

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR
THE HUMANITIES

UGA

11:00 a.m. January 17, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

The Regents Advisory Committee for the Humanities met on January 17, 2020 at the Willson Center for the Humanities and Arts on the campus of the University of Georgia. Dr. Nicholas Allen, Director of the Wilson Center for the Humanities, brought the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

In Physical Attendance:

Leslie Harrelson, Dalton State University
Charles Williams , Albany State
Adam Tate, Clayton State University
Denise Davidson, Georgia State University
Monica Lee Weatherly, Georgia State University
Curtis Ricker, Georgia Southern University
Mark Smith, Valdosta State University
Keith Pacholl, University of West Georgia
Carlos Cunha, East Georgia State University
Shawn Long, Kennesaw State University.
Nicholas Allen, University of Georgia
Leith Dillard, University of North Georgia
Cynthia Bolton-Gary, Associate Vice Chancellor of Educator Preparation and Policy (Georgia Board of Regents)

Attending remotely were Rhonda Kelley, Paul Dahlgren, Elizabeth Wurz, Shannon Mathews, Mariana von Hirsch, David Shook, Patrick S. Brennan, Aran Mackinnon, and Allen Dutch.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Dr. Nicholas Allen welcomed everyone to the first meeting of this new committee and introduced the Board of Regents liaison to this RAC, Dr. Cynthia Bolton-Gary.

The first order of business was to discuss the establishment of a humanities course prefix for system-wide application. This led to a supplementary conversation about the desirability of a shared, team-taught, cross-institutional and online class that would afford students the opportunity to explore the value of humanities careers and applications in the world at large. The idea arose of this course providing a common theme each semester, and of it being connected with K-12 and AP classes online as an enrolment and educational tool. For purposes of this

conversation it was understood that for the purposes of CLEP and systemwide prefixes that the term 'humanities' applies to those disciplines not already represented in individual RAC committees. However, for the purposes of this proposed class, the 'humanities' are understood in their broader and traditional sense, to include, English and History.

The second order of business was to discuss what the appropriate score and credit for a Humanities CLEP Test in context of the ongoing General Ed Redesign. Dr. Bolton-Gary observed that so much of what came to light in the first meeting of the General Ed Redesign Committee was how important the humanities are to that redesign, and how the committee can advocate on behalf of the humanities through a common system course prefix.

The last order of business was the appointment of future chairs and venues for meetings.

DISCUSSIONS

Discussions included the rationale for an online team-taught class, as described above, which the committee felt would be an excellent tool for education and enrollment for the humanities

The rationale for a common introductory humanities courses with a common prefix would highlight the importance of the humanities in the core. Shannon Mathews emphasized that it would strengthen the validity of the discipline to have some common prefixes. The group emphasized that this did not mean all courses with this prefix were standardized given the history, scale and resources of the diverse institutions involved.

The second discussion focused on what the appropriate score or credit for a Humanities CLEP Test may be. Cynthia Bolton-Gary, the BOR liaison to this committee discussed that all institutions that offer Humanities are being challenged to come up with a passing CLEP Score, and (50) seems to be a common number. A CLEP exam specific for the 'Humanities', would be for anyone that can prove competency in that area. The committee agreed that the language used to describe a humanities course would have to be written in such a way that a passing score on the CLEP would not CLEP a student out of English, for example, and would only CLEP students out of HUMN entry level courses. The committee would also have to be careful about different institutional effects of CLEP testing, with the agreement that the core of humanities instruction must be retained.

In framing the conversation about CLEP, the committee agreed to discuss the pros and cons of CLEP with a view to explaining to the system board what the benefits of a humanities education are.

BREAK

The committee adjourned for lunch from 12:00-12:45

CONTINUED DISCUSSIONS

Continued discussions expressed concern that the committee did not know specifics of what will happen with the upcoming General Education Redesign, and that all of our conversations and proposals are tentative until we know what specifically will be mandated with the redesign.

Members of the committee also wanted to respect the diversity of institutions, their scale and resources, in conversations about common humanities courses. The shared online course was one way to negotiate this issue.

Some discussion of forward thinking of the humanities outside of the classroom existed, including the possibility of providing a competition or perhaps a Governor 's Humanities Award, and working with the Georgia Humanities Council to help publicize applied humanities work across the state.

The discussion then shifted to the vocabulary of 'applied' humanities and 'interdisciplinary' humanities. Leslie Harrelson wanted to highlight that the committee's actions should have quantifiable benefits to students. That included having a planned or intentional piece such as planned courses. Because there are interdisciplinary courses taught, but not under a degree program, the humanities should be talked about beyond the core and not something ancillary as a part of other degree programs. Leigh Dillard shared thoughts about maybe including the idea of service learning into the conversation.

Finally, as this committee begins to draw up a text of what it would like to see happen with the humanities within the core, words it would like to consider are Applied, Analytical, and Reflective. For this reason, it was agreed that Digital Humanities are great for "lab-like" environments. Denise Davidson from GSU mentioned that GSU has successful Digital Humanities initiatives, as does UGA and Georgia Tech. Curtis Ricker noted that Georgia Southern University has a minor in Digital Humanities that is in its first year.

FINAL COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Dr. Denley will give a 20 minute briefing on February 11, 2020 at the next Board of Regents Meeting of the outcome of the January 16, 2020 meeting of the redesign of the General Education Core Curriculum. The committee will then complete the following tasks:

1. Create a Humanities Description of an Introductory Online and System Wide Course and see what institutions are offering that may fit into this model (by email, Spring 2020).
2. Allen Dutch will investigate the CLEP score and map the consequences and outcomes of a common score, which we will arrive at this semester (by email, Spring 2020).
3. Dr. Bolton-Gary will continue to create the link between the System Office, the committee and the Board of Regents.

4. The committee will decide on a member(s) to serve as a future chair and the establishment of infrastructure for the appointment of future chairs and venues for future meetings. Discussions between volunteers are ongoing.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.
Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Monica Lee Weatherly
Associate Professor of English
Georgia State University