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Staff Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes

Human Resources

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10-18-2019

## Staff Council Meeting Minutes

Georgia Southern University, Staff Council

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

**Call to Order** The meeting was called to order at 9:01 am.

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

- **Addressed the book burning incident following the Common Read Event on 10/9/2019**
  - The issuing of his initial statement for the media was pursuant to standard USG procedures. It was submitted to the Office of Legal Affairs first and then to USG for approval prior to being released.
  - Dr. Marrero acknowledged that his statement to campus on Friday, October 11th was not strong. He explained that he responded as the President of Georgia Southern University, one who is charged to respect and protect the rights of all students, staff, and faculty; including juxtaposing viewpoints.
- **Open forums on Armstrong and Statesboro Campuses**
  - Dr. Marrero attended open forums on Armstrong and Statesboro Campuses. They were the first open forums since 2013.
  - He acknowledged that students are not interested to discuss the Strategic Plan or the First Amendment at this moment, but would rather hear how he as the president plan to make things better.
  - He appreciated the open honest expression from the students and understands their frustration.
- **Moving forward**
  - Dr. Marrero stands by the First-Year Experience curriculum.
  - There will be purposeful action as outlined in the Strategic Plan.
  - Administration has begun Implementation of the seven recommendations in the Inclusive Excellence report.
  - He is committed to allowing, honoring, and respecting differing perspectives.
  - Dr. Marrero confirmed the significance of Staff Council's role in helping leadership to communicate with staff and in helping to construct a path of reconciliation.
  - As President, he must ensure that all voices and perspectives are heard.
  - He is ready to listen to the faculty's perspective at the upcoming Faculty Senate meeting.
- **Investiture**
  - Investiture is next week. An event is scheduled for Thursday, October 24th at Armstrong Campus. Investiture Ceremony is scheduled for Friday, October 25th at Hanner Fieldhouse.



- **Comments by members of Staff Council**

- Several members of the Council expressed their support for Dr. Marrero and appreciation for the work that he is doing and has done since his tenure began at Georgia Southern University.

- **Dr. Marrero thanked Staff Council for its support and fielded questions from members**

- **Questions:** What is leadership learning as it relates to future events? What can we do to help? What are the speaking points when dealing with alumni, constituents and donors?  
**Answer:** Capture the narrative of everything that GS is doing and the success stories to “drown out” negative incidents which tend to occur maybe once a year. A plan has been developed which includes all the steps we need to take. We will work the existing plan. I’ve established President’s Student Advisory Council (PSAC). Actions are being established around PSAC and student organizations. I will continue to send out monthly emails to update the campus on tangible activities and dedicate a section specific to inclusive excellence. Every college has been asked to establish a diversity plan. Our initiatives will not make GS perfect, but they will make us better. Our efforts must permeate throughout the organization. This is not indoctrination; no one is being asked to believe or agree with anything, but we are being asked to engage in inclusive and tolerant dialogue of all perspectives. Let’s not be afraid to talk about difficult topics

**Questions:** Do you think that this incident will negatively impact our ability to recruit viable candidates for the Chief Diversity Officer position? Can you comment on recruitment in general of diverse faculty and staff? Has Admissions Recruiters been prepared to respond to inquiries from potential students?

**Answer:** Yes, talking points were provided to the recruiters. There was a recruitment event, the Atlanta-Cobb Galleria event Wednesday night. VP Dr. Scot Lingrell attended the event to speak with potential students and their parents. It is being made clear that inclusive excellence will be a part of the FYE curriculum. Concerning the CDO, this will bring candidates who want to see transformational change. It is going to be an opportunity of a life-time for someone. To be clear, the burden will not be on this one person alone. They will help leadership to help organize and embed inclusive excellence. Dr. Maxine Bryant has been instrumental in guiding us through this as a community. While hiring the best candidate, we have to look for opportunities to diversify. There are ways to advertise open lines to qualified diverse faculty. Ultimately, it is the departments and faculty who hire faculty.

**Comment by Dr. Maxine Bryant:** The search committee has recognized the need to present the narrative in a positive light; this is an opportunity of a life-time. The hope is that the narrative will draw candidates who can rise to the challenge.

**Question:** How do you plan to hold faculty and other hiring managers accountable to embrace inclusion and diversity who may not want to change in their hiring practices?



**Answer:** Search committees tend to be of the majority population. It is my hope that individuals will seize their own opportunities to make change as they serve on search committees and not look to administration alone to effect change.

**Comment:** Some students do not understand the concept of white privilege. The student who asked the question at the Common Read Event did not understand. There is a disconnect between faculty and staff where faculty thinks that Academic Advisers are not equipped to teach concepts such as white privilege, equity and identity in FYE. Some students have expressed different viewpoints on this. It is disheartening to hear these sentiments coming from colleagues. This creates a further divide. Please support Academic Advisers as FYE instructors.

**Response:** We are trying a new model. Academic Advisers have gone through training. We must give the new model a chance to work. It will be assessed. Although faculty enjoyed teaching FYE, they were compensated. \$1.2M recurring was paid to faculty overload to teach those courses. A portion of those funds are now being used to increase Advisors' salaries to reduce turnover due to wages. We will assess the new model for improvements, but I don't anticipate abandoning it; we just need to communicate it more effectively.

**Comment:** I heard the conversation on social media of an Academic Advisor who was leading the conversation with students and defending the process of learning. She was working through that very well. Criticism of the advisors teaching FYE is unfounded. I would like to have that same confidence in faculty, that they know how to help students work through serious incidents and that faculty is being trained in crisis management and are able to handle difficult conversations with students.

**Response:** This speaks to training. Ideally the departments and colleges will assume the responsibility for training. It will not be mandated but highly recommended for those working in lower division courses.

This concluded the President's updates.

**Inclusive Excellence - Updates from Dr. Maxine Bryant, Interim Chief Diversity Officer as follows:**

- **Dr. Bryant gave a presentation to introduce the Office of Inclusive Excellence (OIE)**
  - She shared OIE's mission statement and a few important points.
    - Inclusive excellence is in the center of the Strategic Plan.
    - In 2018, students and PDAC requested a cabinet level Chief Diversity Officer.
    - Each of the colleges has established their own diversity council.
    - OIE is encouraging Deans and Chairs to include measurable diversity efforts in the promotion and tenure process.
    - OIE has created and scheduled some workshops and small group sessions. More educational opportunities are forthcoming.
    - OIE will eventually be located in the Williams Center.



- **Diversity Inclusion Faculty Fellows (DIFF)**
  - This group was already established but is being reorganized and placed under the OIE.
- **The Commission on Women**
  - This group was established at the request of Dr. Reiber and will also be under the OIE. They will be dealing with issues specific to women.
- **Hiring Practices**
  - OIE will be working with search committees to ensure diverse applicant pools and develop ways to retain new hires.
- **Dr. Bryant fielded questions from members**
  - **Questions:** Dr. Damon Williams suggested that we not wait but go ahead and begin working in small groups to push the effort forward. What can people in programs do outside of colleges and academic divisions? How can all of us bring this issue to the forefront as opposed to it being just an academic issue?  
**Answer:** OIE welcomes feedback. We want to broaden this outside of Academic Affairs. We can all be messengers, but we need to formalize the involvement across the entire university. Getting the message out is a challenge and we welcome all suggestions.

**Question:** When was PDAC formed?

**Answer:** PDAC was formed under Dr. Herbert. Prior to consolidation, Armstrong State had a Diversity Council. I stepped into the role after the director resigned. After consolidation, Dr. Herbert and I decided to broaden the office to involve all 3 campuses.

#### **Introduction of new HR Staff - Mrs. Rebecca Carroll, AVP:**

- **Changes to Auxiliary and Facilities Services Personnel Services**
  - One of the recommendations from the Comprehensive Administrative Review was to bring Auxiliary and Facilities Services - Personnel Services into HR to facilitate efficiency.
    - Ms. Vicki Shaw, Director of Personnel Services for Auxiliary Services and Ms. Katie Edwards, Coordinator for Training and Employee Relations will be in HR effective November 1st. Each will be assuming campus-wide responsibilities.
    - Ms. Shaw's new position and job title will be Director of Professional Development and Employee Engagement.
    - Ms. Edwards' will continue to serve in her current role, but with a broader scope for university wide Human Resources.
    - Both were present at today's meeting at the request of AVP Carroll and were formerly introduced to the Council.
    - They each greeted the Council and shared a few words regarding their new roles.

#### **Consent Agenda and Minutes of Meeting**

- Adoption of agenda
- Adoption of minutes from September 20, 2019. Motion was adopted and carried unanimously.



## Committee Reports

- Treasurer Report
  - ARM Discretionary Fund (Acct#2072): \$1,053.62
  - ARM Scholarship (Acct# 7071): \$1,283.54
  - Statesboro (Acct# 0869): \$2,501.23
  - Statesboro (Acct# 7110): \$11,143.54
  
- By Laws Committee
  - Chair position is vacant. No updates.
  
- Communications Committee
  - The redesign of the SC webpage is forthcoming. It will replicate Human Resources' webpage. A draft will be presented to the full body for approval.
  - Members were asked to submit photos for the website.
  - SC social media pages need to be updated. Recommendations are welcomed.
  - The committee's chair proposed that Staff Council issue an open statement in support of Dr. Marrero.
    - The Council discussed the best way to proceed with open support for the president while being sensitive to all staff.
    - Members agreed that staff should have a platform to be heard but should be prepared to discuss solutions as well as problems.
    - The statement will be submitted to and approved by Legal Affairs and Communications and Marketing.
    - The committee's chair will submit a draft for consideration.
  
- Fundraising and Scholarship Committee
  - Donation boxes for the book drive have been placed at different locations around campus. The drive is scheduled from September 20th through November 15th.
  - Follow up from the council member concerning the 70 boxes of books previously mentioned. The books are not available for the book drive.
  - There will be a small book sale during the annual holiday reception.
  
- Staff Development Committee
  - Staff Development Conference will be November 13, 2019 (all hands on deck).
  - The conference agenda has been developed.
  - Committee has received commitments from all presenters.
  - Waiting for bios, and slide decks and materials for the booklets.
  - Communication has gone out to the campus. Registration is now open.
  - The committee plans to send out a post-conference survey.
  - Need a sign-in sheet and volunteers to assist with attendance verification.
  - 243 people have registered for the event.
  
- Staff Outreach and Special Events Committee
  - Planning for the holiday party will begin soon.



### **Old Business**

- Parliamentary vacant position
  - Executive Committee will vote soon on a new parliamentarian.
- Marketing Representative vacant position
  - Chair will reach out to Communications & Marketing to vote for a new representative.
- Staff Professional Development Conference
  - Planning is underway as reported.
  - Secretary will send a sign-up sheet; members will need to take turns attending & hosting.

### **New Business**

- Faculty and Staff Awards and Recognition Ceremony
  - A website will go live on November 15th.
  - A nomination process is being developed for faculty and staff.
  - The award structure includes six value awards, six pillar awards and one team award.

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

- **Position Descriptions**
  - A Position Description Review was performed several years ago but was not fully implemented due to changes in HR staff. Position description reviews have not been completed on a regular basis. It is typically done by the hiring manager and employee during the annual performance evaluation. A process to address this is underway.
  - The following steps were taken in 2018:
    - Aligned the current position description template with best practices.
    - Selected new technology.
    - Transferred current position descriptions to the new template.
    - Developed a process for reviewing position descriptions annually.
    - Implemented PayFactors in December 2018. PayFactors is a classification and compensation software system that provides a component for housing position descriptions.
    - Developed a new position description template.
  - The following steps have been taken in 2019:
    - In February, HR began working with vice presidents and their direct reports to review the position descriptions for each job classification in their areas.
    - Received feedback from leaders of each division in August and established a baseline from which to work.
    - A review of administrative support roles is in progress. This review will provide valuable information from the employees in administrative support roles and will be used to inform the development of a position framework and position descriptions for administrative support job positions.
  - Next Steps:
    - Annual performance evaluations will be conducted in February 2020.
    - Performance evaluation forms will be updated to include a section indicating Job Description Review has been completed.



- **Performance Evaluations**

- The Performance Evaluation Form is being aligned with the University's values.
  - Collaboration, Academic Excellence, Discovery and Innovation, Integrity, Openness and Inclusion, and Sustainability.
- The updated performance evaluation form will be submitted to the President's Cabinet for approval in November.
- The timeline for completing the performance evaluations along with training dates for hiring managers will be communicated with campus in December.
- Hiring manager training will be held from early January to early February.
- All staff will complete self-evaluations in January 2020.
- Performance evaluations conducted in February 2020.
- The evaluation period is January 1 - December 31, 2019.

- **AVP Carroll fielded questions from members of Staff Council**

- **Question:** How were increases determined for individuals who do not have a job description or do not have an updated job description? After the initial study by Sibson, increases were assigned but there was no discussion with the employee. When will the discussion with employees about merit and or pay bands take place?
- **Answer:** Understand that merit increases and pay bands are two different things. The time to discuss discrepancies between job descriptions, job titles and pay should take place in February during the performance evaluations. There is a difference between changes in tasks versus changes in overall job responsibilities. We need to manage expectations; corrections are happening in phases. Encourage staff to meet with their supervisors to have their questions answered.
- **Question:** Should admin staff have already received their job descriptions?
- **Answer:** Not necessarily. The descriptions are being reviewed.
- **Questions:** The new MyHelp system is working well with just a few inconsistencies. Should we send an email or always go through the system? Is this hiring process going to be changed as well?
- **Answer:** Yes, all requests should go through tracking; business and personal. We create tickets and send emails through the system anyway. We are four weeks in and have some statistics which will be assessed next week. We are also getting ready to move to Careers for the hiring process to replace PeopleAdmin. Everything will be on the Careers platform; processes will be much more efficient with this technology.

This concluded updates from Human Resources, AVP Carroll.

#### **Important Dates**

- Investiture of President, Dr. Kyle Marrero, October 25, 2019
- Professional Development Conference, November 13, 2019
- Next Staff Council Meeting, November 15, 2019 | 9 - 11 am

**Meeting Adjourned** 11:23 am

Minutes recorded and submitted by Dylitchrous Thompson