

Political Science RAC Skype Meeting April 15th

Dlynn Williams: University of North Georgia

Kimberly Gill: Columbus State University

Geoff Bowden, Savannah State

Joe Robbins: Valdosta State University

Kerwin Swint: Kennesaw State

Frank Pridemore: South Georgia State College

Brett Larson, East Georgia State College

Josh Meddaugh: Clayton State

Chapman Rackaway: University of West Georgia

Kris Beck: Gordon State College

Paul Answorth: University of Georgia

Abby Paulson: American Political Science Association

Julie Lester: Middle Georgia State

Jonathan Watts Hull: System Office

Tristan Denley: System Office

Barbara Brown: System Office

Skype Call

Dlynn opened by highlighting the importance of civic education. She gave information relating to the Legislative Requirements as well as global competencies. She provided data from The Final Report of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service.

Political Science courses and American Government focuses on the structures of government and how they interact. The foundational principles of international/global competencies differ from American Government.

Point was made that going forward with a curriculum that does not require American Government, from advisors the idea is that students take courses in both American Government and History. Concern from legislators is that the removal of American Government would not meet the requirements of the legislative mandate.

Bret Lawson-Has there been any attempt to reach out to the legislature to get some clarification regarding the intent of the legislation? Interested in how we move forward in the spirit of the legislation to improve what we already have.

One of the concerns from faculty: how many things are we going to try to condense into one course? Concern is due to public service orientation, the course may potentially have so many learning outcomes linked to American Government, and how can all of these things be accomplished?

Point of evolution to what we have: what is the baseline point of skill and knowledge we want our graduates to have? What does it take to achieve these aspirational content-one course-two courses? How do we balance within the actual course content? There are practical constraints to creating this within 60 hours-how do we satisfy all of the constraints. The task is to find a way to do this. To thoroughly deal with some of the learning outcomes, a single course may not be sufficient.

Concern: Take six hours of course materials and lump them into a 3 hour course-to what degree is there an interaction between those who teach American Government and American History? Very different enterprises. Suggestion is some coherence between Political Science and History.

Many on the RAC voiced concerns with this concept in that the collaboration with History in terms of training and background are so different as are the classes. Basically, History and Political Science are not a natural marriage.

Discussion: Originally, Political Science and History were of the same vein. There has been a transition and divergence with Political Science moving toward public policy, to statistics, to current economic trends. In many ways the two disciplines differ. The topics differ substantially.

Global Competencies-in the social sciences

Lance highlighted the importance of separating global competencies from basic American Government courses. Cross cutting competencies could potentially crowd out some of the main concepts in courses. Global competencies better treated in the social science domain or in a specific globalizations/international course rather than in the American Government course.