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Staff Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes

Human Resources

12-6-2019

Staff Council Meeting Minutes

Georgia Southern University, Staff Council

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Present: Paul Barnes, Tina Brookins, Rebecca Carroll, Frank Collins, Mary Driggers, Theresa Duggar, Ava Edwards, Lakesha Hill, Shartesia Jackson, Christopher Johnston, Patrice Kerner, DeAnn Lewis, Memory Littles, Adrienne McCollar, James Michael Morgan, John Pate, Brenda Richardson, Lindy Sherwood, Nick Shrader, Dee Thompson, Ashley Thornton.

Regrets: Brittany Horn-McLamb, Katherine Lewis, Trina Smith, and Jessica Weaver.

Absent: George Brannen

Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 3:06 pm.

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

● **Enrollment**

- The census is complete, and the final headcount is 26,054. Down 1.3% from last year.
- Freshmen is the area where enrollment is down. The number has gone from 3,900 last year to 3,655 this year; down by 245 first time students.
- Areas where enrollment increased include, online (12.18%), dual enrolled (23.67%), out-of-state (3.8%), transfer (4.43%), graduates are up as well.
- Next year, the focus will be more on graduates, adult learners, transfer students and military. We will be shifting our programs and marketing towards this market. The national trend indicates that by 2025, there will be fewer 18-20-year-old individuals in the U.S. population.
- Credit hours are down only 1%. This amounts to \$809,000 loss of revenue from Fall 2018 to Fall 2019.

● **FY21 Budget**

- Dr. Marrero referred to his December 9th email which included the comprehensive line by line budget narrative. The 30-page document that was sent to the entire campus.
- He went over the budget which has been shared on multiple occasions.
- There are some potential variables such as changes to the state's budget or increases to health benefit costs that may have to be considered.
- If the System does not cover the increases of employee health benefits, the institution will have to pick up the 1.6M in recurring costs.
- We also need to absorb the \$809,000 shortfall from enrollment.

● **Employment Engagement Survey**

- Dr. Marrero made the decision to move the engagement survey to September 2020.



Staff Council Meeting
Friday, December 06, 2019 | 3:00 -5:00 PM
Statesboro | Veazey Hall 2001C
Savannah | Solms Hall 207

- **Institutional Effectiveness**
 - A search for the Vice President of Student Affairs will begin in January 2020.
- **Inclusive Excellence Update**
 - **Chief Diversity Officer.** Candidates have been identified. Phone interviews will be conducted next week. Finalists will be on campus in January.
 - **Courageous Conversations.** The first event, *Privilege, Respect, and Social Responsibility*, took place this week. President's Student Advisory Council on Inclusive Excellence confirmed that the institution is headed in the right direction.
 - **Student Assignment (Video).** Dr. Marrero shared that he is aware of the video of a Georgia Southern student presenting his assignment entitled 'Replacement Immigration'. Administration is aware of the situation. He stated that the student does not pose a threat and is entitled to free speech. He reminded everyone that he issued a statement to campus reaffirming the institution's position on diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence. He acknowledged frustrations and encourages everyone to use positive messaging to continue to move forward with the current plans for diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence.

Dr. Marrero invited questions from members.

Question: There is a line item that eliminates funding for staff awards. Can you speak to that?

Answer: The \$1000 award was paid from the HR budget. We are no longer allowed to do that. Therefore, those funds remained in the HR budget. The awards budget is now coming out of the president's account. The \$8,000 has been given back to the University and the new amount \$24,000 is being reviewed for approval. (AVP, Mrs. Carroll).

Question: It appears that the student is trying to encourage others who share his ideology to attend Georgia Southern. How does this affect us?

Answer: It hurts our brand. It hurts when students say they do not feel safe. It is contrary to everything that we stand for as a university. I will continue to say and to write that this does not align with our values.

Question: Can there be some education/training on First Amendment so that people can understand why there is no punitive action towards individuals who express their views? Some faculty want to conduct workshops and are willing to train and to facilitate conversations but want to be safe.

Answer: That's what we want. We encourage dialogue. We are here to help and to provide security. There is no evidence that this individual has posed a threat. The other associations of the ideologies are a concern. We will continue to watch.

Question: Is there a way to create a safe space to have these conversations?

Answer: We are working with the Office of Multicultural Affairs and PSAC. In the Spring there will be events every two weeks. There will be opportunities for this dialogue. The question is, how do we get the people who need to be there to come? I'm proud of all of the recent accomplishments in last 6 months. More training is coming. Some big events are planned as well as small group discussions.



Question: Can we provide resources and training to staff on the front lines in recruiting, enrollment, and advising because these are the people in direct contact with those promoting controversy? And to make other students feel safe. Students need a place or person to go to when they feel unsafe or don't understand the Constitution and how it works.

Answer: (AVP, Mrs. Carroll). Maura Copeland does a phenomenal job of training on constitutional rights.

Question: How is the lack of acknowledgment of diversity being addressed?

Answer: VPs are being held accountable for training. Staff should be seeing opportunities for training. It should be trickling down. If you are not seeing this, let AVP, Carroll know. Also, the university is looking at some common reads that may be helpful. Sometimes people are not aware of their own biases.

Question: There was a recent survey by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE). It gave rankings on a red, yellow, and green scale. Vast majority received yellow. None of the Georgia institutions received green. Georgia Southern and Emory received red. It looked at policies and transparency.

Answer: The red was because they said they could not easily find the policies. They said our policies are not easily accessible. The same organization gave a good grade during the book burning incident.

This concluded the President's updates.

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

- **Ethics Training**
 - AVP Carroll reminded everyone to complete the mandatory ethics training and to encourage staff in our areas to complete the training. The deadline is December 31st. There must be 100% participation. A report is due to USG January 6. A link to the training is located in Folio.

AVP Carroll invited questions from members. There were no questions.

This concluded updates from Human Resources, AVP Carroll.

Consent Agenda and Minutes of Meeting

- Adoption of agenda
- Adoption of minutes from November 15, 2019. Motion was adopted and carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

- Treasurer Report
 - ARM Discretionary Fund (Acct#2072): \$1053.62
 - ARM Scholarship (Acct# 7071): \$1283.54
 - Statesboro (Acct# 0869): \$2643.73
 - Statesboro (Acct# 7110): \$10,955.05



- By Laws Committee
 - The committee has been charged with looking at the elections process and the Council's structure in terms of equitable campus and division representation.
- Communications Committee
 - Committee members received a comprehensive written summary of their last meeting.
 - The webpage is still missing headshots.
- Fundraising and Scholarship Committee
 - We do not have a chair for this committee. Shartesia Jackson and Lakesha Hill will co-chair this committee.
 - SC Chair will forward the Shelley Merrick Textbook Scholarship applications to them, so the committee can begin processing them.
- Staff Development Committee
 - The next Staff Professional Development Conference will be in March.
- Staff Outreach and Special Events Committee
 - Donated clothing will be collected Monday, December 9th. The distribution will be December 16th and 17th in Russell Union 2080 (Statesboro) and in the Skidaway Room (Armstrong). One bin is missing from the Armstrong Campus. Efforts were made to locate it but so far has not been recovered.
 - Holiday receptions will be December 18th (Statesboro) and December 19th (Armstrong) at 3:00 pm. The events will be held in the Student Union Ballrooms on both campuses.
All hands-on deck!
 - There is a schedule conflict with the proposed breakfast for Facilities Services staff. Adrienne McCollar will follow up with the Chair with an alternate date.
 - Helping hands are needed for both events. A link to the sign-up sheets will be sent out.

Old Business

- Faculty/Staff Awards and Recognition Ceremony
 - The site is live. Please nominate faculty and staff by going to:
<https://www.georgiasouthern.edu/gsawards/> Nominations close January 31st! There will be no monetary awards for teams. Individuals will receive medallions. There is also a feedback form. Awards and service recognition will occur at the same ceremony. The awards ceremony will be in April 2020.

New Business

- Ethics Hotline
 - SC Chair will invite Mrs. Maura Copeland to provide an educational session on the purpose and appropriate use of the ethics hotline.



Rumors and Gossip

- An 'Unmerge My University' flyer was shared with the group. Dr. Marrero and Administration is aware. Ultimately, there is nothing that can be done to unmerge the University.

Announcements

- Stamats has been selected to be the new branding consultant for GS. Representatives from the company will be on all three campuses next week.
- A new marketing director will start on January 6, 2020.

USG Staff Council - Updates from Mr. Jasper Stewart are as follows:

- Follow-up to the Top 5 concerns:
 - **TAP.** Tuition is waived but employees are taxed on the entire amount which includes fees; fees for services not used. Employees are charged the fees but cannot use the services for which the fees are assessed.
 - Members agree that this is a concern that should be addressed.
 - Tuition assistance for technical and executive programs are also a concern.

Important Dates

- Next Staff Council Meeting, January 18, 2020 | 9 - 11 am
- Warm Clothing Distribution | December 16 - 17
- Holiday Reception, Statesboro Campus | December 18, 3-5pm
- Holiday Reception, Armstrong Campus | December 19, 3-5pm

Meeting Adjourned 4:33 pm

Minutes recorded and submitted by Dylitchrous Thompson