

Minutes
USG Learning Support Director's Meeting
November 2, 2001
Macon State College

- I. Rick Reynolds, chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He welcomed the directors and guests.

- II. Sharon Carlin from BOR gave a presentation on Regents' Test remediation possibilities through eCore. She said that there are two courses in Regents' reading and English remediation ready to go. Since Regents' remediation isn't really part of the core, she wanted feedback from the directors about their interest in using these courses through their individual institutions' programs. She said that each institution would list the course, and it would be made available through the GLOBE website catalog of courses. She asked what institutions presently offer online remediation. Elizabeth Ragsdale said that Darton offers online reading remediation. Floyd College offers reading and essay remediation online, and Fort Valley State College offers essay remediation.

- III. Sharon also passed out information about the Sharing Content Online for University Teaching (SCOUT) website. She discussed two areas in which SCOUT can be helpful to instructors: teaching under eCore, and adopting materials from SCOUT to use in one's own classes. She explained that before a course is put on the SCOUT catalog, all materials not developed by the system are removed. She asked that the directors encourage faculty at our institutions to consider developing online courses. She answered several questions:
 - How are these courses developed? Faculty from BOR institutions develop the courses.
 - How does a faculty member become eligible to develop such courses? Faculty apply and are accepted based on their experience, recommendations from their institution's VPAA, and their desire to teach online.
 - What students should take these courses? Online courses are not a be-all for all students, but they are a good way to deliver courses to a certain segment of the student population, especially adult learners. The online environment provides opportunities for students who might not have the opportunity to get an education because of time or location constraints.
 - How are the courses selected? A set of general education outcomes is the driving force behind the development of courses. They must meet legal, pedagogical, and technical criteria. Extensive evaluations are done on eCore courses, especially in the first year.

- IV. Kathleen Burk presented information derived from the Learning Support Feedback Project, which was developed to examine the validity of the placement tests and placement process. The results will be used to determine whether or not to raise math COMPASS system scores. The data were analyzed to address several issues: low grades in core math classes, high withdrawal rates from these classes, adequate preparation for core math courses, and the effects of learning support courses on the pass rates of students in core courses. Grades in courses for first-time freshmen over one academic year were collected (Summer 2000-Spring 2001). The data presented indicate that Learning Support math gives students a real chance to pass core math courses; Learning Support has a definite effect on the probability that a student will pass. Those students who exempted Learning Support with a COMPASS math score near the system minimum were more likely to fail core math courses than those who were required to take Learning Support math. Data show that system CPE and COMPASS scores should be raised. Data collected on COMPASS reading scores indicate that they do a good job of predicting success in Political Science 1101. Kathleen commented that this was the first time we've had hard data of students who went through LS to show that LS works. Rick Reynolds pointed out that we want to put a positive spin on this with the administration of our institutions. He said that we need to provide administrators with a clear explanation of the positive effects of Learning Support courses.
- V. Kathleen said that the problems with the Windows version of COMPASS are ongoing. ACT says changes can be implemented in January in time for students entering summer term. She wants to have it in place by February, but she can't say for sure that it will be ready.
- VI. Kathleen asked the directors for feedback on those institutions that have set a schedule for their Regents' remediation courses. A 3-year schedule is being set up by the BOR. She wanted to know if the institutions want maximum time before the tests. The BOR will move the test as late as possible to still get the results back before the end of the semester. Spring break can cause a problem for some schools, and Kathleen said that testing centers can test early if the spring break schedule requires it. It is not possible to have one set schedule for the entire system. The tentative 3-year schedule will be released in December. She said that there is sentiment from the governor's office to toughen the Regents' Test. Governor Barnes mentioned recently that many people are flunking it. The Atlanta Journal Constitution has come out with an editorial that it should be toughened. Others recommend getting rid of it. Still others want to add a math component. Whatever is decided will have an effect on remediation courses.
- VII. Kathleen passed out the Mini-Core Project information that was approved by the ACAA 10/16/01. The Mini-Core has two goals:

1. for faculty in both Systems to come to agreement on content alignment for English 1101/191 and 1102/193 and MATH 1101/190, 1111/191, and 1113/194.
2. To ensure transferability of these courses between DTAE and USG institutions.

Kathleen pointed out several provisions of the draft agreement such as the provision that students' DTAE placement test scores would be accepted. She discussed an alternative that would require USG institutions to accept the placement scores of students only if they enrolled in a DTAE course and had the placement test score on the DTAE transcript. She pointed out that our recommendation had asked that the DTAE institutions use the Asset Intermediate Algebra test than the Elementary Algebra test. We did not win that argument. She said that this was another argument for raising the COMPASS math system minimum to at least 37. She will look into the impact of raising COMPASS math entrance score from 30 to 40 to meet the DTAE Asset Elementary Algebra score of 42. Kathleen also discussed some possible effects of the transfer policy on number of attempts within three years. Presently a student has 3 attempts in a Learning Support area. After that he/she would be suspended for 3 years and could come back after earning 30 transferable hours. One disadvantage to this is that a student may withdraw early and transfer to a technical college to avoid suspension. Then USG institutions may be pressured to accept 30 hours from technical colleges to allow for readmission as a transfer student. Kathleen offered two possible solutions:

1. we could eliminate the suspension policy;
2. we could change the policy to allow re-entry if a student enrolls in and exits Learning Support and completes the first core curriculum course at a COC accredited DTAE institution.

Discussion followed but no recommendations were made.

- V. Kathleen also pointed out that freshman experience courses are not allowed in area B..
- VI. Carol Pinson distributed a copy of the Number of Attempts per Area allowed by the individual institutions in the System. All institutions allow 3 attempts in each remedial area except Gordon College, which allows two in each area and an appeal for a third attempt in math only. Georgia Tech and North Georgia do not allow appeals for additional attempts.
- VIII. Janet O'Brien provided information about the 2002 Learning Support Conference. It will be held at the Jekyll Inn, April 7-9. Registration will remain \$95.00. Room rates are \$72.00 for a regular room, \$102 for a 1 bedroom villa, and \$132.00 for a two bedroom villa. Janet urged directors to remind their faculties to submit presentation proposals by November 30, 2001. She has received only 4 so far. She will send an invitation to faculty of DTAE schools.

IX. Rick Reynolds adjourned the meeting at 1:00 p.m.