreign language. He added that he is totally opposed to this practice because it is not a foreign language.

Ellen said that sign language has no literary or oral tradition.

Sheila said that proponents argue that sign language does have a literary and an oral tradition. But she agreed with Trino that ASL does not contribute to internationalization.

David agreed that the lack of internationalization is the strongest argument against ASL as a foreign language. It is the international and the cultural aspect that sets foreign languages apart.

Dina asked why other forms of English would not be considered a foreign language if we accept ASL as a foreign language.

Viki argued that master signing is quite complex and has four levels of difficulty. She felt that the acceptance of ASL to fulfill foreign language requirements is coming since sign language can be done bilingually.

Denise said that if native French speakers must fulfill the foreign language requirement, so should people who are proficient in ASL.

Jana asked if students who use ASL to fulfill their language requirement in high school are admitted to college as having fulfilled their CPC requirement in foreign languages. Dale said yes, since only a box is checked off on the transcript, and the college must accept that.

Jim said that we could agree to accept sign language if students could sign in a foreign language.

Lynne noted that we are putting students at a disadvantage if we do not give them the benefit of learning a foreign language in the international arena.

David agreed. He said that all students should be “internationalized” and understand other cultures. We don’t want to leave out hearing impaired students.

Trino pointed out that most students who would take these courses would be North American students who are not hearing impaired.

Denise said that if there is no issue of handicap, then we are under no obligation to serve that population.

The question of whether or not we have to accept two years of ASL from the high school as fulfilling the college foreign language requirement was raised. Rick said that in a number of disciplines, there is a discrepancy between what secondary education says

fulfills a CPC deficiency and what the college says, so it is the final decision of the Advisory Committee on Foreign Languages and the USG.

After discussion, Bill moved that we adopt Rick LaFleur's statement from 1990 and that we reaffirm the recommendation of FLAAC from that time. Viki seconded. The motion passed unanimously. (See Appendix 1 for the 1990 statement.)

Chief Issue #1

Jim asked Viki to read the statement that she and Sheila had worded for the committee:

Since Foreign Language is a CPC requirement, we recommend its inclusion in the Essential Skills Area (Area A) of the core (six hours of the same foreign language suggested).

After some discussion, David moved for the adoption of this language, Dale seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Jana suggested that we make a separate recommendation since the proposal is going to the Chief Academic Officers.

Bill said that individual institutions can put foreign languages in Area A, but asked if an individual institution can increase the hours in the core.

Rick responded that there are restraints on the changing of the number of hours in the core.

Bill suggested that individual institutions should push for the change, thus creating a better approach and more pressure.

Lynne said that the recommendation should clearly name the institutions that require foreign languages for graduation.

Dale said that VA students are not paid for any course that is not specifically listed as part of a degree plan.

Jana suggested that a subcommittee be appointed to draft a recommendation.

Viki said that we should consider the consequences in terms of meeting demand with current resources of requiring all incoming freshmen to take foreign languages.

Break from 10:05 to 10:25.

David announced that hotel arrangements had been made at the same rate for April 9, 10 and 11 of 2006.

Viki asked if internet connections could be added. David said he would find out and let the committee know what access is available.

Dina brought up the problem of the transfer of credit within the USG, particularly in the case of language courses that are four-hour courses at one institution but three-hour courses at another.

Rick said that if a student graduates, the credit must be taken, but if the student does not graduate, "it's up for grabs." Rick also stated that study-abroad credit from USG programs should be treated just like any other USG credit granted on Georgia campuses.

Dina then asked how other institutions deal with the SACS requirements for adjunct instructors. Discussion ensued. It was determined that various institutions have various policies regarding what constitutes qualified faculty to meet the requirements of SACS. Rick said that larger institutions are not as vulnerable to being checked by SACS as smaller institutions are.

Sheila asked if credit can be given for a non-USG study abroad program. Dale said that the easiest approach is to give credit by examination.

Viki asked if certificate programs are automatically accepted by USG campuses. Rick said that they are not, that acceptance of such programs is a voluntary action on the part of each campus.

Jim asked if all courses for the minor have to be taken on the home campus. In other words, can study abroad programs count towards the minor?

David said that the current policy at Georgia Tech does not allow study abroad credit to count towards the minor, but that the Curriculum Committee is planning to change the policy. In the future, students will even be able to do all of their minor abroad.

Noel said that 50% of courses must be taken on the home campus for the major and the minor, although any UGA study abroad program would be considered the home campus.

Jim called for announcements and other business. Lynne asked about a video project and more advocacy for FLAG. Rick said that his office's operating budget has been cut by 55%, so they are constrained.

Lynne also proposed a project of a clickable map of Georgia with markings of different cultural and international events. Rick said that the OIE has a more "low tech" listing on its web page with cultural events around the state. Bill said that the real problem is collecting the information. Perhaps each community or institution should be responsible for its own information with links.

Jim called for other announcements. Vicki thanked Jim on behalf of the committee for his hard work, and there was a round of applause.

Jim gave the committee greetings from past Chair Joel Walz, who has retired. Jim plans to send certificates to retirees. Jim also asked for everyone to pose for a group picture after the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Hughes, Secretary
East Georgia College
May 2, 2005

Attachment: Appendix 1

APPENDIX 1

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM ADVISORY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ON: Foreign Languages

CHAIRPERSON: Richard A. LaFleur

DATE: 27 April 1990

RECOMMENDATION: In response to a proposal submitted from the Regents' Student Advisory Committee (via Dr. Ralph Hemphill) that American Sign Language (ASL) be recognized as fulfilling both the CPC foreign language admission requirement and the various foreign language graduation requirements of individual institutional degree programs, the Academic Advisory Committee on Foreign Languages (AACFL) recommends that ASL not be endorsed as a substitution for such requirements, except as already provided in the case of students with handicapping conditions for whom such a substitution may be deemed academically appropriate.

RATIONALE: In the AACFL's discussion, it was noted that degree requirements are an institutional prerogative, not a System mandate, and that issues related to such requirements should be addressed at the institutional level. It was further noted that, in the case of students with handicapping conditions (including hearing impairment), policies are already in place allowing for exemptions or substitutions for both CPC (see section IV.a of Anne Flower's 11-30-89 memo to the System's Chief Academic Officers: "Although institutions may not waive the College Preparatory Curriculum requirements, they should accommodate the special needs of students with handicapping conditions in order to assist them in meeting these requirements.") and graduation requirements (in accordance with federal regulations regarding persons with handicapping conditions), so that the SAC proposal seemed to be an issue primarily for students who may have an interest in ASL but who do not themselves have handicapping conditions that make their study of a foreign language difficult or impossible. Greg Duncan, Foreign Language Consultant for the Georgia Department of Education, noted during our meeting that the Department of Education had no official policy on this issue, but that in general ASL was not construed as a substitute for foreign language in the CPC, because it lacked the component of international awareness, which is a major objective of foreign language study. Most members of the AACFL agreed with this point emphatically.

Other issues raised in our discussion of the proposal were: What would the content of such courses as ASL 101 or 104 be? Are advanced ASL courses actually possible? ASL does qualify as a language, linguists agree, but is it a foreign language with an international cultural component? If a non-handicapped student's motive for studying ASL is to enable him/her to work with or teach handicapped students, shouldn't such a person have foreign language and international competence at least equivalent to that of other students entering or graduating from the same degree program (e.g., shouldn't a teacher of the handicapped have at least the same skills and knowledge as other persons with the same college degree and not have in fact a narrower humanistic

background?). What are the standards for measuring proficiency in ASL? The four skills of language learning (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are not developed in ASL, which has, moreover, no substantial body of literature. In view of these and other issues, and, as noted above, observing that provisions are already in place (and mandated by federal law) for accommodating the special needs of students with handicapping conditions vis-à-vis foreign language admissions and graduation requirements, the AACFL voted not to endorse the SAC's proposal.