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11-19-2020

### Faculty Senate Minutes

*Georgia Southern University*

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## Georgia Southern University Faculty Senate Meeting

November 19, 2020 | 4:00 –6:00 p.m.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM.

The agenda for this meeting, the minutes of the October 15 meeting, and the Librarian's report were approved. The Senate heard reports from the General Education and Core Curriculum Committee, the Graduate Committee, and the Undergraduate Committee and approved their reports.

The Senate heard a report from Senate President Trish Holt on a meeting with the USG Chancellors and Vice Chancellors, with updates regarding the budget, the SAT/ACT requirement, and the General Education update, as well as a statement on the importance of face-to-face education. Salary raises, the spousal surcharge on insurance, and Covid protocols were also discussed.

The Senate heard a Motion to Counter Discrimination on Campus. The motion was unanimously approved.

A second Motion to Form an Ad Hoc Committee of Senators to Complete the Inclusive Excellence Plan was returned to the authors because the Senate voted that all Senators would work on the plan.

The Senate discussed faculty concerns regarding Covid-19 as reported by the Faculty Welfare Committee. The Senate also briefly discussed voting procedures for Senate, which were deemed to be rectified at this particular meeting.

The Senate heard reports from President Marrero and Provost Reiber. Senators asked questions regarding classroom safety, the roster notifications for quarantine dates, a rumor that staff are required to work graduation, the spring academic calendar, the location of the new Honors College, classroom caps, and the purpose of putting syllabus information on Folio before Thanksgiving break, among others.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 PM.

### MINUTES

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

**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 (CAH), Kendra Parker (CAH), Jeffrey Riley (CAH), Solomon Smith (CAH), Robert Terry (CAH), Nicholas Holtzman (CBSS), Nancy McCarley (CBSS), Wendy Wolfe (CBSS), Daniel Chapman (COE), Nedra Cossa (COE), Lucas Jensen (COE), Dee Liston (COE), Fayth Parks (COE), Nancy Remler (COE), Karelle Aiken (COSM), Christine Bedore (COSM), Yi Hu (COSM), Ionut Emil Iacob, Jim LoBue (COSM), Cathy MacGowan (COSM), Justin Montemarano (COSM), Traci Ness (COSM), Amy Potter (COSM), Jeffrey Secrest (COSM), Nathaniel Shank (COSM), Abid Shaikh (COSM), Divine Wanduku (COSM), Robert Yarbrough (COSM), Jennifer Zettler (COSM), Andrew Hansen (JPHCOPH), Haresh Rochani (JPHCOPH), William Mase (JPHCOPH), Barbara Ross (Liberty), Jessica Garner (LIB), Kristi Smith (LIB), Cheryl Aasheim (PCEC), David Calamas (PCEC), Rami Haddad (PCEC), Chris Kadlec (PCEC), William Amponsah (PCOB), Omid Ardakani (PCOB), Mark Hanna (PCOB), Lowell Mooney (PCOB), Bill Wells (PCOB), Diana Botnaru (WCHP), Katrina Embrey (WCHP), Chris Hanna (WCHP), Susan Hendrix (WCHP), Joshua Kies (WCHP), Kari Mau (WCHP), Christy Moore (WCHP)

**Alternates in Attendance:** Barbara Hendry (CBSS), Brett Curry (CBSS), Salman Siddiqui (PCEC), Mary Estelle Bester (WCHP)

**Senators not in Attendance:** Tony Morris (CAH), Josh Kennedy (CBSS), Addie Martindale (CBSS), Eric Silva (CBSS), Rocio Alba-Flores (PCEC), Felix Hamza-Lup (PCEC), Clint Martin (PCEC), Jake Simons (PCOB), Bill Yang (PCOB), Sheri Carey (WCHP), Ellen Hamilton (WCHP)

**Participating Administrators:** Kyle Marrero (President), Carl Reiber (Provost), Annalee Ashley (Chief of Staff), Amy Ballagh (Enrollment Management), 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), Vickie Shaw (HR), Ron Stalnaker (Chief Information Officer), David Walker (IT), Rob Whitaker (VP Business and Finance), TaJuan Wilson (AVP Inclusive Excellence)

**Guests:** Chris Cartright (CAH), Megan Small (Faculty Senate GA), Joanne Chopak-Foss (Chair, Undergraduate Committee, JPHCOPH), Shelli Casler-Failing (Chair, Graduate Committee, COE)

**Attendees:** Ashlea Anderson, Dustin Anderson, Maddie Bercher, Brenda Blackwell, Caitlin Brady, Donna Brooks, Maxine Bryant, Breanna Calamas, Lisa Carmichael, Suzanne Carpenter, Sonya Chance, Ashley Colquitt, Diana Cone, Kelly Crosby, Christopher Curtis, Janet Dale, Mohammad Davoud, Nikki DiGregorio, Steven Engel, Delena Bell Gatch, Ken Gassiot, Eric Gato, Debanjana Ghosh, Janet Goodman, Amanda Graham, Candace Griffith, Michelle Haberland, Eden Hodges, Barry Joyner, Youakim Kalaani, John Kraft, Allison Lyon, Delana Nivens, Norton Pease, Alyson Prude, Cathy Skidmore-Hess, Ria Ramoutar, Brenda Richardson, Tammy Robbins,

Amy Smith, Trina Smith, Kip Sorgen, Brad Sturz, Kara Bridgman Sweeney, Tom Sweeney, Jennifer Syno, Audra Taylor, Stuart Tedders, David Walker. Deborah Walker

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Trish Holt (COE) called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

Trish Holt reviewed the new voting procedures by using the raise hand button.

### **II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Finbarr Curtis (CAH) moved to approve the agenda for the November 19, 2020 meeting. Rami Haddad (PCEC) seconded. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

### **III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES / OCTOBER 15, 2020**

KONKLE (CAH), SENATE SECRETARY

Chris Kadlec (PCEC) moved to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2020 meeting. Leticia McGrath (CAH) seconded. There was no discussion. Minutes were approved.

### **IV. LIBRARIAN'S REPORT / NOVEMBER 4, 2020**

KING (CBSS), SENATE LIBRARIAN

Barbara King (CBSS) moved to accept that the Librarian's Report was submitted. Haresh Rochani (JPHCOPH) seconded.

#### **A. GENERAL EDUCATION AND CORE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – WELLS (PCOB)**

Bill Wells reported that the committee voted to deactivate four humanities courses that have not been offered for a number of years. The committee has been norming for assessments for Core courses. Jim LoBue (COSM) seconded. Senators voted to approve the report.

#### **B. UNDERGRADUATE COMMITTEE – CHOPAK-FOSS (JPHCOPH)**

Joanne Chopak-Foss (JPHCOPH) reported that all items on the October meeting agenda of the Undergraduate Committee were approved by the committee and referred senators to the Librarian's report for more information. The committee is taking a closer look at student learning outcomes in coordination with IAA. They are trying to do due diligence in aligning courses with program learning outcomes. The report was seconded by Leticia McGrath (CAH). The report was approved.

#### **C. GRADUATE COMMITTEE – CASLER-FAILING (COE)**

Shelli Casler-Failing (COE) reported that the Graduate Committee approved a revised GRE requirement for MA English and courses that the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences wanted deleted and replaced with practice-based courses. Amanda Konkle (CAH) seconded the report. The report was approved.

## **V. USG FACULTY COUNCIL REPORT**

### **MEETING WITH CHANCELLOR & VICE CHANCELLORS – TRISH HOLT (COE)**

Trish Holt provided a summary of the issues discussed at an October 23 meeting with the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors. According to Dr. Wrigley, there is not much new with our budget, but there is hope that we can request a \$61 million increase. It is not guaranteed that we will receive it. A new internet sales tax should increase state revenues. His priority is full formula funding. He reported that the legislators want to know why we are charging the tuition that we are and that he is answering their questions. He said that in the spring we need to maximize face-to-face courses and minimize online courses; hybrid courses need to be truly hybrid. They are not de-emphasizing online instruction but rather emphasizing the “richer, fuller” face-to-face experience. He said that first generation and Pell grant students need the face-to-face experience. When he was told that students are not showing up for classes, he reported that statewide students are saying that faculty are not showing up for classes (as of October 23). The system only had three institutions with a surge in the first week in the fall, and those were soon contained.

He also discussed aligning salaries with SREB data but that the state needs to provide some funding to provide the needed raises. It would take \$21 million to give all university employees a 1% raise.

Tristan Denley (Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer) provided an update on General Education, which is currently on hold. They hope to get people together in the spring to finalize them. Denley said there was no option but to waive the SAT/ACT requirement for Fall 2020 because the test was not provided. The SAT is 20,000 students behind who are waiting on the exam. Once that is caught up, they will return to previous requirements. They are also looking at the post-tenure review process. They will be conducting a data analysis to determine the purpose and procedures of post-tenure review, with a process dating from the late 1990s. They will be looking into whether the process measures accountability and provides a process for rewarding excellent work. There is a committee working on this; Helen Bland is our representative.

Natasha Webb-Prather in Benefits and HR reminded the group that the USG is keeping up with the CDC guidelines and asking the Georgia Department of Health for guidance when there is ambiguity. Each university is responsible for its own testing protocols.

Juanita Hicks, Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, suggested that the \$100 surcharge for employees with a working spouse may not be permanent.

## **VI. SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT MOTION REQUESTS**

### **A. MOTION TO COUNTER DISCRIMINATION ON CAMPUS – CARTRIGHT**

**MOTION:**

... The Faculty Senate resolves that:

- 1) Every member of the GSU community has the right to express their opinion [within the bounds of the law](#); University Administrators, Faculty, and Staff have a professional and ethical responsibility to recognize and respond to forms of discrimination wherever they appear in the University community.
- 2) In order to guarantee equal opportunity, enforce the Student Code of Conduct, achieve the University's strategic goals, and support the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan, Academic Units should develop teaching and learning opportunities that equip members of the community with evidence-based strategies to recognize, report, and respond to forms of discrimination and/or racism expressed in behaviors, language, and symbols.
- 3) In order to guarantee equal opportunity for Employees and Students, the University Administration should firmly and explicitly defend Faculty, [Student](#), and Staff 's free [expression](#) rights while supporting through the [Office of EEO and Title IX](#) ~~their~~ efforts to prohibit [unlawful](#) discrimination and harassment, interference with academic performance, or the creation of a hostile learning environment.
- 4) In order to achieve the University's strategic goals regarding fiscal responsibility and employee satisfaction, the Administration should rely on [whenever possible and practicable](#) Faculty [and Staff](#) with relevant expertise to create and deliver anti-discrimination learning resources, compensating work appropriately, documenting clear recognition of Faculty service and scholarship in these areas as contributing to tenure and promotion, and providing course releases as appropriate. ...

SEE APPENDIX FOR FULL TEXT OF MOTION WITH NOTES ON REVISIONS MADE SINCE OCTOBER SENATE MEETING

**DISCUSSION:**

Chris Cartright reported that this is the most recent draft of the resolution, which has been revised with the help of Legal Affairs and the President's Diversity Advisory Council. He noted that the motion needs a friendly amendment to revise the final phrase in paragraph 5 to "any unlawful act of intimidation or bullying" and to correct the years for the Student Code of Conduct to 2020-2021. This motion was seconded by Dee Liston (COE). Lisa Abbott (CAH)

stated that as the Senator who submitted the Motion, she accepts the friendly amendment. The motion was unanimously approved.

**B. MOTION TO REQUIRE SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO SUBMIT MEETING MINUTES AND REPORTS TO THE FULL FACULTY SENATE OF ALL SEC MEETINGS – ABBOTT**

**MOTION:** I so move that we change the Faculty By Laws; 323 Faculty Governance/Shared Governance Article III – Officers / SECTION 5. I. from "I. provide agendas of all Senate Executive Committee meetings;" to read instead "I. The SEC shall provide full minutes and a summary report of all SEC meetings. Summary reports would appear in the senate agenda in the senate meeting following the SEC meeting. The full minutes would be added to the Librarians report in the following senate session to allow time for submission as SEC meeting happen relatively closely to Senate meetings.

**RATIONALE:** Whereas the current Faculty handbook only asks for an SEC agenda to be submitted. and Whereas in the interest of openness and transparency that has been called for by the body of the senate, and whereas the work of the Senate Executive committee is to represent the full senate and all faculty in the planning and implementing of the senate agendas it is important that the SEC provide clear information on their deliberations and reports on all information that the SEC receives in all meetings in which they are gathered as a committee.

Lisa Abbott (CAH) reported that this motion is a response to bylaw changes as a result of consolidation. Because all other standing committees have to report their minutes, the SEC should also report their minutes. A summary will be included in the agenda because the SEC meeting is close to the Senate meeting. Minutes will be included in the Librarian's Report. This is to be done in the interest of transparency. Chris Kadlec (PCEC) seconded.

**Discussion:**

Leticia McGrath (CAH) asked for a history of this, specifically whether the SEC used to submit minutes. Helen Bland reported that she knows that since consolidation there have not been minutes. Bill Wells recalls a summary in a prior iteration of the SEC in the early 2000s on the Statesboro campus. In March of 2019 there was a motion to clean up the bylaws to make them reflect what was actually done in the committees, and one of the things that was changed in the bylaws was the removal of the SEC minutes requirement. He added that he serves on the SEC and it seems reasonable that the committee provides minutes.

Katrina Embrey (WCHP) served on the equivalent to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee at Armstrong, and they did not submit minutes.

Diana Botnaru (WCHP) reported that the function of the SEC as listed on the Faculty Senate website currently states that minutes are required, but she does not know whether they have ever been taken and submitted.

Leticia McGrath (CAH) said she agrees and wants to know if there are reasons against taking these minutes. Mark Hanna (PCOB) said it's reasonable for the committee to provide its minutes. He noted that there's a Senate Executive Committee report at the meetings, and this could eliminate the need for a report and shorten the meetings. Lisa Abbott (CAH) reported that there was formerly a general report given similar to what other committees do, and the report and minutes will serve this purpose. President Kyle Marrero said that he is in favor of this, especially if it helps spread information from meetings with President Marrero and other members of administration (he was referring to the biweekly meeting notes which do currently go out to the SEC for circulation to their colleges).

The motion passed.

#### C. MOTION TO FORM AD HOC COMMITTEE FROM ELECTED SENATORS TO COMPLETE INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE PLAN – MOORE

**MOTION:** That one or more Ad Hoc committee(s) be formed to complete portions of the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan on behalf of the Faculty Senate.

**RATIONALE:** Many of the Faculty Senate's Standing Committees have been asked by the Faculty Senate President to develop policies and procedures to include action plans, resources, timelines, and personnel for Action areas in the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan on behalf of the Faculty Senate. Many of the Action areas are outside the Standing Committees' charges and their members' knowledge level. The committees are being asked to develop policies and procedures to govern the Faculty Senate. Many of the committee members serving on Standing committees have not been senators and are not qualified to write such policies and procedures. Specifically, the Academic Standards Committee has been charged with developing policies and procedures that pertain to Faculty Senate marketing practices, communications, publication, bias incidents, social media guidance, and clarify goals and expectations with respect to Inclusive Excellence.

Further, the Academic Standards Committee has been asked to develop quarterly reporting forms and content for the Faculty Senate (Inclusive Excellence Action Plan Goal 1, Strategies 1G1 through 1G5 and Goal 4, Strategies 4D1 and 4D4, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/16FQBFCJTyr5V31vaXB7UeonoNsHbvVOa/view>). The Academic Standards Committee is specifically charged with overseeing the university's academic integrity, concerns with admissions, academic suspension, academic exclusion, special admission, special readmissions, provisional and probationary procedures (Faculty Senate Bylaws, SECTION 15).



Less than half of our current members have ever served on the Faculty Senate. It would seem that per the Inclusive Excellence Action plan, what is appropriate for our committee is to review our own policies and procedures to ensure our committee's compliance with best practices for Inclusive Excellence, and that the Faculty Senate form ad hoc committees from its own body of elected Senators to accomplish the same task for the Faculty Senate.

Trish Holt reported that after discussion this was returned to Christy Moore because it was voted by Faculty Senate in the spring that we all work on this together. Due to the short timeline for completing this work, this motion was returned to the author.

### **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION – NOVEMBER 2020**

#### **A. FINAL EXAMS FOR FALL SEMESTER 2020 – TAYLOR**

Provost Reiber responded to these concerns in an email to the faculty.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS – NOVEMBER 2020**

#### **A. SUMMARY OF FACULTY COVID-19 CONCERNS AS REPORTED TO THE FACULTY WELFARE COMMITTEE – AIKEN**

**SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION:** Since the beginning of Fall 2020, many faculty have emailed COVID-related concerns and recommendations directly to the Faculty Welfare Committee. The decision was made to submit a summary of these concerns (see the attached document) to the Senate for discussion.

**RATIONALE:** These concerns were submitted by faculty from multiple colleges. This information could prove useful for informing future academic decisions. The faculty's feedback focuses on issues such as the learning environment, challenges our students are facing, and the well-being of members of our community.

Karelle Aiken (COSM) summarized faculty concerns regarding Covid in the spirit of reaching solutions. She summarized the concerns that were submitted to the Faculty Welfare Committee. These concerns fall into four main areas of concern: increased workload, quality of instruction, impacts on enrollment, and health and safety. In the area of increased workload, faculty feel that their workload is increased because of adapting to modalities, dealing with students' anxieties, and addressing accommodations. In regards to quality of instruction, the committee reported that technology issues are impacting quality of instruction. There is concern that the university hasn't thoroughly investigated students' responses to current teaching methods. There are also increased instances of academic dishonesty. Regarding concerns about enrollment, the committee reported concerns about first-year students and returning students who struggled in previous semesters. They also reported a concern that we might end up losing talented members of our faculty body. In the areas of health and safety, the committee

understands that the pandemic has affected everyone, and the concern is about asking faculty members to put their health and safety at risk. This disproportionately affects students of color. The committee reported requests for help enforcing face masks, securing adequate cleaning supplies in classrooms, and accessing outdoor classroom spaces. Some instructors are teaching off campus where masks were not required. The committee also reported a concern about a need for more accurate ways of tracking infection, as well as a request for assessment of how the pandemic affects work/life balance, especially for faculty with young children.

Leticia McGrath (CAH) thanked Karelle Aiken for her work on this committee. She added that it was difficult for the committee to summarize the many concerns. This committee met just before the last faculty senate meeting, and so additional concerns have been added, including that this affects not only parents of school-age children but also parents of younger children. Another concern is that there seems to be a change in the number of students who are allowed in the classrooms, i.e., higher numbers of students in Covid caps.

Jim LoBue (COSM) addressed the fourth point regarding safety. He doesn't understand where the 85% goal has come from, but he wonders if there is any flexibility considering that there are increased rates of transmission, hospitalization, and death. Many faculty are concerned for their health. There are also a number of students who are worried about their own health. However, there seems to not be a balance in reporting this. Might we consider some time of quarantining and remote delivery of classes at the beginning of the semester to mitigate the surge before returning to in-person classes. A similar approach could be used after the Spring Break. He would like to see that there's some kind of discussion that would help us understand that it's not all about that we fill our classes but also that we care for the individuals who are most likely to be jeopardized by the 85% in-person policy.

## B. FACULTY SENATE VOTING IN VIRTUAL (ZOOM) MEETINGS – YARBROUGH

**SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION:** We respectfully request a discussion of the Senate's current voting procedure at the November 2020 Senate meeting.

**RATIONALE:** The current format for voting (using Qualtrics) requires senators to include their name and college with every vote. As was noted at the October 2020 Senate meeting, this vote information (including names and colleges) is then subject to an open records request, which effectively makes every vote a roll call vote. We ask that the following specific questions guide this discussion: If only faculty senators are receiving the voting links, why are we required to provide any additional information (besides the vote itself)? What is the purpose of requiring names and colleges and is this absolutely necessary? Do other voting options exist that more closely mirror the Faculty Senate's voting procedures during face to face meetings (i.e., where no identifying information is required to accompany a senator's vote)? Rob Yarbrough (CoSM) Bill Wells (Parker College of Business) Josh Kennedy (CBSS) Brett Curry (Alternate-CBSS)

Robert Yarbrough (COSM) asked supporting senators if the changes to voting implemented in this meeting satisfied the concerns, and Bill Wells (PCOB) concurred that they do.

#### **VIII. PRESIDENT'S REPORT – DR. KYLE MARRERO (PRESIDENT)**

President Marrero thanked Karelle Aiken (COSM) and Leticia McGrath (CAH) for their work on the Faculty Welfare Committee. He has shared their report with the Assessment Team. The President assured Jim LoBue (COSM) that he does not go a night without thinking of every faculty, staff, and student on our campuses. He thanks faculty for stepping up and noted that students are adjusting as well. He noted that he has been discussing and will continue to discuss these concerns and suggestions with SEC at their biweekly meetings with administration.

President Marrero provided some Covid-19 updates. There is an upward tick in the country. We have been fortunate in this side of Georgia for this delay in this uptick, but it is slowly making its way into this area. Symptomatic reports are stable and there were a few more instances of contact tracing in the past week. East Georgia Medical in Statesboro is at the lowest level it has been at in some time. Region J hospitals are all stable. Transmission rates as of November 19 are 122 per 100,000 in Bulloch County, 161 per 100,000 in Chatham County, and 120 out of 100,000 in Liberty County. All areas are assessed every Monday and Thursday. We are still at Level 1 in all areas. The classroom is one of the safest places you can be. As they investigate cases, they are coming from clinical sites, off-campus sites, and social gatherings.

President Marrero reported on the budget. An email went out November 19 with the summarized budget narrative. On myGS, under the Performance Excellence tab, you can find all the documents that will be submitted to the System. The narrative will clarify how we are addressing needs and documentation that we are asking faculty to do far more than they have done before and we can't sustain this. Data sheets with enrollment projections, financial aid distributions, and the modeling of the \$2.29 million of reduction are also available. As you'll recall, \$1.57 of unallocated funding was held back to address this, 8 vacant positions filled the \$720,000 gap. Those will be held until April, when we find out the percent of true reduction. We are not always held at this 100% modelling, but typically closer to 75%. The prioritization of investments for growth dollars also appears there, which includes positions to be filled, operational expenses, and salary adjustments/equity. Segal is a company doing a study on gender and diversity across ranks of faculty and staff to assess inequity, and \$500,000 has been set aside to put something toward that beginning July 1. Promotion and tenure needs to be funded, which is on average a \$500,000 recurring investment for the institution. There are some blank lines and unallocated reserves held back to make sure we have money set aside because our enrollment growth cannot be booked until it is repeated. Questions should be directed through the divisions first, because those prioritizations came from deans.

Shay Little (VP Student Affairs) discussed \$1.5 million from the Governor's office to be targeted toward expanded clinical support and resources through a third-party partnership with a company that can support additional hours; a partnership with the JED foundation for its campus program to review mental health, policies, and clinical practices in terms of promoting student health and wellbeing; campus mini-grant process where funds can be diverted to programs already existing on campus (Active Minds backpack programs, wellness ambassadors in student organizations, substance abuse use and abuse resources, mental health resources folder to be distributed to faculty, clinician training around trauma support, expanding QPR training), and administrative support for additional programs. The first program will be a Healthy Mind Study to explore aspects of students' mental health.

President Marrero noted that mental health crises are an additional crisis of the pandemic. This money will help us better support students' needs. He also understands that this has been a tough year for faculty, as they deal with students' crises.

President Marrero announced that the university has completed applications to be a closed pod delivery site for a vaccine to be distributed at no charge to faculty, staff, and students. Immediate families may be included. The current timeline is March, April, May, or June.

President Marrero reminded everyone to complete the Inclusive Excellence Climate survey. As of November 19, about 40% of faculty had completed the survey. We should encourage students to complete the survey as well.

He announced that Dr. Eileen Dowell will start as the new Dean of Students on February 1. We will be embarking on a national search for Vice President of Business and Finance. Rob Whitaker has decided to move on to other things but will remain Vice President until the search is complete. TaJuan Wilson and Ron Stalnaker are co-chairs of the search committee. They plan to have campus interviews in March. This is an opportunity at the cabinet level to have diverse candidates and attempt to diversify the cabinet through this search.

We expect 1700 students over 5 ceremonies for commencement, with 400 students from spring and summer who were not able to walk before.

President Marrero thanked faculty again for their efforts this semester. What faculty decide to do after Thanksgiving in terms of delivering curriculum is up to them. The university is open with business as usual, but it is up to faculty what kind of projects students are completing and how to approach curriculum delivery and meet learning outcomes for the semester.

Bill Dawers (CAH) asked how definitive information regarding contact tracing and classroom safety is and where infections are happening. President Marrero answered that an early increase came from Bid Day gatherings of Greek organizations. They put their own moratoriums in place, and local watering holes

also helped to slow the spread. President Marrero also responded to reports that students are not reporting, explaining that students who get tested at CVS, DPH, and doctor's offices are reported to the university. It is unclear if there are numbers of students who do not get tested. There have not been any clusters within housing. The majority of faculty cases have been from clinical sites off campus. When he says that the classroom is the safest place it is because of investigation of cases.

Leticia McGrath (CAH) thanked President Marrero and Provost Reiber for addressing faculty concerns. She asked about the purging of records from the rosters regarding students' quarantine dates as they ask for makeup assignments. It is also easy to miss these notifications because they only appear on the roster, or students inform faculty after the fact that they were quarantined. President Marrero responded that the solution is to contact Diana Cone, who can provide dates that students entered and exited quarantine. Provost Reiber mentioned that we had this conversation in SEC, and Dr. Cone has been contacted by a few people this week. He is working with Ron Stalnaker to get something more comprehensive, as faculty will need this and the Provost's office will need this as they address grade complaints.

Susan Hendrix (WCHP) asked if staff are being required to work commencement. President Marrero responded that staff are being asked to volunteer, and that 200 initially volunteered, and they need about 70 more. If someone has accommodations, they will not be asked to work. No one is going to be forced to work graduation.

Traci Ness (COSM) noted that some USG institutions have been changing their spring academic calendars and asked for confirmation that we are not changing our academic calendar. President Marrero responded that we will stick with the schedule as published, continue with current assessment protocols, and know that we have the option to toggle if needed. Provost Reiber added that he has received a petition from Valdosta asking for support in bringing their spring break back. The Georgia Southern decision to keep spring break was somewhat informed by mental health concerns.

President Marrero stated that Bill Dawers and his committee's report on campus morale on the Armstrong campus is being put into action, and they are seeking an advisory committee out of Faculty Senate to help monitor that.

Diana Botnaru (WCHP) noted that the minutes from the last SEC minutes were not distributed yet and it is not clear that all faculty receive/read those, and therefore might not know how to get information regarding quarantine dates. Perhaps a faculty-wide email could go out clarifying this to faculty. President Marrero said the notes are public documents, but he will look into a more direct method of disseminating the information.

Karelle Aiken (COSM) noted that we've been given support for learning different delivery modes and asked what support students have been given for working in these different modes because a number of students are struggling. President Marrero added that additional advising and student services through virtual support as well as tutoring and early alerts have been provided. Student Affairs has been "appropriately aggressive" in offering support for students. Shay Little added that there is an engaged residence hall staff working with students. We also have a Behavioral Assessment Team (BAT) team that faculty can refer students from off the Dean of Students' website. Students don't know that they are on that team's radar, but support for them is ramped up in terms of what the student needs. The counseling center has on-call clinicians who can also work faculty through addressing a student in crisis. The mental health folder will be both printed and on the web with information and resources for faculty to address student needs. Karelle Aiken (COSM) added that the question was more about how do they help students be proactive, how do we help them stay engaged. Shay Little responded that they are building an online system called Eagle Engage and that Residence Life is helping students with skills building; Student Activities are also incentivizing proactive leadership and informational sessions.

Bill Wells (PCOB) asked a question about SACSCOC. For the spring, it is necessary to request Emergency Temporary Relocation of Instruction. President Marrero stated that we have opportunity to work through various aspects of accreditation. This particular requirement will be an easy form to fill out. He noted that there are a number of audits related to stimulus money and so on, and that there are a number of additional administrative processes this semester. Provost Reiber stated that his administrative philosophy is that faculty should have as little to do with SACS as possible. SACSCOC had suspended some requirements for spring and summer; however, they are asking that those teaching online (who have not already done so) be certified to do so through the CTE or Quality Matters.

#### **IX. PROVOST'S REPORT – DR. CARL REIBER (PROVOST, VPAA)**

Provost Reiber reiterated the last point. Bill Wells summarized this at the last meeting between administration and SEC. It is up to faculty how to address curriculum delivery after Thanksgiving break and how to assess the students in creative ways.

The Honors College that Dr. Steven Engel proposed to the Senate several months ago was approved by the USG last week. Provost Reiber thanked everyone involved in creating the documents and the assessment. This will usher in a new era for our undergraduates.

The College of Education is searching for a Dean, chaired by Dean Ryan Schroeder.

Despite anxiety that it would be a challenge to get faculty volunteers for commencement, within 24 hours, every slot needed was filled. Even in Covid times,

it is clear that faculty are very dedicated to students and celebrating their successes. He thanked faculty for input, comments, and commitment to students.

Grant Gearhart (CAH) asked if the Honors College will be on all campuses. Provost Reiber responded that there will be a Dean, two associate deans on Statesboro and Armstrong campuses, and increased activities on Liberty campus and online.

Leti McGrath (CAH) asked about students having access to Folio. We are being asked to put information in our Folio shells, but it is unclear when students will have access to Folio. Provost Reiber stated that the System wants transparency. The first step is that a column has been added to Banner so that students can see the nature of delivery. Once those students register, they can look at the syllabus and see additional details, and then they can choose to change classes if that does not meet their needs. He reported that they are also telling students to look at Banner repeatedly, as ADA forms are still being processed, and a course might change its delivery mode. ADA gives the university latitude regarding the 85% face-to-face requirement. Diana Cone is pushing a bunch of ADA forms out Thursday and Friday. He said that it's not ideal, but the two-step process allowed us to provide information without making all course information public. Leticia McGrath (CAH) confirmed that the entire syllabus does not need to be on Folio at this point. The Provost said it's fine to add a note about the structure of the class or a generic syllabus without dates. Leticia McGrath (CAH) added that many faculty are receiving new assignments this week and so it's difficult for faculty to be able to provide the syllabus information. The Provost confirmed that this is complicated and a number of faculty are still receiving accommodations and changing course delivery modes. He added that a number of faculty with accommodations were eager to teach in the large auditoriums with distance and plexiglass.

Robert Yarbrough (COSM) asked Provost Reiber to address the concern outlined in the Faculty Welfare report about raised classroom Covid caps in the spring. Provost Reiber reported that the only changes he is aware of are in the College of Business in rooms where extra furniture was removed, the room was remeasured, and additional students could be fit. There were conversations around inconsistencies in room measurements. He is not aware of any large-scale changes, but he has a note to check with Katie Twining on that. President Marrero noted that if you have a specific question on a room, contact them.

## **X. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES**

Trish Holt announced that SGA is back up and running.

President Marrero thanked Chris Cartright and Lisa Abbott (CAH) for their collaboration on the Motion on Counter Discrimination.

## **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion and second were received, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dr. Amanda Konkle (CAH)

**APPENDIX:**

**MOTION: DRAFT (07 NOV, 2020): Motion to Counter Discrimination on Campus**

WHEREAS the Georgia Southern University Faculty Senate is responsible to “serve as the representative and legislative agency of the faculty,” to “serve as the official faculty advisory body to the President,” and for “formulating policies and reviewing procedures” related to “general educational policy of the University, the welfare of the faculty, and other matters which maintain and promote the best interests of the faculty and the University”<sup>1</sup>:

Whereas the University community has experienced [several incidents that test our values and merit](#)

[robust academic discourse](#)<sup>234</sup>: ~~of racial discrimination in which members of our community used~~

~~racist language, burned the books of an invited speaker, and promoted white nationalist ideas in classrooms:~~

Whereas racial discrimination and white nationalism are incompatible with the goals and values of our institution; racial discrimination impacts student retention<sup>5</sup>, impedes the culture of respect and critical thinking that is essential to learning<sup>6</sup>, and harms the personal development of our students:

Whereas “it continues to be the policy of Georgia Southern University to implement equal opportunity... which prohibits any employee, student, or patron from unlawfully harassing, threatening, or physically or verbally abusing another individual with the effect of unreasonably interfering with that person’s work or academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or academic environment”<sup>7</sup>:

Whereas Georgia Southern University’s 2019-2020 Student Code of Conduct regulates student conduct including “any classroom behavior that interferes with the Faculty’s ability to conduct class, failure to conform to the Faculty member’s announced expectations for the classroom, or the ability of other Students to learn”; “speech or other expression (words, pictures, symbols) that constitutes fighting words and is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to



interfere, limit, or deny one's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program"; "any act of intimidation or bullying directed against any person or group of persons"<sup>8</sup>:

Whereas the University strategic pillars require the institution to develop "students into holistic critical thinkers who contribute as productive citizens to societal

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enrichment"; to ensure that "all

<sup>1</sup> [Faculty Senate](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Georgia Southern responds to student's apparent racist text](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Georgia Southern student promotes white supremacist theory in class](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Racist Incidents, Budget Cuts, and Faculty Warnings: Inside the Run-Up to a Campus Book-Burning](#)

<sup>5</sup>Gusa, Diane Lynn. 2010. "White Institutional Presence: The Impact of Whiteness on Campus Climate." *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 80, no. 4, pp. 464-489.

<sup>6</sup>Chun, Edna B, and Joe R. Feagin. 2019. *Rethinking Diversity Frameworks in Higher Education*. Routledge.

<sup>7</sup> [Reaffirmation of the University's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy | Equal Opportunity & Title IX](#) <sup>8</sup> [2019-2020 Code of Student Conduct](#)

populations will feel valued and respected, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education, or disability”; to implement “robust policies, procedures, and practices to ensure current and future sustainability... risk management, and employee satisfaction”; to provide “access to resources for support” and “strong curricular and co-curricular opportunities” to promote “the intellectual, personal, and professional development of students”; and to deepen “strategic relationships” and expand “cultural opportunities” to distinguish the university “as a valued partner and community resource”<sup>9</sup>:

Whereas the University Administration has committed to following recommendations from the 2019 Inclusive Excellence report, which include “training and professional development” and “cultural competence... curriculum and co-curriculum”<sup>10</sup>, [and has developed the 2020-2022 Inclusive Excellence Action Plan with which this resolution is aligned](#):

Whereas during the 2019-2020 session, the Faculty Senate has reviewed University policies and procedures related to free speech, unprotected speech, equal opportunity, and racial discrimination<sup>11</sup>:

The Faculty Senate resolves that:

- 1) Every member of the GSU community has the right to express their opinion [within the bounds of the law](#); University Administrators, Faculty, and Staff have a professional and ethical responsibility to recognize and respond to forms of discrimination wherever they appear in the University community.
  - 2) In order to guarantee equal opportunity, enforce the Student Code of Conduct, achieve the University’s strategic goals, and support the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan, Academic Units should develop teaching and learning opportunities that equip members of the community with evidence-based strategies to recognize, report, and respond to forms of discrimination and/or racism expressed in behaviors, language, and symbols.
  - 3) In order to guarantee equal opportunity for Employees and Students, the University Administration should firmly and explicitly defend Faculty, [Student](#), and Staff’s free [expression](#) rights while supporting through the [Office of EEO and Title IX](#) ~~their~~ efforts to prohibit [unlawful](#) discrimination and harassment, interference with academic performance, or the creation of a hostile learning environment.
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- 9 [Strategic Plan: Performance Excellence](#)
- 10 [Inclusive Excellence: seven recommendations for Georgia Southern University](#)
- 11 [Faculty Senate Minutes](#)

- 4) In order to achieve the University's strategic goals regarding fiscal responsibility and employee satisfaction, the Administration should rely on **whenever possible and practicable** Faculty and Staff with relevant expertise to create and deliver anti-discrimination learning resources, compensating work appropriately, documenting clear recognition of Faculty service and scholarship in these areas as contributing to tenure and promotion, and providing course releases as appropriate.

Notes:

- 1) This motion draft is based on the resolution draft discussed during the October 2020 Faculty Senate meeting.
- 2) Content in blue represents edits proposed by the Office of Legal Affairs. These proposals were discussed at the President's Diversity Advisory Council meeting on Oct. 26th, 2020.
- 3) Pres. Marerro requested that language be added to the preamble to indicate that this resolution aligns with the Inclusive Excellence Action Plan (also indicated in blue).
- 4) During the PDAC meeting, Pres. Marerro indicated his willingness to sign the Senate motion if it includes the edits from the Office of Legal Affairs.
- 5) On Nov. 5th and 6th, Maura Copeland recommended the changes to the second preamble based on her previous comment in the document.