

Meeting Minutes: Committee on Arts and Sciences

Academic Advisory Committee for the Arts & Sciences

November 4-5, 1999

Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah, Georgia

Attending.

Ahmed Abdelal, Curtis Bailey, Kent Barefield, Jeffrey Buller, Raymond Chambers, Arthur Cleveland, Lennet Daigle, Tom Dasher, Tom Fox, Tim Goodman, Henry Harris, Ronald Henry, James Hill, Jason Horn, Elizabeth House, Myra Jackson, Wilsie Jenkins, Mary Jones, John Kohler, Grace Martin, Carl McDonald, Lanny Milbrandt, Bernie Patterson (presiding), Laurence Peterson, Elizabeth Ragsdale, Hugh Ruppensburg, Howard Shealy, Michael Stoy, Edward Vizzini, and Dorothy Zinsmeister.

Welcome.

Dr. Patterson opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m. and thanked everyone for making the trip to Savannah and for participating in this meeting. He introduced Dr. Grace Martin, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Armstrong Atlantic State University, and thanked her for hosting the meeting. Dr. Martin welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming to the meeting.

Program.

Dr. Patterson introduced Dr. Ronald Henry, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Georgia State University. Dr. Henry gave a presentation entitled "Standards in Postsecondary Education." Dr. Henry discussed moving from instructional paradigms to learning paradigms, changes in higher education, the challenges of changing systems, and the values and benefits of standards (see copy of enclosed Power Point presentation). Discussion followed the presentation. Among the items discussed: most college teachers are discipline-taught and do not know what all this "educationese" means, it is hard to understand; it needs to be made clear what the standards-based ideas are trying to accomplish; standards need to be public to give students an idea of what is expected of them, to be more public is bring out in large measure what is meant by standards-based education; and, clearly, there have always been standards, but the need is there to be more public; students come to us with very differing experiences. The idea of doing away with grades was mentioned, but doing that would do away with competition, take away motivation to perform well, and lead to mediocrity. Even though, many students will still strive to meet and exceed the upper levels of performance expected of them. There is no difference between "outcome-based learning," "standard-based learning," or "performance-based learning," and "behavioral objective" learning. Goals are nice, but students do not have to reach them to graduate. Having standards does require students to perform at that level to graduate. There seems to be some difficulty in measuring these standards in the classroom. Even though this is a difficult task, it is what educators need to be doing. Will these standards be System-wide or enacted individually at each institution? There will be a number of common themes in areas where there is a lot of agreement, but there will also be local variations, especially standards for graduation where the standards will reflect the makeup of the faculty and will focus on several areas. The commonality for student transfers will not be much more than the introductory courses. What happens if a student does not reach proficiency? He/she will go back and work on issues for the individual

standards. Clearly, not all questions are thought through now. Just because things are the way they are does not mean they cannot be changed. There are no national standards, only state and institutional standards. The whole idea is that it does not matter which institution a student attends, there will be a common set of learning outcomes. Standards are not linked directly to a course. Dr. Henry reminded everyone this is a work in progress, a pilot program. It may be easier to assess how much content the student has absorbed but more of a challenge to assess broad outcomes. Institutions need to target a small number of highly respected faculty who are willing to work on implementing these standards. It is sometimes difficult to break out of a mindset in the academy. These standards may be a useful tool in discussing how courses may be restructured to encourage student learning.

Sub-Committee Meetings.

After a brief break, sub-committees met from 3:15-4:00 p.m. Individual committees will report to the group at 9:00 a.m. on Friday.

Other Business.

Dr. Patterson introduced Dr. Dorothy Zinsmeister, Senior Associate for Academic Affairs from the Board of Regents, to update the group on current issues. She distributed a membership list of the Academic Advisory Committee on Arts and Sciences 1999-2000 for members to update. She needs the most current information to update the web page for the group. Although there is only one official representative from each institution, other Arts and Sciences deans and assistant/associate deans are encouraged to attend these meetings and be included on the listserve so that they can receive mailings.

Dr. Zinsmeister mentioned the recent teaching and learning conference for the University System held in Atlanta. John Bransford from Vanderbilt presented on brain research in teaching and learning. Arts and Sciences deans do not usually receive such information as this. The letters outlining these types of conferences go to the vice presidents for academic affairs, and they are asked to put together a team of faculty, particular those involved in certain initiatives, to attend these conferences. Dr. Zinsmeister then sends conference information directly to faculty involved. This is a wonderful opportunity to capitalize on faculty development opportunities that are no cost to the institutions. The team model works well because the faculty teams return to their campuses and work together to share what they have learned. Well-respected, highly motivated faculty who are able to work well with others to bring about change are good choices for these conferences. The suggestion was made to Dr. Zinsmeister that she make this conference information available to all the deans on the committee, with both electronic and paper copies, and not rely solely on the vice presidents to disseminate it. She said she would try to facilitate. The suggestion was also made to send out a clear agenda for these teaching and learning conferences. Sometimes it is difficult to tell exactly what the conferences are about and it is hard to target particular faculty to send. Some deans also suggested the possibility of sending teams to individual institutions to present.

Dr. Zinsmeister also shared some budget information. The teaching and learning grants are suspended for this year and the money was given to the campuses. Part of the money was used for faculty development. The Distinguished Professor funding was also redirected for next year. There are guidelines for using the money

awarded for the Distinguished Professor. Many campuses have used the money for faculty development, and to enhance teaching to result in better student learning. The \$45,000 allocation required a \$25,000 match of non-state money, but some smaller institutions have difficulty coming up with the match. The money is intact for this year for the Distinguished Professor Program but will probably be redirected in next year's budget.

Dr. Zinsmeister reminded the group that there is a faculty development calendar on the System website and urged them to periodically check it to see what opportunities are upcoming which will affect faculty in their areas. "The Regents Research in Undergraduate Education Award" is new this year. This award was suggested by the last year's faculty associate who wondered why teaching was valued and research was not. The RFP asks institutions to identify faculty who have spent time working with and conducting research with undergraduate students. The award is divided into different sections two-year institutions compete with each other, four-year institutions compete with each other, and research institutions compete with each other. The RFPs have just gone out. The deadline for selection is February.

The RFP for the new BOR faculty associate will be sent electronically to the vice presidents for academic affairs on Monday, November 8. The request asks the vice presidents to identify an individual they feel could benefit from the experience at the System office and who could return and benefit their home institution. The faculty associate becomes involved in all the work of academic affairs, such as program review, faculty development, distance education, etc. The BOR does not pay the salary but does provide \$30,000 for the home institution to hire a replacement. Money is available to facilitate the faculty associates move to Atlanta if necessary.

Dr. Zinsmeister also mentioned the campus dialogue program from the Carnegie Institute on the Scholarship of Teaching. She shared a brochure from the Carnegie Foundation, which illustrated several of its programs. In these campus dialogues, faculty and administrators talk about what the scholarship of teaching means. There is no commitment necessary to be involved in the campus dialogue other than to be willing to discuss the scholarly work you are doing in teaching your discipline, what it means to teach in your discipline, and how students learn in your discipline. There are several institutions involved with the Carnegie project, which requires administrative support at the top level. Although these are campus-based programs, conversations via the Internet between campuses have become national conversations. If there is interest at your institution in becoming involved in the campus dialogue effort, Dr. Zinsmeister can support and help facilitate it. The Carnegie Scholars Program is restricted to eight disciplines and Dr. Deborah Vess, IDST Director at Georgia College & State University, is one of the 25 scholars selected nationally. These scholars spend ten days in California twice during the year and work on projects and gather and share data. The application process is not difficult, but the competition is keen. The preliminary proposal is screened and if there is interest in it, the Carnegie Foundation will contact the faculty member and ask for a broader proposal.

The RFPs for the Academic Advisory Committees have changed somewhat this year. In the past, the total amount available was \$30,000, but this year it will be \$75,000. The funds will be distributed to a smaller number of committees, up to \$25,000 each. At least two committees have to collaborate with one another. For example, the Academic Advisory Committee on Education can collaborate with the Academic Advisory Committee on Arts and Sciences. The Teacher Preparation Sub-Committee may think about some proposals. The money can be

utilized beginning July 1, 2000.

A question was asked about the search for the new Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. An advertisement has not been circulated yet. Dr. Zinsmeister mentioned Dr. Sethnas involvement with the teacher preparation initiatives, technology issues, benchmarking, etc. and that David Morgan is responsible for much of the daily activities in Academic Affairs.

Dr. Zinsmeister also mentioned STEP (Standards-based Teacher Education Preparation) and the three institutions involved in it: University of Georgia, Georgia State University, and State University of West Georgia. Fort Valley State University will be involved this year. The \$11.8 million over three years from the Title II Grant for Teacher Preparation provides funds for other institutions to become involved in STEP. Dr. Zinsmeister encouraged the group to investigate what STEP has to offer when the RFP comes out and how Arts and Sciences faculty can cooperate with Education faculty in preparing teachers.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. and will resume Friday, November 5 at 9:00.

Dean Grace Martin opened the meeting on Friday morning by introducing Interim President Frank Butler who welcomed everyone back. Dr. Patterson then called for the reports from the sub-committees.

Bylaws Sub-Committee.

Dr. Patterson and Dr. Ray Chambers were on this sub-committee and distributed copies of the proposed bylaws. The group reviewed the bylaws, article by article, and modified them as needed. Dr. Patterson will make the recommended changes and distribute copies to the group for a vote.

Faculty Workload Sub-Committee.

Tom Fox reported for this group. Jimmy Solomon had sent questions for thought and discussion to this group earlier via email. The sub-committee discussed these questions at this meeting, along with other concerns. The sub-committee feels there needs to be a clearer understanding of just what workload policies are in the University System. No two institutions have the same policy and we need to find out what priorities are and make a recommendation System-wide. The suggestion was made to have that item as the focus of a future meeting. The most recent statement on workload was written and disseminated by Dr. Zinsmeister and states it is an institutional decision. Lots of discussion centers around workload at various committee meetings, and nothing ever gets resolved. A better strategy would be to share with each other our own individual strategies for managing workload that seem to be working on our individual campuses. One strategy will not work on all campuses. One idea is to poll institutions via the list serve to get their input/definitions on workload policies. One basic point is the need to define what is meant by "workload". A broader definition is needed, because workload is obviously a bigger issue than simply teaching. The issue of workload is hard to define beyond credit hours. The general consensus is that workload is important and a topic of interest to all deans, and the decision was made to definitely pursue the workload issue.

Teacher Preparation Sub-Committee.

Tom Dasher reported that this group discussed several items and agreed there was a great deal going on in educator preparation in the state. Georgia is leading the way nationally in discussion about the best way to prepare teachers. The new Academic Advisory Committee on Educator Preparation met on October 20 and discussed and passed Area F recommendations. These issues are particularly important to two-year institutions, which prepare 50-60% of students who transfer to four-year programs. The AACEP recommendations define the outcomes for Area F, i.e., what knowledge and skills must future teachers have. In most cases, courses would be an institutional decision, but some specific courses are required. At this meeting of education and arts and sciences deans in Macon, there was concern that administrators were determining the curriculum rather than the faculty. Each institution must define how the outcomes are being met in Area F. Institutions that prepare teachers are encouraged to get involved and attend meetings of the new AACEP advisory committee. The committee also discussed content and ways to teach content. There is a need for institutions to share with each other what new curriculum will be in place for Fall, 2000, and how we are developing courses in Arts and Sciences to meet those expectations, especially in early childhood and middle grades education. The recommendation was made to meet to share what proposals are being developed. Title II grant opportunities were also discussed. Georgia received the 2nd highest amount of grant money and is seen as one of the leading states in the country.

Curriculum Sub-Committee.

Larry Peterson reported for this group. Input on topics was solicited before this meeting in Savannah, and three areas are of interest. There was some discussion about the quality and acceptance of online learning courses, and it was agreed there should be more discussion at a future meeting of the Academic Advisory Committee on Arts and Sciences. The second area of discussion centered around foreign language and its place in the core curriculum. There was concern about where it fits in across the University System. The last area of discussion was to clarify BS and BA in terms of curriculum.

Election of Vice Chair.

Nominations were opened for the Vice Chair who, assuming the Bylaws are adopted, will become Chair on July 1. Larry Peterson, Kennesaw State University, and Tom Dasher, Valdosta State University, were nominated. The nominations were closed, a tally was made, and Tom Dasher was elected Vice Chair.

General Discussion.

Next, Dr. Patterson called for a general discussion and questions. Is there a need for a spring meeting? Several issues arose at this meeting that bear further discussion (on line courses, ECORE, workload, teacher preparation curriculum), and the general consensus is there is a need for a spring meeting. The idea of a Thursday afternoon and Friday morning meeting seems to be a good one, and maybe a spring meeting could focus on two main issues, workload on Thursday afternoon and teacher preparation on Friday morning. There was some discussion about Dr. Dasher hosting a spring meeting in March in Valdosta.

Dr. Zinsmeister mentioned that the System office has formally contacted the Southern Association to apply for a "substantive change" visit to explore Distance Education on the System level. If the decision is made to move ahead with this, the visit will happen about this time next year. Georgia will be the first state in which the Southern Association will look at all institutions involved with Distance Education at one time, with an agreement

that once this has been done, it will not need to be repeated for two or three years.

Dr. Patterson thanked Dr. Zinsmeister for attending the meeting and Dr. Grace Martin for hosting the group. With no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.

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Content Source: Academic Affairs