

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Regents Academic Advisory Committee on
History for the Academic Year, 2022-2023

On Saturday, February 4, 2023, the Regents Academic Advisory Committee on History (RAACH) met in Valdosta, GA on the campus of the Valdosta State University. The RAACH met in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Georgia Association of Historians (GAH). The meeting was in a face-to-face format, although many RAACH representatives participated virtually on Microsoft Teams.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Bronson Long (chair, Georgia Highlands College); Barney Rickman (chair-elect, Valdosta State University); Michelle Brattain (past chair, Georgia State University), James Galt-Brown (Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College), Scott McDermott (Albany State University), Alexander McCready (Atlanta Metropolitan State College), Adam Tate (Clayton State University), Michael Morris (College of Coastal Georgia), Gary Sprayberry (Columbus State University), Sarah Mergel (Dalton State University), Jeffrey Howell (East Georgia State College), Dayna Daniely (Fort Valley State University), Mark Vickery (GAH representative), Nathan Orgill (Georgia Gwinnett College), John Tone (Georgia Institute of Technology), Carol Herringer (Georgia Southern University), Glenn Robins (Georgia Southwestern State University), David Parker for Bryan McGovern (Kennesaw State University), Bob Burnham (Middle Georgia State University), Jeff Pardue (University of North Georgia), Michael de Nie (University of West Georgia).

MEETING MINUTES:

Chair Bronson Long welcomed participants and provided brief updates from the USG. Bronson Long and Barney Rickman attended a fall 2022 meeting of RAA chairs with the USG staff (Dr. Barbara Brown) and the new Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Discussion of Foreign Language Sub-Committee Report

From Feb. 2022 RAACH meeting: the USG system office tasked the RAACH to discuss foreign language requirements for history majors and pathway students. While most institutions currently require six hours of foreign language in Area F, a few require nine hours. To explore this issue at more length, the RAACH at its 2022 meeting agreed to form a sub-committee. Carol Herringer, James Galt-Brown, and Glenn Robins volunteered for this sub-committee.

A spreadsheet was provided by Chair Long prior to the meeting that was created by the sub-committee. Carol Herringer provided a summary report. The sub-committee tried to generate data on foreign language (FL) requirements within USG and from peer and aspirational institutions across country. There is a serious concern as to whether FL requirements are a barrier to timely degree completion for undergraduate majors in history. The FL requirements may also be a barrier to recruitment and retention of undergraduate majors in history. The sub-committee further asserted that there are other

skills besides foreign language that are very useful for undergraduate majors in history. According to the sub-committee's research, the USG is fairly rigid on FL requirements, but many peer/aspirational institutions are more flexible, and some do not even have a foreign language requirement. The sub-committee also pointed to a serious reduction of FL faculty within some USG institutions which hampers completion of foreign language requirements and how most classrooms today are tied to internet and have access to effective foreign language translation programs.

Discussion occurred on the system-wide drop in undergraduate majors in history as a major concern as well as the elimination of B.A. History programs at some USG units. General agreement was achieved as to the importance of advising and mentoring of undergraduate majors as to their career goals to determine whether they will need a foreign language to achieve their career goals.

As had been the case at the 2022 RACCH meeting, the consensus of the RAACH is that foreign language requirements should be flexible and that rigid requirements should be eschewed. In general, Area F for History should have a "learning tools" category of some sort that allows students who wish to take foreign language to do so. However, depending on the options available at individual institutions, it should likewise allow students who wish to pursue things such as digital humanities, statistics, sign language, or even education courses to do so as well.

On February 4, 2023, the RAACH decided its decision on foreign language requirements should be folded into the next agenda item, consideration of a proposal for Area F Learning Outcomes.

Consideration of Area F Learning Outcomes Proposal

From Feb. 2022 RAACH meeting: the USG system office requested that the RAACH update the History Area F Learning Outcomes. A subcommittee consisting of Michelle Brattain, Bronson Long, and William Simpson agreed to take up this issue.

In response to the issues that Dr. Barbara Brown raised in an October 10, 2022 email to Chair Bronson, the RAACH's sub-committees on foreign language and Area F agreed on the following new Area F Learning Outcome for the entire RAACH's consideration which was discussed and revised on February 4, 2023:

Proposed History Area F Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to differentiate between primary and secondary sources and critically analyze historical evidence. Students will be able to employ additional means of historical literacy. This may include communicating in a language other than English, statistical analysis, teaching and learning, digital humanities, or cultural and information literacy.

Area F must total to at least 18 credit hours. Courses from the following disciplines include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Anthropology
- Computer Science
- Economics
- Education
- Foreign Languages

- Geography
- Introduction to Asia, Africa, Europe, or Latin America
- Introduction to Local/Georgia History
- Introduction to Philosophy
- Introduction to Religion
- Introductory Thematic Courses in History
- Minorities in American History
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Statistics
- U.S. History Survey
- World or Western Civilization
- Others deemed appropriate by individual institutions

Motion for Approval by James Galt-Brown, second by Glenn Robins.
Passed unanimously.

Discussion of ChatGPT & artificial intelligence (AI) programs.

After discussion, the RAACH unanimously passed the following statement:

The Regents Academic Advisory Committee on History considers the submission of any material produced by AI, without instructor authorization, as a student's original work as a form of academic dishonesty.

Discussion then occurred on the future of the history profession in an era when state legislatures and the public in general do not appreciate the value of a degree in history as well as how courses in history teach skills that benefit numerous career paths.

Review of Committees and Elections (Chair-Elect for 2023-2024 Academic Year)

The RAACH elected Sarah Mergel of Dalton State College as chair-elect for 2023-2024, and everyone expressed their sincere appreciation that Sarah Mergel was willing to stand for election to this post.

The RAACH bylaws state that the Executive Committee should serve as the nominating committee, plus two at-large members. Scott McDermott and William Simson will continue to serve as at-large members in this regard, but it was agreed that at the 2024 RAACH there will be a need to begin staggering the terms of the at-large members.

In other RAACH business, the sub-committees on US History will be Sarah Mergel and Gary Sprayberry, World History will be James Galt-Brown and Michael Morris, Graduate Programs will be Carol Herringer and Michelle Brattain, Major Programs will be Matthew Adams and Ruth McClelland-Nugent, and the African American History sub-committee will be Adam Tate and Kenja McCray.

The RAACH meeting in February 2024 will take place in conjunction with the annual GAH meeting, but the location of the 2024 GAH meeting has yet to be determined. Barney Rickman will chair this meeting.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Barney Rickman.