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SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

March 5, 2021,

Via Zoom: 1:00p.m. – 3:00pm

Voting Members Present: Lisa Abbott (CAH), Cheryl Aasheim (PCEC), Diana Botnaru (WCHP), Cary Christian (CBSS), President-Elect, Jessica Garner (LIB), Trish Holt (COE), President, Dee Liston (COE), William Mase (JPHCOPH), Jeffery Secrest (COSM), Bill Wells (PCOB)

Non-Voting Members Present: Amanda Konkle (CAH), Secretary, Barbara King (CBSS), Librarian, Helen Bland (JPHCOPH), Parliamentarian, Megan Small, Graduate Assistant

I. CALL TO ORDER

Trish Holt called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Lisa Abbott asked if we needed to add approval of minutes to the meeting. It was determined to approve the minutes via email.

The agenda was approved.

III. CHAIR'S UPDATE

A. Welcome

Trish Holt clarified that the timeline for submitted reports is adjusted because of spring break. We can wait to include information during spring break in the Senate agenda if needed.

B. Librarian's Report

Barb King reported that some minutes have not been received yet because of the earlier deadline; they will have to be included in the next Senate agenda.

1. Graduate Curriculum Committee

2. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

3. Core Curriculum Committee

4. SGA Representative will be added to the Senate Agenda if a representative is named.

C. Resolution to Counter Discrimination on Campus

Trish Holt met with Chris Cartright and TaJuan Wilson last week to determine how to operationalize the Resolution to Counter Discrimination passed by the Senate in November 2020. Chris Cartright will write an action plan for the Faculty Senate and the Provost's Inclusive Excellence plans. It will be submitted to SEC for review. Options of new officer positions or committees were suggested. Barb King noted that one of the suggestions of the Elections Committee was to create a position on the SEC as a liaison between SEC and various diversity committees.

D. SGA / FS Joint Resolution on Diversity Meeting

Trish Holt met with Kahria Hadley (chair of SGA) and TaJuan Wilson on operationalizing the SGA / FS Joint Resolution. Provost Reiber advised that some work has been done on this so far, such as training students who want to be involved on faculty searches. Trish is meeting with

Diana Cone to review other actions taken. The Provost also mentioned putting language on his website to advocate for diversity in hiring.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Inclusive Excellence Plan – Trish Holt

On February 23, Diana Botnaru, Bill Mase, Trish Holt, and Helen Bland discussed the Inclusive Excellence plan with TaJuan Wilson. TaJuan Wilson provided suggestions. Trish Holt volunteered to draft the report for reviewing in April. Dee Liston and Diana Botnaru offered to help Trish Holt draft the Senate Inclusive Excellence plan.

Cheryl Aasheim explained that she had just seen the Inclusive Excellence plan for the Honors Council, which left items that did not apply to them blank. Faculty Senate will also only fill in items that apply to Faculty Senate. Diana Botnaru clarified that his suggestions involved addressing policies rather than addressing every item within the plan. So Faculty Senate can address items in the plan that the Senate can contribute to. Diana Botnaru added that the Staff Council worked together to draft the plan, and that breaking the plan up likely contributed to Senate's difficulty working on the plan.

B. SRI AdHoc Committee Update – Lisa Abbott

The SRI committee wanted Lisa Abbott to bring questions about the charge to the SEC. The committee has been charged with creating a permanent SRI instrument that can be used for lectures, labs, and everything in between, send to SEC, and then to Senate. This is a huge undertaking, and several individuals who had served on a previous SRI committee refused to be involved again.

The SRI committee has asked for SEC approval on also formulating how the SRI instruments are used. Trish Holt noted that the Colleges have varying policies on how SRIs are used. The committee also wants to issue a statement about how to use the SRI, especially since there is to be only one instrument that is used for every class. Lisa Abbott is reviewing the USG and SACSCOC policies on SRIs.

The sense among the committee is that numbers regarding the class and the student's engagement in the class go into the average score, but only the instructor-oriented scores have to do with the instructor. Diana Botnaru asked if the USG requires that SRIs are used for promotion and tenure.

What we choose to use and how we present those results are important, especially for addressing the biases in SRIs (gender, race, native language, whether it is a required general education course or an upper-level major course) and not comparing scores among faculty.

The committee hopes to have something to present at the first meeting of academic year 21-22.

Trish Holt confirmed that individuals who previously served on this committee refused to do so a second time. She cautioned that the next Senate President will need to support this committee. Lisa Abbott clarified that this conversation has not gone well in the past because the past three times it has come up, the results have been similar. That is why the current committee intends to

not only suggest an instrument but also how that instrument is used. Barb King suggested that this committee send out some surveys and drafts for faculty input. Trish Holt added that the Provost's office is available to provide administrative support. Lisa Abbott clarified that the committee will need administration to support the committee's recommendations.

C. SGA Representatives – Trish Holt

Trish Holt reported that one volunteer responded to her call for a faculty representative to SGA, Casey Keck. She will serve in that role for three months. Lisa Abbott clarified that, according to the bylaws, the Senate has to confirm the nomination from the SEC, so this just needs to go through a pro forma vote at the March Senate meeting. Casey is also willing to be the nominee for the next year, which vote will take place in April.

D. Elections Committee Update – Barbara King

All of the colleges have sent out their calls for nominations. Regarding certification of election results, Barb King said that certification is needed, and that it should go through the Elections Committee chair. She has also added a note to the Bylaws to add this to the Librarian's duties.

The Bylaws don't have specified electronic voting for the officers. We voted electronically last year because of Covid, and there is reason to do that again. Barb King could send out a ballot two weeks prior to the final Senate meeting.

Lisa Abbott clarified whether nominations would be opened in the March meeting. Barb King clarified that traditionally, the vote has taken place at the last Senate meeting, but for the last three or four years that vote has occurred electronically. That change has not been made to the bylaws. Lisa Abbott expressed concern that voting prior to the last Senate meeting eliminates nominations from the floor. Diana Botnaru expressed concern about not following the bylaws. Trish Holt expressed concern about voting by raised hands because it is difficult to certify that only Senators voted. Lisa Abbott asked if we could vote via Qualtrics. Diana Botnaru asked to clarify what we mean by certifying the vote. Cheryl Aasheim stated that Helen Bland might have previously been referring to ensuring that candidates are qualified. Helen Bland clarified that she was concerned about certification of officers and that we previously have done an electronic vote. Bill Wells inquired why Ginger Malphrus would have certified the officer nominations and votes after the election. Helen Bland said that what is meant is a certification of the vote count. Trish Holt expressed concern about Senators sharing the ballot with someone else and if Alternates are voting for Senators as a proxy vote. If a link is shared in the chat, panelists who are not Senators could end up voting. There are efforts to make sure that only an Alternate votes as opposed to a Senator and an Alternate voting. Bill Wells stated that these are adults who have professional responsibilities and should be trusted, and added that if there is a problem with voting in this way, then that calls into question previous votes taken by raised hands. Bill Wells argued that we should not hold the hands of Senators who can't fulfill their responsibilities; Trish Holt said sometimes someone's child gets sick just before the meeting. Diana Botnaru expressed concern about backpedaling on voting procedures by saying Raising Hands will not suffice. Cary Christian advocated for Qualtrics, with a 24-hour grace period to double check the results. The results of the vote could be released the next day. Another concern was expressed about the possibility of raising hands three or four times, with support for a Qualtrics vote. Trish Holt said Megan Small, the GA, could help with setting up the vote survey and sharing the official results.

Barb King clarified that the motion is for an electronic ballot to begin during the Senate meeting and be closed by the time the Senate meeting concludes. Trish Holt added that candidate statements could be sent out in advance. Barb King added that she will not include those biographies on the ballot.

The timeline for officer elections includes a nomination form to go out at the end of March, with candidate statements to go out a week before the election at the April meeting.

Barb King moved that the SEC approves an electronic ballot for this year's officer elections. The motion was seconded and passed with one abstention.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. RFI – One submitted and withdrawn

One RFI was submitted, but was withdrawn within an hour.

B. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. FS Bylaws Review

Trish Holt cited Georgia Southern Statutes Article V, which states that Faculty Senate Bylaws must be approved by the corps of instruction, which goes beyond the Senate. The Senate Bylaws were approved by the Senate in April 2019. And that revisions have to be approved by 2/3 of the Senators and that the Senate can call the corps with a 10% petition.

Lisa Abbott confirmed that she is aware of the requirement for Bylaws changes to be approved by the whole corps of instruction. This is a process, with the first step being committee suggestions, then approval by the Senate. If changes are made to Faculty Bylaws, those have to go out to the corps of instruction. The President is required to call two meetings of the full corps of instruction per year. It is appropriate to have a vote at those meetings on anything that is a change to the Faculty Bylaws, but those meetings typically include staff as well, so those have been approved via electronic voting. There are inconsistencies between the Faculty Bylaws in the Faculty Handbook, the Senate Bylaws, and the University Statutes, and Senate Bylaws have got to align with the Statutes.

A Discussion Item was submitted about the Review process. Lisa Abbott read the membership as listed on the Senate website. This committee has started meeting and meets every two weeks. All members of the SEC have access to view and comment on the Bylaws working document. Any Senator can request to table recommendations or send this back to the committee.

There was discussion over whether this sub-committee should have minutes. Diana Botnaru said that the committee will be reporting to the SEC, and their reports will be in the SEC minutes. As a subcommittee of the SEC, the responsibility is to report to the SEC.

Dee Liston asked to clarify that the SEC is determining what should go on the Senate Agenda. She appreciates responses to the questions posed in the DI, but suggested that these are an RFI, and that this information could go to the Senate as a response to the RFI, while the discussion can focus on the Bylaw revisions.

Helen Bland said that the SEC is charged with determining the agenda and not necessarily the content of the items. Rationale should be included for this being revised from a Discussion Item to an RFI. The submitters' hope was that through some discussion, they would understand the process and be able to move forward with the discussion of the items. This item is about the process and how did we get there. One is a discussion about the process and one is a motion on the changes. Amanda Konkle asked what the discussion aspect of the discussion, as opposed to a report of how the revisions are taking place, would be. Helen Bland suggested that the goal of the Discussion Item is to have a discussion on how faculty can have input. Bill Wells said that this committee is operating as other committees do, by asking for volunteers and then getting to the work of the committee. Trish Holt added that subcommittees go to constituents for feedback. Lisa Abbott clarified that they are not avoiding going to constituents for feedback; none of this will be put forward for a vote without the Senate having time for responding to the recommendations.

Dee Liston stated that she would like for people to have the most input as possible. She stands behind what she stated earlier, that this DI should be an RFI, but maybe the Motions should be moved forward as DIs to give the Senate a chance to provide feedback on the suggested changes. From this process, the committee has input and can tweak and move forward to a vote on the Bylaws with formal opportunities for faculty to provide the input during Senate. Diana Botnaru asked Helen Bland how the previous 2019 revisions to Bylaws were shared for faculty input and what mechanisms to share those changes were in place then. Trish Holt shared that the consolidation committees shared a ton of information and asked for votes. Helen Bland said the subcommittee presented them to the Senate, but she doesn't remember the specifics of how that was undertaken. Lisa Abbott supported Dee Liston's suggestion that we change the Motions to DIs. She cautioned that would mean that Articles I and II would not be voted on until the April meeting, and subsequent revisions would not be voted on until the summer Senate meeting. Helen Bland stated that she appreciated Lisa Abbott's previous statement that SRIs would not be brought forward until August, and that there are a number of issues associated with these Bylaws, and that Lisa and Diana have another year on SEC to head work on these.

Dee Liston moved that the Discussion Item be changed to an RFI. Diana Botnaru seconded. The motion passed with nine in favor. The rationale is because the questions submitted in the Discussion Item fit the format for an RFI rather than a Discussion Item. With an RFI, Senators can ask for clarification during the meeting.

Dee Liston moved that the Motions be changed to Discussion Items. Bill Mase seconded. Dee Liston stated that she is now rethinking, stating that if these come forward as a Motion, they will be discussed, and could potentially be voted on and moved forward. If they come forward as a Discussion Item, they could not be voted on. Diana Botnaru would like the option to vote if Senators are comfortable doing so. Articles I and II do not have a lot of changes that would require faculty input. Helen Bland stated that the spirit of the DI that became an RFI was the opportunity to get input, but when issues are put forward as Motions, that suggests that input is limited. Cary Christian supported the idea of these moving forward as Discussion Items. This addresses a lack of trust in Senators and processes and increasing transparency. Bill Wells argued for putting these forward as Motions, because Senators will have access to them

beforehand. Bill Wells called to question to determine if we are ready to vote on the motion, with nine in favor.

A vote was taken on whether to turn the motions into Discussion Items; six voted in favor, three were opposed.

C. MOTIONS

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QsCBNcAi1BAbtnPVAvMO15Yp8e3buiBmk8wGPZ759i0/edit?usp=sharing>

The SEC then discussed the changes as they would be brought forward to the Senate.

1. Faculty Senate Bylaws Article I Revisions

Changes to Article I were largely grammatical and word choice, defining shared governance.

Trish Holt raised a question about whether the number at the beginning of the document, whether it should be 325 or 323. She also raised a question about what is meant by the phrase “equity, accountability, and ownership” in Article I. Section I.

Helen Bland stated that it’s not necessary for the SEC to discuss the changes at this point, as the purpose of this meeting is to set the Senate Agenda. We can go through it piece by piece, but we won’t vote on the content of the Bylaws.

Lisa Abbott stated that the subcommittee makes a recommendation to the SEC. The SEC has to vote on what will be sent to the Senate. The subcommittee does not have the power or the charge to determine what to send forward to the Senate; they can only bring recommendations forward to the SEC. The SEC’s task is to decide what will be sent to the Senate.

Bill Mase agreed with both. Bill Mase moved to approve these revisions as written because he is comfortable that the subcommittee has done its job. Dee Liston seconded. Cary Christian said that he would be uncomfortable moving forward without the SEC taking a moment to read through the changes. Barb King agreed and said she had made a suggestion in the chat: “One suggestion for Article II Section 1c: If this criterion is not met, the campus without representation will be given priority when the next position becomes available. Those units with less than 3 assigned senators and disproportional distribution of campus faculty may elect to skip an election cycle preference in order to maintain balanced representation.” Six voted in favor; three were opposed.

Lisa Abbott will write these up so changes can be viewed side by side in the Senate meeting.

2. Faculty Senate Bylaws Article II Revisions

VI. APPROVAL OF FACULTY SENATE AGENDA FOR MARCH 2021

The Senate Agenda will include:

Monthly Reports / Usual Content

TaJuan Wilson will record a 15-minute presentation on the Campus Climate survey.

Trish Holt will speak to the Senate Inclusive Excellence plan.

Barbara King will speak on Senate Elections.

The DI will be an RFI.

The Motions will be changed to Discussion Items.

An SGA Representative will give a report if we have the name of someone.

The NTT Committee will meet with the Provost on March 11, and this Agenda comes out March 12. There was discussion of if this should go on the Agenda, if the committee can address the Provost's comments prior to 5:00 PM on March 11.

Amanda Konkle moved that these items, with two provisional items, go on the Senate Agenda. Dee Liston seconded.

Bill Mase asked if it would be possible to add the NTT item as a Motion, then it could be tabled if necessary. Amanda Konkle asked if this could be tabled if it was not ready to be voted on. Bill Wells expressed concern about this being a box-checking motion, as opposed to an actual policy decision. Diana Botnaru clarified that the committee is unsure what the Provost's suggested revisions are, so they do not know if the policy will be ready for review at the March meeting. Trish Holt stated that she could report that there was a meeting and that this would come forward in the April Senate meeting. The NTT item will be mentioned in Trish's report. Seven were in favor; two members had to sign out before the meeting was over.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:13 PM.