

Meeting Minutes: Committee on Academic Affairs

March 28, 2000

Macon State College

Rehearsal Hall - Fine Arts (M) Building

MINUTES

The Administrative Committee on Academic Affairs held its spring meeting on March 28, 2000 on the campus of Macon State College. Chairperson Thomas Jones called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Dr Jones welcomed the Chief Academic Officers and introduced President David Bell, Macon State College. President Bell provided opening remarks and welcomed the institutional guests to the campus. The following designated institutional representatives and guests attended the meeting: Dr. Bill Hill, Kennesaw State University; Dr. Tim Goodman, East Georgia College; Dr. Kathy Rozmus, Georgia Southwestern State University; Dr. Mollie Brown, Albany State University; Dr. Jeanne Clerc, Georgia Perimeter College; Dr. Mary Moak, MGT of America; Dr. Madlyn Haynes, Office of the Chancellor; and Dr. Martin Okafor, Faculty Associate in the Office of Academic Affairs.

The minutes of November 16, 1999 were approved as distributed.

i. Report of the Senior Vice Chancellor

Chairperson Jones introduced Interim Senior Vice Chancellor Beheruz N. Sethna. Dr. Sethna proceeded to discuss the following topics and activities that have systemwide impacts.

a. Benchmarking Project

Dr. Sethna explained that the Benchmarking Project was moving forward quickly and with much progress. The Benchmarking Project is being managed by a management audit team comprised of the following individuals: Madlyn Hanes, Lindsay Desrochers, Beheruz Sethna and three individuals from the Office of Planning and Budget and related state agencies. Dr. Sethna emphasized that the Project is comprised of three scopes: 1) the Benchmarking Study; 2) Management Review of the Central Office and Select Institutional Business Practices (Best Practices of the Central Office); and 3) Data Similarity and Transferability.

Dr. Sethna introduced Dr. Madlyn Hanes, Special Assistant to Chancellor Portch, who further delineated the progress of the program. Dr. Hanes indicated that activities associated with the project are on schedule. Each system institutional representative received a packet of information describing the benchmarking process and indicators for the selection of peer or comparator institutions. Dr. Haynes introduced Dr. Mary Moak, Project Manager/Senior Level Consultant for MGT America.

Dr. Moak explained the methodology behind the selection of peer institutions. Due to inherent time constraints, Dr. Moak requested that each institution complete their survey forms within two weeks in order to tabulate information concerning performance indicators for the system. Dr. Moak explained

that the methodology associated with the selection of peer institutions is based upon mission related variables. Other variables to be used in the selection of peer institutions include IPEDS data, Carnegie classifications, location, number and percent of staff, and number and percent of degrees awarded.

The following were identified as the three key steps in the process:

Step 1: Take all public universities and look at the Carnegie classifications of the institutions.

Step 2: Identify mission related variables.

Step 3: Based on mission related variable only (not performance variables), single out comparator institutions. Complete a factor analysis and normalize the variation between variables. With the resultant distance score, how far an institution is from other institutions on the comparator list, identify those institutions that are closely linked to a majority of the campuses within a specified sector. For example, a distance score of zero indicates that an institution is looking at itself; whereas a distance score of 1 indicates that an institution is similar to your campus in mission. Dr. Moak suggested that each institution try to find a minimum of four comparator institutions in addition to those recommended by the University System. This will allow each institution to compile a list of comparator and aspirational institutions.

Dr. Moak further emphasized that an Executive Committee meeting would be held to brainstorm issues concerning performance indicators for the System and institutional sectors. The mission related variables were provided in the benchmarking packets. Performance indicators need to be accurate and valid for interpretation. The suggested comparator institutions were derived by closely aligning institutional missions. At the end of the process, 60 comparator institutions were identified for the state universities, 30 peer institutions were identified for state colleges, 55 - 60 peer institutions were designated for the two-year colleges, and 15 comparator institutions were delineated for the research universities. The Benchmarking Project represents the cornerstone of accountability. Qualitative and quantitative measurements will be treated as baseline measurements. The final phase of the project will involve developing a system to continuously collect data and obtain measurements over time.

Drs. Moak and Haynes asked that the Chief Academic Officers complete the following activities upon returning to their respective campuses:

1. Review the peer institution lists enclosed in the benchmarking packet.
2. Identify the peer or comparator institutions.
3. Contact counterparts in administrative roles at the selected peer or comparator institutions.
4. Contact MGT of America with the name, telephone number, and e-mail address of the counterpart at the selected peer institution.

After these steps have been completed by all system institutions, the results of the survey will be

placed on the web per institutional response. University System institutions were also encouraged to complete individual benchmarking studies that include provisions for determining related variables, the number of performance indicators, and mission relatedness of the variables used in the study.

b. Technology Masterplanning

Dr. Sethna explained that the Central Office had contracted with Arthur Andersen to complete the technology masterplan. The completion date is scheduled for June 1, 2000. **[Note: The Regents received the Technology Master Plan for the System at the June 2000 Board meeting.]** The steering committee consists of three individuals from each sector of the University System. The membership on the Committee represents a diverse mix of individuals from various parts of the campuses (i.e., Vice Presidents, Faculty Members, Librarians, Continuing Education, Information Technology, and members of the Student Body).

Dr. Sethna explained that the Technology Masterplan is comprised of two phases.

Phase 1: System Level Issues

Phase 1 involves the analysis of system level planning for technological needs. Although it does not involve a detailed facilities master plan, the objective of this phase is to develop a sector template for institutional master planning that includes technology. The University System will, in turn, look at the outputs of the master plan and develop a limited scope study on the use of technology in instructional delivery, research, and general operations.

Phase 2: Revision of University System Level Strategies

Phase 2 involves the revision of existing university system level strategies. For example, one of the issues to be reviewed is the impact of Peachnet on technological needs at USG institutions. Should Peachnet be outsourced or be strategically aligned with other functions within the University System? Another example involves the organization of the Office of Information and Instructional Technology (OIIT). The faculty development group is now part of Academic Affairs. Dr. Sethna indicated that a survey concerning the links between information technology and academic affairs should be completed within a week in order to provide feedback to the Chancellor.

c. FY 2001 Budget/Impact on Institutions

Dr. Sethna addressed the Chief Academic Officers concerning the FY 2001 budget and indicated that the official release of information concerning the budget would be provided at the April Board of Regents meeting. "The session was quite positive given the impacts of semester conversion," explained Dr. Sethna. The positive outcome of the session was referenced by the \$48 million delegated for capital expenditures, a \$33 million reprieve for health insurance this year with a \$19 million reprieve for next year, and salary increases in excess of \$36 million. The start date for the increased salaries will not begin until October 2000. This is the same time period when other state agency employees will receive salary increases. Other highlights of the budget include the following appropriations:

Amount	Activity
1.5 million	GLOBE
3.5 million	Eminent Scholars (7)
33 million	Management of the State Public Library System
50 million	Management of the DOE Accountability System
2.6 million	Assistance for Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs)

Dr. Sethna further explained that the System was able to collect \$24 million in saved revenue through the deletion of expenditures and conservative financial management practices. Surplus funds are not returned in the base budget; instead they are geared toward specific areas such as health premiums.

Dr. Sethna also discussed issues concerning tuition and fees. The University System uses a 75/25 (institution/state) rule when applying tuition increases. Because formula funding has decreased, it follows that tuition should decrease. If a tuition increase is to be determined it will be based upon the University System's share of the new funding formula. Because technology fees have been developed and/or increased across the System, the Chancellor has decided that the System will not increase other fees, but rather, freeze fees at the current rate.

d. Revisit USG 2001 Minimum PSO Scores

Dr. Sethna explained that, in the past, the Chief Academic Officers adopted a minimum score of 970 but decided to raise the bar to 1,030. The increase deterred otherwise satisfactory students on certain campuses.

The following **recommendation** was provided to the group: **"Modify the PSO minimum score to 1,000. A minimum score of 1,000 does not inhibit a campus from admitting a student with a higher PSO score."**

The group's counter recommendation and motion was the following: **"Adopt a minimum score of 970 on the PSO." The motion was approved.**

Members of the group discussed the fact that true determinants of success in a program of study were more closely aligned to study skills than the SAT score. It was suggested that the changes in the Freshman Index with a PSO score of 970 would equate to a 3.0 GPA, increased minimum standards for incoming freshmen students, and the addition of a fourth math.

It followed that **a motion was passed to keep the SAT at 970 and the recommendation was sent to the Senior Vice Chancellor.**

e. Review of Tenure on Appointment Procedures

Dr. Sethna explained the Tenure on Appointment procedures to the Chief Academic Officers because of some confusion about the process. Five years ago it was only prudent to recommend tenure on appointment for stellar candidates with world-renowned reputations (i.e., Nobel Laureates). The procedures have been interpreted to allow institutions to recommend tenure on appointment for exceptional faculty candidate cases. The campus and the Board have specific roles to play in this process.

The following is a reiteration of the steps in the Tenure On Appointment process:

1. The Vice President for Academic Affairs or President contacts the Senior Vice Chancellor to discuss the tenure on appointment recommendation and a letter with support documentation is sent to the Central Office. The cover letter will address the candidate's credentials, explain the plethora or lack of recent publications in the field, and specify whether the candidate held tenure at a previous institution.
2. The Senior Vice Chancellor and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will review the institutional request and call or e-mail the institution with any follow-up questions.
3. Upon notification from the Central Office that the candidate meets with no objections and will be recommended to the Board for tenure on appointment, the campus may enter the appropriate information into the Faculty Information System (FIS). Dr. Sethna cautioned that an institution should be certain that the candidate has accepted a position at the institution because the individual's record is not completely purged from the system upon entry.

f. ACS Substantive Change for Distance Education

Dr. Kris Biesinger provided an update concerning SACS Substantive Change for Distance Education. After visiting other Systems that have made forays in the area of SACS substantive change, Dr. Biesinger and others met with SACS representatives after the North Carolina SACS visit. On behalf of the University System, a request was made for a System substantive change. In February 2000, SACS asked for additional information. As of March 2000, SACS had not notified the System with a response. Dr. Biesinger indicated that she would keep the institutions informed of the progress of the substantive change request.

g. WebCT Course Hosting and Help Desk Interest

Dr. Kris Biesinger explained the University System's efforts to develop WebCT course hosting and help desk opportunities. According to Dr. Biesinger, the University System has two WebCT servers; one is located at the University of Georgia and the other is located at Georgia State University. These servers provide support for pilot programs that are part of the desktop initiative. An important component of the WebCT model is the student services component. Dr. Biesinger explained that SACS specifically looks for evidence of satisfactory help desk capabilities in programs offered via distance education technologies for students and faculty.

To determine System needs and plan for additional course hosting opportunities, Dr Biesinger asked the group to answer the following questions: 1) Are you interested in having a course provided on the WebCT server? And 2) Are you interested in having your institutional server certified to offer WebCT courses? If an institution is interested in certifying its server, specific accreditation guidelines must be followed. Dr. Biesinger explained that a difficult component of the process is being able to support faculty who transfer to another institution. Dr. Biesinger also suggested that the following issues required further analysis: methods of using lottery funds for technology, purchasing products that are owned by the institution instead of an individual faculty member, and outsourcing the development of specific products with a built-in training component.

ii. Committee Reports

a. Regents Administrative Committee on Institutional Effectiveness (Plan for Comprehensive Program Review)

Dr. Robert Haney presented the template for Comprehensive Academic Program Review to the Chief Academic Officers. Dr. Haney explained that the template was developed to acknowledge the changes in the System and has the flexibility to be used for accountability and improvement. Members of the RACIE committee who contributed to the development of the plan were Dr. Joseph Silver, Sr., Dr. Thomas Z. Jones, Dr. Lloyd W. Benjamin, III, Dr. Cathie Mayes Hudson, Dr. Joseph Szutz, and Dr. Beheruz Sethna. The plan defines the review cycle, program procedures, and the emphasis on annual reports. The plan was developed for University System accountability purposes and to address the State oversight efforts. There will be an expanded emphasis on performance indicators and criteria development. Institutions will be solicited for their input on defining the standards.

Dr. Haney recommended the following: Approve the policy section of the report and solicit information on the process.

The Chief Academic Officers expressed concern about the following issues: interpretation of enrollment and degrees conferred ratios among institutions, Central Office involvement in the process, trigger mechanisms inciting further in-depth review, cost of administering the process, outside evaluations based on individualistic review processes, individualization of graduate programs, the perceived impact on transfer issues and external degree programs, and the impact on future budget cycles.

Motion and Approval: A motion was made to table the policy. The Chief Academic Officers decided unanimously (not including those members of the RACIE Committee) that the Comprehensive Academic Program Review Policy would be tabled.

Dr. Haney asked that members of the group provide additional details concerning the issues raised at the meeting, provide ideas on how to use the academic audit, and send any comments to the

following e-mail address: rhaney@gasou.edu.

b. Council on General Education

Dr. Joan Lord, Chair of the Council on General Education, explained that she was now Chair of the E-core Advisory Committee. President James Burran will serve as Chair of the Council on General Education starting in July 2000. The following issues were discussed with the group:

1. **Area D and optional courses for students majoring in Math** The first topic to be discussed during the fall meeting of the ACAA Committee on Science will be the following: "Should all students be allowed to choose between calculus and statistics or should this be a choice made by discipline."
2. **The E-core Subcommittee and the Components of E-core**
The E-Core Subcommittee was formed (i.e., J. Lord, C. Beadle, L. Benjamin, and B. Carpenter) and six courses are under consideration to be included in this delivery. The courses are the following: two English, two Mathematics, two Political Science, and one American History. The first offering of an e-core course will be fall semester 2000. A portal will be open for viewing the delivery by April 1. Nine additional courses will enter the development stage during the fall. The E-core's progress will be measured by student learning outcomes, especially those benchmarks developed by the General Education Council for RACIE.

The following is the delineation of the course array for E-Core.

The course array for Area A consists of the following: English I and II, Math Modeling, College Algebra, Pre-calculus, and Calculus.

The course array for Area B consists of the following: Interpersonal Public Communications and Electronic Teaching in the Educational Environment.

The course array for Area C consists of the following: one literature (World Literature I, II or American Literature I, II), one humanities (Philosophy, Spanish or French 1001, 1002, 2001, and 2002, or introduction to Fine Arts).

The course array for Area D consists of the following for non-Math or Science majors: two of the following - Biology I, Geology I, or Integrated Science; one of the following: Computer Science, Statistics, and an additional math or science. It is important to offer three science courses, especially if a student has a CPC deficiency.

The course array for Area D Math/Science majors consists of the following: Calculus, Chemistry, or Physics sequence.

The course array for Area E consists of the following: Political Science; one World Literature I, II;

one American Literature I, II; and one Psychology or Sociology.

The following is the financial structure for E-core:

- \$300.00 per course, no fees
 - Home institution receives 20% of the revenue.
 - Offering institution receives 60% of the revenue.
 - RCO - Advanced Learning Technologies Unit/GLOBE receives 20% of the revenue.
- Dr. Lord explained that a \$25.00 technology fee was built into every course offered. The availability of E-core does not supplant any labs associated with specific courses.

3. **Telecourse Initiatives** Dr. Lord indicated that negotiations had taken place with five institutions to use the televised services of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). GLOBE has negotiated a contract with PBS for telecourse availability. Telecourses will adopted for the core curriculum. The telecourse initiative works on the same principle as the E-core; however, the format for this medium is video-based.

Dr. Lord further indicated that the following was the agenda for the upcoming activities of the E-Core Subcommittee:

- Develop Academic Policies to Regulate E-core
- Grade Appeals
- Academic Honesty
- Course Development Phase-In
- Course Review Procedure
- Identification of Transfer Courses
- Testing Procedures

It was announced that the following institutions will participate in the telecourse initiative: Floyd College, Clayton College & State University, Valdosta State University, Georgia Perimeter College, and Albany State University. If any other institutions were interested in participating in the telecourse initiative, it was requested that the Chief Academic Officer contact Dr. Blaine Carpenter at Clayton College & State University.

iii. **Academic Committee Recommendations**

a. **Academic Committee on English**

The following recommendations were approved unanimously.

Regents' Test: That the appropriate agents of the BOR should be urged to implement computerized administration and scoring of the Regents' Test as soon as possible.

ACAA Executive Committee Recommendation: The Executive Committee supports this

recommendation and requests that the BOR Central Office staff initiates the necessary studies to determine the feasibility of computerized administration of the Regents' test.

Academic Committee on English

eCore

1. That the University System of Georgia sponsors a System-wide interdisciplinary forum to discuss not only eCore implementation but also issues pertinent to online instruction.
2. That comprehensive ecore policies, procedures, and course descriptions be developed and disseminated to all System institutions before registration for the first semester of eCore courses.
3. That at least one major assignment in each eCore English course be proctored to ensure that student cheating and plagiarism be minimized.
4. That students systematically be advised about the unique demands of online learning, and particularly of the demands of the types of instruction and interaction required for effective learning in English Composition. Advisement strategies designed to optimize retention should be developed, possibly including a requirement that all students who register for online classes attend an orientation session of an appropriate type.
5. That, given the time demands not only effective paper-grading but of managing online instructional logistics in general, strong consideration be given to limiting each section to a maximum of 20 students per eCore section of English 1101 or English 1102. In no case, however, should enrollments in sections of ecore English 1101 or 1102 exceed those permitted in conventional sections of those courses.
6. That screening and admissions standards for enrollment into eCore English 1101 and English 1102 should not only maintain consistency with existing System and host-institution admission criteria but should also incorporate any further measures to help ensure that the students who enroll in English 1101 and English 1102 stand the greatest chances of persisting and succeeding in those courses.
7. That eCore instructors be provided with adequate technical support during both the design and the teaching phases of their work.

b. Academic Committee on Learning Support

The following recommendation was approved with one opposed vote.

eCore: Although the Committee understands that there are currently no plans to accept students who need Learning Support remediation, our major concern is that non-traditional students are one of the target audiences, and that the decision may have implications for both the Admissions Initiative and Learning Support. The Committee approved unanimously the following position statement.

When eCore is implemented, it is important

- that all non-traditional students be screened for placement in accordance with Admission

Initiative,

- that the screening be done by the CPE or COMPASS proctored on a campus in the University System of Georgia (Given the fact that a System school is not accessible to all students who will apply for eCore, students should be allowed to except screening for placement if they can present SAT scores that meet at least the System minima),
- that required remediation be done on a campus in the University System of Georgia, and
- that the Academic Committee on Learning Support be presented on any committee that may eventually design Learning Support courses to be offered electronically.

ACAA Executive Committee Recommendation: It is the understanding of the Executive Committee that no students requiring learning support will be admitted to eCore courses. However, if circumstances should change, the Committee recommends that the above recommendations be forwarded to the eCore Advisory Committee. In the meantime, the eCore Subcommittee will be asked to consider the first two recommendations concerning screening for Learning Support exemption.

c. Academic Committee on Educator Preparation

The following recommendation was approved unanimously.

Academic Committee on Educator Preparation: To be admitted into an undergraduate educator preparation program within the University System of Georgia:

1. Students must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 on all attempted hours in the System core curriculum in areas A-F, as required for teacher preparation.
2. Students must have a passing score on the Regents' Test.
3. Students must have a passing score on PRAXIS I.
4. Receiving institutions may establish higher admission requirements.

These requirements should be included in catalogs of two-year colleges and universities that prepare teachers. For purposes of reporting to the Board on progress in meeting this principle, 1997 will be used as a baseline. This recommendation is intended to replace the section on Admission Requirements into Educator Preparation Programs, on page 7 of the November 1998 Guidelines for the Preparation of Educators for the Schools.

ACAA Executive Committee Recommendation: The Executive Committee recommends the adoption of these changes.

iv. Open Discussion

a. Interpreting and Reporting Faculty Sick Leave

Dr. Jones asked for an open discussion on interpreting and reporting faculty sick leave. Chief Academic Officers expressed concern about the morale issues and how leave is reported for faculty versus staff. Other members of the group were concerned about procedures to regulate faculty

compensation and responsibilities without severely impacting the teaching loads of other faculty members or requiring the support of hiring an additional person mid-way through the academic year. Additional discussion centered around audit reports and how to interpret sick leave under different situations (i.e., parents of children who are sick versus individual sickness). Discussion ensued after it was pointed out that distance technology mediums further require that institutions define the faculty functions. Dr. Jones suggested that a small workgroup comprised of Chief Academic Officers, human resources representatives, and legal personnel be established to develop recommendations and guidelines that are equitable, valid, reliable, and can withstand interpretation for a variety of circumstances. The group suggested that a key faculty voice could be found in the role of the faculty associate.

Motion and Approval: The Committee decided unanimously to ask Dr. Sethna to form a committee that represents academic affairs, faculty, human resources, and legal personnel interests in the development of guidelines for the interpretation and reporting of faculty sick leave. The motion was approved unanimously.

b. Timing and Procedures of Reporting Part-time Faculty Each Semester and Late-hired Full-Time Faculty

Dr. Jones opened the discussion with a questions concerning whether approval is necessary for part-time faculty members. Chief Academic Officers expressed frustration with the timing of part-time faculty approvals and the resultant violations of policy if an institution is unable to send faculty information to the system six weeks before the December deadline. Additional concerns were expressed about the lead time associated with notifying the Central Office about part-time appointments. In some cases, delays in system processing require that a faculty member wait two months before being paid for services rendered. Several members of the group asked if an emergency policy could be enacted for administrative personnel appointments.

Dr. Jones suggested that the Chief Academic Officers send any concerns about this topic to Dr. John Wolfe.

Motion and Approval: Dr. Wolfe will address the issues with the new administrators of the Faculty Information System and provide a report to the Chief Academic Officers during the Summer meeting concerning viable options to the current approach.

v. General Announcements

a. Survey on Post-Tenure Review

Dr. Dorothy Zinsmeister, Senior Associate, informed the Chief Academic Officers that the survey on post-tenure review was discussed during the Executive Committee session. Dr. Zinsmeister informed the group that the survey would expand the amount of information collected. A response will be required in two to three weeks.

b. Summer ACAA Conference Dr. Jones informed the group that the summer meeting of the Academic

Committee on Academic Affairs will be held July 16 through 18 at Callaway Gardens. Dr. Ron Simpson, University of Georgia Institute of Higher Education, will be assisting the System in planning and implementing the conference. "Student Persistence" is one of the themes of the meeting. The agenda and theme are still under development.

- c. **Upcoming Institutional SACS Visits** Dr. Robert Haney announced that several institutions would soon be involved in SACS visits in either May or June. Dr. Haney requested that those Chief Academic Officers contact him for information concerning institutional effectiveness and responding to recommendations as soon as possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marci M. Middleton, MBA, MS
Director, Academic Program Coordination
USG

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270 Washington Street, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30334
U.S.A.

DRAFT LETTER/E-MAIL TO PRESIDENTS/VICE PRESIDENTS
ON PEER SELECTION

Mission-Related Variables to Use in Peer/Comparator Selection

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Value</u>
Carnegie Classification	Liberal Arts I and II, 2-year with BA
Number of Students	Headcount Percent full-time
Location	Rated 1 – 9, based on population
Number of Degrees Awarded	Total Number of Associates Number of Bachelors Number by two-digit CIP Code: Business Health Liberal Arts Technology/MIS
Percent Degrees Awarded	Percent Associates Percent Bachelors Percent by two-digit CIP Code: Business Health Liberal Arts Technology/MIS
Number of Staff	Total Full-time Total Faculty Total Non-faculty Part-time Total Faculty Total Non-faculty
Percent Staff	Percent Full-time Total Faculty Total Non-faculty
Percent Full-time Faculty	As a percent of total faculty
Number of Separate Disciplines	Count of 6-digit disciplines

Draft – March 22, 2000

Introduction and Background

The USG Comprehensive Plan

Although comprehensive program review is not a new concept to University System of Georgia institutions, it received fresh impetus from the USG Comprehensive Planning process. The 1996-1997 Comprehensive Plan established new roles in program planning and review for the Central Office of the Board of Regents. Specifically, the Plan charged the Central Office to monitor academic program goals in relation to both state workforce needs and degree productivity.

In response to that charge, a sub-committee of the Board of Regents Administrative Committee on Academic Affairs developed a report on the comprehensive review of academic programs. That report emphasizes the program review role of the institutions and serves as a valuable resource for institutions seeking to implement or improve a program review process. At the same time, there have been new pressures on the BOR to establish System guidelines for program review and to ensure that institutions systematically review programs.

External Accountability

In 1997-1998, the Georgia Department of Audits conducted a performance review of “Academic Programming” in the University System of Georgia. The audit focused on the processes and procedures employed by the Central Office to ensure that USG and its institutions develop and maintain high quality programs and monitor the efficiency of academic program offerings.

Prominent themes in the State Auditor’s report were institutional accountability to the Central Office, greater efficiency through program consolidation and discontinuation, and the relationship of academic program planning to workforce development. The Department of Audits reports its findings to the Budgetary Responsibility Oversight Committee (BROC), a committee of the General Assembly with a focus on accountability.

New legislation proposed by Governor Roy Barnes and passed by the General Assembly creates an office of Educational Accountability designed to monitor the operational and academic performance of public education in Georgia. Also in 2000, the University System embarked on its first Systemwide benchmarking project, and the Board of Regents is among the first state agencies to undergo an independent management audit under a plan initiated by Governor Barnes.

The USG Response

USG must respond emphatically to these growing demands for more centralized oversight of institutional processes to improve academic program quality. The System reinforces the principle that effective academic program review must be faculty driven and must focus on program improvement. At the same time, it is imperative that the Board of Regents meets expectations of effective oversight by the statewide community it serves. Ideally, the USG approach to comprehensive program review will ensure academic integrity as well as provide a record of responsibility and good practice to show our funding partners. Both the institutions’ and the Central Office’s roles are essential to achieving that goal.

As part of the System’s response, the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs charged the Regents Administrative Committee on Institutional Effectiveness (RACIE) to make recommendations concerning the role of the Central Office in the comprehensive program review

process. In November 1999, a RACIE report outlining that role was presented to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

The following Comprehensive Program Review model is an outgrowth of the two preceding USG reports. It reaffirms that USG is accountable to the people and the leaders of the State of Georgia. Meeting the accountability expectations in the current state and higher education context will demand more than having every institution implement an independent review process. It will require that every review process meet certain basic, objective criteria and that the Central Office consistently monitor both the results of the institutional processes and certain empirical indicators which may suggest the need for targeted program review.

The Challenge to Improve Programs

The challenge to the committees that have worked on this report has been to define an appropriate balance between the roles of the Central Office and the roles of the institutions. The challenge to the Central Office, which cannot review programs from afar, is to take an active role in ensuring that program review is effective in improving programs and promoting efficiency. Faculty must drive the program review process, and the challenge to faculty and to the institutions is to make that process meaningful.

Guidelines for Academic Program Review

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish a system of periodic review of academic programs within the University System of Georgia institutions. It is understood that academic program review is one component of an overall institutional effectiveness plan; other components include strategic planning, assessment of student learning outcomes, and assessment of outcomes in administrative areas. It is recommended that these guidelines be reviewed periodically to determine their effectiveness in guiding program review within the University System.

I. Definitions

Program Review – systematic examination of an academic program by faculty and administrator to assess the relative value of the program in terms of viability, productivity, and quality. The focus of the review should be on the program, not on the department to academic unit. The analysis of department viability, while an important institutional activity, is independent from program review.

Review Cycle – the period of time in which all academic programs of an institution are reviewed.

Viability – the use of such considerations as available resources, student interest, career opportunities, and contributions to the goals and mission of the institution, University System, and state to determine whether a program should be continued as is or modified (expanded, curtailed, consolidated, or eliminated). Viability considerations are independent of quality measures, i.e., a high quality program could lack viability, or a program in need of considerable improvement could have high viability.

Productivity - the number of and contributions of graduates of an academic program and/or the number of students served through service courses in the context of the resources committed to its operation. (Additional measure of productivity might include counts of students who meet their educational goals through the program's offerings, including minors, certificates, or job enhancement, if such goals are part of the program's mission.)

Quality – measures of excellence. Quality indicators may include, but are not limited to, attainment of student learning outcomes, a comparison of program elements relative to internal and external benchmarks, resources, accreditation criteria, relevant external indicators of program success (e.g., license and certification results, placement in graduate schools, job placement, and awards and honors received by the program), and other standards.

II. Program Review Policy

- A. Each University System institution shall complete a systematic review of all academic programs at least every seven years. If a program is accredited by an external entity or agency, that review may substitute for institutional program review. If an external accreditation entity's review cycle is ten years, the ten-year review cycle may be used for that program only, pending approval of a request to the Central Office for a review cycle waiver. No program review cycle shall exceed ten years.
- B. Each institution shall develop procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs, to include the quality of teaching and learning, scholarship, and service as appropriate to mission. The review of academic programs should involve analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.
- C. At the outset of the initial program review cycle, each institution shall develop a plan for one complete cycle of program review. The Central Office must approve the plan and may require changes in the plan, providing adequate time for the change to be implemented. The institution in turn may request changes in the plan. Each institution will conduct program review according to the terms of its approved plan, providing annual updates to the plan as necessary.
- D. Planning and conduct of academic program reviews will be used for the progressive improvement and adjustment of programs in response to findings and recommendations of the reviews. "Adjustment" may include program modification, or if fully justified, consolidation or termination of the program. The responses to reviews shall be documented as part of the annual reporting process of the academic program review cycle.
- E. Each institution will submit an annual program review report to the University System Central Office, including a list of academic programs reviewed and a summary of findings for programs reviewed during the previous year. In addition, the institution will summarize actions taken and evaluation results of previous academic program reviews (from prior years, as appropriate). The institutions must make a *prima facie* case to the non-specialist that the program has undergone a review and is meeting rigorous standards. Institutions should demonstrate that they make judgments about the future of academic programs within a culture of evidence

The summary of findings section of the report must address two important guidelines: (1) identification of viability, productivity, and quality parameters measured, and (2) findings relative to defined expectations such as internal standards, and, as appropriate, external benchmarks.

III. Program Review Process

Nothing in the following guidelines precludes independent reviews of specific academic programs by the University System or any of its institutions.

Central Office

A. The Central Office will monitor the following indicators and will initiate the steps described below in section "B" if all indicators fall below minimum standards. If fewer than _____ (four?) indicators show cause for concern, the Central Office will determine whether a special review is warranted. Wherever possible, data already reported by the institutions to the System should be used to construct the indicators.

1. Undergraduate and graduate enrollment

- a. The three-year change in undergraduate and graduate full-time equivalent students show a decline greater than 10 percent.
- b. Undergraduate enrollment in the major (average over the past three years) is less than 15.
- c. Graduate enrollment in the major (average over the past three years) is less than 10.

2. Degrees awarded

- a. The three-year change in degrees awarded decreases more than 10 percent.
- b. Undergraduate degrees awarded in the major (average over the past three years) is less than 10.
- c. Graduate degrees awarded in the major (average over the past three years) is less than 5.

3. Student credit hour production

The three-year change in student credit hours generated by FTE faculty shows a decline greater than 15 percent. 9NOTE: This cannot be calculated at System level. The System CIR identifies hours by course, but the courses are not grouped into programs. The System FIS attaches a faculty member to a department, not to a degree program. While credit hours generated in service hours are important, these are functions of departments and are not measures of program quality.) We need suggestions for a different indicator here. For example: The three-year average section size in upper level courses is at least _____(10?).

4. Graduation Rates

Suggested indicators: The three-year change in program's graduates per FTE faculty member reflects a decrease greater than 10 percent. (This is similar to degrees conferred. An FTE faculty member cannot currently be identified at the System level. The System FIS can provide the number of full-time and part-time faculty teaching in a department in any given term, but it cannot attach a faculty member, or a proportion of a faculty member's time, to a program.)

The program graduation rate is less than _____. These benchmarks would need to be defined by program type. For example, a bachelor's degree program graduation rate might be defined as the ratio of all program graduates after three years to all students admitted to the program.

- B. When indicators for academic programs fall below the minimum standards, the following will occur:
 - 1. The Chief Academic Officer of the home institution will be notified and asked to respond to the specific indications that the program is not performing at an acceptable level.
 - 2. The Central Office will review and follow-up on the institution's response. The institution may be required to add that program to the current or next year's schedule of programs it will review, thus altering the institution's overall plan for the review cycle.
 - 3. If a full review of such targeted program is conducted, a separate report on the results of that program review will be submitted to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- C. The annual review of key indicators by the Central Office may also reveal questions about program effectiveness in one or more discipline areas across institutions and programs. When general questions about a degree and major in a particular discipline arise, the following will occur:
 - 1. A general review of the degree programs in that specific discipline at all USG institutions may be requested.
 - 2. A separate report from each institution on the results of the targeted program review may be requested by the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- D. In the event that either Section "B" or "C" has been invoked, the institution's schedule of programs to be reviewed that year will include the program specified by the Central Office in addition to those scheduled by the institution.
- E. The Central Office will review and approve the program review schedule for the current year and the report on programs reviewed the previous year. The Central Office will report to the Board of Regents as appropriate.

INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS

- A. Each institution will submit an initial report (one-time submission, updated as needed) to the University System Central Office. The report will list the date of the last program review, if a review has been conducted, and the accrediting body for the program, if applicable. If the program must be reviewed by an outside entity for accreditation, the review cycle and other descriptive information should be provided.

The initial report will summarize the academic program review plan and process adopted by the institution, outlining the procedures and methods to be used. An initial list of the program to be reviewed during the institution's full program review cycle will be provided.

- B. The program under review will conduct a self-study. This self-study should include relevant data on such issues as program admissions, student credit hours, number and percentage of graduates, cost/student credit hours, and resources committed to the program. The self-study should include defined expectations and a measurement of these expectations relative to internal standards and external benchmarks.

- C. Appropriate input and evaluative elements of an academic program review include:

Mission – program mission, relation to institution mission, relation to University System mission, needs of students, and demand for graduates.

Teaching and Learning, Research and Scholarship, and Service - evaluation of these program functions should include, but may not be limited to, the following kinds of elements:

Students - percent and number of majors and graduates, percent and number of graduates passing professional and qualifying examinations, diversity, selectivity, skills at entry, service course enrollments, credit-hour generation, and student learning, satisfaction and evidence of success in meeting student needs and learning outcomes.

Faculty and Staff – numbers (part – and full-time), costs, student-faculty ratio, average class size, faculty productivity, diversity, credentials, and professional development.

Facilities - space (adequacy and condition), cost, technology labs, equipment, library, and other indicators of adequacy of campus infrastructure to support the program.

Curriculum – coherence, currency, relevance to program learning outcomes and student needs, course sequencing or frequency of course offerings, and enrollment patterns.

Other Learning and Service Activities – advising, tutoring, internships, service-learning practica, study abroad, and career planning and placement.

Research and Scholarship – faculty and student involvement, productivity, reputation, level of financial support, mentoring and development opportunities for new faculty.

Service – projects completed and outcomes (program, division/school/college, institution, community and/or region levels) and contributions to mission.

- D. The program review process must provide for an analysis of the self-study and of the program by a study group of external faculty and outside evaluators, if appropriate and possible.¹ If

¹ In support of this requirement, the University System will prepare a database of qualified external reviewers for employment by the institutions in conduct of their academic program reviews. External reviewers should be a part of the academic program review in every cycle, unless the unit has been the subject of a review for another purpose, which resulted in a competent and thorough external review of the program during the current cycle. In developing this database, the System Central Office will solicit recommendations of external reviewers from throughout the System and, as necessary, will provide training to these qualified external reviewers. In addition, institutions may recommend external reviewers for

internal reviewers are used, every attempt must be made to ensure that the review is as objective as possible. As appropriate, academic programs which are professionally accredited may use the self-study and external review processes of reaffirmation to satisfy the academic program review requirements, provided these guidelines are followed.

- E. The program review process must provide for input and analysis of the review by the faculty governance and administrative bodies.
- F. The program review process must include a commitment by faculty of the program and appropriate administrators to act upon the findings and recommendations of the review. Each campus will regularly report on unit progress in implementing review recommendations.
- G. The following performance indicators will be addressed in all program reviews.

Dedicated Resources (Human, physical, fiscal)

Faculty Qualifications. The program meets all regional accreditation requirements for faculty qualifications. It is suggested that the program meet discipline-based accreditation requirements, whether or not special accreditation is sought.

Faculty/student ratio. The program reports the faculty/student ratio and demonstrates that it is adequate and efficient for its mission. (Suggested: The faculty/student ratio meets the standard recommended by accrediting organizations.)

Instructional technology. The program demonstrates that its physical facilities and non-instructional technical support are current and adequate for the program's mission.

Learning resources for faculty and students. The program demonstrates that the library and other information resources are current and adequate for the mission and that they meet the requirements of the relevant accreditation body.²

Budget Resources. There is evidence that the program has financial resources necessary to support its teaching, research, and outreach efforts as appropriate to program and institutional mission.

Program, Learning and Service Outcomes

Faculty/graduate ratio. The program's faculty/graduate ratio is computed, adjusted for the program's service role, and compared internally and with comparator institutions.

Success of graduates. The program's graduates find appropriate employment or meet post-graduation educational goals in light of market trends.

Scholarly contribution. The program's scholarly productivity is appropriate to the mission of the program and the institution.

University System approval. External reviewers may come from government, corporate, and not-for-profit sectors as well as from other academic institutions.

² Or other national/regional organization standards/guidelines as appropriate if specialized accreditation is not available or appropriate for the program.

Community service and outreach. The program's activity in community service and outreach is appropriate to the mission of the program and institution.

Retention rates. The program demonstrates that retention rates are appropriate for the program and the student population.

Student learning outcomes. Graduates of the program demonstrate that the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors of general education have been maintained and advanced. Graduates of the program exhibit mastery of their discipline.

Processes

Design of learning experiences Learning experiences are designed to reinforce the general attributes of a college graduate through recognized good practices such as the following:

- High expectations of students
- Coherence in learning
- Synthesizing experiences
- Integrating education and experience
- Active learning
- Ongoing practice of learned skills
- Prompt feedback to students
- Collaborative learning
- Significant time on task
- Respect for diverse talents and way of learning

Curriculum review. The program demonstrates that periodic review of the curriculum is carried out, based on assessment of learning outcomes and other types of feedback, such as practice in the field.

Attrition rates. The program monitors attrition rates in light of similar rates for comparator institutions, with particular attention to sub-populations of the student body. The program demonstrates that it has a process in place to monitor and promote student progress.

- H. Each program review plan must adhere to these Guidelines. In addition, institutional program review plans must meet the requirements of the Commission o Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Criteria, Section 3.1 (in part):

The institution must develop guidelines and procedures to evaluate educational effectiveness, including the quality of student learning and of research and service. This evaluation must encompass educational goals at all academic levels and research service functions of the institution. The evaluation of academic programs should involve gathering and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate student achievement.

Measures to evaluate academic programs and general education may include the following: evaluation of instructional delivery; adequacy of facilities and equipment; standardized tests; analysis of theses, portfolios, and recitals; completion rates; results of admissions tests for students applying to graduate or licensing examinations; evaluations by employers; follow-up studies of alumni; and performance student transfers at receiving institutions. The institution must evaluate its success with respect to student achievement in relation to purpose, including as

appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates.

- I. Each institution will submit an annual report on program reviews as outlined in Section “E” of the program review policy.