Faculty Senate Minutes

Fall 8-20-2020

Minutes 8_20_2020

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Executive Summary: Trish Holt (COE) called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. The Senate approved the agenda for this meeting and minutes from the previous meeting.

Trish Holt (COE) shared an orientation presentation reminding senators of the Senate’s role as an advisory body and how the Senate conducts its business. The presentation clarified scenarios for RFIs and DIs and encouraged senators to be constructive and solution-driven. The presentation reviewed how this year’s meetings will run via Zoom.

The Senate brought forward an RFI on cancelling class for election day, with information on paid holidays provided from John Lester (VP University Communications).

The Senate then brought forward a motion on changing the course waitlist time to respond from 12 to 24 hours. After discussion, the Senate determined to table the motion and send to the Student Success Committee for further discourse.

The Senate then brought forward a DI on the criteria to determine changes to the current university reopening plan. President Marrero and his cabinet shared what occurs at a typical meeting of the Situation Representative Covid 19 Group, which meets every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to discuss operational status in all units of the university as well as public health guidelines and case numbers. The university will be reporting confirmed and self reported cases each Monday by noon. Some discussion then took place to clarify how the numbers are reported as well as the process for contact notifications.

President Marrero then gave a brief report on enrollment, which at this time is up from last fall. Tajuan Wilson reported on the status of the Inclusive Excellence Plan. Provost Reiber commended faculty for their efforts over the summer, encouraged everyone to have content available on Folio in the event of a hurricane or student or faculty illness, and commended the College of Engineering’s work printing face shields.

Bill Wells (PCOB) announced that the GECC will be holding town hall meetings to discuss changes to the core curriculum as well as sending surveys about this.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 PM.

MINUTES

Officers in Attendance: Trish Holt (President), Amanda Konkle (CAH, Secretary), Barbara King (CBSS, Librarian), Helen Bland (Past President and Parliamentarian), Cary Christian (CBSS, President Elect)

Senators in Attendance: Lisa Abbott (CAH), Lisa Costello (CAH), Finbarr Curtis (CAH), Bill Dawers (CAH), Katherine Fallon (CAH), Grant Gearhart (CAH), Amanda Hedrick (CAH), Christopher Hendricks (CAH), Carol Jamison (CAH), June Joyner (CAH), Leticia McGrath
Alternates in Attendance: Brett Curry (CBSS), Kip Sorgen (COE), Kay Coates (LIB), Russell Thackston (PCEC)

Senators not in Attendance: Tony Morris (CAH), Josh Kennedy (CBSS), Linda Ann McCall (COE), Ionut Emil Jacob (COSM), Jake Simons (PCOB), Bill Yang (PCOB), Rocio Alba-Flores (PCEC), Felix Hamza-Lup (PCEC), Jim Harris (PCEC)

Participating Administrators: Kyle Marrero (President), Carl Reiber (Provost), Amy Ballagh (Enrollment Management), Rebecca Carroll (HR), Maura Copeland (Legal Affairs), Brian DeLoach (Medical Director), John Lester (VP University Communications), Scott Lingrell (VP Enrollment Management), Shay Little (VP Student Affairs), Christine Ludowise (Associate Provost for Student Success), Ron Stalnaker (Chief Information Officer), David Walker (IT), Tajuan Wilson (AVP Inclusive Excellence), Rob Whitaker (VP Business and Finance)


I. CALL TO ORDER:

Trish Holt called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. She thanked the 25 Senators who ended their terms in May, including Michelle Haberland, librarian, Carol Jamison, senate secretary, and Helen Bland, past president and and introduced Cary Christian, the president-elect.
II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
Bill Mase (COPH) moved to approve the agenda for the August 20, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:
Bill Wells (PCOB) moved to approve the minutes of the April 29, 2020 “Assembly.” The motion was seconded. There was no discussion. Sixty-four senators unanimously voted to approve the minutes and agenda via a Google form.

IV. WELCOME/UPDATES/ORIENTATION:
Trish Holt announced that Faculty Senate and Standing Committee meetings will be held virtually this year.

Trish Holt shared an orientation presentation, in which she reminded everyone that Faculty Senate serves as the official advisory body to the President, specifically regarding academic policy. Despite the changed format, senators will still represent colleagues, serve on the standing committees, and follow a modified version of Robert’s Rules of Order, with a two-minute comment limit requested.

Senators were reminded of their responsibilities, which include planning to attend all meetings and determining alternates 48 hours in advance, establishing a caucus to seek and share information, being prepared, concise, gracious, solution-driven, constructive, productive, professional, and collaborative.

Senators were reminded that Requests for Information (RFIs) should only be submitted for information that is not readily available. You should reach out to the appropriate channels prior to submitting an RFI. Information sought must be relevant to two or more colleges or the academic community as a whole.

Discussion Items (DIs) are used to update senators on ongoing business or give/receive information related to potentially upcoming action items.

Senate President Holt noted that standing committees have been established and received their first two charges, including selecting a chair. Submit chair to fsoffice@georgiasouthern.edu. Chair orientation session will occur September 2.

The meeting format is online via zoom; the goal is to allow people to speak and be heard and vote when necessary. Senators should raise their hands to be recognized to speak. They will then be able to unmute and make their statement. Once someone has spoken, others will be given time before a senator gets another turn.

The Senate has established some community principles. These include listening respectfully, assuming senators and administrators have good intentions, making “I” statements, being conscious of the extent to which one speaks, and solution building.

Faculty Senate meetings are open and Trish Holt holds weekly Senate office hours on each campus.

V. SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION – AUGUST 2020

A. RFI ON CLASSES ON ELECTION DAY FROM CHRIS BARNHILL

**Question:** Has the senate ever petitioned to have classes cancelled on election day? If not, would this be an idea worth pursuing.

**Rationale:** After watching the issues with Georgia's primary elections, I think this may be an idea worth exploring for a number of reasons: Students not having to choose between waiting in line and missing class. Commuting to students' precincts may be far from campus. Students may be registered in their hometowns instead of Statesboro/Savannah, making it difficult to get polls before closing. Students who work likely have to choose between class, work, and voting. It would allow students to volunteer and become part of the process. These are just thoughts I had and I was curious if the issue has ever been raised. Thank you.

**Response:** From John Lester (VP University Communications): USG policy allows each USG institution to establish 12 paid holidays each calendar year. The only way to add a date to the holiday calendar would be to take a day away from an existing planned holiday.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. MOTION REQUEST ON THE WAIT TIME FOR WAITLIST

**MOTION:** Change the time a student has from notification of being able to register for a class from the waitlist to 24 hours. (Donna Mullinax and Nathaniel Shank)

**RATIONALE:** Students that are on a waitlist have 12 hours to respond to an opening in a class before losing their position on the waitlist. This seems unrealistic and can potentially hurt student success. Many of our students work off campus and/or have families. 1) Not every student is attached to the University through email 24/7. Faculty are not expected to be, so why do we expect students? 2) Additionally, students that work 12 hour shifts (medical, military, etc.) can easily miss the opportunity because they are working. We should not expect them to check their GSU email right before reporting to work and then right after work. 3) If a student has a question about the respective course or other changes that adding this course may cause, who will respond to their questions within 12 hours, especially in the evening or during the weekend? 4) For students that are involved in activities such as athletics, drama, etc, 12 hours could be while they are on the road, training, etc. A more realistic time would be 24 hours during regular business days. So if an opening occurs at 7:48 PM on a Friday, the student has until 7:48 PM on Monday at the minimum to respond.

Chris Kadlec (PCEC) seconded the motion.

**Discussion:**
Bill Wells (PCOB) noted that he opposes this motion because it seems to unnecessarily drag out the time for seats to be filled. He researched how many students were on the waitlist for the current semester and found 128 courses with 320 students waitlisted on Saturday before courses began and 122 courses with waitlists with 261 students waitlisted Wednesday of the first week of class. This is a small number of students. He added that if a student needs a course to graduate, they will be overridden into a course.
Waitlists with more than 2 students on them give students false hope that they will be able to get into a class.

Russell Thackston (PCEC) requested statistics on how many students miss out on getting in a class from the waitlist because they weren’t able to respond during the 12-hour window. (No answer.)

Finbarr Curtis (CAH) questioned when the 12-hour window begins (for example, is it 12 hours that could potentially begin at 8:00 PM and end at 8:00 AM the next day?) He asked if this window could be changed to a business day and 24 hours over the weekend. Scott Lingrell (VP of Enrollment Management) responded that the 12-hour window begins when a seat opens and that it would be difficult to program the system in a way that allows for a business day or a different amount of time over the weekend. He added that the Registrar’s office can set this to be whatever time of window determined, but that window can’t be variable.

Mark Hanna (PCOB) asked about the initial impetus for this motion and whether it arises from student feedback/complaints. Nathaniel Shank (COSM) replied that students working in medicine and service missed getting into classes over Christmas break because they were on 12-hour shifts and bumped from the line when they missed their time. Helen Bland (JPHCOPH) added that the window had been 24 hours before consolidation for Armstrong. Armstrong faculty and students aren’t used to that change.

Grant Gearhart (CAH) inquired about how students are notified when they are able to enroll in a class from the waitlist. Christine Ludowise (Associate Provost) explained that students are notified via an auto-generated email. The waitlist is problematic for a number of reasons, including that is not used consistently across all colleges. Christine Ludowise suggested that we examine the effectiveness of waitlists in general. Waitlists will have anywhere from 1 to 999 students on them; this should be a trigger for departments to create new sections rather than leave students on the waitlist.

Barbara KIng (CBSS) asked to clarify whether a student is kicked off the waitlist if they don’t respond in 12 hours or if they are skipped. Amy Ballagh (Enrollment Management) answered that the student is skipped but not removed from the waitlist entirely. This is to allow students to get into classes quickly during the hectic add/drop period.

Andrew Hansen (JPHCOPH) asked if the period could be changed to 24 hours over the holidays but be 12 hours during the drop/add period. Scott Lingrell (VP Enrollment Management) said he could investigate. He thinks Banner will need it to be either on or off and that there might need to be a manual process to make this happen at a time when the registrar’s office is very busy. Helen Bland (JPHCOPH) noted that the motion does not state that the waitlist time should be variable but rather that it should be 24 hours.

Russell Thackston (PCEC) stated that he was uncomfortable proposing a change that’s not data-driven and wondered if this change could keep students from getting into a class they need several days into the semester. Robert Terry (CAH) noted that from an equity perspective, recognizing the material conditions that would keep people from enrolling in a class within a 12-hour time frame needs to be considered as well.
Chris Kadlec (PCEC) moved to table the motion until we can get some data, and Russell Thackston (PCEC) seconded the motion. Lisa Abbott (CAH) supported the idea of tabling the motion, but encouraged clarifying what we need to find out before bringing this back before the Senate. Bill Wells (PCOB) said we would need to know how many students are affected by the waitlist time, what courses have waitlists, and what sizes those courses are. Trish Holt (COE) and Lisa Abbott (CAH) suggested that the Student Success Committee should look into this. To clarify parliamentary procedure, Bill Wells (PCOB) noted that there is no friendly amendment to a motion but that Senate Executive Committee should discuss what we need to know and forward this to the Student Success Committee. Chris Kadlec (PCEC) added that we want to know whether waitlist time can be variable and what are options are in Banner. Fayth Parks (COE) added that we should find out from the students what their obstacles are for getting into courses, and Andrew Hansen (JPHCOPH) added that we need to know why students are on waitlists (instructor preference, need to graduate) and how changing the waitlist time would burden the registrar’s office. Mark Hanna (PCOB) asked if there might be other solutions to this problem, like a preferred means of notification or some other solution because extending the waitlist time slows down the process of filling classes. June Joyner (CAH) added that we should ask advisors for input on this as well.

The motion to table this motion and move it to committee was voted on and approved by a vote of 54 aye, 6 nay.

VII. NEW BUSINESS
DISCUSSION ITEMS - AUGUST 2020
B. DISCUSSION ITEM ON CRITERIA FOR MOVING FROM ONE CONTINGENCY PLAN TO ANOTHER FOR THE FALL 2020 SEMESTER

SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION: In the “Fall 2020 Return to Campus Plan,” Georgia Southern University identified “three basic scenarios/contingencies of reopen status.” In a recent email to faculty leaders it was explained that “President Marrero will call the chancellor and talk through where we are if he feels we need to move online. The decision would need to be supported by the USG and the BOR.” We request more information about the specific criteria that would cause the university to request permission from the USG and BOR to move from one contingency/scenario to another. What specific data will be utilized in the decision at the university and system levels, and what processes are to be followed to move from one contingency to another? See attached file for links and references.

RATIONALE: As Georgia Southern University reopens for face-to-face instruction, there are concerns that the resumption of face-to-face instruction and the resulting increase in Covid-19 cases will cause the university to become a public health nuisance. Currently, nearly 90 percent of Critical Care Beds in area hospitals are occupied. (Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency, Region J, "COVID-19 Situation Report for 8/3/2020") Recently, the New York Times revealed that Georgia Southern has already experienced 40 cases of Covid-19. Faculty, staff, and students will inevitably have increased exposure with the resumption of face-to-face instruction. An increase of cases associated with the return of students, staff, and faculty to Georgia Southern University’s campuses therefore poses a potentially grave risk to an already strained system.
Trish Holt asked President Marrero and his cabinet to give us an update on the current COVID situation. After which, we will be able to discuss questions that have not yet been answered.

President Marrero and his cabinet took the floor to discuss the university’s Assessment Methodology for health and safety measures during the reopening. President Marrero reminded senators of past and ongoing town halls and meetings with Senate Executive Committee and Staff Council to discuss our plan and what is happening on campus.

President Marrero announced that we have established our own contact notification team, and we have our own data, which will be reported by noon on Monday each week. This will report positive tests from our health centers and athletics testing as well as self-reports for faculty, staff, and students, as well as whether these cases were confirmed for each day of the previous week.

President Marrero and his cabinet then reviewed the process for the assessments that take place on Monday, Wednesday, Friday each week in the Situation Representative Covid 19 Group consisting of 20 individuals, including healthcare professionals, the President’s cabinet, and operations staff. This group assesses seven areas using a tiered structure. Tier 1 indicates that cases are not jeopardizing operations or safety. Tier 2 means that we are still meeting need but indicates that an area should be monitored, or a modification might be needed, such as a small scale operational change to continue operations but mitigate risk. Moving to Tier 3 also indicates that we are meeting need but would require communicating with the Board of Regents to make a larger change such as moving a class online or making changes in a residence hall.

President Marrero walked through a typical meeting of this Situation Representative Covid 19 Group. In these meetings, Dr. Brian DeLoach and Dr. Stuart Tedders overview the community health services status, health center campus-specific activity, and testing availability status.

Rob Whitaker (VP Business and Finance) overviewed the areas he reports on. These include staffing levels in the offices under Business and Finance, availability of PPE and orders needed supplies and isolation beds across campuses and leave trends.

Shay Little (VP Student Affairs) provides updates on student life, Student CARES team trends, SARC requests), updating about mask compliance and mask distribution, and housing status.

Scott Lingrell (VP of Enrollment Management) discusses staffing in enrollment management services and support and a number of other offices.

Provost Reiber reports on curriculum delivery status, Faculty/staff support CARES team, and Christine Ludowise (Associate Provost) monitors students who think they might have close contact or feel ill. Faculty are notified of student illnesses, and student illnesses are monitored for hot spots by talking to chairs and deans.

Ron Stalnaker (Chief Information Officer) reports on ITS support and CARES center status including call volume, number of tickets, and self-reporting.
Ron Stalnaker shared a report that will be shared weekly beginning Monday, August 24. This chart will be on a public-facing website off of the CARES website. The chart reports positive cases by week (Monday-Sunday), broken into university confirmed (tested in health services unit or athletics) and self-reported (not validated). Contact notification team attempts to reach out to anybody who submits a self-report within four hours. Data will be reported by employees and students as well as by campus, and the webpage will provide data definitions.

Other updates will address topics such as city mask ordinances, legislative updates, athletic updates, HR accommodations updates, and a public safety update. The Office of Inclusive Excellence and legal updates, as well as an update on communications plan are reviewed.

President Marrero noted that verbal updates will continue with faculty Senate Executive Committee and Staff Council every two weeks and levels will be updated at faculty senate meetings as well.

**Discussion:**
Bill Dawers (CAH) noted that hospital region numbers are posted every day by GEMA and notes that our region has expanded critical care beds, but those are currently at 90% and general beds are at 85%. He requested clarification on whether positives on campus are reported to GDPH or by county of campus or county of home residence. Brian DeLoach answered that students diagnosed in student health centers are reported according to local address associated with campus. DeLoach has asked DPH to send out notifications to centers in communities with colleges and universities to report the case to the college community. DPH is considering it but has not committed to doing so. Students who are in clinicals or internships who are not on campus will be reported in the area where they are living, but students who are diagnosed on our campuses are reported here. President Marrero noted that self-reporting will soon be encouraged on MyGS, and cautioned that some of these students may be online in other locations. Dr. DeLoach added that whoever diagnoses the case is required to report that to DPH.

Andrew Hansen (JPHCOPH) asked if students get billed for testing on campus and if Dr. DeLoach has concerns that students who go to DPH to get tested will mess with our test positivity on campus. Brian DeLoach replied that rapid tests available in health centers are $35, but students who cannot afford that can get tested for free at DPH testing site, and if they can’t afford testing and can’t get there, DPH test kits are available on campus to be sent to DPH. Brian DeLoach noted that DPH has agreed to work with us to identify students who are tested at DPH test sites. Testing that takes place at urgent care, emergency room, at home for the weekend, we will not know. Brian DeLoach also noted that percent positivity is more important when widespread surveillance testing takes place, but ours is directed at people who are symptomatic, which results in a higher percent positivity rate. We are testing people with symptoms and are not surprised when a positive result returns. Brian DeLoach urges caution in comparing our percent positivity to the state level.

Christy Moore (WCHP) asked if the CARES teams reach out during the quarantine (not the initial report contact) to faculty or just students. Ron Stalnaker (Chief Information Officer) answered that a self-report to the CARES team results in a series of notifications to faculty/staff as well as student CARES team, housing, SARC, eagle dining, facilities, student athletes,
student facilities. Contact notification will reach out to you if quarantine is needed. The CARES team will not reach back out during quarantine but is available to answer questions.

President Marrero noted that this discussion will continue with the Senate Executive Committee and questions can be reported for that as well.

**VIII. PRESIDENT’S REPORT - DR. KYLE MARRERO (PRESIDENT)**

President Marrero provided an enrollment update. Summer was up on credit hours and head count. Fall is up in head count and in credit hour generations at this point. The large freshman class (perhaps record-setting; waiting on October census) is the driver. Drop for nonpayment will occur next week (of August 24) with mechanisms to help students get funding.

President Marrero reminded us that score cards are on the website. He noted two record results in the history of the institution: four-year graduation rate and faculty more than $10 million in sponsored research expenditures/awards.

TaJuan Wilson provided an update on the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan, which has received feedback and has been revised and submitted to Marketing and Communications, with a plan for rollout in the first week of September. He will record a training video for this and provide a template for each college to develop their own action plans. Due date for college action plans is October 30.

President Marrero concluded by noting that he met several students and parents last week, and is pleased to report that parents are happy and students are complying. We will continue to remind them of their individual responsibility being critical to our success.

**IX. PROVOST’S REPORT - DR. CARL REIBER (PROVOST, VPAA)**

Provost Reiber reiterated the herculean efforts of faculty in preparing for the semester. Of the total number of sections scheduled (includes ecore, courses without students), 6412 sections, about 23% online (includes online and synchronous zoom), 71-72% face-to-face, and 5.2% hybrid. Virtually every course has an activated Folio site and the attendance verification quiz seems to be working very well. Provost Reiber encouraged faculty to make sure that there is some content in their Folio account, to prepare for both hurricane season and for students who are ill or need to quarantine. If faculty need to quarantine, they can use Folio to continue teaching as long as they are healthy and well.

Provost Reiber commended the College of Engineering for printing face shields. Faculty and staff prefer the ones being made in house - great job engineering! So far the start of the semester is going well with some concerns.

**X. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES:**

Trish Holt (FS President) thanked the administration for their work and for sharing the assessment methods with us. Standing committees have a charge to develop Inclusive Excellence plans. TaJuan Wilson will be releasing the full plan and templates in early September that these committees can use to help develop their plans.
Trish Holt (FS President) noted that legal and human resources have been flooded with questions coming out of standing committees. She asked these committees to please refrain from overloading these departments with questions that have already been addressed elsewhere, and to send questions through the chair of the committee if more information is needed on an issue under their charge.

Trish Holt then opened the floor for announcements and updates. Bill Wells (PCOB) announced that the GECC will be sending invitations again to Town Hall meetings to discuss the core curriculum changes proposed by the BOR. The committee will also send out a survey for feedback on this.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:**
A motion to adjourn was made and seconded and the meeting was ended at 5:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Amanda Konkle (CAH, Senate Secretary)