

Minutes
Academic Advisory Committee on Learning Support
April 6-7, 2002
Jekyll Island, Georgia

- I. Rick Reynolds, chair, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, April 6. He welcomed the directors.
- II. Janet O'Brien discussed the conference schedule and special events. Michael Volmer, President of ABAC will be the dinner speaker Sunday evening. Kathleen Burk, Assistant Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs will speak at Monday's lunch. Kathleen Burk announced that Frank Butler, Vice Chancellor for Academic Faculty and Student Affairs, would be at Sunday morning's meeting.
- III. 2003 Conference Update – Janet O'Brien reminded the group that next year's conference would be held at Callaway Gardens. The price of the conference will be higher. Rooms are \$103, and meals are more expensive. As a result, the registration fee may be raised.
- IV. Monitoring of Regents' Test preparation for Summer Term – Bari Haskins-Jackson discussed the concerns of many institutions about the remediation requirement during Summer Term. Students don't like to take the remedial course in the summer, and often the course is too short to be effective. Tim Woltering, Tabitha Barnette, Bari Haskins-Jackson, and a representative from UGA served on a committee to examine the problem. They presented a proposal that would allow any student to take the Regents' Test in the summer without the remedial course and also take other regular courses. Discussion ensued. Angelia Jones said that the proposal would not fly at GSW. Students will line up to take it in the summer. Bari suggested that the exception be limited to students who have earned 45 hours but not yet taken the test. Liza Davis said that finding an instructor to teach these remediation courses in the summer is difficult at Kennesaw State. Sherry Jones argued that the proposal would reward students for procrastinating. Kathleen Burk noted that the Regents' Test Report would name students who had passed the test after earning 45 hours; this will put pressure on institutions to make students take it before they reach that milestone. Rick Reynolds mentioned that, while he supports remediation courses, the present policy of requiring transfer students to immediately take the Regents' test hurts institutions who have many students changing from certificate programs to AA programs because they are thrown in the same pile of the "not passed." Kathleen said that this could possibly be changed. Tim Floyd outlined the problem: How do we offer Regents' remediation courses for students in the summer? James Spencer said

that this proposal would work well for some institutions, but not others and that the best option is to allow individual institutions to have the choice. Bari asked to put the motion on the floor. It was defeated.

- V. Mini Core and DTAE – Kathleen provided the directors with a copy of the rules regulating the acceptance of core coursework and placement test scores from DTAE colleges. She noted regulation #2 stated that USG institutes must take COMPASS, ASSET, or CPE scores from COC accredited schools. She noted that the BOR may encourage COC institutions to change from the ASSET to COMPASS because the ASSET may not be as suitable for mandatory placement decisions and the ACT has no data on elementary algebra as it predicts college success. There is also no validity on the ASSET writing test in predicting students' success in core English courses. Tim asked why we are limiting this arrangement to COC accredited schools. Angelia said that we would lose SACS accreditation unless each course was validated before it was accepted by the USG institution.

Kathleen asked us to consider our Learning Support suspension policy. If students are excluded from our institutions for 3 years, they can go to a DTAE school. Several questions came up: Can students in DTAE schools continually retest for exiting? Ans.: We have no way to check. Students can retest as often as they want and we have to accept the scores. What about the hybrid schools that have DTAE? Are they required to send students to their competitors? Students would be excluded from the USG institution. Kathleen said that the 3-year suspension policy could encourage students to leave before their last attempt and go to the DTAE school because the consequences of the 4th attempt are so serious. She mentioned two policy alternatives: 1. Eliminate the suspension policy and allow unlimited attempts; 2. Change the policy to allow re-entry if a student enrolls in and exits DS and completes the first core curriculum course at a COC accredited DTAE institute. Discussion followed. Elizabeth advocated removing the limit on attempts because it punishes non-traditional students. Bari advocated adopting the 2nd alternative because we are not really losing the students to DTAE; we get rid of them anyway for 3 years. If they can go to DTAE, take the remediation and the core course and return they will come back. Bill Dodd said that EFT would be affected because we will lose students to the COC schools. Elizabeth Ragsdale made the motion that we allow unlimited attempts in Learning Support courses. The motion failed. Bari Haskins-Jackson made a motion to approve an amended alternative #2:

Change policy to allow re-entry if a student enrolls in and exits DS and completes first core curriculum course in that area with a C or better at a COC accredited DTAE college. After much discussion, the motion passed, but was later set aside for additional review after further discussion with Dr. Butler during Sunday's meeting.

- VI. NovaNet – Problems with NovaNet were discussed. Rick mentioned that NovaNet has been sold and the new owners have not provided the service we had in the past. It has not worked at times, and Clayton State people have been telling the NovaNet people how to use it. There was some discussion about technical support. Kathleen was unaware that there had been problems.
- VII. Windows version of COMPASS – Kathleen warned everyone to be on the lookout for unexpected results, especially on the Reading COMPASS since early results indicate too many people may be passing. There was a question about placement in LS math courses with the new COMPASS math cut score of 37. Several institutions reported that they were using 30 as the cutoff for placement in MATH 0097. Some institutions are immediately requiring an exit score of 37. Others will phase it in, with students who were enrolled prior to summer 2002 being allowed to exit with a 30.
- VIII. Math Regents' Test – Kathleen announced that committees are developing the test specifications and that field testing of forms will begin by Spring Semester 2003. The test will be a requirement for students entering 2003 and later. There should be a long phase-in period. The committees are trying to get the content organized for diagnostic remediation. The BOR wants to have online instructional materials available for remediation rather than a 3-hour credit course. In addition to material from MATH 1101 and 1111, students will be expected to interpret data from charts and graphs. This material may be covered in Political Science and other courses. Students with high SAT scores might be exempt from the test. Calculators will possibly be allowed for some sections.

The Academic Committee on English has endorsed a plan to exempt students with high scores on the verbal section of the SAT from the Regents' Reading Test. Sheri Nist asked when there would be a decision on the reading exemption. Kathleen replied that the VPs have already approved it, but we don't know when it will take effect.

- IX. BANNER prescriptive registration module for Learning Support – The directors approved the following proposal: *The Academic Advisory Committee on Learning Support recommends that the completion of the BANNER prescriptive registration module for Learning Support become a priority for OIIT.*
- X. Kathleen announced that there is no prohibition against students with Learning Support requirements taking eCore courses as long as they are otherwise eligible to take the courses.

- XI. The CPE will probably be phased out. Kathleen said institutions still using it would get a year's notice. She will work out an alternative plan for schools like Georgia Tech that have very few people taking these tests
- XII. Carol Pinson, Carol Adams and Shirley Hall are scheduled to rotate off the Executive Committee. At Sunday's session the Director's will select two new members to replace them.

Rick Reynolds adjourned the meeting at 4:30 with the reminder that it would resume Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Rick Reynolds called the Sunday session to order at 10:00 a.m.
He welcomed Dr. Frank Butler.

- I. Election of members to Executive Committee – Rick reminded the group that members of the Executive Committee serve 4-year terms. Those people rotating off the committee are from 2-year institutions and should be replaced by representatives from the same institutional tier. Valerie Epps from Atlanta Metropolitan College, Sandra Sharman from East Georgia College, and Mary Alice Money from Gordon College were named to the Executive Committee. Next year's officers will be Janet O'Brien from Georgia Southern, President; Terry Irvin from Columbus State University, Vice President in charge of the 2003 conference, and Tim Floyd from Floyd College, Secretary.
- II. Dr. Butler spoke to the group about several issues:
 - Committee roles have been diminished or are less visible. He wants to look at the bylaws and make committees more visible and important.
 - Learning Support is critical to the university system. He believes LS visibility will be raised because we have problems with preparation levels of entering students that won't be met by improvements at the secondary level. He wants to know the percentage of students who came through at least one Learning Support course who graduate. He believes that these fragile students who get the most help are happiest at graduation.
 - We need an assessment of how new graduation standards are going. We won't be backing down from standards, but he hopes that meaningful assessment will be available within one year.
 - Math Regents' Test won't be a "greased pole for students to climb." The test should cover the kinds of math college graduates need to know. He hopes the test will bring about systematic changes in teaching math. The governor is for statewide reform of the assessment of math. He hopes the NSF might help with some of the cost. There also need to be changes in ways to grade the English writing tests. Putting the test online may help.
 - Tuition policies – Nobody is in favor of higher tuition, but Georgia is one of the lowest states in the country. We can't improve the system without more money. A revision of the formula won't lead to more money. We

may have to get students to pay a higher percentage. One problem is that if HOPE controls tuition and fees, raises won't happen. In addition, there are problems with PSO funding. State reimbursement for 75% hurts several institutions. How much can we let fiscal policy determine the finances of the system? We need to get on the same playing field as DTAE schools.

- Mini-Core – Dr. Butler said it is evident to him that the concept of working with DTAE is going to happen. We should be careful to do the things we must do and should do, but there is an area in between. Discussion followed. Terry read the proposal for re-entry that had been considered previously: *Change policy to allow re-entry if a student enrolls in and exits DS and completes first core curriculum course in that area with a C or better at a COC accredited DTAE college.* Dr. Butler said that he probably would support it; he likes options for students and he wants to simplify and clarify the process. Bari related a rumor that if the DTAE gets to teach the core, the two-year institutions will collapse. Dr. Butler replied that the Chancellor does not support that view. Dr. Meredith will try to control the organizational agenda. It is a constitutional question: How do we have duplication with an institution that isn't a constitutional entity (DTAE)? He doesn't believe that a drastic change will take place in course offerings, and said that the biggest mistake USG institutions could make is to rail against things. Valerie Epps said that her institution, Atlanta Metropolitan, does not agree with the amended proposal because it will hurt enrollment. Since there is no DTAE institution close by, she wondered if students excluded from AMC would have to receive remediation in another county. Dr. Butler replied that some LS pilot programs are in place at universities in areas not served by a 2-year institution. These were formed to address unfairness, and maybe we can work ad hoc arrangements in other places. Kathleen noted that the 3-year expulsion was a compromise from a proposed 5-year expulsion. Elizabeth mentioned that the directors had voted down eliminating limits on attempts because of money issues and quality concerns. Sheri Nist said that when students are dismissed, they should be able to follow the same policy for re-admission as all other students; it should be institutional policy. Dr. Butler said that the Report Cards preclude a no-limit policy. The Office of Educational Accountability doesn't want to hear about exceptions, even if there are important differences between institutions and students. Several people mentioned that graduation rates only tell part of the story. We talk about a 35% graduation rate, but ignore the fact that there are 35% who couldn't even go to college without Learning Support. We must educate anybody we can about what we do. Kathleen asked if we need more flexibility for non-traditional students. Rick replied that in fairness, the policy must be the same for traditional students and nontraditional students. Bari asked if we should consider adding courses to meet the needs of students unprepared for the level of skill required by present Learning Support courses. Dr. Butler said no. Rick Reynolds said that the Executive Committee would discuss this issue at its summer

meeting. Dr. Butler will get a sense of the BOR feeling on the issue and let us know. We can meet again before the Academic Officers' meeting in the fall. Following the discussion, the directors voted to rescind the vote in favor of Proposal #2 and table it until more information could be obtained.

Rick Reynolds adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.