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## Concerning the immediate establishment of a faculty club

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# Concerning the immediate establishment of a faculty club

Submitted by: David Seaman

11/6/2005

## Discussion:

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Concerning the immediate establishment of a faculty club.

## Rationale:

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Suppose the current owners of the fund, described in a previous response as "All Faculty and Staff," do NOT want to wait for a presidential plan to create other facilities first. What is NOW the possibility of investing the 100K plus dollars in a facility.

Does no one realize that the faculty is without a collegial home, and suffers from low morale?

Why not take dramatic steps to correct this situation with the funds the faculty already have dedicated to this purpose?

Please indicate how we may now procede on behalf of the faculty. We see all around us the wonderful RAC the students are creating, and the fine administrative structures. If I may speak on behalf of the faculty NOW, where are we supposed to meet and have collegial relations? I have only been here 13 years, but already I am getting impatient.

## SEC Response:

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The SEC has been investigating the possibility of resurrecting a Faculty/University Club, at least in the interim. At this point, there is no legal signatory to the account. Dr. Grube and Billy Griffis (VP for University Advancement) have merely been exercising "fiduciary responsibility" for the money. There have been no withdrawals since the money was turned over to the Foundation. According to Billy Griffis, it is his opinion that to legally withdraw any money at this point would require approval from Dr Grube, Dr. Bleicken, Pat Humphrey (as Faculty Senate chair), and the chair of the Staff council. It should be

noted that given the ownership, as designated by Dr. Fraser, any club would be a "University Club", not a "Faculty Club."

There is currently no space available on campus for a "permanent" or full time University Club establishment. I am exploring some options including using the Williams Center dining hall on Fridays as an interim arrangement. Leslie Furr has also indicated that the Hospitality and Tourism Department may be willing to let us use their space as well as provide catering using their students and chef. I will be exploring this option further. In any case, before the University Club becomes a reality, we will need to appoint a committee to establish (create bylaws, etc) and run such an entity, and most likely we will need to survey faculty and staff as to what they would like.

More information will be forthcoming as it is available.

### **Senate Response:**

11/14//2005: Information Requests: Since the last Senate meeting, there have been a couple of information requests from the same individual. David Seaman from CLASS asked about a faculty club. First, he wanted to know who legally owned the funds in the Foundation.

How does a representative of the faculty go about getting the funds to use them for creating a Faculty Club?

According to Billy Griffis, Vice President for University Advancement, the legal owner is "all faculty and staff of Georgia Southern." There is currently a balance of \$129,287.65 in the fund. The source of the funds was the old Faculty Club, a totally private entity that ran an establishment off campus. Jay Fraser was apparently the last treasurer of the old Faculty Club, and he had custody of the funds. At the time that he retired and was moving to Savannah, he no longer wanted to have the responsibility, so that is when the money was transferred to the Foundation.

Since then, Billy Griffis and Dr. Grube have been acting totally in a caretaking fiduciary aspect. They do not have any power over the funds. Furthermore, having spoken with Billy and talked with him on Saturday during the game at half time, it is his opinion, at this point, that to legally withdraw any money would require approval from Dr. Grube, Dr. Bleicken, myself as chair of the Faculty Senate, and the chair of the staff council. We would all have to agree. It also should be noted that the given ownership of the account as designated by Dr. Fraser when he committed the funds to the Foundation is that it is a University Club not a Faculty Club. Apparently, my information is that staff were eligible to be members of the old club; it was not strictly restricted to faculty. Dr. Grube also replied at that point that the long range plan is to set some sort of facility in the Eidson Alumni House after a new alumni house has been built. The new alumni house is in the works they have a site selected, they have been doing fundraising, and they have some preliminary plans. According to Billy Griffis, they

received their first set of architects' drawings last week, and the estimated price was a million dollars over what the budgeted amount was. So they have got to go back and do some rethinking on that one. At any rate, a new alumni house is a year-and-a-half or so out in the future.

Secondly, Dr. Seaman asked about immediate establishment of a faculty club, and I have been doing a little investigation on this question. Currently there is no space available on campus for a full time faculty club. We have been doing some exploring of other options. One thought that has been investigated is using the Williams Center dining hall periodically. I spoke with Leslie Furr just before the meeting and he has indicated that Hospitality has a facility that might be available periodically. So, we are thinking about an interim facility for use as some sort of periodical weekly, monthly, place where we can have some sort of periodical weekly, monthly, place where we can have some sort of faculty camaraderie. Before we can make such a thing a reality, we would need to survey faculty and staff about what do they want, about what they might be willing to pay for dues, and about what sort of programs they might be interested in. We would also want to establish a committee to be in essence a founding board, draw up bylaws, operation rules, etc. However, some of these things are not totally insurmountable, and I think we could do something fairly quickly, hopefully, maybe for next semester even. Another point of information interestingly enough in my research I found out that currently there is no other institution in the University System that has a faculty club. UGA used to have one; they had about 4,800 square feet in a place called Memorial Hall, but that has been turned into a general dining facility for the whole campus.