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Overview of Presidential Search and Screen Process and Q & A

Submitted by: Trey Denton, Chair, Presidential Search and Screening Committee

3/5/2009

Motion:

Rationale:

To provide the Senate with an overview of the search process and to answer questions. Suggest a brief presentation followed by Q & A. Also suggest that this be a regular report at Faculty Senate meetings until position is filled.

SEC Response:

Minutes: 2/16/2009:

Presidential Search Committee—After the Presidential Search Committee is charged, Search Committee Chair Trey Denton will speak to the Senate about that process. The SEC also received an RFI from Debi Sabia asking how the members of the search committee had been chosen, and the SEC's response has been posted and is in two parts: Part one is the BOR Policy that specifies the constitution of all such search committees, and Part two is Vice Chancellor Susan Herbst's response to the specifics of the Georgia Southern Search Committee, which President Grube solicited at the SEC's request. The committee was constituted according to the requirements of BOR Policy. Recommendations for individual members were solicited from a number of sources. Chancellor Davis selected the committee members in consultation with Regent. Trey Denton was asked to chair the GSU Search Committee because of his excellent qualifications and experience. This Faculty Senate will participate by being active faculty

members who meet, review, and assess candidates, and encourage other faculty to do the same.

Debra Sabia (CLASS) thanked the SEC for helping her with answers to her questions, and then asked whether there had been any University System precedent for selecting for a second time the same chairperson for a Presidential Search Committee.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) Chair, Senate Executive Committee could not respond but agreed to look into Dr. Sabia's question.

Minutes: 3/24/2009

Report from Trey Denton (COBA), Chair of Presidential Search and Screen Committee thanked Faculty Senators for allowing him to meet and go over the action plan for the Presidential Search process and for making him a regular part of senate meetings until the search is concluded. He recognized another search committee member Dr. Fayth Parks (COE), who was present at the meeting.

Denton began by stating that GSU is an institution that's always receptive to noble inspiration and asked the Senate's help in finding the next president. He stressed that the process was relatively simple but serious as it involves academic integrity, strategic direction, and jobs and lives. It also involves a careful balancing act: On one hand, the committee has a responsibility to the campus community to run the search in as open as fashion as possible, to be transparent, and to involve as members of the campus family in the process. On the other hand, the committee has got to attract the best candidates who most often are sitting University Provosts and Presidents. The committee, therefore, has the responsibility to guarantee the confidentiality of their participation until later in the search process. He then provided handouts detailing the process, as well as the position description that was written on campus and forwarded to the Board of Regents for approval. He then reviewed the process.

The committee was charged February 23rd by the Board of Regents. They answer directly to Executive Vice Chancellor & Chief Academic Officer Dr. Susan Herbst. The committee will be using "a modified confidential search process," which is one of three possible types:

a. Completely open. This type of search is rare, except in a handful of states, as candidates are generally very reluctant to participate in a completely open search.

b. Completely closed. This is the process that was used most recently by the University of Georgia, Georgia State, and Georgia Tech, in which the

committee makes all the decisions without a campus visit and no opportunity for campus involvement.

c. Modified confidential search. No names are released to campus until the candidates are announced.

Denton explained that the committee will be assisted by Parker Executive Search and passed around a copy of their brochure.

The committee's first task was to draft a position announcement. The first page of the position announcement has a general overview, an introduction to Georgia Southern and an explanation of why we think this is a tremendous opportunity. The next page has seventeen expressed position qualifications. The last page has nomination and contact information. He pointed out that the search committee made a careful and deliberate attempt to put in multiple mentions of shared governance, student involvement in decision-making and our culture of kindness and civility.

They created the Presidential Search website to both attract candidates and inform candidates and campus personnel of the progress of the search. As they get farther into the process, the website will be updated on a weekly basis.

The committee is in the process of placing ads for the position, and they intend to cast a wide net. The ad will be placed in a variety of publications, with the intent of producing a candidate pool with very diverse characteristics.

In April, the committee will be hosting a series of meetings with various constituent groups to discuss the characteristics of the person that we seek and to encourage faculty, staff, community, and student involvement. They plan to meet many different groups, including faculty groups, the Faculty Senate, the Deans' Council, Student Government Association, the President's Staff Advisory Council, the Boosters, the Foundation, the Alumni Association, the President's Cabinet, and various community groups. Each session will have multiple committee members in attendance, acting as facilitators. Denton pointed out that he is the only committee member allowed to speak with the press, but any other committee member may speak with anyone or any group as they see fit according to the stipulations of the modified confidential search. Faculty should feel free to meet with any committee member and share their Impressions.

The sixth step is to start soliciting nominations and encouraging the applications. This has already started, and will continue throughout the summer. He asked that all faculty members consider people they know and send in names of nominees. The search firm is also making contacts at this particular point in time. He stated that the search firm is not a screening organization (they will not exclude anyone). Every nominee from any source will receive a letter inviting that individual to apply for the position of president. The Search and Screen Committee is the only group that can

exclude a candidate from consideration.

The seventh step will take place in late summer. The Search and Screen Committee will get together in person and do a careful review of all of the candidates.

As a result of that meeting they will select 8-10 candidates to interview in person at an offsite location, probably an Atlanta hotel near the airport.

After the offsite meetings, a list of finalists will be announced and on-campus interviews scheduled. Seven to eight candidates will probably be brought to campus over a three-week period. The committee will try to give as many groups on campus the opportunity to meet with each candidate in person and schedules will include an open forum that will be open to all. Everyone that meets a candidate will have the chance to formally evaluate that candidate.

The committee will collect the formal evaluations and include them in a report to the Board of Regents with a list of three to five acceptable, unranked candidates. These individuals will be interviewed by the Special Regents' Committee chaired by Regent Leebern, Chancellor Davis, and Executive Vice Chancellor Herbst.

Once a candidate has been selected, Executive Vice Chancellor Herbst will extend an offer to the candidate. This will take place in the mid-Fall, and the new President will assume office at some date in the future.

An update will be given at every Faculty Senate meeting until the process is completed. A special meeting for the Faculty Senate to meet with the committee has been scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, April 7th at 4:00 p.m.

Denton encouraged faculty to contact him, any committee member, or the search firm with nominations, suggestions for making the process stronger, or any nice.

Michael Moore (COE) asked what exactly the search firm would be doing.

Trey Denton (COBA) said the Executive Search Firm has contacts across the nation. They won't contact anybody recently placed, but they do stay in contact with all their placements as sort of a "brain trust" to generate nominations from people who have been in one position for some time and may be ready to move and to generate names of candidates that are highly regarded in academe. They use these contacts extensively, and they do as much fact checking as possible to make sure that information submitted on applications is accurate. He added that the search committee did not get to select the search firm; they were told which search firm we would be using.