

STATE OF ALABAMA
Articulation and General Studies Committee
Alabama Community College System
President's Conference Room
October 3, 2016

MINUTES OF MEETING

Committee Members Present:

Dr. Sharron Herron-Williams	Alabama State University
Dr. Juarine Stewart, Alternate	Alabama A&M University
Dr. Constance Relihan	Auburn University
Dr. Marsha Adams	University of Alabama in Huntsville
Dr. Charles Nash, Alternate	University of Alabama System
Dr. Mary Coleman	University of South Alabama
Dr. Hal Fulmer	Troy University
Dr. Suzanne Ozment, Alternate	University of Montevallo
Dr. Patricia Sims, Alternate	Athens State University
Dr. Herbert Riedel	LB Wallace Community College

Ex-Officio Members:

Dr. Keith Sessions, Executive Director	AGSC/STARS
Mr. Shannon Nichols	AGSC/STARS
Dr. Elizabeth C. French	ACHE

Committee Members Absent:

Dr. Charles Israel	Auburn University
Dr. Eric Loomis, Alternate	University of South Alabama
Dr. Ken Tucker	University of West Alabama
Dr. Russ Rothamer, Alternate	Alabama Community College System
Dr. Gary Branch	Faulkner State Community College
Dr. David Campbell, Alternate	Northeast Alabama Community College
Dr. James Mitchell, Alternate	Wallace Community College-Selma

Others Present:

Dr. Yardley Bailey, UAS

CALL TO ORDER	The regular meeting of the Articulation and General Studies Committee was called to order at 1:35 p.m. A quorum was determined by roll call of members present.
ADOPTION OF AGENDA	Dr. Fulmer moved for the adoption of the agenda. Dr. Crawford seconded. The agenda was adopted.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	Dr. Sims moved for approval of the July 25-26, 2016 minutes with corrections. Dr. Crawford seconded. The minutes were approved with corrections. Dr. Adams moved for approval of the September 1, 2016 minutes with corrections. Dr. Fulmer seconded. The minutes were approved with corrections.

DECISION ITEMS

External Evaluation Report

Subcommittee Recommendations. Dr. Ozment reported that the subcommittee reviewed each page of the report for factual content, congruency and response to previous requests by AGSC members for changes. She stated that the sub committee's recommendation is that the External Evaluation Report conducted by the Education Policy Center of the University of Alabama be received with the condition that it not be published and not posted on the AGSC/STARS website. The rationale for this decision was based on numerous editorial errors within the report, factual inaccuracy, incorrect references to committee structure, and questionable conclusions based on research methodology.

After discussion regarding the ownership and the legality of releasing the Report without AGSC approval, Dr. Riedel moved that the Evaluation Report be received by the AGSC. Coleman seconded. Motion passed.

Dr. Fulmer moved that the AGSC accept the Subcommittee's recommendation that the Report not be published. Relihan seconded. Motion passed.

Dr. Ozment will prepare a letter on behalf of the AGSC acknowledging receipt of the Report and requesting that the Report not be published.

AGSC Response to Recommendations of the Report. Dr. Ozment led the discussion of recommendations presented in the report.

Major Recommendations:

- 1. AGSC & STARS needs mission realignment and program simplification by adopting uniform course numbers and titles for 100-200-level general education courses at community colleges and universities.** The AGSC decided that this issue required further study to determine whether or not the absence of a uniform course numbering system was an impediment to the effectiveness of the articulation/transfer system. The issue will be presented to the Chief Academic Officers at its October 5, 2016 meeting to explore the feasibility for implementation at state universities.

2. **Building on the insight that greater practical interaction between two-and four-year institutions will help students transfer, the AGSC should create a AGSC Registrar's Subcommittee.** The AGSC decided that rather than appointing a subcommittee it would be more beneficial to invite registrars to attend AGSC meetings periodically.
3. **Building upon the insight that students use STARS to "shop", improve STARS' web-based services by making them accessible on mobile platforms.** Dr. Sessions reported that while students can access STARS through their mobile devices at this time, the STARS web-based services could be improved by giving students the ability to save and send documents from the mobile device. He proposed two options. A copy of the options and explanations are attached - #1. The AGSC decided that the STARS office will investigate these options further.

Practical Recommendations:

1. **Addressing Area V concerns, the top recommendation from the 2002 external evaluation, are of even greater concern in 2016, and must be addressed by the AGSC.** There was agreement that this was probably the most challenging work to be done. Discussion included updating the list of the Institutional Points of Contact and determining their involvement and/or interaction with the Academic Discipline Committees and the Pre-Professional Committees. A subcommittee was established (Relihan-Chair, Fulmer, Crawford, and Coleman) to address Area V concerns
2. **AGSC should reconsider its current system of 21 General Studies Academic Subcommittees and 16 Pre-Professional Subcommittees, which is not working well.** The subcommittee appointed for addressing Area V concerns will address as well the membership, function, and purpose of the Points of Contact and the Academic and Pre-Professional Committees.
3. **A simplified, streamlined STARS system allows for additional state investments to be devoted straight into sorely needed training and public awareness.** The AGSC and STARS staff will pursue the development of training modules that are accessible online to faculty, advisors, and students (Coleman). Dr. Sessions stated that the STARS office can handle this.

Dr. French suggested that regional meetings for the Points of Contact should be held annually to outline the responsibilities for Points of Contact and present an agenda for activities for the coming year.

4. **AGSC should engage in succession planning to replace senior STARS office staff.** There was discussion on succession planning and the responsibility of the AGSC to appoint the Executive Director. French reminded the members that Dr. Ed Roach, one of three regional university representatives on the AGSC, was chair of the search committee that appointed Dr. Sessions as Executive Director in 2003. Discussion indicated that developing a plan to replace senior STARS office staff was not a high priority. It was suggested that a standard operating procedures manual be developed (Crawford).
5. **AGSC should have two non-voting student members.** Following discussion regarding the level of student interest in the general operations and functions of the AGSC, the

recommendation was not considered to be practical. Instead, it was decided that students would be invited to participate in focus groups, student surveys, and AGSC meetings held on campuses.

- 6. The AGSC should consider extending participation in STARS to all regionally accredited institutions in Alabama.** Discussion included the feasibility of including private institutions (profit and non-profit) in the AGSC general studies and articulation transfer process. A number of private institutions are already in agreements with two-year and four-year institutions regarding transfer of credits.

The recommendation was determined to be beyond the scope of the AGSC legislation and, since state funds were utilized to support the operations of AGSC/STARS, a broader inclusion of the private sector was not practical.

- 7. AGSC should commit to periodic external review conducted every four years.** It was agreed that while AGSC is committed to continual assessment and improvement, options other than an external review conducted every four years were deemed to be more feasible.

Dr. Ozment stated that the next review may be more beneficial to the AGSC if other state articulation systems were asked to do the review because of their familiarity with an articulation system. It would be similar to an external program review. It would also be more economical.

Executive Director's Report

AGSC/STARS Goals & Priorities 2016-17. There was some discussion and the Goals & Priorities were revised to delete the establishment of a subcommittee to revisit the uniform course number system and replace with item 2 as follows:

1. Refine the protocols for resolution of Student Complaints and develop a process for presenting findings to the AGSC periodically as information items;
2. Implement opportunities for student engagement;
3. Improvement of STARS web-based services on mobile platforms;
4. Address Area V concerns; and
5. Evaluate the current structure of the General Studies Academic Committees and the Pre-Professional Academic Committees to make recommendations for improvement.

Dr. Crawford moved for the approval of the Goals & Priorities 2016-17 as revised. Sims seconded. Motion passed.

AGSC/STARS Budget FY 2016-17. Although a version of the FY 2016-17 budget was approved at the July 26, 2016 meeting of the AGSC (copy attached-#4), Dr. Sessions responded to questions on a revised budget. A copy is attached-#2.

Dr. Riedel moved to accept the budget. Dr. Stewart seconded. Motion passed.

AGSC/STARS Expenditure Report FY2015-16. Dr. Sessions referenced the expenditure report for FY 2015-16. A copy is attached-#3.

Dr. Relihan moved to accept the report. Dr. Adams seconded. Motion passed.

OTHER

Dr. Nash reminded the AGSC that a report of the AGSC priorities should be given to the Commission on Higher Education and to the Council of Presidents.

SCHEDULE OF FUTURE AGSC MEETINGS

February, 2017 TBA	University of Montevallo
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INFORMATION ITEMS

1. STARS Options on Web-based Services on Mobile Platform (Sessions)
2. AGSC/STARS Proposed Budget FY2016-17 (Sessions)
3. AGSC/STARS Expenditure Report FY2015-16 (Sessions)

The October 3, 2016 meeting of the AGSC adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Suzanne Ozment, Chair

Deborah Nettles, Recording Secretary