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Approved by the Faculty Senate: 4/3/2017
Approved by the President: 4/5/2017

Inclusion of Senate Vote on proposed SRI with final SRI report

Submitted by: Barbara King

3/20/2017

Motion:

The Faculty Senate of Georgia Southern University moves that the final senate vote on the adoption of the proposed Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI) and the minutes of the Senate meeting of March 6, 2017, at which the final report was discussed be included along with the final report of the ad hoc Committee on SRI that previously was voted to be forwarded to the appropriate Operational Working Group.

Rationale:

Recognizing the hard work of the ad hoc Committee on Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI), at the March meeting, the Faculty Senate voted to forward the ad hoc committee's final report to the appropriate Operational Working Group (OWG) for informational purposes. Based on the ad hoc committee's research, this report included three recommendations: adoption of the proposed SRI, changes to the faculty handbook regarding faculty evaluations and use of SRIs, as well as exploring the possibility of centralizing the SRI process. The senate voted down the first of these recommendations, but no vote was taken on recommendations two and three. When the senate voted to forward the report, there was not an option to forward the report AND include results of the senate vote on the first recommendation. Although the report is being forwarded for informational purposes only, this information seems incomplete without including this important senate vote. In Dr. Mauer's presentation of the ad hoc committee's final report, he noted one of Dr. Bartel's original goals was faculty input regarding the creation and adoption of a new SRI instrument. Not including the results of the senate vote on the first recommendation violates the spirit of the original mission. As is, anyone reading the final report has no way of knowing faculty thoughts on the

committee's recommendations. Despite this information being unknown in regards to recommendations two and three, this is information we have regarding the first recommendation. Furthermore, as is, there is no reason for members of the OWG to distinguish between the three recommendations. This is problematic given that one of those recommendations was voted down. Although there is no way of knowing senate preferences regarding the other recommendations, reporting vote results regarding the committee's first recommendation, sends a clearer message that support for recommendations two and three is unknown, thus reminding OWG members the report they are reading is only informational and not an endorsement.

Response:

Faculty Senate Minutes 4/3/2017:

Motion: Inclusion of Senate Vote on proposed SRI with final SRI report Barbara King (CLASS) was concerned that the consolidation Operational Working Group (OWG) to which the SRI committee's report was being forwarded for informational purposes only would not recognize that, since we formally voted down only one of the report's recommendations, we had rejected all of the report's recommendations. She thought this needed to be made clear as part of a full relay of information to the OWG. Just forwarding the report was not forwarding full information because it would not relay the faculty input provided by the Senate discussion, particularly misgivings about the SRI instrument itself.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) noted that King had raised something like this during the last meeting, but it got lost in the donnybrook of discussion. He thought her motion sought to forward to the OWG a clearer version of what occurred, and he thought that was a good idea.

Finbarr Curtis (CLASS) agreed with the basic motion. At the last meeting, we had said we did not want to make recommendations to the OWG that would develop an SRI for both GSU and Armstrong, but just forwarding the report could send the wrong message. A note that we have strong reservations should accompany the report.

Moderator Flynn asked if inclusion of the results of the senate vote would accomplish that goal.

King said that would be a start.

Janice Steirn (CLASS) wanted to include the vote, but also a paragraph saying that this was discussed at length and there were several reservations.

Moderator Flynn asked if they wanted to send the minutes or a reference to the minutes, or would that accomplish more than they were asking for.

Alice Hall (CHHS) noted that consolidation had formed part of the discussion, and wondered if we had voted the measure down because we did not like it, or because of consolidation. She thought forwarding the minutes would be important to show how we arrived at the vote.

Lisa Abbott (CLASS) said the overwhelming consensus was we didn't like the new measure, and that needed to be communicated. King was also concerned that the OWG would not be able to tell how many people voted against it because they didn't like it, how many did so because of consolidation, and how many used consolidation as a way of not having to be mean.

Cyr said that issue was cloudy and that was a reason to send the minutes to the OWG, so they could see for themselves what was said.

Moderator Flynn noted at this point that the motion had not been formally made, so King made it: to include the Senate vote on the proposed SRI with the forwarded SRI Report. It was seconded.

Jake Simons (COBA) said something inaudible, but it appears to have been a suggestion that the motion be amended to include the minutes of the SRI discussion. After some discussion of how amendments work, Mark Welford (COSM) formally moved an amendment that we include the minutes of the discussion along with the SRI committee's report in the material forwarded to the OWG. He was seconded.

Adam Bossler (CLASS) was concerned that just forwarding the minutes would not make clear how strongly faculty were against the new SRI, regardless of consolidation. The OWG might want to take some of the recommendations from the report and try to implement them even though we were strongly opposed to them.

Moderator Flynn asked if Bossler was clear on the fact that the amended motion would forward both the minutes and the result of the vote.

Bossler said he understood that, but noted that some people had said the minutes weren't very clear about whether we voted it down because we were against it, or whether we were just trying to be nice by saying we rejected it because of the consolidation. He thought we should be much clearer about why it was rejected.

Cyr thought Bossler's suggestion would have to bring up an entire new discussion in which we would have to gauge how much we hate it. He wasn't sure that there was any reason to do that right now. He thought the amended motion sent as much clarity as we could achieve.

Ellen Hamilton (CHHS) did not think sending the report forward would result in its being accepted and implemented. She thought there would be much more discussion even with forwarding the minutes that included Senators' objections to the report.

The amendment was voted on and Approved. The amended motion was then voted on and Approved.