

RAAC Psychology Meeting
March 24, 2023

Meeting called to order at 9:30am by Chair, Janet Koposko. Representatives in attendance introduced themselves (Bruce Walker, Georgia Tech; Antionette Miller, Clayton State; Steve Smith, North Georgia; Aisha Adams, Columbus State; Barbara Brown, USG; Ty Boyer, Georgia Southern; and Vickie Williams, Georgia Gwinnett; Brian Pope, College of Coastal Georgia).

Barbara Brown took the podium at 9:40am to provide an overview of USG developments. Dr. Brown noted that there has been quite a bit of turnover recently in the system office, with a new chair and a new vice chair installed in January. The planned overhaul of the USG Core Curriculum, spearheaded by Tristan Denley, had been delayed by COVID. Dr. Brown noted that, since Denley's departure to a new position with the Louisiana BOR, those Gen. Ed. changes are now off the table. She noted that there are nevertheless issues with the core that need to be addressed (e.g., students don't understand it, and the use of A through F lettering to identify the areas is not helpful, something more descriptive needs to be added), but probably nothing dramatic such as what had been proposed back in 2018. One change under consideration is to create 'umbrella' outcomes for each core area. As for psychology, Dr. Brown said that we need to 'buff up' the list of common courses across the USG (some attention was paid to this later in the day). Regarding enrollment, Dr. Brown said we have not yet hit the 'enrollment cliff' and added that we appear to be losing some enrollment to schools who require no test scores for admission. The USG has paid close attention to pass rates and semester by semester retention of new freshmen, and the trends during COVID were not downward (as some had feared, with admission decisions being driven by HS grade point averages). Dr. Brown suggested that the use of Accuplacer for Dual Enrollment (DE) decisions was also not necessarily helping (although it was noted that there isn't enough data yet to make a clear determination on whether it should be dropped). Another issue regarding DE students is that schools appear to be moving toward not counting college math classes as fulfilling the state's high school math requirement.

The next topic addressed was post-tenure review, and Dr. Brown noted that the Regents **required** changes be made, as given their uniform backgrounds in business rather than academia caused them to view tenure itself as 'alien' and a few publicized cases has them convinced that action needed to be taken. She added, however, that the original version of the revised review requirements (which allowed for little or no due process) was not the final version. The AAUP chimed in regarding the absence of due process, but appeared to be reacting to the initial draft, not the newer version (which does allow for a peer-led appeals review). The Regents had also pushed to add Student Success to annual faculty evaluations, but ultimately decided to leave it to individual schools to decide how to implement it. Most have not moved to add this as a fourth leg of the evaluation process, but to allow activities that appear to fit the 'student success' mold (but not very neatly into teaching, service or scholarship) to be counted on annual evals. Dr. Walker noted that Georgia Tech was moving in the direction of counting 'impact' more and grant funding less in tenure decisions, as grant money has become more scarce. Brian Pope asked how much the Regents considered good grades as the goal of higher education, and Dr. Brown indicated that they are more focused on pass rates, retention and

progression rates, and graduation rates. She said 'we absolutely don't want grade inflation.' Dr. Miller inquired as to whether the USG had looked at performance in online vs. face-to-face classes since the pandemic, and Dr. Brown said she was not sure whether there were other differences, but that the WF rates were clearly higher for online classes (attributed to the students not feeling like they were 'really in the class' in that format).

Regarding the state budget, Dr. Brown said that there is a significant budget surplus, which the legislature plans to handle mainly by issuing checks to all taxpayers, and not to address budget crises in higher education. Asked if the Regents plan to continue making school funding based on enrollment numbers, she said there would perhaps be a shift in the formula to focus a bit more on retention and graduation rates (both of which have increased substantially across the USG since 2013/14). This had come up before, however, and the idea was 'squashed' by the Regents, who largely adhere to the notion of having 'the dollars follow the student.' Dr. Walker noted that Georgia Tech's admins have been told that 'enrollment-based funding is here to stay.' Dr. Brown noted that the formula ships less money per Learning Support student, and more money for Graduate and upper-level students than for freshmen. She added that 'most people don't understand the formula' and said that included herself. Asked whether adding courses with a fairly obvious diversity/equity/inclusiveness (DEI) element was risky, she replied that it would indeed incur the wrath of some politicians, and suggested being more devious or subversive with the course descriptions. Dr. Brown concluded by saying that she is retiring at the end of the year, and to not take it personally when she was not at next year's RAAC.

10:37am. As Dr. Brown had begun somewhat ahead of schedule, and the next invited speaker was slated for 11:00, Dr. Kopusko suggested we tackle some of the 'time permitting' agenda items. All agreed, and she began by inquiring as to whether attending members had been receiving her emails about the meeting. She was concerned that many members hadn't seen them (perhaps because of them being filtered to junk mail). Since some schools have Google based email and others have Outlook, it was suggested that incompatibility issues could be behind it. Members were asked whether face-to-face or online meetings would be preferable, and it was noted that the tradeoff is between higher attendance vs. higher quality of discussion. Perhaps a significant factor at present is the lack of any travel funding in some departments (and severe reductions for almost all of us).

Participants took a break from 10:55 until 11:00am, at which time we were joined via Teams by Dr. Susan McCarthy Furman of the Georgia Psychological Association (GPA). She noted that the GPA was founded in the 1940s by USG faculty and that Georgia was the 2nd state to begin licensing psychologists. At present, licensed psychologists do make up the majority of the GPA membership, but there is no requirement for members to be licensed, or to even have psychology degrees. Undergraduate and graduate student memberships are offered at a reduced price. She noted that members have access to leadership opportunities, networking, continuing education, and the annual conference. The GPA works to advocate for legislation that benefits the mental health of Georgians, and provides public educational resources to help advance that goal as well. Dr. Furman noted that the annual conference is in Athens this year, with an April 1 deadline to register, and that students can attend free if they sign up as one-day

volunteers at the conference. She reviewed the credentials of the GPA leadership and executive board, highlighting the connections many of them have to USG psychology programs. Recent achievements by GPA include getting the state added to the list of PsyPact participants (thus improving the portability of licenses across state lines), and the passing of HB 752, which allows Georgia residents to plan their own mental health treatment and care in the same way medical directives work. The GPA campaigned (unsuccessfully) against HB 140, which was designed to prohibit surgical procedures meant to treat minors with gender dysphoria. Dr. Furman was asked what interest academics (who don't do clinical psych on the side) should have in GPA; she replied that they are a 'very dynamic' organization and that new members could make new things happen if they were to take an active role. Asked if they have committees akin to APA, she noted that there are a wide range of committees (detailed on their web pages). Asked if the call for student volunteers was only for the conference, she said that was true, but that they were also seeking a student intern for next year. There being no further questions, Dr. Furman said goodbye at 11:48am.

The next topic was capstone requirements, with each attending member asked to identify what they required. Responses were as follows.

ABAC: service learning, internship, and senior thesis required, with students asked to find their own internship sites

Georgia Southern: capstone course, and a thesis option (mostly reserved for Honors students). The capstone class is HIP with a required lit review but no data collection. A senior internship option is also available.

Columbus State: no capstone requirements

Clayton State: required internship (min. 150 hours, not clerical in nature, students mostly find their own sites)

Georgia Tech: internship agreement with Delta Airlines

Georgia Gwinnett: history and systems course

CCG: also a capstone course in History and Systems (which is taken in preparation for the ACAT, which students take in a zero credit assessment course)

UNG: capstone course which includes a career analysis paper and resume review; Major Fields Test; senior thesis for Honors students

At 12:15pm, Dr. Kuposko asked if the attending members wanted to break for lunch or continue to work through the planned break, and the clear consensus was to continue with the agenda. Janet spoke about ADHP on behalf of Dr. Lee Gillis. Several members agreed that simply having access to the ListServ was a big benefit, as it permits an immediate sounding board for ideas. Their annual meeting is also a benefit and adheres to "Vegas rules" regarding confidentiality of topics and people discussed.

12:20pm. The next agenda item discussed was Area F. The RAAC was charged with reviewing our course guidelines to ensure compliance with USG policy. It was noted that, if a curriculum is not in compliance, they will need to receive approval from USG for any deviation. Each member in attendance shared their Area F requirements. The responses were as follows.

Columbus State: Intro, Psych Careers, Human Growth & Development, Stats (and one biology class paired with a philosophy class)

GA Gwinnett: Intro to Psychology, Writing in Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, Lifespan Developmental Psychology, and 2 additional courses

CCG: Intro, Psych careers

ABAC: does not offer a psych major, but a Rural Development major, for which the Area F courses include an Intro to Psych option

At this point the question was asked whether anyone in attendance knew of any ways in which they were not in compliance. Hearing none, discussion proceeded to what learning outcomes we should identify for the area. Much discussion ensued, the gist of which was it was deemed best to stick close to the previously approved (2005) LOs with less specificity regarding 'major perspectives' and that we might also ask for guidance from Dr. Jane Halonen, our scheduled 1:00pm guest.

After a 10 minute break, the meeting resumed at 1:00pm. After sorting through some technical difficulties, Dr. Halonen joined us from Pensacola. Once able to share her screen, she reviewed the draft of the APA 3.0 guidelines, with the emphasis on **draft**, although it was noted that this draft has been approved by the APA's Board of Educational Affairs. Final approval is pending the August APA meeting.

Dr. Halonen reviewed the brief history of the APA learning outcomes, which began in 2003, and after four years produced the first set of guidelines (APA 2.0). The next revision was published in 2013, and a set of outcomes for master's programs was released in 2019. A good portion of Dr. Halonen's presentation outlined the main intentions of the APA LOs, with a significant caveat that they most definitely do NOT want to move in the direction of accrediting undergraduate programs ('way too busy' with PhD programs). The 2.0 guidelines referenced expert (4 year graduates) vs. 'novice' (2 year graduates) as a remedy for the lack of any delineation between community colleges and four year programs in APA 1.0. The 3.0 focus was on themes, most especially 'empowering people to make a difference.' Major enhancements desired in APA 3.0 included more representation of statistics, incorporation of 'persistent' themes of psychology (from the APA Introductory Psychology Initiative), improved clarification of students' professional development needs (to promote more effective preparation for the workforce, since the majority will not go on to graduate school), and a reflection of the APA's commitment to DEI. The draft report (with all of the draft guidelines) can be accessed at <https://apps.apa.org/CommentCentral2/attachments/Site97-Undergrad%20Guidelines.pdf> and will not be reproduced here. Asked for her advice as we write our Area F learning outcomes, Dr. Halonen said to 'make it easy on ourselves.' She advised tailoring assessments to tracks within the major instead of attempting to use the blunt instrument that is the MFT, suggested that 'if you don't have a capstone course, get one' (the UWF capstone focuses on career development plus content review based on instructor's area of specialization), and noted that assessments need not be based on a census of students (we trust random sampling in research, why not for our own assessments?).

After Dr. Halonen bade us farewell, we continued discussing potential language for our LOs from 2:00 to 2:20pm. The end product is listed below.

Upon completion of Area F, students will be able to:

- Identify basic concepts and research findings in psychology
 - Define and explain basic psychological concepts
 - Interpret research findings related to psychological concepts
 - Apply psychological principles to personal growth and other aspects of everyday life
- Solve problems using psychological methods
 - Describe the advantages and limitations of research strategies
 - Evaluate psychological research
 - Draw logical and objective conclusions about behavior and mental processes from empirical evidence
 - Examine how psychological science can be used to counter unsubstantiated statements, opinions, or beliefs
- Critically evaluate information from other courses so that they may gain a greater comprehension of behavior and mental processes

For roughly the next 10 minutes, we went around the room checking on who did or did not offer the following: Intro to Psych, Human Growth & Development, Psych of Adjustment. The goal was to eliminate any listings from Area F that are no longer taught at USG schools. The only course that was not widely taught was PSYC 2101 (psych of adjustment) but at least a few schools still offer it as an Area F option, so it was removed from the chopping block. A motion was made (and seconded, with a unanimous yea vote) to recommend replacing the word 'normal' from the description of PSYC 2103 (Human Growth & Development) with the word 'typical.' Dr. Brown indicated that there's a form we're required to submit for this change to be considered by the USG.

Starting at about 2:30pm, discussion turned to the final agenda item, next year's RAAC meeting. Consensus was quickly reached that Macon's central location in the state provided the best option if we are to meet in person. Dr. Kopusko stated that organizing and chairing this year was not a major hardship for her, although she felt that as a faculty member at a school that doesn't offer a psychology major she might not be the best choice to chair again. All in attendance seemed to be in agreement that this was not an obstacle for success in running the meeting (we have plenty of department chairs of psychology in attendance so there is no risk of that voice being muzzled), and that she had done an excellent job. Dr. Brown noted that we had cleared three years' worth of the USG's agenda items for us in six hours. The remaining discussion was intended to identify possible discussion/agenda items for 2024. The following were suggested:

Learning outcomes for PSYC 1101

Online courses (or even online curricula) and eCore

Capstone courses

Variations in assessment approaches

What students can do with a BA/BS in psychology

Tracking alumni

Substantive evaluations of students

Accessibility concerns (on the subject of which, Dr. Pope put in a plug for Yuja for those wanting to convert lectures into ADA compliant format).