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Ad-hoc committee to examine the bases and methods for, and impacts of summer curriculum/course selection and deletion

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Approved by the Senate: 10/20/2008

Not Approved by the Senate:

Approved by the President:

Not Approved by the President:

(See President's response below)

Ad-hoc committee to examine the bases and methods for, and impacts of summer curriculum/course selection and deletion

Submitted by: M. Jill Lockwood

9/24/2008

Motion:

I respectfully request the Faculty Senate to appoint an ad hoc committee to review the way courses are selected/deleted during summer term.

Rationale:

This motion should be considered by the Senate because the Faculty Handbook guarantees the faculty shared governance and faculty should have a role in decisions made during the summer term. Please see attached for additional information.

SEC Response:

10/14/2008 from the SEC minutes:

The agenda item request for a motion by Jill Lockwood (COBA) titled "Ad-Hoc Committee to Review Decisions Regarding Course Selections During Summer Term" was approved for inclusion on the agenda. This motion has been revised since it was submitted, and Lockwood will be presenting the revision as a Friendly Amendment; for

efficiency's sake, Cyr will send a copy of the revision by email to Senate members prior to the meeting.

Senate Response:

MOTION: Jill Lockwood (COBA) passed out copies of her amended motion and rational and referred senators to agenda item 9: "That the Faculty Senate appoint an ad-hoc committee to examine the bases and methods for, and impacts of summer curriculum/course selection and deletion, including impacts on faculty, students, and programs."

Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Moderator called for a second and opened the floor for discussion.

Jill Lockwood (COBA) explained that the rationale stemmed from experiences that the School of Accountancy had with summer classes last summer and acknowledged the School of Accountancy's understanding of the University's need to make a profit in the summer.

She then explained that the School of Accountancy had been told to cut two classes before registration for summer term ended because its profit goal was not being met, despite the two classes being viable and necessary for students who depend on summer classes to complete their program for graduation or prepare them for fall. One of the classes, Lockwood added, was a class in its Fraud concentration in the School's Masters of Accountancy, which is starting to develop a national reputation. In an effort to attract students into the program, the school promises prerequisites in summer to students who transfer in so they will be ready in the fall. Because that class was threatened, the school ended up having people on twelve-month contracts teaching those courses as part of their loads, even though they weren't scheduled to teach them and had never taught them before.

The Faculty Handbook offers a guarantee of shared governance between the faculty and the administration, and her motion builds on that guarantee. The university's insistence that summer offerings have a 150% profit in the sum total of all of the classes taught is unreasonable. No business can operate at cost plus 50% profit. In addition, Lockwood argued, is it ignores contribution margin, which means that if you cancel something that is generating a profit, you lose that profit and we do not know how much cash that policy may be costing this University.

More importantly, however, we have a role and a responsibility towards our students. And that role is a shared role. The motion would allow faculty to work with Finance and

the Provost in finding a formula that will maximize profits but also take care of our students.

Michael Moore (COE) also spoke for the motion and added that it is the responsibility of the University is to provide the best faculty members for its students and to rely on the promotion and tenure process to determine who our best faculty are. Offering the best faculty to teach each course is going to cost. But to cut classes because a faculty member makes too much money or keep the class and allow a less-experienced faculty member to teach it at a lower cost defeats our purpose of offering our students our best teachers.

After discussion, the motion passed unanimously. Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Moderator added that he will be working with the SEC to put this committee together and asked for volunteers, adding that ad hoc committee members need not be members of the Senate.

President's Response

"Due to President Grube's absence from the Senate meeting of November Whatever, his response to the motion passed by the Senate on Whatever could not be clarified and the matter is in abeyance pending Provost Bleicken's forums in January 2009."

From Dr. Grube: 11/18/2008:

To ensure that understanding is enhanced among faculty regarding the planning, scheduling, and funding mechanisms for Summer School, the Provost will sponsor two well-publicized forums for faculty. In addition, pertinent information regarding Summer School will be made available on the Provost's Office website at <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/provost/>. If substantive questions remain among the faculty following the forums, the recommendation regarding the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee will be considered.

MOTION: That the Faculty Senate appoint an ad-hoc committee to examine the bases and methods for, and impacts of summer curriculum/course selection and deletion, including impacts on faculty, students, and programs.

RATIONALES: Section 110 of the Faculty Handbook, based on BOR policies, gives the faculty the right and responsibility to be involved in academic/curricular decisions and any elements relating to faculty welfare. These aspects of shared governance do not seem to be in place re: summer sessions at GSU:

- Faculty have been told there is funding formula in place for summer – The reasons for this formula, or even by whom this formula was arrived at and imposed, are unknown to faculty, yet it is the driving force behind curricular decisions – in particular, choices of what classes to offer and what classes to delete – that impact faculty, students, and programs. For example, it seems that in COBA in summer 2007, Accounting was directed to delete two classes to meet this profit formula; rather than damage the students and the program, two members of the department taught these classes for no extra pay, in essence funding the profit formula out of their own pockets (and the pockets of the faculty members originally hired for those classes).

- Section 216 of the Faculty Handbook states flatly that faculty will be paid 3% of their annualized Spring salary per credit hour for summer teaching, yet this pay rate was unilaterally reduced at the last moment in some departments of COBA during the summer of 2008, and there is a proposal that in at least some departments and courses in CLASS pay will be on a per student basis beginning summer 2009, and that the number of students per class will be increased from the number in those classes during Fall and Spring. The increase in the number of students per class can/will negatively impact a class's quality; it certainly increases faculty workload, and can decrease the number of faculty used by the University (more students per class means fewer classes – and fewer faculty to be paid). This committee should investigate the use of a budget formula to drive class size and thereby impact class quality, and should investigate the terms of contractual obligations/protections for summer terms, including the “handshake” nature of the current faculty employment agreement: Some form of clear written statement noting an individual's summer schedule and his/her compensation is needed.

- Section 216 of the Faculty Handbook seems to make deletion of a class the only way to meet the financial formula strictures, and this situation should be examined.

Other Response

11/19/2008: Marc Cyr (Chair) Senate Executive Committee reported that the Senate had just received President Grube's response to the motion passed last month to establish an ad hoc committee on summer issues, but he was not sure how to proceed given the provisions in GSU Statutes, Article 5, Section 5. Cyr felt that President Grube's response was implicit disapproval of the ad hoc committee recommendation even though disapproval was not explicitly stated in the response. However, given the statute does not give an option between approval and disapproval, by announcing in its stead two forums to be held by the Provost to discuss summer issues and noting that he will reconsider the recommendation should faculty remain unsatisfied after these forums, Dr. Grube's response implies disapproval of the ad hoc committee recommendation. Cyr then asked if anyone had questions.

Ellen Hendrix (CLASS) asked what options the Senate had given President Grube's implicit disapproval of the ad hoc committee.

Marc Cyr (Chair) Senate Executive Committee responded that he was not sure given that President Grube wasn't there to clarify that language and asked Dr. Bleicken if she could clarify President Grube's thinking.

Linda Bleicken (Provost) was not sure that President Grube's response was an approval or disapproval, adding that she thought it was recognition of faculty misunderstanding and misinformation about summer school in general. The forums, she felt, would at least put the facts out in an accessible way to all faculty and would be an attempt to be as transparent as possible to as broad a group as possible. She acknowledged that the forums were her suggestion. After the forums, she added, an ad hoc committee would be considered if faculty remained concerned.

Marc Cyr (Chair) Senate Executive Committee stated that the Senate's problem was procedural at that point, citing Statute 5, Section 5, Article 5, Section 5: "Upon receipt of a recommendation from the Faculty Senate shall within 30 days, either approve or disapprove the recommendation." He added that the Senate would need clarification by Friday. He then asked Parliamentarian, Mr. Bob Cook, for input and outlined the three options the Senate would have had it been clear the recommendation had been disapproved: 1) To do nothing and in effect accept the disapproval, 2) To rescind the previous motion by a majority vote and not have the President disapprove it, or 3) To vote by a two-thirds majority to not accept the President's disapproval and to send it to the entire faculty for consideration and recommendation. Without President Grube present, Cyr felt the Senate was in a parliamentary conundrum.

Bob Cook (CIT) Senate Parliamentarian explained that the Senate could do nothing without consequence since the Bylaws don't require the Senate Executive Committee to appoint ad hoc committees within a particular timeframe, so assuming that the two public meetings and distribution of information was done in a timely fashion, then the SEC could make a recommendation to actually staff the committee. If the Faculty Senate decided to withdraw the previous motion, then the Senate would allow the public meetings.

If after those meetings the Senate is still not satisfied, then the motion could simply be put back on the floor. Withdrawing the motion also would not put President Grube into a situation of disapproving something before information has been disseminated.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Executive Committee responded that Mr. Cook's interpretation assumes that the motion had been disapproved, adding that the

parliamentary problem facing the Senate was that President was not there to confirm disapproval. Cyr recommended that the Senate not act on the issue at all at that time. Bob Cook (CIT) Senate Parliamentarian added that the Faculty Senate could pass a motion to establish the ad hoc committee at a future meeting if necessary. If it's then approved by President Grube, the committee exists; if it's disapproved, then the Senate could make another statement with respect to the committee, at which time presumably everyone would have an informed opinion to back up the motion.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Executive Committee agreed.

Chris Geyerman (CLASS) asked if the Senate had to know if the motion has been approved or disapproved in order to withdraw it. He explained that if that knowledge isn't required in order to withdraw the motion, and since the public meetings were going to take place anyway, it would seem expeditious to withdraw the motion, have the public meetings, then we put the motion back on the table if there still is discontentment among the faculty with regard to the clarity for summer school policies and procedures. Pat Humphrey (COST) agreed, stating that there is nothing in the Bylaws that prevents us from calling a special meeting above and beyond the normally scheduled meetings should we decide we need to do so to reinstitute the committee.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Executive Committee added that the Senate could vote to pull back the motion because of a lack of clarity. Doing so, he added, could not be recorded as acceptance of the President's disapproval because the Senate does not know if it has been disapproved.

Richard Flynn (CLASS) questioned the time frame of the President's statement that more information about the forums would be available on the Provost's web site. Linda Bleicken (Provost) assured the Senate that the information could be up within the next two weeks.

Marc Cyr (Chair) Senate Executive Committee then concluded the SEC's report.

2/16/2009: Ad Hoc Committee on Summer Issues – the SEC decided in consultation with President Grube to leave the issue of an ad hoc committee on summer issues in abeyance while we see how summer 09 works out.

Attachment: [adhocrequestfacutlysenate-summer issues](#)