

Minutes of 2009 Annual Meeting
Foreign Language Academic Advisory Committee (FLAAC)
Macon, Georgia
April 6, 2009

Attendees:

Albany State U	Arnold Odio
Atlanta Metropolitan C	Aldene Preddie-Dale.
Augusta State U	Jana Sandarg, Chair Elect
Clayton State U	Joe Johnson
Dalton State College	Nancy Mason
Fort Valley State U	Victoria Dubriel, Joyce Jenkins
Gainesville State College	Eric Skipper
Georgia C&SU	David DePosada
Georgia Gwinnett C	J. Victor McGlone
Georgia Highlands College	Mark Greger
Georgia Perimeter College	Carol Wilkerson
Georgia Southern U	Eric Kartchner
Georgia SW U	Elena Odio
Gordon College	Darren Broome, Secretary
Kennesaw State U	Bill Griffin
Middle Georgia College	Trino Prados, Chair
North Georgia CSU	Jim Chesnut
Savannah State U	Boniface Kawasha
Southern Polytechnic SU	Bernice Nuhfer-Halten
University of Georgia	Martin Kagel
U of West Georgia	Gary Schmidt

Special Attendees:

BOR/U System of Georgia	Laura James (Senior Executive Director, High School to College Transitions)
Georgia DOE	Joe Valentine

FLAAC 2009 Recommendations and Endorsements:

1. In light of the University System of Georgia's commitment to globalization of its curriculum, the FLAAC recommends at least six hours of foreign language be required for all curricula where one of the courses is at the 2001-level or above, or its equivalent.
2. The FLAAC recommends that the University System of Georgia maintain diversity of foreign language offerings in spite of economic challenges.

Monday, April 7, 2009

Chair Trino Prados called the meeting to order at 9:37.

A summary of the agenda was distributed. One item on the agenda was changed (Laura James would address the committee at 4:00).

Report from Joe Valentine, Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Legislation

Valentine addressed the following items:

1. Professional Standards Commission is requiring teachers to have P-12 certificates and more methods courses; this will give them the ability and skills to teach a larger range of grades/courses. Georgia Performance Standards are now out for perusal.
2. The Professional Standards Commission currently is looking at all numbers for languages for the state and have noticed an unbelievable growth in Spanish where of the 262,000 foreign language students in the state of Georgia, 202,000 are enrolled in Spanish. He pointed out that the viability of other foreign languages relies heavily on the personalities and dynamics of the teachers.
3. On the website, www.gadoe.org and under world languages, you can find district coordinators throughout the state of Georgia. Valentine is in the process of updating the site. Here you will find coordinators throughout the state of Georgia, in case you want to contact one of them.
4. He pointed out that the year of 2010 would be all about making connections. There has been much turnover within districts, in particular, for languages other than Spanish. After he left his job as German teacher, his district was unable to find a replacement.
5. He encouraged others to contact him for teacher placement.
6. Within Georgia Virtual School, world languages account for over 40% of the classes: Spanish, French, Chinese, and Japanese. Members of the committee expressed concern about offering on-line courses since there is the question of oral proficiency, and it also might cause the state to cut more foreign language programs.
7. He plans to send out distribution list, so he can hear about other potential foreign languages. He stressed better communication to maintain diverse languages.
8. In five years, Georgia should have an Arabic program, but for the time being Arabic would be targeted to heritage speakers.
9. He mentioned that in North Carolina there is Project C.A.F.E. (Calling All Future Educators). This is an initiative to identify and recognize outstanding young people who could have a future in teaching a world language other than English. Georgia should consider adopting a plan such as this one since we still import a great number of teachers of foreign languages. Many foreign language teachers come from Florida.
10. He touched on SALSA, which airs on Georgia Public Broadcasting daily. SALSA is a comprehensive Spanish program for young children featuring puppets, state-of-the-art graphics, animation and a good dose of humor. The program caters to kindergarten to 3rd grade audiences. It can be purchased for \$400, and the only requirement is that one day of the week a paraprofessional must be present. The state of Wyoming implemented the program statewide. Kids really enjoy it. Studies found students were not dropping Spanish and beginning other languages. SALSA can be construed as an inexpensive way of implementing languages.

11. 21% of Georgia secondary students transfer to other schools. Transient rate is very high. He recommended that students should pick one language beginning in grammar school and continue with it. Regarding schools that have limited offerings in foreign languages, Valentine suggested students would have attend another school, or take the course on-line, Georgia Virtual.

12. The topic of teacher certification came up. Valentine recommended that students work on teaching certificate while in school versus returning to college, let's say, if the student only has B.A. in German. Bill Griffin pointed out that teacher certification is complicated and expensive. Valentine was eager to know how each school operates with teaching certificates. Valentine was aware that teaching certification is becoming a cumbersome task because of no clear cut requirements/rules. Bill Griffin also mentioned that one way of obtaining teacher certification is through a MAT program, but it requires 48 graduate hours, considerably more than most MA degrees. While discussing the difficulties of teacher certification, Bill Griffin questioned why the Professional Standards Commission and Department of Education are separate. That is, Bill Griffin thought both offices should be working more in unison.

13. There are three successful dual language programs. One of them is in Clayton County, Unidos Dual Language Charter School. *Unidos* is the state's first public charter school to offer students instruction of the state-required curriculum in two languages. Unidos goal is to be 50/50 (English/Spanish); beginning in kindergarten 70/30(English/Spanish) while in 3rd grade it becomes 50/50. On the subject of Clayton County Schools, Trino Prados asked if the school was affected by the SACS review. Valentine replied that the school would not lose its charter. Another dual language school is Hall County World Language Academy. At this school, English and Spanish-speaking students learn together for most of the day with academic subjects taught in the two languages. The home language of all students is maintained and developed while additional language is acquired. Students develop fluency and literacy in Spanish and English as they learn to listen, speak, read, and write. The other dual language program is in Douglas County. North Carolina is one of the leaders of dual language schools in the country. If interested in observing a dual language school, contact Carry Woodcock. Jim Chesnut asked Valentine if there was any discussion of adding dual language programs in other areas of Georgia, other than metropolitan Atlanta, and specifically in South Georgia, where students do not have the same advantages as in the metro area. Valentine was optimistic that these schools would be added to other areas.

14. Another concern for the state is the shortage of foreign language teachers, notably in Spanish. A question was asked where the state will find Spanish teachers. Valentine stated that in 2012, Hispanics will be the majority in that graduating high school class. He believes it is essential to find heritage speakers of Spanish to become future teachers. Bernice Nuhfer-Halten offered her concern that heritage speakers of Spanish could be counter intuitive if they are deficient in English.

After Valentine's discussion, Trino Prado asked the committee to review last year's recommendations as well as to nominate a new secretary. Trino Prado decided to postpone the nomination of the secretary until the afternoon. A propos the recommendations, Bill Griffin asked where the recommendations go. In response to the question, Trino imagined they went to the Board of Regents. Jim Chesnut mentioned

that in the past, this committee never received feedback on the recommendations. Arnold Odio suggested the recommendations be sent to each college's core curriculum representative, and that someone from the FLAAC committee attend a board meeting. Jim Chesnut recommended that the chair of the FLAAC committee attend the Board meeting where our recommendations are discussed and voted on.

Next year's meeting

The committee agreed to meet again in Macon: Monday, April 13, 2010.

Other morning items for discussion

1. The merger of community colleges with technical colleges

Trino Prados mentioned that Middle Georgia College recently merged with Georgia Aviation College. According to Trino Prados, it has been a positive for his college so far. His numbers have increased in all of his Spanish courses. Trino also cautioned that the nature of this merger was unique. GATC is an aviation technical college. The merger has allowed Middle Georgia College to acquire four-year status offering bachelor degrees in the aviation field. This merger is quite different from the proposed mergers. Bernice Nuhfer-Halten asked if this merger was approved by SACS. Trino said the courses were approved by SACS. Committee members posed the questions of transferability of courses from technical college as well as the academic rigor of the courses. Mark Greger pointed out that in Mississippi all two-year colleges all under one umbrella. Mark Greger proceeded to say that in Mississippi, two-year colleges are considered academic institutions that also fulfill a technical mandate. As a representative of a two-year institution at this meeting, Mark Greger expressed his opposition to the merger pointing out if the merger were to succeed as proposed, two-year colleges would be considered technical institutions that fulfill an academic role. Many members agreed that community college would absorb more students from technical colleges than vice versa, if the merger is approved. Jana Sandarg believed the merger could negatively affect her university, Augusta State University. She said her college has, to a certain degree, a quasi community college within it. A number of her students are deficient in college preparatory core, and if the community colleges merge with the technical college, her college would potentially lose students to Augusta Tech. Eric Kartchner suggested that perhaps if the students are able to dual enroll at a college and technical college—as in Colorado—the enrollment would not decrease. Carol Wilkerson alluded to the fact that faculty find the possible merger offensive, and they do not feel they have enough information.

At 11:30, Trino Prados adjourned the committee for lunch.

The committee reconvened at 12:38.

Announcements

Jim announced that Jacqueline Konan is retiring from Columbus State University.

Elections

Eric Kartchner was nominated as next secretary. The committee unanimously voted for Eric Kartchner.

Other items for discussion in the afternoon

1. Faculty loads

Since his arrival to Georgia, Eric Kartchner discovered that in Georgia faculty loads vary considerably from college to college. Eric Kartchner would like to find another university in Georgia with which he could compare his own: Georgia Southern University. In response to this question of which college he should compare his college, Bill Griffin suggested Eric Kartchner not compare his college to any college. Bernice Nuhfer-Halten said we might want to base teaching loads on what faculty members are evaluated on. Subsequent to the discussion of work loads, the committee addressed the topic of how much adjuncts are paid per class. Committee members were in agreement that adjunct salaries vary considerably in the state. Also, there seems to be considerable variance in the state between the definition of lecturer and instructor as well as their expectations. David DePosada brought up that at GCSU instructors are considered tenure-track positions. In the course of a discussion about class sizes and foreign language instruction, Martin Kagel pointed to a recent MLA report on "Foreign Languages and Higher Education." Eric Kartchner mentioned that at Georgia Southern his department needs an average of 22 students per section in the summer sessions in order to break even financially. Bill Griffin added that at Kennesaw State, class size for the summer is averaged out across the university, not departmentally. Eric Skipper shared with the committee that at his college he has a magic number of 11. In other words, if his class does not make 11, then the instructor has the option of teaching the course at a prorated salary.

2. Proficiency standards

Eric Kartchner expressed his concern about proficiency objectives in foreign languages. He asked the committee if their courses were oriented to proficiency. Trino replied that his college must develop proficiency objectives for SACS review. Eric Kartchner proceeded to say his school does the same but they are not related to ACTFL Certified Proficiency Testing Programs. Carol Wilkerson explained that in many cases students who do not reach advanced low on ACTFL go on, let's say, to be literature majors while in the past students who did not reach advanced low went on to be foreign language teachers. Bill Griffin said very few of his students have not reached advanced low on ACTFL. At Southern Polytechnic State University, the school doesn't have a major in Spanish but does offer a class where students must take Oral Proficiency Interview; the school only has a certificate in professional Spanish. Arnold Odio questioned certificates, but Bill Griffin asserted that certificates are decided by each institution. Eric Kartchner, then asked how many of us consider our programs proficiency oriented? In response, very few members raised their hands. Eric Kartchner conjectured the reason that students don't score at intermediate-high or advance-low may reflect that instructors

need to become familiar with the principles of proficiency in order to help students reach higher levels of proficiency. Some members agreed that upper-level courses did not include enough proficiency standards. Furthermore, a number of committee members concurred that very few students would reach superior level with four-year college degrees, and some native speakers were not at the superior level. Bernice Nuhfer-Halten encouraged Eric Kartchner to give a presentation on proficiency skills, possibly at the next FLAG conference.

3. Teacher education programs

Eric Kartchner opened discussion on why not all four-year colleges have foreign language teacher programs. Bill Griffin shared with the committee that Kennesaw States offers foreign language certificate from their division; however, MAT comes from the school of education.

Carol Wilkerson mentioned that students are not clamoring into being foreign language pedagogy specialists since it can be too much of a burden for these faculty members to teach both foreign languages/pedagogy while at the same time observe students. Joyce Jenkins mentions that the move is toward MAT programs. Darren Broome affirmed that most MAT programs require six graduate hours in the content (language). At Kennesaw State, students must take 18 graduate hours in the content (language) for MAT. A possible reason for the few content courses for some MAT programs is due to the department of education's strong hold on determining curriculum, pointed out by Joyce Jenkins. There was a general consensus that most two MAT programs or undergraduate foreign language education programs include two methodology courses.

Trino called for a break at 2:10, and he then called the meeting back to order at 2:30.

4. Discussion on recommendations for BOR

Trino proposed we form groups to discuss possible recommendations for the Board of Regents.

The committee agreed on two recommendations:

- 1) In light of the University System of Georgia's commitment to globalization of its curriculum, the FLAAC recommends at least six hours of foreign language be required for all curricula where one of the courses is at the 2001-level or above, or its equivalent.
- 2) The FLAAC recommends that the University System of Georgia maintain diversity of foreign language offering in spite of the economic challenges.

5. How universities count double majors

Eric Kartchner proposed that the Board of Regents facilitate a double major program regardless of the degree designation. Committee members from U of Georgia, Kennesaw State U, Augusta State U, and Georgia CS&U all stated that this practice of having a double major program, regardless of the degree designation, is already occurring at their institutions. Eric Kartchner commented that less than 15% of degrees are BA's. Eric Kartchner proceeded to say for most degrees, students have 15 to 30 electives and they have enough elective courses for a degree/major in foreign languages. For instance, if they are getting a business degree, how much more difficult would it be to get another degree. There seemed to be a great deal of inconsistency amongst colleges/universities regarding dual degrees and dual majors.

6. Participation of faculty from private institutions

Carol Wilkerson suggested for future FLAAC meetings that we invite other private colleges. The committee was against the idea of inviting private colleges but recommended that they be invited to the FLAG and SCOLT conferences.

Report from Laura James, Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia

Laura James introduced herself as the newly appointed BOR representative to the FLAAC committee. She expressed enthusiasm for working with the committee, as well as her support for the role of foreign language in education. She also informed the committee of the result of the final budget approved by the legislative session, which included cuts for the Office of P-16 Initiatives, ICAPP, and the Early College, among other areas. She mentioned that some proposed cuts in funding for capital projects had been added back into the final budget; however, the total percent in cuts for the System were larger than expected. Beyond the general information available in the most recent legislative update, she indicated that she was not able to elaborate further on the budget. She reiterated that while there were many challenges facing the University System of Georgia and the State within the context of the current economic circumstances, she stressed what continues to be a strong commitment on behalf of the USG to support established priorities.

Following a brief update on the legislative session, members of the committee expressed their disappointment and lack of clarity around the decision to dismantle the Office of International Education. When questioned about the seemingly insignificant budgetary impact (less than 1% was noted by a committee member) resulting from shutting down the Office of International Education, Laura James indicated that her understanding of the decision was consistent with the feedback that it was one based on budgetary needs, and that she had no other information. Members of the committee expressed an interest in having the question posed for additional information to members of the Board of Regents, and Laura agreed to take the question back for consideration and response.

Arnold Odio asked Laura James about the process for both submitting and receiving responses to FLAAC recommendations: specifically, where do recommendations go once they are forwarded from the committee, and who, at the Board level, makes the decisions regarding the recommendations? He also asked about how the committee would receive feedback. As a new representative to the FLAAC committee, Laura indicated that she would confirm this process, and report back to the committee to guide in subsequent communications to the Board, and for future reference. This included confirmation of the process for approval of minutes, along with details regarding recommendations to the core curriculum committee. In response to this question, she indicated that Dr. Robert Vaughn serves as the BOR liaison for the core curriculum committee, and that other issues that are academic in nature may need to be forwarded to others at the BOR, like Dr. Mendi Spencer, since individual roles vary, and may, at times, overlap. Laura James encouraged the committee to forward issues to her attention in the immediate, with the commitment to follow up as soon as possible regarding other protocols. She also stated that she would assume responsibility going forward for coordinating feedback to and from the committee.

Bernice Nuhfer-Halten asked Laura to offer clarity regarding how support services offered by the Office of International Education were to be carried out going forward, to include the former duties of Rick Sutton. Laura James indicated that she would address the committee's concerns with representatives of the Board and follow up with the FLAAC. Laura James stated that if specific priorities for the committee were deemed immediate in nature, to include follow up on the questions of the Office of International Education, and foreign language as a priority at the system level, that she would address these with the appropriate person at the BOR the following week, or as soon as possible.

Laura James asked if there were other recommendations from the FLAAC. Jim Chesnut asked that she hear the current recommendations from FLAAC. The recommendations were read to her. It was stated that the recommendations reflected a long-standing committee position, and although these had not changed for approximately a decade, the issues had not been addressed to the committee's satisfaction.

Laura James indicated that she communicated with Dr. George Rainbolt, Chair of the Core Curriculum Committee, prior to the meeting to solicit his input on issues relevant to the FLAAC committee. She read to the committee his email response, highlighting the issues he indicated were most relevant to the FLAAC regarding foreign languages in the core curriculum. She also informed the committee members that the next meeting for the Core Curriculum committee was scheduled for April 17.

Laura James read from the text of the email from George Rainbolt regarding core curriculum review: "Off the top of my head, I see two issues/items of particular import to FLAAC. 1. The basic idea is to give institutions a lot more flexibility. One of the motivations for this was that many institutions want to put more foreign languages into the core but there is no natural place to do that under the current rules. Under the new rules, there are many ways one could put in foreign languages. For example, an

institution might decide to have an Area B of 9 hours and put three 3-hour foreign language courses in there. Or one could expand Area C and put them there. There are lots of other possibilities. 2. At its next meeting the Committee will discuss the following rule: Institutions may decide that the first course in a foreign language falls outside of the maximum number of hours indicated for undergraduate degrees and/or outside of Areas A-F. This rule is part of the current BOR core policy and it can be found at line 249 of the first rough draft document noted above. Some have suggested that this is not a good rule because it discourages the development of a foreign language different from the one studied in high school. Others have suggested that this is a good rule because we do not want students taking a foreign language different from the one they took in high school merely because it seems to them that the first course in a language is easier than subsequent courses. If the FLAAC has input on this rule, the Committee would very much like to hear it. The next (and last) Committee meeting is on April 17th so time is short. But several BOR advisory committees have worked via email to make recommendations and post them to the blog. If FLAAC wanted to do that, that would be great.”

The email sparked considerable debate among committee members regarding what to do about foreign languages in the new core curriculum for Georgia. Jim Chesnut stated that the Board of Regents did not respond to the recommendations from the FLAAC committee or take a stand for the core curriculum recommendations in 1998. Laura stressed the need to define the primary issues of importance to the committee, and to provide those for consideration prior to the April 17th meeting.

Carol Wilkerson also mentioned her concern about the elimination of foreign languages at the secondary level, which was echoed by others. Members also expressed concern about the reduction in foreign language programs at the levels of P-16, stating the question of how students can be competitive in a global society if foreign language programs are eliminated statewide.

Laura James summed up her understanding of the committee’s concerns, and requested that these be forwarded, in writing, to her to address with the appropriate representative at the Board of Regents. The gist of the committee’s concerns centered around how global literacy can be obtained without foreign language training/education, and why all elementary and some high school foreign language programs, in light of the need for global literacy and awareness, are being eliminated throughout the State.

Jim Chesnut expressed his dismay in how one can study international studies and not take foreign languages. He also mentioned that at one time, the study of foreign languages was reserved for an elite group studying for the BA degree. In an increasingly global environment, members of the committee stressed that foreign language study is essential for Americans to be competitive in all fields. Jim Chesnut asked why foreign language study in college can be considered less important than, say, another social science course, something already studied in high school. Arnold Odio added that students frequently do better in terms of proficiency in their native language after studying a second language.

Other committee members agreed, emphasizing the need for foreign language education for both native and non-native language learners.

Meeting adjourned: 4:40.

Minutes submitted by Darren Broome.