

Georgia Southern University

Digital Commons@Georgia Southern

---

Staff Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes

Human Resources

---

9-20-2019

## Staff Council Meeting Minutes

Georgia Southern University, Staff Council

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/staff-minutes>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Human Resources Management Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, Staff Council, "Staff Council Meeting Minutes" (2019). *Staff Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes*. 87.

<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/staff-minutes/87>

This minutes is brought to you for free and open access by the Human Resources at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Staff Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu).



**Present:** Danira Beckmann, Tina Brookins, Rebecca Carroll, Frank Collins, Mary Driggers, Theresa Duggar, Ava Edwards, Lakesha Hill, Shartesia Jackson, Christopher Johnston, Patrice Kerner, Katherine Lewis, Memory Littles, Adrienne McCollar, James Michael Morgan, John Pate, Brenda Richardson, Lindy Sherwood, Nick Shrader, Trina Smith, Ashley Thornton. **Regrets:** Paul Barnes, George Brannen, DeAnn Lewis, Brittany Horn-McLamb, Dee Thompson, Jessica Weaver. **Absent:** none

**Call to Order** The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am.

**Presidential Updates and Comments - Updates from President, Dr. Kyle Marrero are as follows:**

- **Meeting with City Leaders**

- Dr. Marrero is scheduled to meet with key leaders from the City of Savannah at Georgia Southern today, September 20, 2019.

- **Performance Excellence**

- All are encouraged to view the Performance Excellence tile on the university's website.
- President Marrero reiterated the importance of the scorecards, the scorecard process, key performance indicators and objectives.
- Each person must see themselves as part of the process.
- There will be progress indicators every quarter.
- The goal is clear, open, and transparent communication.
- Dr. Marrero welcomes comments and suggestions.

- **Inclusive Excellence Report**

- The Inclusive Excellence Summary was sent out last month, Dr. Marrero encouraged everyone to read the summary. The report shows an abundance of opportunities for improvements and outlines 7 recommendations. The timeline to complete the recommendations is 18-24 months.
- The first priority is to hire an AVP of Inclusive Excellence. The job description is being developed and the job advertisement will be posted soon. There will be a national search. Dr. Marrero hopes to have the position filled by the end of year or sometime in January 2020.
- Dr. Williams will be on campus October 2-3, 2019. He will meet with leadership to review the report. If time permits, he may also have a town hall forum for faculty, staff and students. If time does not permit, he may have it come back in later weeks to hold some open forums.

- **Employee Recognition and Service Awards**

- Dr. Marrero thanked the Staff Council Chair, the Faculty Senate President, and all those working on the Faculty/Staff Awards Ceremonies.



- The framework is available for open feedback. There will be listening sessions on the Statesboro and Savannah campuses. September 23rd at 10:00 am & 3:00 pm in the Student Union Ballroom. September 25th at 10:00 am, Statesboro in the Russell Union, Room 2080. Leadership wants input from employees and are looking forward to what will come out of the sessions.
- There will be 12 faculty and staff awards that align with the Strategic Pillars, a team award, and an Employee of the Year award. 12 medallions will be given as awards to the individuals identified and voted by their peers.
- **Enrollment**
  - September 9th is the deadline to drop for non-payment. September 19th is the deadline for reinstatement. Students have one week for reinstatement.
  - October 14th is the first day of Minimester which coincides with the enrollment census.
  - Minimester is the next opportunity to get GS to 1% in terms of credit hours to bolster enrollment.
  - Many institutions are experiencing challenges but some have had increases in enrollment. Kennesaw State had a 30% increase to its freshman class. Georgia State had a 15% increase to its freshman class.
  - GS is up in dual enrollment, transfer, and graduate students but down in enrollment of freshman.
  - We are working to correct this drop for next academic year.
  - This time last year we had between 500-600 new students.
  - Dr. Marrero thanked everyone involved in the process of increasing enrollment and stated that enrollment is critical to success
  - Last year enrollment was at 26,408. This year enrollment has decreased by approximately 400 students. This is less than a 1% drop.
- **Credit Hours**
  - Credit hours are at 322,000 opposed to 327,000 last year. We are down 5000 and need to make this deficit up. At minimum we need to gain 2500 which will be a significant increase in revenue.
  - Get students with 12 hours to take another class or two; but ensure that they are progressive classes that advance them forward. October Minimesters are encouraged.
- **Budget**
  - Dr. Marrero reviewed the budget.
    - \$3.2M of the \$7M estimated recurring allocation reduction was set aside in the FY2020 budget leaving \$3.8M to backfill in the FY2021 budget. The critical needs at this time are to secure the \$3.8M shortage and fill critical positions.
  - The budget redirection process is underway.
    - Dr. Marrero wants employees to understand why decisions are made.
    - Everyone should be involved in the process at their level.



- It is currently at the vice president level and will be at the cabinet level on October 1st. There will be a retreat on October 10th and much of the time will be spent on the budget process.
- Additional funds requirement.
  - We've been charged to find \$6.3M which is \$2.5M more than originally planned. The additional \$2.5M is to cover the increase in the health benefits package if increases are not covered by the state. In that case, the increases will have to be covered by the institution. This could amount to \$800K to \$1M in recurring costs.
  - In addition, it is to cover any enrollment decline that may occur next year. This could be \$800k to \$1.5M in revenue that we may have to cover in FY 2020-21
  - Promotion and tenure for faculty.
  - Salary and equity investment (recurring).
    - The goal is a \$1M recurring investment. \$500K each for faculty and staff.
- Due date
  - USG extended the due date for the budget narrative from the 1st week of October to November 20th. The proposed budget has to go through the legislative and house processes. The institution will be given the final budget after the Governor signs it.
  - It is based on 75% of formula. The \$6.9M is the objective view of funds lost. What will be defined through the process is the subjective amount. Dr. Marrero intends to make a strong case for GS to USG to get as much of the \$6.9M subsidized. He hopes to have more information by the second week of November.
- Caveats | Filters
  - Dr. Marrero added that there should be no harm to student progression and curriculum delivery; student advising and counseling; enrollment; and operations-efficiency and sustainability.
- **Investiture**
  - Investiture will be part of the Homecoming festivities.
  - An event is scheduled for Thursday, October 24th at Armstrong's Fine Arts Auditorium. There will be a reception from 5:00 to 6:00 pm, and a Speaker Series event from 6:00 - 7:30 pm highlighting Georgia Southern's institutional values. The event is open to everyone. The theme for the event is "Values Defining Georgia Southern's Future". There will be 6 speakers to highlight the 6 values. Their presentations will be centered around the Strategic Plan.
    1. Integrity: General Leslie Smith, Inspector General of the US Army and GS Alumni
    2. Innovation: Mr. Greg Parker, CEO of Parker's, Entrepreneur and Philanthropist
    3. Inclusion: Dr. Ann Levitt, Superintendent, Savannah Chatham public schools



4. Collaboration: Don Waters Chairman of the University System of Georgia Board of Regents
  5. Sustainability: Mr. Hugh "Trip" Tollison CEO of Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA)
  6. Academic excellence: Dr. Steve Wrigley, Chancellor of the University System of Georgia
- Investiture Ceremony is scheduled for Friday, October 25th at Hanner Fieldhouse at 10:30 am. A reception with music and food will follow at the Williams Center. Classes and campus activities will progress as usual but everyone is invited.
- **Dr. Marrero fielded questions from members of Staff Council**
    - **Question:** A citizen on NPR asked a question about the 10% budget cut proposed by the Governor. The report indicated that the 10% would not impact higher education and that 75 million dollars would be added to the budget for higher education. However, a second report indicated that one of the USG institutions had one of their programs cut. The information was limited as to what was cut. Is the 4% and 6% still not applicable to higher education?
    - **Answer:** GS is not part of that exercise to cut 4%. The institution does not receive B-Line Funding or special allocation. GS does not receive B-Line or special allocation. The Governor has asked that state agencies find 4% by October 1st of the current fiscal year and then find 2 more % by July 1, 2020 for fiscal year 2021. This makes it a total of 6%. It is not an additional 6% on top of the 4% but a total of 6% by July1. The Press is saying the cuts will amount to people. That is what is being reported in the media. The Board of Regents met 2 weeks ago to finalize the budget (Office of Planning and Budget). It is based on growth, formula and square footage; which is maintenance and operations, and healthcare plan increases. Based on formula, there is approximately \$76M in additional funding the entire USG. One large check is written to USG. Individual institutions do not control the funds. All is based on formula. Legislature doesn't control what happens to the funds. Distribution is based on formula. As of today, GS is not in play for those cuts. Everything is based on formula funding.

This concluded the President's updates.

### **Comments by SC Chair**

All requests or questions can be sent via the Staff Council website. All proposals are discussed within a larger forum not just Staff Council Executive Committee. Executive Committee will review the question or concern and determine if it can be immediately answered or taken before the President's Advisory Council. In regards to the proposal for a Halloween Costume Contest, the Executive Committee discussed the proposal and voted against the event as an agenda item. Executive Counsel, AVP Maura Copeland is present to speak to the issue from a legal perspective and to discuss why the decision was made to not approve of a Halloween Costume Contest.



**Office of Legal Affairs - Executive Counsel, AVP Mrs. Maura Copeland:**

- **Halloween Costume Contest**
  - The decision was made to not approve of a Halloween Costume Contest.
  - Some people may choose to dress in culturally inappropriate or offensive costumes.
  - Offering a list of acceptable costumes still involves a high level of risk.
  - An incident at the University of Louisville was cited as an example.
  - The importance of historical traditions was acknowledged while explaining that some traditions are no longer appropriate based on the times. For example, the Annual Watermelon Cutting or the tradition of barring women from becoming attorneys.
  - AVP Copeland advised the Council to seek other ways to host an event that does not involve costumes.
  
- **AVP Copeland fielded questions from members of Staff Council**
  - There were no questions regarding the decision against the Halloween Costume Contest.

This concluded the address from the Office of Legal Affairs.

**Consent Agenda and Minutes of Meeting**

- Adoption of Agenda
- Adoption of Minutes from August 9, 2019. Motion to adopt the agenda and MoM was carried unanimously.

**Committee Reports**

- Treasurer Report
  - Foundation has been going through an audit so the balance for the foundation account (#7110) is not available but is expected very soon.
    - ARM Discretionary Fund (Acct#2072): \$1,053.62
    - ARM Scholarship (Acct# 7071): \$1,283.54
    - Statesboro (Acct# 0869): \$2,501.23
    - Statesboro (Acct# 7110): Unavailable
  - Copies of the operating budget was made available in print to members in Statesboro and sent electronically to members at Armstrong.
  - The proposed budget distributed on September 20th is the most up to date version.

**Question:** Is there a quorum to continue with the meeting?

**Answer:** Yes. There are 14 at Statesboro Campus and 5 at Armstrong Campus. 19 members in attendance constitute a quorum.

- By Laws Committee
  - No updates
  - The Committee needs to select a new Chair.
  
- Communications Committee



- There is a need to have a Co-Chair appointed to accommodate the travel schedule of the Chair. Several committee members have not been on the Council for a year. Others have respectfully declined.
  - The committee has discussed a redesign of the SC webpage and would like for it to replicate Human Resources' webpage. One of the members has agreed to assist with that project. A draft will be presented to the full body for approval.
  - Training for Wordpress occurs once per month on both campuses. Working with the webpage can be time consuming.
  - The protocol for getting information out to the University is through the Office of Communications and Marketing.
- Fundraising and Scholarship Committee
    - Some possible events/initiatives have been discussed.
      - A book drive is scheduled for September 20th thru November 15th.
        - Donation boxes will be placed at different locations around campus.
      - The Committee requests to have a one liner invitation be added to the Staff Development Conference announcement to inform employees of the book drive. The books will be sold at a future event to help fund the scholarship program.

**Comment:** Council member stated that Lane Library has 70 boxes of books that they are not sure what will be done with them. He will reach out to the library to see if some of the books can be donated to Staff Council for the book drive.

- Staff Development Committee
  - Staff Development Conference (all hands on deck).
    - **Date:** November 13, 2019
    - **Location:** Nessmith-Lane Statesboro Campus
    - **Time:** Morning sessions: Check-in 8:30 am, 9-9:45 am, 10-10:45 am, 11-11:45 am; Afternoon sessions: 1:15 pm-2:00 pm, 2:15 pm-3:00 pm, 3:15pm-4:00 pm
    - **Lunch:** Served at 12:00 pm.
    - **Keynote Speaker:** Brigadier General Randall Simmons. General of the Georgia Army National Guard.
    - **Registration:** Registration is expected open September 30th.
    - **Seating Capacity:** 400. Encourage employees to sign up early.
  - The schedule has been developed. The sessions have been identified.
  - There will be a snack break during both sessions
  - Committee members are reaching out to potential presenters.
  - There will be a couple of giveaway items.
  - A sign-up sheet to volunteer with execution is forthcoming. *All hands on deck.*
  - Fall Conference will be in Statesboro Campus. Spring Conference will be in Savannah.
  - Communication will be going out to the campus soon.
  - The menu proposed by Dining costs \$23 per person. The Chair will ask for a menu that is within the Council's budget.



- Staff Outreach and Special Events Committee
  - Habitat for Humanity
    - The first event of the year, a community work day with Habitat for Humanity in Statesboro is tomorrow, September 21st. The committee partnered with the organization to support a GS employee. 8:30-12:00 Noon. Up to 12 people can come out to help. To date, 5 people have volunteered. There is a point of contact council member for anyone interested to participate.
  - The concern is for the community partners and local businesses.
    - Expressed concern about asking the same vendors to donate items all the time.
    - Discussed the need to prioritize which events we will ask our community partners and local businesses to support.
    - A discussion was put forth proposing to not do a raffle at the upcoming holiday event and save gift items for larger events.
    - Approximately 6 events planned for the entire year. (3 events at each campus).
    - Need to determine when to approach campus departments for swag versus community partners and local businesses
    - Last year, members found it difficult to get gifts because vendors had already been called upon for previous events.
    - A decision needs to be made as to which events we will have giveaways.
    - It may be better to raffle or give gifts at the Staff Picnic than at the holiday events. Using the decorative poinsettias as giveaways may be a way to alleviate overtaxing our partners.
    - Bulk purchases of the plants result in better pricing.
    - The Council agreed to prioritize gifts and donations for staff events.
  - Holiday Party
    - The date for the event must be established very soon. Chair will contact Ms. Leigh Price on Dr. Marrero's availability for the holiday party. December 17th & 18th are possible dates. However, the back to back events last year proved to be a lot of work. Perhaps the 17th and 19th may work out better.
    - Ugly sweater. The Committee would like to continue the sweater contest.
  - Warm Clothing Drive
    - Need to expand the drop off time frame to a few weeks with locations where people can drop off boxes.
    - Proposed dates are November 18th thru December 6th for Drop-off and December 16-20th for pick-up.
    - Want to target staff and give them a greater opportunity to get the clothing.

**Suggestion:** Have covered donation boxes or bins to discouraged people from taking items prior to the event.

**Response:** The box or bin will be locked in the office. Donations will be accepted from 8 am to 5 pm.



### Old Business

- Shuttle Service
  - A new schedule was posted since the last meeting. There is not a shuttle going to and from Liberty Campus. President Marrero informed the Chair that a feasibility study was conducted and showed that given the number of students and staff on Liberty Campus, there was not feasible for a shuttle service at this time. In addition, students on Liberty Campus are specific to that campus. They do not typically go to the Armstrong or Statesboro Campus.
  - The service is first come, first served. Maximum capacity is 24 passengers.
  
- Scorecards
  - Staff Council's scorecard is not related to or associated with any office division.
  - Everyone has had an opportunity to provide input and review the scorecard.
  - It will be published on the webpage.
  - President Marrero may add something to the scorecard but that has not been determined as of yet.

### New Business

- Staff Council representation for Liberty Campus
  - With guidance from Dr. Reiber and AVP Carroll, it has been determined that no changes can be made for this current year.
  - Trina Smith has agreed to be the representative for Liberty Campus. She will reach out to the Liberty staff periodically for any questions or concerns that need to be brought before the Council.
  - The election process will be evaluated for next year to address this issue. The Chair will work with Institutional Research to pull the data by staff which can be weighted for equitable distribution.
  
- Staff Council 2019-2020 Budget
  - The allocation for the year is \$15,300.
  - All comments and suggestions were appreciated. A few changes were made since the original distribution. Amounts highlighted in yellow indicate the changes.
    - USG Annual Conference. \$2600 has been allocated to assist members to attend The unused portion of the \$2600. will be placed under New Initiatives.
    - Staff Appreciation Picnic. No changes to the line item.
    - Holiday Reception. \$500 was moved from the holiday reception to reduce the amount allocated for decorations and added to the Professional Development Conference. In past years, holiday decorations were borrowed from around campus. \$4000. to \$3500.
    - Community Engagement Events. No changes to the line item.
    - New Initiatives. \$750 was moved from New Initiatives and added to the Staff Council Retreat.
    - \$250 is discretionary and can be used where needed.
  - Funds were over-allocated in some areas in FY 2018-2019. There should be enough to cover expenses even if funds need to be moved to different line items.



- **Question:** \$1100 for swag for journal notebooks and cups. We will need all of that just for this semester to cover items for the PDC. Where will the money come from for additional items for the Spring PDC? **Answer:** That was not considered. We will have to look at that and see if we can request additional funds or possibly adjust numbers for catering.
- **Question:** Will the giveaway items be the same for the conference in the Spring?
- **Answer:** No. Whatever is not spent on other events can be allocated to the spring pdc. Just because the funds are there doesn't mean that we must spend all of it.
  
- **Question:** At what point will we know how much the registration cost is for annual conference so that we can know how much of the \$2600 can be used for the spring conference?
- **Comment:** We should go ahead and determine the number of items to purchase and go ahead and purchase now since we already know that there is a limitation on registration. Purchase it all now because the more you buy the less expensive each item costs. Buy 600-650, \$2.50 per person. It is manageable within the \$1600.
- **Response:** The question previously asked was concerning the USG Annual Conference not the Staff Development Conference. We can review the budget quarterly because the numbers will change. The current discussion is about the baseline; the starting point. For those who want to attend the USG Annual Conference, information is forthcoming.
  
- Staff Appreciation Picnic. No changes to the line item.
- Holiday Reception. \$500 down to \$3500 instead of \$4000
- Community Engagement Events. No changes to the line item. Still \$500
- New Initiatives \$750 moved to cover the cost of the Staff Council Retreat.
- \$250 That can be used where needed. This is for over/under allocations.
- This is the proposed budget for the year.
  
- **Question:** What are the publications under staff appreciation picnic?
- **Answer:** Banners, signage. \$500 is allocated but it is not anticipated that this much is needed. To date, Staff Council has not ever spent this much towards publications. Accountability. Transparency.
  
- Vote**
- Motion to approve the 2019-2020 budget.
- Motion seconded.
- Approved-19 | Opposed-None.
- The budget was approved and will be reviewed quarterly.
  
- Changes to USG Healthcare
  - There are several changes to the healthcare benefits.
  - Questions or concerns about the changes to the healthcare plans or benefits should be sent to [usg.edu/hr/contact](http://usg.edu/hr/contact). This is the link to the contact form regarding anything HR related or anything that is specific to individual employees. This is the contact information shared with all of the institutions. AVP Carroll does not oversee at this level.



- Staff Council Vacancies
  - Two vacancies that must be filled.
    - General member from Communications and Marketing. Chair will request the Office of Communications and Marketing to select and vote for a replacement.
    - Executive Committee, Parliamentarian. This position will come to the Council for a vote. Per by-laws, anyone who has served at least one full year and is interested may self-nominate. The one year of service criteria has proven to be difficult and may need to be adjusted to partial prior service.
  
- USG Staff Council Conference Travel
  - Registration is \$100.
  - Members should let the Chair know if they would like to attend the conference but will not receive financial support from their departments.
  - \$2600 has been allocated for all members who want to attend the conference.
  - Everyone is encouraged to carpool if possible.
  
- USG Staff Council Top 5 Concerns and Strategic Planning for Staff Council
  - The concerns will be shared with Lashika Thomas who will share them with the USG Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, Dr. Juanita Hicks.
    1. Rising healthcare costs.
    2. Interact USG; 5 Year USG Strategic Plan (Open Communication).
    3. Budget cuts.
    4. How to fund staff recognition activities at the department level without using personal funds.

**Comment:** Some employees have been told that their supervisors are not giving ranks any higher than 'Meets Expectations' on performance evaluations, even if the employee deserves a higher ranking.

**Response:** AVP Carroll and Dr. Marrero are waiting for the Board of Regents to roll out the new performance evaluation tool. It will be electronic. Continued training will be key. There will be extensive training for all managers on the new rankings. The new tool will address these issues and expectations will be made clear through training.

**Question:** What is the evaluation time period?

**Answer:** January 1st through December 31st is the evaluation period. Employees will have an opportunity to provide their performance indicators to supervisors in advance. Self-evaluations need to be completed in January. It is anticipated that all performance evaluations be completed in February. This is being proposed to the President and the President's Cabinet in October. The evaluation form will be the same form. That will change when we move to the new system. AVP Carroll will bring more detailed information to the next meeting.



**Comment:** There are still concerns about job descriptions that need to be updated, job descriptions that are not in alignment with current duties, and positions that do not have job descriptions at all.

**Response:** AVP Carroll asked to table this concern until she gives the Human Resources update but will be more prepared to address it in more detail at the October meeting.

**Question:** Some divisions have received budget cuts while others such as Athletics are receiving funding. Million dollar donations, raises, new uniforms? What determines who gets funds? Academic areas have been asked to do more with less. Can funds be reallocated to different areas?

**Response:** That is a valid question. It is a question for Dr. Marrero. We will ask this at the next meeting.

**Comment:** This is a great question. It might require us to be better educated on Athletics budget and how these funds are used. There may be good reasons why Athletics are doing what they are doing with their funds. However, we can see why this concerns the academic divisions. For example, when we are paying \$1M to play a game. Perhaps we can have someone from Athletics come and speak with us about this so that we can better understand how this works and be more educated to answer questions from staff.

**Response:** The President should be able to answer any questions that we have concerning the budget and funding for Athletics. The perception is that Athletics is not held to the same budget requirements. This will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

**Question:** For staff who work at night, there is an increase in crime. Lack of notifications through Eagle Alert or a delay in getting the notifications.

**Response:** Off-campus incident occurred last weekend but an Eagle Alert was not issued. According to Dr. Lester the university does not have to send an alert when there is no direct or imminent threat to the campus. Off-campus incidents are handled by Statesboro Police and/or Bulloch County Sheriff's Department. We will not receive Eagle Alerts for those incidents. However, it is a good question. It will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

**Comment:** The City and County both have alert systems. Individuals can sign up to receive alerts for off-campus incidents.

#### **Human Resources - Updates from Mrs. Rebecca Carroll, AVP as follows:**

- **MyHelp: Human Resources Service Center**
  - This is Day 5 since the launch of the new service center.
    - Metrics will be provided at the next meeting.
    - Everyone should have received information on how to contact the service center.
    - An abundance of appreciation goes to the IT Department and the Office of Communications and Marketing.
    - Professional development and job descriptions will be brought as an agenda item to the next meeting with more detailed information.
  
- **AVP Carroll fielded questions from members of Staff Council**
  - **Question:** Job descriptions will be discussed at the next meeting?
  - **Answer:** Yes.

This concluded updates from Human Resources, AVP Carroll.



**GEORGIA  
SOUTHERN  
UNIVERSITY**

Staff Council Meeting  
Friday, September 20, 2019  
9:00 -11:00 AM  
Statesboro | Nessmith Lane Conference 2911  
Savannah | Solms Hall 207

**Miscellaneous** n/a

**Comment:** Chair thanked the members of the Council for their service and stated that President Marrero is sincere in his efforts towards transparency and is very interested in issues that concern the staff. Please share anything that needs to be addressed by Staff Council or submitted to the President's Cabinet.

**Important Dates**

- Next Staff Council Meeting, October 18, 2019 | 9 - 11 am
- 2019 USG Staff Council Conference, October 10-11, 2019
- Professional Development Conference, November 13, 2019

**Meeting Adjourned** 11:00 am

Minutes recorded and submitted by Dylitchrous Thompson