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Armstrong Faculty Senate Minutes

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### April 3, 2017 Armstrong Faculty Senate Minutes

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**Armstrong State University**  
**Faculty Senate Meeting: Special Session**  
**Minutes of April 3, 2017**  
**Student Union, Ballroom A, 3:00 p.m.**

I. Call to Order by Senate President Padgett at 3:30 pm (Appendix A)

II. Senate Action

A. Mission Statement for Consolidated Georgia Southern University (Appendix B)

Senate President Padgett: We can only discuss consolidation issues in this special session. As you can see, this mission statement (revised) is much briefer. Hopefully you have had a chance to review it. Is there a motion to endorse this mission statement? Yes. Second? Yes. Thoughts?

Senator: I have a problem with the statement about the types of degree programs (associates, bachelors, master's, and select doctoral degrees). My concern is based on the view I am getting from folks at GSU that we are being thought of as a junior college. I would get rid of the reference to degree programs entirely, so that it would read: GSU offers nationally accredited programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines.

Comment: the commas in a series should also be used consistently throughout the document.

Question: Where did this come from?

Answer: the same work group as the last mission statement.

Question: How different is this revised mission statement from GSU's?

Response: I don't know.

Comment: if it's different, that's fine.

Comment: This seems to be an advertisement or a description of what is done rather than a mission statement.

Response: Some of this came from the BOR as a suggestion: "to enhance economic development in the area".

Comment: For example, there's nothing about being based in a strong liberal arts education.

Comment: Reading of GSU's mission.

Comment: that's what I thought.

Comment: Why are we limiting us to the coastal Georgia region? I would suggest that area be broadened. The new GSU should aspire to more.

Comment: in health professions, we address global economics and technical science. We are not looking at the coastal empire market, we are targeting the global market. That's just in Nursing.

Comment: That goes hand in hand with the center for academic excellence – it's national.

Question: what does personal attention mean?

Comment: student-centered.

Comment: it's just kind of weird.

Senate President Padgett: The motion on the floor is to endorse this mission statement. We can send our comments, but remember, it's not something that needs our approval. We were asked to give our comments. To endorse? (Approved, 17 yes, 14 no, 2 abstentions)

## B. Committees of the Senate

Senate President Padgett: I propose we adopt the same structure that we have for the senate officers and we freeze committee membership unless someone wants to move off and can find a replacement. If someone steps off UCC, though, they will have to have an election for a replacement. We need to have some continuity through this consolidation process. Is there a motion? So moved. Second? Second. Comments? None. (Approved 29-1)

## C. Electronic Approval during Summer and Beyond

Senate President Padgett: We need to come up with a mechanism so that we can conduct business without having to meet, on short notice. My proposal is to use Google Groups with senators. We can have discussion on that forum. After one day of discussion, we would have a survey on Qualtrics for voting. Issues that need to go to discussion and vote will be decided by executive committee and then we will contact senators to prompt discussion and voting. Motion to adopt?

Question: Would this be just for summer?

Response: For summer and possibly into fall if needed.

Question: We are not doing away with regular meetings?

Response: No, it's when issues come up that need quick attention in between meetings.

Question: To do this, you would still need a quorum?

Response: Yes. It would have to be more than half of voting members to pass anything.

Motion to accept? So moved. Second? Second.

Comments: Discussion is not anonymous, but votes are?

Response: Yes, as far as we know in Qualtrics. I don't know if you could dig to find it, but it's not readily apparent from my use of it (Approved 32-1).

## D. Additional Business:

### 1. Response to Summer OWG pay

President Bleicken: We would like to find the dollars. We know it would go better if we can find a stipend. So, that will happen.

Question: Is that an amount TBD?

Response: We will come forward with the \$500 that has been asked for, but I have not talked to GSU.

### 2. Faculty Resolution on Consolidation (Appendix C)

Senate President Padgett: There needs to be made a resolution to discuss it.

So Moved. Second.

Comment: Where it says the GSU OWG's, I would suggest qualifying those statements since we can't assume most or all OWG's have been dictatorial.

Comment: It was recommended that dept heads issue should be included in a separate resolution. That is a post-consolidation structure issue and the other issues here are related to the consolidation process.

Response from Senate President Padgett: Let me share some of the background. This problem was discussed at the JLT meeting. Since then, an email was sent from Presidents Bleicken and Herbert, along with Provosts Smith and Bartels emphasizing that work groups need to negotiate and addressing the concerns discussed at JLT. My opinion is that we might hold onto this resolution to see if things get better.

Dr. Bleicken: This is after a week where at the JLT meeting there was a lot of discussion about what was happening and what wasn't happening. It was followed by me placing a call to Dr. Hebert and letting him know the general consternation experienced by this campus about the consolidation – related to the mission statement and experiences on the OWG's. Some of the OWG's are going well, but some are not. What we've seen this week is the OWG on the mission statement come back together and are really trying to address the concerns about the last draft. This recent draft of the mission statement was drafted by both provosts. Dr. Hebert, John Futchco and I have a standing meeting. When I reported again that there was still angst about OWG's not going well. Dr. Hebert noted he had already had those discussions with the academic side of the house. I think I understand the frustration that drives a resolution like this.

We need to do better. Right now, to come forward seems like we haven't given them a chance to stand up and do better. I wouldn't get rid of the resolution, but my concern is one of timing.

Provost Smith: We have experienced the frustration expressed in this resolution. The deans have expressed many of these concerns to me. We need to make a clear statement to both sets of OWG chairs that the OWG discussions are negotiations. We are telling co-chairs in OWG's and sub-OWG's in this email that they need to negotiate. I am also concerned about the timing. We have had a discussion of all of our Deans and their Deans (3 hours). It was a very different meeting than either of the 2 previous meetings. It was clear that they were listening to our concerns. We ended up in a different place. I have started to see some change in behavior. We have already argued our point. The timing of this is such that this might be piling on when we are starting to see progress. We are trying very hard to see that there is progress and I think we are starting to see this.

Comment: This email doesn't show any change in behavior. The communication here is the same as what we've been hearing from the beginning about what should happen. But, this email doesn't have any teeth. This sends a message that we are trying to play nice. If we don't state this, how do we tell faculty that we hear them and understand their frustrations.

Comment: We are not ever going to be good as a rhetorical body. Timing should not be our concern. Our concern should be truth.

Provost Smith: I do want to be clear that all of those things raised in the resolution, we have already raised, with clarity, with their president, provost, and deans.

Comment: If this is the voice of the faculty, I don't see what harm this does.

Comment: The comments from LLP – the bulk were in support of this resolution.

Comment: There was very strong support from LLP about the penultimate issue regarding Department Heads. I would be reluctant to have it removed.

Comment: The two comments I got about this was that GSU would focus on the other issues in the resolution and their feelings about the other issues would muddy the waters about the department head issue.

Comment: I propose we move issue 3 to a separate resolution.

Comment: I would propose that we add the word “some” to OWG’s as a qualifier in this resolution.

Senate President Padgett: Now we are discussing moving item 3 to a separate resolution.

Question: They would both be submitted together?

Response: If they both pass.

Approved (28-5).

Senate President Padgett: Now we are talking about sending the resolution without item 3.

Comment: I think we need to talk about long-term strategy. If we were to give this a moment to see if it actually achieves the objective, we don’t need to do this. We could vote this through next week electronically if needed if we find that OWG’s are not working as they should. It’s possible this correspondence from Dr. Hebert might do the job. If we’ve only got one bullet in the gun, do we want to do this now.

Comment: We got pretty positive feedback in our college about OWG’s. It’s hard to know how anything is going after one meeting.

Comment: This is our time to make sure we represent the faculty. We need to make sure when we leave here that we have represented them in their best interest. Many faculty have worked hard with their programs. We have to take time to make sure people understand we have a lot to offer.

Comment: I see both sides of this. If we don’t communicate to faculty that we’ve heard their concerns. I truly hope moving forward that things do go better. How do we tell people that we’ve heard their concerns?

Comment: With my department, a lot of our anxiety rests with point #3 about department heads. We haven’t been able to do any work on our OWG sub group because we don’t have that structure yet. That’s what worries us as the summer comes up. The dept head issue needs to be addressed soon.

Dr. Bleicken: One of the things I’ve heard from the outset is the sincere wish from all on this campus to be involved. I think some of the frustration that was articulate now is what is going on in a lot of quarters. Absent an opportunity to weigh in, we’re seeing a fair amount of frustration. One of the things that strikes me is if it makes sense for this group to endorse what has gone forward from the 4 of us. The conversation I had with Dr. Hebert was very pointed. A statement in JLT was that there were actual aggressions going on in these OWG’s. That is nothing that anyone wants. I’m thinking of something short of this that communicates our desire for sincere negotiation rather than aggression. I’m wondering if this could be communicated more simply. We want for this communication to happen like colleagues. Dr. Hebert asked me in a follow-up conversation, “what does the faculty senate want?”. My perspective is you want to be taken seriously, you want a voice.

Comment: But that message is verbatim of the objective of the consolidation. I don’t feel their faculty are reading the reasons we were told the consolidation is occurring. We are getting the message that we care less that you are free thinking people who are concerned about the future of the university. You should become the old Georgia Southern.

Comment: I feel like this is pretty clear about what we want. I’m not sure what the harm is in terms of long-term strategy. Historically, waiting to see if things change has not always worked if you are the party with less power. I would hope that GSU would not be petty in reading this, but making a decision based in fear does not seem the best way forward.

Comment: I understand what is happening because I've experienced it on an OWG. I think the faculty know this is coming through. I think the faculty needs to know the senate is working on this. I would like to see this more succinct. To rush it through, I have a little problem with that.

Motion: I think it should be shorter, more succinct. Second? Second.

Comment: Take whereas 1, 5 and get rid of the rest.

Comment: there is an angry tone to this.

Comment: I think it's very clear. We provide sufficient background as to why we are making this resolution. We all have doctoral degrees. This is only two pages.

Comment: I would like to add an informational item, other than the reference to Dr. Hebert's statement, all of the "whereas" points were taken from the Georgia Southern University FAQ webpage.

Comment: I don't mind the whereas comments. I don't like the tone. Turning us into Georgia Southern B sounds junior high. What I really like is number 4 – it is worded positively and creatively.

Comment: All of the whereas statements don't bother me. I saw the strategy, but if there is a concern that our main point is lost by the length, some of these could be removed.

Comment: There are concerns about the tone, but the tone comes from faculty having experiences on OWG's where they are met by their GSU counterpart at their car and told that they were told not to negotiate.

Comment: That needs to be said then.

Comment: Then this would be a much longer document.

Comment: When is our next regular meeting?

Response: In two weeks.

Comment: If we address the concerns in two weeks, does that address the concerns about timing and re-writing this?

Comment: There can be a motion to re-write the resolution. Do we want to do an online thing?

Response: First, we need to decide on re-writing the resolution – that's the next motion on the floor.

Comment: We are talking about putting discussion off for two weeks and voting off further.

Comment: Why don't you take some sentences off here (reading from sections of points 1 and 2 of resolution).

Response: If we decide to re-write it, we could do it now (senate offers suggestions for revision)

Senate President Padgett: Motion on the floor is to re-write the resolution. (Approved 24-4)

Comment: I would like to see us re-write this now, in case any OWG's meeting this week have similar problems as we have had in the past.

Senate President Padgett: We are now voting on re-writing it and voting on it now (Approved 22-4)

Senators offer final suggestions for revision (See Appendix D for revised resolutions)

Senate President Padgett: We are now voting on accepting the modifications to the resolution (Approved 31-0)

Comment: I would like to make a motion to vote on this resolution. Second? Second.

Comment: One thing to consider is that email that was sent out by the Provosts and the Presidents was sent last night. Our faculty may not be aware yet that the message was sent out. Might that not change your colleagues' opinions? I still think we can wait to do this.

Comment: The message from the provosts is not in opposition to this.

Comment: If they wanted everyone to read it, they would have sent it to everyone on campus.

Comment: I think this is proactive.

Senate President Padgett: Hearing no more discussion, let's vote (Approved 25-5)

Comment: I make a motion to vote on the second resolution on department heads. Second? Second.

Comment: This is so important in terms of who we report to. This was the most important component of the original resolution, in my opinion. Do we need to add any language to this to let others know we need a commitment to this very soon, before more faculty leave the university?

Comment: We have not yet begun the discussion on structure at the departmental level.

Comment: We need to pass this before that discussion occurs.

Comment: We could add that "making this decision is a priority....."

Comment: How about "committing to this is a priority...."

Comment: How about "making this decision is a priority....."

Comment: Yes, but it's not just making the decision soon, we want them to commit to retaining department heads on this campus. I don't want them to make a quick decision to eliminate department heads.

Comment: I think it is fine as it is.

Senate President Padgett: Hearing no more discussion, let's vote (Approved 30-1)

### 3. Other Business?

Comment: I have a question. I have been asked to provide information to our accrediting body. When are we supposed to get an organizational chart?

Response: President Hebert expects to have the highest level organizational chart by mid-April.

III. Adjournment at 4:35pm.

IV. Minutes completed by:

Wendy Wolfe

Faculty Senate Secretary 2016-2017

Appendices

A. Attendance Sheet

B. Revised Mission Statement for Consolidated University

C. Faculty Senate Resolution on Consolidation

D. Faculty Senate Resolution on Consolidation – Revised; Faculty Senate Resolution on Department Heads

Appendix A

Faculty Senators and Alternates for 2016-2017 (Senate Meeting 4/3/2017)

Department	College	# of Seats	Senator(s) and Term Year as of 2016-2017		Alternate(s)	
Adolescent and Adult Education	COE	2	Brenda Logan (1)	x	Anthony Parish	
			Greg Wimer (1)	x	Rebecca Wells	
Art, Music and Theatre	CLA	3	Rachel Green (3)			
			Emily Grundstad-Hall (1)		Mia Merlin	x
			Benjamin Warsaw (1)		Pamela Sears	
Biology	CST	4	Jennifer Broft Bailey (2)	x	Sara Gremillion	
			Brian Rooney (1)		Michele Guidone	
			Aaron Schrey (3)	x	Michael Cotrone	
			Jennifer Zettler (3)	x	Jay Hodgson	
Chemistry and Physics	CST	3	Brandon Quillian (2)		Catherine MacGowan	x
			Donna Mullenax (3)	x	Lea Padgett	
			Clifford Padgett (3)	x	Will Lynch	
Childhood and Exceptional Student Education	COE	2	LindaAnn McCall (1)	x	Jackie Kim	
			Robert Loyd (1)	x	John Hobe	
Computer Science & Information Tech	CST	1	Hongjun Su (2)		Frank Katz	x
Criminal Justice, Social and Political Science	CLA	2	Dennis Murphy (2)	x	Michael Donahue	
			Kevin Jennings (1)	x	Laura Seifert	
Diagnostic and Therapeutic Sciences	CHP	2	Shaunell McGee (3)		Rhonda Bevis	
			Pam Cartright (3)	x	Christy Moore	
Economics	CLA	1	Maliece Whatley (1)	x	Yassi Saadatmand	
Engineering	CST	1	Wayne Johnson (3)	x	Priya Goeser	
Health Sciences	CHP	2	Lesley Clack (2)		Joey Crosby	
			TimMarie Williams(1)	x	Rod McAdams	
History	CLA	2	James Todesca (2)	x		
			Michael Benjamin (3)	x	Allison Belzer	
Languages, Literature and Philosophy	CLA	5	Jack Simmons (1)	x	Will Belford	
			Carol Andrews (3)	x	Carol Jamison	
			Jane Rago (3)	x	Annie Mendenhall	
			Christy Mroczek (2)	x	Julie Swanstrom	
			James Smith (3)	x	Rob Terry	
Library	CLA	1	Aimee Reist (2)	x	Ann Fuller	
Mathematics	CST	3	Tricia Brown (1)		Sean Eastman	
			Sungskon Chang (1)	x	Duc Huynh	x
			Kim Swanson (1)		Greg Knofczynski	x
Nursing	CHP	3	Sherry Warnock (2)	x	Carole Massey	
			Gina Crabb (2)		Luz Quirimit	
			Katrina Embrey(1)	x	Jill Beckworth	
Psychology	CST	1	Wendy Wolfe (3)	x	Nancy McCarley	
Rehabilitation Sciences	CHP	2	David Bringman (2)	x	AndiBeth Mincer	
			Jan Bradshaw (1)	x	April Garrity	



## Appendix B

Georgia Southern University provides transformative learning opportunities to meet the needs of a diverse student population through its time-honored commitments to academic excellence and personal attention. Deploying the shared resources of its multiple locations, the University creates vibrant learning environments that foster an inclusive, student-centered culture of engagement designed to prepare students for lifelong service as scholars, leaders, and responsible stewards of their communities. As a designated public comprehensive university, Georgia Southern offers associates, bachelors, master's, and select doctoral degrees in its nationally accredited programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines. The University enhances the quality of life and drives economic development in the Coastal Georgia region by supporting collaborative relationships in technological innovation, scientific discovery, education, health services, and cultural enrichment. Faculty, staff, and students express the core values of this mission by embracing integrity, civility, kindness, tolerance, and a dedication to sustainability and social responsibility.

Appendix C  
**Armstrong Faculty Senate Resolution on Consolidation**

Whereas, creating the new Georgia Southern University should combine the best of both institutions\*;

Whereas, the principal goal is to serve students better and provide increased opportunities for students\*;

Whereas, the primary driver behind consolidation is to better serve students from both institutions. Meanwhile, the culture of the new university will be influenced and shaped by each of the campuses\*;

Whereas, through consolidation, institutions have been able to offer more academic programs, such as bachelor's degrees and expand student support services, such as advising and tutoring\*;

Whereas, this is a consolidation and not a merger or acquisition. It is called a consolidation because the strengths of both institutions are being combined to create an even stronger university\*;

Whereas, programs and departments will be involved in the decision-making process. There will be a number of working groups that pair Georgia Southern and Armstrong counterparts to determine the most strategic ways to combine strengths. All units will have the opportunity to offer input throughout the consolidation process\*;

Whereas, Dr. Jaimie Hebert, the President of the new Georgia Southern University, has stated that there can be multiple flavors of the same degree program at the three campuses;

Therefore, given that the above guiding principles have not been observed by Armstrong faculty to have been followed on the CIC and on various OWG's,

The Armstrong Faculty are resolved that the following consolidation concerns need to be addressed:

- 1) The consolidation is functionally a takeover of Armstrong by GSU. GSU OWGs have made very little effort to negotiate anything with their Armstrong OWG counterparts, and instead have dictated what is going to occur. The disconnect between the upper administration's attempt at placating the Armstrong faculty and the reality present in the OWGs and CIC is creating a hostile environment between faculty and between faculty and administrators on the two campuses.
- 2) Turning Armstrong into Georgia Southern B will do nothing to benefit the Statesboro campus, and will cause irreparable damage to the Armstrong campus, the Savannah

community, and Savannah business interests. The attitude projected by the GSU OWGs that curricula, policies, and procedures of the “new” Georgia Southern will just be transplanted from the current Georgia Southern also forecloses any possibility of improving the Statesboro campus. Rather than using this consolidation as an opportunity to reimagine all three locations from a clean sheet of paper, continuing on the current path will drive away students, faculty, and staff from the Armstrong campus.

- 3) Department Heads need to be retained on the Armstrong campus and retain the authority to make Armstrong campus departmental decisions. A situation in which an off-campus administrator is evaluating faculty performance, determining faculty teaching schedules and course offerings, and resolving faculty and student concerns without regular contact with Armstrong faculty, students, and our campus/community needs and culture is untenable.
- 4) OWGs need to embrace the stated objectives of the consolidation and give thorough and open consideration to curricula, programs, departmental and college organizational frameworks that have been successfully developed over time to serve students in Savannah and the surrounding area. Further, OWGs need to be open to creative solutions such as integrating existing programs, curricula, and departmental/college organizational structures when appropriate AND maintaining different programs, curricula, and departmental/college organizational structures when appropriate, when those solutions appear to best meet the stated consolidation objectives.

\* From <http://consolidation.georgiasouthern.edu/faq/>

Appendix D  
**Armstrong Faculty Senate Resolution on Consolidation**

Whereas, creating the new Georgia Southern University should combine the best of both institutions\*;

Whereas, this is a consolidation and not a merger or acquisition. It is called a consolidation because the strengths of both institutions are being combined to create an even stronger university\*;

Therefore, given that the above guiding principles have not been observed by Armstrong faculty to have been followed on the CIC and on various OWGs,

The Armstrong Faculty are resolved that the following consolidation concerns need to be addressed:

- 1) Some of the GSU OWGs have made little effort to negotiate anything with their Armstrong OWG counterparts. The attitude projected by some GSU OWGs that curricula, policies, and procedures of the “new” Georgia Southern will just be transplanted from the current Georgia Southern also forecloses any possibility of improving the Statesboro campus.
  
- 2) OWGs need to embrace the stated objectives of the consolidation and give thorough and open consideration to curricula, programs, departmental and college organizational frameworks that have been successfully developed over time to serve students in Savannah and the surrounding area. Further, OWGs need to be open to creative solutions such as integrating existing programs, curricula, and departmental/college organizational structures when appropriate AND maintaining different programs, curricula, and departmental/college organizational structures when appropriate, when those solutions appear to best meet the stated consolidation objectives.

\* From <http://consolidation.georgiasouthern.edu/faq/>

## **Resolution on Department Heads on Armstrong Campus**

Department Heads need to be retained on the Armstrong campus and retain the authority to make Armstrong campus departmental decisions. A situation in which an off-campus administrator is evaluating faculty performance, determining faculty teaching schedules and course offerings, and resolving faculty and student concerns without regular contact with Armstrong faculty, students, and our campus/community needs and culture is untenable.