

Minutes of the Academic Committee on Mathematical Subjects (ACMS)

February 5, 2009:

The ACMS meeting was called to order on the campus of the College of Coastal Georgia in Brunswick on Thursday, February 5, 2009, at 1:30 p.m. Tim Howard, Committee Chair, presided over the meeting.

Minimum Grade Requirement in Area A: Brent Griffin led the discussion on the possibility of establishing a minimum grade requirement for Area A mathematics courses. A grade of “C” or better is also being considered for Area A English courses. Of those in attendance, 13 institutions allow a “D” in Area A mathematics courses. Questions were raised about transferability. Some schools use a grade of “NC” instead of “D”. Concerns were raised about increased enrollment in Area A courses if those earning a “D” must repeat the course. Most institutions require a “C” or better in prerequisite courses, so some students earn Area A credit but must repeat the course to take the subsequent course.

USG Maple Site License: Tony Giovannitti led a discussion on the USG Maple (Computer Algebra System) site license. The issue on campuses like Clayton State University (where each student is required to have a laptop) is that under the current site license, students are not allowed to place site-licensed copies of the software on personal computers. Tony discussed some of the possible options that could be explored with a revised site license and announced that discussions were on-going with the USG Office of Information and Instructional Technology (OIIT).

Advising: Due to the new USG Strategic Plan, the group discussed the issue of Advising. Some institutions have 2-3 faculty dedicated to advising all majors. These institutions use orientations sessions to train advisors and have advising booklets/handbooks. Other institutions provide cohort advising. Some institutions reported that they pull random files to check for accuracy. It was reported that it is likely that all institutions will be required to keep electronic files on each advising session. It was also mentioned that advising be included in the evaluation for promotion and tenure. The group also discussed early alert systems to let students know their progress and S/U midterm grades.

USG Core Curriculum Review: Virginia Carson, President of South Georgia College, member of the USG Core Curriculum Review Committee and Chair of the USG Council on General Education made a presentation on the recent review of the USG Core Curriculum. She discussed the process that was followed and the diversity of the committee membership. She mentioned that the goal of the USG is that each institution will develop and assess learning objectives for the core at the institutional level. She also reported that approximately 2000 faculty members across the USG participated in the survey conducted by the Core Curriculum Review Committee and that most all participants favored the current core curriculum.

Subcommittee Meetings: To conclude the afternoon session, the subcommittees convened. Afterwards, the group moved to the student center for a meal and the presentation “The Do’s and Don’t in Distance Learning” by Mary Wolfe of Macon State College.

Friday, February 6, 2009

The Business Meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. The meeting began with the election of officers. Tony Giovannitti, Clayton State University, was elected to the position of Chair-Elect. The Executive Committee for 2009-2010 is: Ward Schaffer (Chair), Tim Howard (Past-Chair), Tony Giovannitti (Chair-Elect), Martha Abell, and Joel Fowler.

The ACMS made a motion that a “C” or better be required in Area A Mathematics courses. After some discussion, the group held a vote. Yes – 9 No – 11

A motion was made for the ACMS to provide a statement to the USG Core Curriculum Review Committee. This motion was passed unanimously. (The Executive Committee will develop a statement, which will be circulated to the full group for approval before forwarding to the Review Committee.)

The site for the 2010 ACMS Meeting was selected. Metro Atlanta College will serve as the host institution. Jack Morrell is the contact person there. (If funding is an issue in 2010, the group also discussed the possibilities of meeting in Macon for a day or meeting through a webcast.)

A question was asked about what happened to the recommendation made by the ACMS to the Council on General Education in Spring 2007 eliminating the use of MATH 1101 or 1111 in Area D of the core curriculum at all institutions. (Some schools were allowing this practice.) Brent Griffin planned to follow-up on what actions were taken at the system level (if any).

Subcommittee Reports:

Assessment – No report

Computer Science – The subcommittee discussed the pre-requisites for CSCI 1301 and 1302.

Course and Textbook – ACMS members were encouraged to complete the on-line textbook survey and to include information about the technology used in each course.

Distance Learning – The subcommittee led a discussion on the issues related to on-line mathematics courses. There are high drop rates associated with the courses because students are not prepared to take on the responsibilities associated with on-line learning. Some institutions require students to take an on-line readiness quiz before being allowed to take on-line courses. At Georgia Perimeter College, nine full-time tenure-track faculty members are teaching nothing but on-line courses to students around the world. There is more of a reliance on on-line learning to meet the student capacity demands. However, this can negatively impact student success in core courses, which works against the USG Strategic Plan.

Math Awareness/Faculty Development – The subcommittee set up a website on Facebook to promote the activities in the mathematics community in the state of Georgia.

Placement/Learning Support – The subcommittee discussed the possibility of moving to a 3-semester mathematics sequence in learning support at the open enrollment colleges in the state. Currently, there is a 2-semester sequence. They also discussed some of the approaches to learning support such as the ALEKX system used at Georgia Gwinnett College. The subcommittee will continue to work with the LS Advisory Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.