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Dean's Council

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Dean’s Council

Submitted by Christopher Ford/Student Government Association

6/7/2006

Motion:

Request from SGA to present to Faculty Senate with the proposal of the council system.

Rationale:

To open the lines of communication between the different councils of the University and to address the specific issues concerning the different colleges.

Response:

6-21-2006 Senate Meeting: A motion was made by Dr. Clara Krug that the representatives of the SGA bring to the first fall Faculty Senate meeting, Fall 2006, in writing detailed information about the membership of, the goals of, and the means of communication of a proposed council system. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote. The SEC Chair has discussed the agenda item with SGA President Chris Ford. SGA requests Senate approval of a council system at the college level to foster communication at all levels. Each council is to consist of SGA reps, Faculty Senate reps, Administration, and additional students. According to Chris Ford, the proposal is that each council meet approximately once per month.
Further, Chris also submitted an agenda item requesting the Senate to endorse the SGA’s plan to establish college councils. The intent is to foster communication between students, faculty, administration. I will let them address that more in agenda item #8. Motion from SGA on College Councils, Chris Ford, SGA President: Once again, Kelsey Grubbs, who is Vice President for Academic Affairs, will explain this motion.

Kelsey Grubbs (SGA VPAA): We want to propose a council system, in which every college has a council. Each council will consist of a Dean or the Associate Dean or some form of faculty from each college. We want to have five students from different departments in each college to represent the colleges. And they will meet once a month and our five Senators that represent that college will also meet with them. That would allow more people involvement in SGA, and we would have more people representing different departments within the University. We would have a little more interaction with the Deans. If something is going wrong in a college, they are going to have the Dean sitting with them to say, hey you know this is a problem, and if it turns out to be something that SGA can help them with, they would come to us, and tell us to take a stand on it. We would like to get faculty involved, and that is why we are bringing this to you today. We are still working on it, but we want to know if you have any suggestions and what you think of the idea.

Clara Krug (CLASS): The motion reads that “Each council is to consist of SGA reps, Faculty Senate reps, Administration, and additional students.” And in the list you just mentioned, you included the Dean or Associate Dean, plus five students, plus five SGA Senators. Did you mean five faculty instead of five SGA Senators, because you did not mention faculty at all in your comments?

Chris Ford (SGA President): That is the breakdown of the proposed council. We will have five Senators or six Senators from SGA; excuse me, the Faculty Senate members, which represent their college; five representatives from within the college, which represent departments within the college; the Dean or Associate Dean or designee from the Dean, which represents the administration of the college; and that is the breakdown proposed for the council. That way we open the lines of communication between all the different entities on the campus or within a college; that way everyone will know what is going on.

Richard Flynn (CLASS): So, for instance, in CLASS, where I think there are about thirteen Faculty Senators, all thirteen of those Senators would be on this committee?
Kelsey Grubbs (SGA VPAA): We just want people that want to come. You are welcome to come to the meeting. If you have any input about it, you can come in and out as you please. This is something just for the students. This is not something that is just about big plans. We just want to know what is going on in the school, what is going on in the colleges, and we want the Faculty Senate to be there as well, just so they have a little bit of knowledge behind what is going on.

Richard Flynn (CLASS): May I follow up? So, in CLASS where you have ten departments, you have five student representatives, how do you decide which department gets represented?

Chris Ford (SGA President): There are five or six Senators from each college on SGA. To get a better view of different departments within the college, we try to get representatives from within the college that are not represented by Student Government Association. That way we have a full understanding of what is going on within the college. This is simply a discussion or recommendation board; therefore, it would address concerns within the individual majors in departments in the college. The purpose of the council will be to open the lines of communication between the different councils of the University and to address the specific issues concerning the different colleges.

Godfrey Gibbison (COBA): Why can the SGA reps not meet with the Dean of the college, and also I want to know if the Deans have any thoughts about this proposal? Dean Jane Rhoades Hudak (CLASS): Great idea. We are already doing it. The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences has been doing this already for three years. We have the Student Government Association people coming, and they meet every month with the Associate Dean and a representative from each department in CLASS. Thank you

Kelsey Grubbs (SGA VPAA): The point of having extra members, from outside of SGA, is so we can include more students. We want the students to feel like they are a part of SGA, because we are trying to get out there and say, hey, we are the voices that you need to go through. We are your voice, and this is the way for them to have their voice heard. So this plan involves more people than just the five or six SGA Senators that represent that college. It is a way for more students to have a voice.

Clara Krug (CLASS): I really appreciate the idea and your enthusiasm. It sounds to me like this is a caucus, and we have had a Senate caucus in various colleges in the past. We do not right at the moment. And I know that in our college, Dean Hudak has been working on this quite diligently for the past couple of years. However, I wonder how the results of any deliberation will get to the faculty? I do not know, for example, of the
various outcome of any specific meeting. I think you realize from the Librarian’s Report that I really do tend to read what comes in on email and in hard copy. I really pay close attention especially to anything that looks like it comes from a caucus, because I am a firm believer in shared governance. But I do not know how anybody, as a Faculty Senator or a faculty member who is not a Senator, is going to find out any results of any meetings and then be able to provide additional ideas.

Kelsey Grubbs (SGA VPAA): We see this plan as kind of expanding SGA. And how SGA works right now, we feel like we have senators that come to you and tell you what is going on as a faculty, and I think you are in the know about what is going on with SGA. And that is how we want this council system to work. The council system will work like SGA, in that the faculty is always in the know, the faculty will always know what is going on, and that way everybody can have that open line of communication.

Marc Cyr (CLASS): I am wondering if we are getting into a boundary-crossing issue here with the Faculty Senate, because Faculty Senate needs to deal with University-wide issues, with issues that hit two or more colleges. It seems to me that to some extent this is not within the purview of the Faculty Senate. This has to do with the individual colleges, and their councils.

Clara Krug (CLASS): I hear the goal, which is to share information; I still have not heard how you are going to accomplish that goal, so that people who are not at the meeting actually know what was done. How will you accomplish your goals so that faculty and students not at the meeting know what has transpired?

Barry Balleck (CLASS): I totally agree with Clara. I think that it is necessary here for the SGA to make sure that if something like this occurs, that it is not just people getting together and talking. There has got to be structure. There has got to be an agenda. There has got to be somebody taking notes. There has got to be a record of minutes being kept. SGA has a web site, it would be wonderful if you had these meetings for each of our colleges and then those minutes from those meetings were posted on the SGA website faculty members could then go to. And that would necessitate then that somebody, one of those permanent members and maybe even an SGA Senator, is responsible for taking notes at that meeting and posting those to the web site so that interested faculty can then go and look and see what has actually occurred in there, and then can comment on those ideas.

Chris Ford (SGA President): Faculty Senate also has a web site, correct?
Pat Humphrey (COST) Senate Moderator: Right.

Chris Ford (SGA President): So this is another means for us, once we have met on the committee, we post the minutes of the meeting on the SGA website and on the Faculty Senate website as well. And then also, not only is the information going to the Faculty Senate and the SGA, it is also going to the student body at the college. The Dean will also know then what is going on within the Faculty Senate and the SGA.

Kelsey Grubbs (SGA VPAA): I would like to remind all of you it is not something that we want to do today; we were just coming here to get your input, your thoughts about the idea, and we appreciate all the suggestions that you had.

Clara Krug (CLASS): But it is presented here as a motion.

Chris Ford (SGA): Actually, it is a motion. We apologize for the misunderstanding. The purpose of today was actually to present the council system which we are proposing, and to say that we would like Faculty Senate members to sit on the council. That is the purpose of today. And the motion on the table is whether or not you all will support or not support the council system.

Clara Krug (CLASS): I agree again with Barry Balleck. Mr. Balleck has served this year as advisor to the SGA, is that correct? And I know you have a lot of experience with previous SGA administrations, and we have had cooperation with various administrations. What I would like to do is to indicate before I make the motion that I am going to make in a minute, that 1) there be something in writing, 2) whatever is put in writing for this group, for the Faculty Senate, be put in writing and be able to be on the web site as other writings are (I think it is 10 days in advance of our next meeting, and all of our meetings are on the web site, and they are available to students as well as faculty), and 3) whatever you present in writing that everything be detailed that as far as membership, as far as goals, that is what I would like to see. Now, having said that, I now move to table this until the fall meeting.

Richard Flynn (CLASS): Point of order. There is no motion on the floor to be tabled, as far as I know.

Clara Krug (CLASS): Then, may I change that motion to table to a suggestion that that occur?
Godfrey Gibbison (COBA): And while that is being done to support what Clara just suggested, I have been on the Senate for two years, and for the two years, I have always been very reluctant to vote for anything where there is not a clear problem and a clear improvement over what has been in place before. Now someone needs to show me that communication has broken down up to this point in the colleges. I have nothing that shows me that communication has broken down. In fact, the last students I talked to were more concerned that nobody told them when Lakeside was going to reopen, than whatever any of the college was doing. So unless somebody shows me a clear problem and an improvement upon that, then I will have to either vote no whenever this comes up, or abstain. But I need to see some clear benefit of this before I can support it and make a vote on it.

Mary Marwitz (CLASS): One of my questions is how this proposed council would differ from bodies that are already in place, as Dr. Hudak said, CLASS already has such a body, so what are you thinking about that would make this different?

Chris Ford (SGA): A lot of times there are misunderstandings between the colleges and the student body as a whole and the Student Government, as well, because we just do not communicate sometimes, or there are misunderstandings about procedures. This is a means for us to open up dialogue between the various bodies on campus. I believe that this is very necessary if we are trying to move towards being more student-centered and moving toward national distinction; communication must be improved.

Barry Balleck (CLASS): Godfrey, I do not think anything is broken necessarily. I think the problem is disengagement on the part of faculty and the students, and I think that is what SGA is trying to do. They are trying to have more people engaged. We are engaged, we are sitting here on a, you know, 95 degree June afternoon, but where are the rest of our faculty members. We have maybe 10 sitting behind us. Out of all of our faculty members why are our faculty not engaged? If you go to a Student Government Association meeting, you have maybe 10 or 15 students in the gallery there. I think what the SGA is trying to accomplish here is to reengage people or hopefully open those lines that they feel are lacking at this point. I do not necessarily think that our communication is broken, but they are trying to re-engage people and get the lines back to where they should be.

Marc Cyr (CLASS): On the issue of engagement--where are the faculty? One of the reasons I think we were elected was so that they would not have to come here this afternoon. We are here for that job. I would like to back what Clara said, the easiest idea here is that the motion just needs to be taken away and written up with greater
detail, and all you have to do, since it has not been put on the floor, is simply pull it back, bring it forward in writing, and then next time out I think it will be clearer communication. It will be very nice.

Chris Ford (SGA): The reason why we did not bring it in writing here is because we wanted to make sure that you all would agree or buy into it. We wanted it not to be just an SGA idea, but to be a Faculty Senate and Georgia Southern University idea. We want to make sure the faculty has as just as much interest in it as we do.
Clara Krug (CLASS): I move that the representatives of the SGA bring to the first fall Faculty Senate meeting, Fall 2006, in writing detailed information about the membership of, the goals of, and the means of communication of a proposed council system. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote.