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Faculty Senate

Fall 2020

Faculty Senate Handbook 2020

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Georgia Southern University 2020 Faculty Senate Handbook

***Faculty Senate Office P.O. Box 8033-1
fsoffice @georgiasouthern.edu***

***Senate Resource Site
http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/faculty_senate***



Senate Executive Committee, 2020-2021

OFFICERS:

Chair, Senate President - Patricia Holt (COE)

President-elect - P. Cary Christian(CBSS)

Past President - Helen W. Bland (JPH CPH)

Senate Secretary - Amanda Konkle (CAH)

Senate Librarian - Barbara King (CBSS)

College Representatives:

PAULSON COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING & COMPUTING (PCEC) - Cheryl Aasheim

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES (CAH) - Lisa Abbott

COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (CBSS) - Cary Christian

PARKER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS (PCOB) - Bill Wells

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (COE) - Delores Liston

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS (COSM) - Jeff Secrest

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES (LIB) - Jessica Garner

JIANN-PING HSU COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH (JPH CPH) - Bill Mase

WATERS COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS (WCPS)

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Common Abbreviations

| | |
|-------------|---|
| <i>BOR</i> | - Board of Regents |
| <i>RFI</i> | - Request for Information |
| <i>DI</i> | - Discussion Item |
| <i>SEC</i> | - Senate Executive Committee |
| <i>GECC</i> | - General Education / Core Curriculum Committee |
| <i>UGCC</i> | - Undergraduate Curriculum Committee |
| <i>GCC</i> | - Graduate Curriculum Committee |

Structure of the Senate

University Statutes

Article V. The Faculty Senate

Section 1. The Faculty Senate shall serve as the representative and legislative agency of the faculty. As such, it shall serve as the official faculty advisory body to the University President. Within the policy framework of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and with the approval of the University President, the recommendations of the Faculty Senate shall be the academic policy of the University to be implemented by the administration. The academic affairs of the University which concern the Faculty Senate and for which it shall be responsible in formulating policies and reviewing procedures include those enumerated powers of the faculty listed in Article IV.

- The *University Statutes* take precedence over the Senate *Bylaws*.
- The *Statutes* describe, in a nutshell, the University's structure and its governance. Its sections include:

Preamble

Article I: The University

Article II: The President

Article III: Academic Administration

Article IV: The Faculty

Article V: The Faculty Senate

Article VI: Academic Colleges and Departments/Schools

Article VII: Armstrong and Liberty Campuses
Administration

Article VIII: Business and Finance Administration

Article IX: Student Affairs Administration

Article X: Enrollment Management Administration

Article XI: External Affairs & University Advancement
Administration

Article XII: Information Technology Administration

Article XIII: Profession/Administrative and Staff Employees

Article XIV: Ratification

Article XV: Amendments

Article XVI: Miscellaneous Provisions

One Article, Article V, deals with the Senate. The *Statutes* do not go into as much detail about the Senate as the *Bylaws*. *Bylaws* cannot contradict the *Statutes*. Revisions of the *Statutes* must be approved by the faculty, the University President, the Chancellor, and the Board Regents. The *Statutes* were last revised in 2020 (SEC Leadership, July 2020).

Faculty Senate Bylaws

- *Bylaws* are given the authority to direct the legislative affairs of the Georgia Southern University faculty by Article V, Section 12 of the University *Statutes* which state “*The Faculty Senate shall operate in accordance with its Bylaws which must be approved by the Corps of Instruction. The Faculty Senate through its Bylaws shall establish standing committees and/or ad hoc committees to recommend policy and/or procedures on all matters appropriate to each respective area of responsibility. The Faculty Senate reserves the right to resolve all jurisdictional disputes and procedural questions that may arise among the committees.*”
- The purpose of the *Bylaws* is described in Sections 1 and 2 Article I of the *Bylaws*.
- The major articles in the *Bylaws* are:
 - Article I: Purpose
 - Article II: Membership and Meetings
 - Article III: Officers
 - Article IV: Committees (includes the Senate Executive Committee, Standing and Ad Hoc)
 - Article V: Ratification and Revision

There is nothing more specific to the Senate business, structure, and governance than the *Bylaws*. The *Bylaws* were last revised in April 2019 .

Shared Governance

Structure of the Faculty Senate

- 76 Senators*
- Senate Executive Committee (9 voting members, 4 non-voting officers, and two *ex-officio* (Past President and a representative from a non-represented campus if all members are homed to a single campus).
- 13 Standing Committees
 - Academic Standards
 - Faculty Development
 - Faculty Research
 - Faculty Service
 - Faculty Welfare
 - General Education and Core Curriculum
 - Graduate
 - Libraries
 - Planning, Budget, and Facilities
 - Senate Elections
 - Senate Executive
 - Student Success
 - Undergraduate

**subject to change based on population for each college*

Corps of Instruction

Board of Regents Policy Manual

Section 3: *Academic Affairs*

3.2 Faculties

3.2.1.1 Corps of Instruction

Full-time professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, senior lecturers, principal lecturers, and teaching personnel with such other titles as may be approved by the Board, shall be the Corps of Instruction. Full-time research and extension personnel and duly certified librarians will be included in the Corps of Instruction on the basis of comparable training. Persons holding part-time and adjunct appointments or other honorary titles shall not be considered to be members of the faculty.

3.2.1.3 Other Faculty Members

Research and Comprehensive Universities

In addition to the Corps of Instruction, the faculty will include the President, administrative and academic deans, registrar, librarian, chief fiscal officer of the institution and other full-time administrative officers as the institution may designate as having *ex officio* faculty status.

State Universities, State Colleges, and Two-Year Colleges

In addition to the Corps of Instruction, the faculty will consist of the President of the institution and other full-time administrative officers as the institution may designate as having *ex officio* faculty status.

Foundational Documents

Board of Regents Policy Manual, Section 2.0: Institutional Governance

2.6 Presidential Authority and Responsibilities

2.6.1 Executive Head of Institution

(Last Modified on Summer, 2020)

The President of each University System of Georgia (USG) institution shall be the executive head of the institution and all its departments and shall exercise supervision and direction to promote the efficient operation of the institution. The President is responsible to the Chancellor for the operation and management of the institution and for the execution of all directives of the Board of Regents and the Chancellor.

2.6.2 Ex-Officio Faculty Chair

(Last Modified on May 28, 2009)

The president shall be the ex-officio chair of the faculty and may preside at meetings of the faculty. The president and/or the president's designee shall be a member of all faculties and other academic bodies within the institution. He/she shall decide all questions of jurisdiction, not otherwise defined by the Chancellor, of the several councils, faculties, and officers.

The president shall have the right to call meetings of any council, faculty, or committee at his/her institution at any time. The president shall have the power to veto any act of any council, faculty, or committee of his/her institution but, in doing so, shall transmit to the proper officer a written statement of the reason for such veto. A copy of each veto statement shall be transmitted to the Chancellor.

At those institutions that have a council, senate, assembly, or any such body, the president or the president's designee may chair such body and preside at its meetings. The president shall be the official medium of communication between the faculty and the Chancellor and between the council, senate, assembly, or any such body and the Chancellor. The President shall be the ex-officio chair of the faculty and a member of all faculties and other academic bodies within the institution. The President may preside at faculty meetings. The President may call meetings of any council, senate, assembly, committee, or governance body at his or her institution at any time, may chair the governance body, and may preside at the meetings. The President shall decide all questions of jurisdiction, not otherwise defined by the Chancellor, of the several councils, faculties, and officers.

The President may veto any act of any council, faculty, or committee of his or her institution but, in doing so, shall transmit to the proper officer a written statement of the reason for such veto. A copy of each veto statement shall be transmitted to the Chancellor.

The President shall be the official medium of communication between the faculty and the Chancellor and between the council, senate, assembly, committee, or governance body and the Chancellor.

Section 3.0: Academic Affairs

3.2.3 Faculty Meetings, Rules and Regulations

(Last Modified on May 24, 2010)

The faculty council, senate, assembly, or other comparable governance body at all USG institutions shall meet and shall appoint a secretary who shall keep a record of the proceedings. All meetings should comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including the Georgia Open Records Act and Georgia Open Meetings Act.

The faculty or the council, senate, assembly, or other comparable faculty governance body at an USG institution, shall, subject to the approval of the President of the institution:

1. Make statutes, rules, and regulations for its governance;
2. Provide committees as may be required;
3. Make statutes, rules, and regulations for students regarding admission, suspension, expulsion, classes, courses of study, the learning environment, and requirements for graduation; and,
4. Make regulations necessary or proper for the maintenance of high educational standards.

A copy of each institution's statutes, rules, and regulations made by the faculty shall be filed with the Chancellor and shall be published, implemented, and disseminated in accordance with SACSCOC regulations. The faculty shall have primary responsibility for those aspects of student life that relate to the educational process, subject to the approval of the President of the institution.

Who Is “Faculty”?

Marc Cyr, 2009

- The Board of Regents defines “faculty” as all full-time personnel holding academic rank. This category includes full-time temporary, permanent non-tenured, tenure-track, and tenured teaching and research personnel (including librarians), as well as administrators (vice presidents, deans, chairs, etc.) who hold academic rank; part-time temporaries and other adjunct personnel are not considered “faculty.”
- That is, what in everyday parlance most people would call “faculty” is defined by the BOR as the “Corps of Instruction.” Therefore, when crafting policies and especially policy language, we need to be careful with our terminology.
- All members of the faculty may vote in Faculty Senate elections. Temporary faculty, however, may not run for or serve on the Senate or its committees because election to such positions could be misinterpreted as a promise of future employment.
- Members of the faculty who are full-time administrators (distinguished by an administrative contract or no teaching duties) are not eligible to serve as senators or on senate committees. Should a senator (or committee member) accept a full-time twelve months administrative position, whether permanent or interim, that individual should resign from their senate seat and/or all committees on which they are serving.

NOTE: This definition of “faculty” is relevant re: the Faculty Senate and its committees, and University Committees. It does not necessarily apply in all circumstances pertaining to individual college, department, or other university sub-unit shared governance situations (for example, faculty recommendations regarding tenure or promotion). However, it is strongly recommended that BOR-defined faculty not be excluded from shared governance situations unless overwhelming arguments can be marshaled to support that exclusion. We want as little class, caste, or in-group dynamic in our faculty as we can achieve.

What the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) Does

Marc Cyr, 2009 (updated SEC Leadership, July 2020)

The main job of the SEC is to facilitate the work of the Faculty Senate and its committees. This will include determining the appropriate format for conducting meetings. Commonly, the meetings are to be held in two designated locations (one on Statesboro campus and one on Armstrong campus). All meeting formats will follow the protocols as closely as possible (even in times of alternative formatting needs).

PERSONNEL MANAGER—

The SEC coordinates and oversees elections to the Senate and Senate committees (via the Librarian), and various elections held in the Senate itself (such as for Senate officers). It also appoints Senators to Senate committees (appointments are made at the last SEC meeting of the academic year for the next year's committees) and searches out faculty to sit on other university bodies.

INFORMATION FLOW—

The SEC examines requests for information, discussion items, and motions, and potential Senate business items from other sources (such as discussions with the Provost) and decides:

- 1) whether an item comes within the Senate's bailiwick, and
- 2) if it is Senate material, what avenue of action is appropriate.

If an item is judged not to be Senate business—for example, if it involves only one college—it will be rejected with an explanation and sometimes suggestions for how to pursue the matter. Sometimes, even if an item technically falls within the purview of the Senate, the SEC will decide it is not worth Senate time and effort or could be as well or even better pursued on a personal basis.

More commonly, if an item is within the purview of the Senate, the SEC will decide whether it should be pursued by the SEC itself; directed to a standing committee under whose charge the item falls; whether an ad hoc committee should be formed; or whether it should come before the Senate as a whole.

EDITOR—

This role often involves the SEC in helping a committee or individual refine an item accepted as proper Senate business, but which the SEC judges to be not yet ready for consideration by the Senate as a whole. Also, quite often information, suggestions, complaints, etc. come the SEC's way via unofficial or casual channels and the SEC will get involved in discussing the matter, and directing it to the appropriate group.

ADVOCATE—

The Librarian, Secretary, and Senate President/SEC Chair sit on various University standing and ad-hoc bodies, both in and out of the Academic Affairs realm. More centrally, before each Senate meeting the Senate President meets with both the Provost and the University President to discuss pending, ongoing, and/or simmering business; and the entire SEC has a regular meeting with the Provost prior to each Senate meeting. These meetings allow for frank give and take unencumbered by most formalities.

Protocol of Senate Meetings

Given the nature of this governing body (i.e., separated by distance, very large, and composed of members with numerous other responsibilities), the Agendas for the committees must act as a navigational map to be followed faithfully at the meetings. The Agenda must contain the Items of Business that will be covered, and no Items may be added to the Agenda after circulation. This requires that those submitting Items to, be patient in the instances where Items could not be planned ahead. In order to facilitate leadership of the standing committees, the President will hold a transition meeting to review protocols of Faculty Senate.

Standing Committee Agendas will be circulated and published at least one week (7 days) in advance of the meeting to allow committee members and guests time to read through, discuss with other faculty within their respective colleges, develop comments or questions, or prepare responses for discussion at the meeting itself. Items submitted after that date will be placed on the following meeting's agenda.

Standing Committee meetings (like the full Senate meeting) is not a place to introduce ideas, pose questions, or make requests. For a Senate of this size (and likewise its committees) to function in a meaningful and effective manner, those things must be submitted ahead of time. The meetings should be the venue to discuss the merits, unpack the issues or faults with, or develop strategies for the submitted items. *n.b. Playing Devil's Advocate is fine with motions and discussion items, but it should always be done in a productive or constructive fashion. The goal of such stances should be to help develop an effective strategy for success, not to be contrarian simply for the sake of disagreement.*

All Standing Committees for the Faculty Senate will have one chair, a consistent agenda, remote meeting, and reporting structure. All Standing Committees for the Faculty Senate have predetermined fixed meeting times that shall not be changed for members are elected to the committees based upon these times (see Appendix). The format of all remote Standing Committee Meetings should be reflective of traditional face-to-face meetings to the greatest extent possible. It is imperative that these committees function in an atmosphere where ideas and information can be shared as openly and easily as possible in a manner that promotes and enhances collegiality. Remote meetings for all Standing Committees should have only two broadcast sites to mitigate any loss of communication due to technological issues (lag, freezing, dropped connections, etc...). These meetings are set in the Spring prior to the new academic year. Being present with your colleagues helps ensure that all ideas are heard as well. Therefore, all Standing Committee meetings will be hosted by two locations using the meeting software of choice. In times of National Disaster, Emergency or other catastrophic events, meetings are allowed virtually.

Sub-committees are free to meet as they like in any fashion that ensures all sub-committee members can participate (multi-client web meetings through WebEx, Zoom, or Hangouts, email, conference call, or face-to-face)—this meeting format should be decided by the sub-committee spokesperson in advance of the first meeting, and clearly conveyed to all sub-committee members.

For each Standing Committee, the Chair or Coordinator (in the case of curriculum committees) is responsible for:

- organizing the meeting locations (scheduling concurrent sites on both campuses),
- ensuring committee member attendance,
- circulating and posting the agenda (including to the Administrative Specialist),
- ensure meeting minutes are taken (duty of appointed or rotated secretary from membership), and
- submitting those minutes to the Senate Librarian (approved and submitted within 5 working days).

These are in addition to the standard meeting management and task assignment for any committee Chair. All meetings should be scheduled through 25Live, and use the room guides posted on the Information Technology Services page (<http://its.georgiasouthern.edu/consolidation/web-conferencing/>). Before your first meeting, the Chair or Coordinator needs to select a committee member who will be present on the partner site to join the meeting via web conferencing. Please

- 1) read through the ITS resources on Web Conferencing (<http://its.georgiasouthern.edu/consolidation/web-conferencing/webex/>), (<https://its.georgiasouthern.edu/zoom/>) (<https://its.georgiasouthern.edu/virtual-resources/>) and
- 2) contact the ITS department to schedule support for the first meeting.

Meeting hosts should be in the meeting space at least 10 minutes in advance of the meeting to establish the web conference connection. Links to both web conferencing tools and 25Live are accessible under the **Events and Planning** module of your **MyApps dashboard** (aka MyGeorgiaSouthern).

Membership on all Standing Committees is a responsibility not to be taken lightly. Whether members were elected by their college faculty or appointed by the Senate, attendance and active participation are requirements of every committee member. Attendance will be recorded for each meeting. If a member fails to attend without contacting the Chair or Coordinator and his/her alternates for those committees that have designated alternates, the Chair should contact the member to find out the reason for the absence. If a member fails to attend two meetings without contacting the Chair or Coordinator, the Chair should replace that member with an appropriate alternate by contacting the member in question, the alternate, Election committee chair, and the college Dean.

All Standing Committees are required to circulate the meeting agenda to the committee no less than a week in advance of the meeting. The Graduate Assistant of the Faculty Senate will post the agenda to Digital Commons (<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gasouthern-leadership/>) under the *Leadership & Divisions > Faculty Committees* collection. These agendas should include all items of business up for discussion or action during that meeting, and include any additional materials appended to the end of the agenda.

The Chair or Coordinator will be responsible for submitting minutes for the meeting. Both a sample Standing Committee Meeting Minutes document and Meeting Minutes Template are available on the Faculty Senate Resources page (<http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/resources/>). These meetings should be detailed to the level of the sample. Since the expectation is professional decorum, any comments made during the meeting should be unproblematically reproduced. The exception to detailed minutes are those confidential by nature, such as award discussions (as in Faculty Research) or student records (as in Academic Standards). All votes should be recorded as either simple numbers, or pass/fails.

Minutes must be submitted to the Senate Librarian and Graduate Assistant by the due date posted on the Senate Meeting Calendar page (<http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/calendar/>) in .pdf format. Please proofread these minutes as they will be reviewed, but published without editing.

Responsibilities of all Senators

Be Present

Plan to attend all Faculty Senate meetings. As soon as you know that you cannot attend a meeting, contact the alternates from your college to confirm a replacement. This is doubly important for Standing Committee meetings. If you cannot regularly attend those meetings, be responsible and step down. Repeated absences will result in removal from these committees. This is to ensure all colleges are fully and equally represented. Plug the meeting dates and times into your calendar now. Senate meetings run from 4:00-6:00pm (unless members vote to extend the meeting); these meetings start promptly at 4pm. On rare occasions meetings reconvene the following day. If you are an alternate, attend at least one meeting of the Faculty Senate as an observer. Whether you've been a Senator in the past or not, observing will help acquaint you with the structure of the new Faculty Senate.

Seek information.

Establish a caucus of your college's Senators to discuss potential requests for information, ad hoc committees, and agenda items (or, at least, ask colleague's opinions about issues that are on the agenda). If there is a department in your college with no Senate representation, identify a colleague there with whom to share or request information.

Be prepared.

Read the Agenda ahead of the meeting. Familiarizing yourself with the specific language and actions of the agenda will allow you to effectively participate in moving the business of the committee or meeting forward. Your colleges are relying on you to represent them, so make certain that you can represent them by knowing the business of the meeting. This will also allow you to solicit feedback from your colleagues in an effective way. If you could not prepare for the meeting, then it is typically best to refrain from offering comments on the material you did not read. It's not a behavior that we encourage with our students, so it isn't something that we should tolerate from ourselves.

Be concise.

Even though he fumbles its execution, *Hamlet's* Polonius sentiment is right on the money: "brevity is the soul of wit". If you will be delivering a motion or speaking on a discussion item, limit comments to what is necessary (no more than a 1 minute overview). All Motions, Requests for Information, and Discussion Items will have been published in their entirety, so there is no need to rehash that material. That time should be used for productive discussion, clarification, or action. If you know you have questions, or are requesting additional information, please draft these ahead of time for clarity's sake. It will allow the respondent(s) to provide the most accurate responses.

Be gracious.

Request the floor patiently and politely. Simply raising your hand will suffice to indicate your desire to speak. Remember, you can't see the entire room, so other members might have requested the floor as well. The only two individuals allowed to interrupt the meeting are the on-site Parliamentarians. They should only do so in 1) the event of a breach of Senate procedure, or 2) when a member's request for the floor was overlooked on their site. Chairs should always call for additional comments before moving to the following stage of action (unless the "question is called" during a motion). Before you make your comment or pose your question, you must identify yourself by name and college.

Stay solution driven.

The Senate and its committees face any number of issues even in a good year. While it is fine to identify problems, please try to do so in a constructive, or better yet, productive fashion. Calling for something to be repealed without a ready replacement has not worked for any governing body in recent history. Simply saying “this is terrible” for sake of saying “this is terrible” does not move the business of the committee or Senate forward. If you have identified an issue, please think through, at least, some starting points for solutions.

Be professional.

This body deals with problems more often than successes. It is easy to get frustrated, but decorum is vital to a productive collaborative environment. As with any debate, we respond to the measure not the messenger. Should a member repeatedly offer comments that are counterproductive to the business of the meeting, the Chair or President will remind them to limit his/her comments to those that are productive or helpful. Criticism is a welcome part of any intellectual endeavor, but criticism or contrariness for its own sake is not something that will be tolerated. *The Chair or President reserves the right not to release the floor to members who have repeatedly been warned of counterproductive behavior. Any member who behaves in an aggressive or dismissive fashion toward another member of the committee or guest will be asked to leave the meeting at that moment.* The Senate and its committees will operate as spaces of mutual respect at all times.

Know the rules.

Familiarize yourself with the Statutes and Bylaws. We will operate largely by Robert’s Rules of Order for all meetings. There will be modifications to the practical execution of those guidelines to allow for technological issues, but will adhere to them philosophically. One important exception is addressing members. Since speakers are required to identify themselves when taking the floor, you should refer to your colleagues by name. The most practically important and frequently used rule is this one:

When requesting the floor to make a motion:

- Clearly and concisely make your motion;
- the President or Chair will call for a Second to the Motion;
 - if there is a Second the President or Chair will call for discussion on the motion
 - if there is no Second [0:30s will be the standard for remote site meetings] the motion fails,
- once every member has had the chance to offer comments or pose questions, a second or third round of comments/questions may be pursued [the President or Chair should clearly ask for to make sure no individuals were overlooked at the remote site];
- following discussion the President or Chair will call for a vote—motions may not be amended at this point—or request to table the Item (if tabled, the Item will be included as Old Business on the following meeting agenda until it is resolved);
- following the vote,
 - if it passes, the vote will be entered into the minutes,
 - if it fails, the committee will move forward;
- if in the discussion, it becomes clear that the motion should be amended or altered, a new motion can be put forward, and will follow the same process [recording amendments or changes to motions is an important aspect of clarifying the decision-making process for those not in attendance].
- If the motion requires a follow-up action, the President or Chair should charge the appropriate body (individual, sub-committee, etc...) with specific goals or tasks and a timeline for completion at that point.

Follow up.

If you submit a RFI, and receive an oral/written report at that meeting, you may want to act upon information included in that report at a subsequent meeting. Typically, this is done by requesting an ad hoc committee to study it, requesting the information/concern be included on the following agenda for further discussion, or by requesting an action be made. Motions should only be made on items appearing on the agenda. Be prepared to ask questions at the meeting based on the submitted agenda items. If you have questions about the decisions made and/or actions taken during a meeting of the Standing Committees, ask those after each Standing Committee report. If you have questions stemming from those, but not having an impact on the approval of their actions, you may request that be addressed as a “New Business” at the same meeting. You may also choose to follow up by submitting one of the formal requests to the SEC prior to a subsequent Senate meeting.

Be patient.

Remember, you're working 'with' your colleagues, even—or perhaps especially—when you don't agree. To secure answers to some questions/concerns, you may need to submit a series of requests to the SEC over a period of several Senate meetings. This isn't to delay a response; it's to provide the best response.

Have a sense of humor.

There is no amount of explanation that could adequately cover this. As academics, if you feel at a loss for how to have a sense of humor Søren Kierkegaard's *Sickness Unto Death* and Albert Camus' *The Myth of Sisyphus* would be good places to start your research.

Faculty Senate Practical Matters

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

[\(http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/resources/\)](http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/resources/)

This is a ready-reference guide intended for use by “practicing” parliamentarians in student organizations. In keeping with that purpose, the material is organized into four sections. Section One contains preliminary information intended to prepare one for participation in the art and science of transacting the business of an organization. Section Two may prove the most useful to beginning parliamentarians as it organizes parliamentary actions in the general order in which they normally arise at an “average” meeting of a group or club. Section Three is an attempt to condense much of the material into chart and hierarchical form so that one can see the big picture. Section Four includes additional detailed information.

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

[\(http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/resources/\)](http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/resources/)

Clicking on this link will take you to a complete compilation of Robert’s Rules of Order Revised which was first published by General Henry Robert in 1876 and is perhaps the most widely followed body of parliamentary procedures in the world.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

[\(http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/calendar/\)](http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/calendar/)

In addition to a list of Senate meeting dates, this screen also lists the dates agenda items are due for each meeting. This will be important if you want to ask the Senate Executive Committee to place a particular item on the agenda.

FACULTY SENATE MEMBERSHIP

[\(http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/senate-and-committee-membership/\)](http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/senate-and-committee-membership/)

This page contains a list of Senate members and Alternates, including their respective units and term expiration dates.

SENATE COMMITTEES

[\(http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/senate-and-committee-membership/\)](http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/senate-and-committee-membership/)

This link contains lists of standing committees and their membership, and is a great place to see how each committee is structured and who will be serving with you on the various committees.

Requests for Information (RFIs)

Marc Cyr, 2009 (updated SEC Leadership July 2020)

A “Request for Information” may be submitted to the Senate, at which time the Senate Executive Committee will decide:

1. whether it is within the purview of the Senate,
2. whether it should be pursued by the Senate, and
3. if it meets the first two requirements, how best to seek the information.

The author of the RFI must document that they have reached out to appropriate channels without any success. (Update form to reflect this). The information sought must not be readily obtainable through less formal and involved means applied by the submitter, such as a simple phone call, email, or internet search; and must be of sufficient import to warrant the investment of Senate attention.

The information sought must be relevant to elements of two or more colleges, or to the university and its academic community as a whole.

NOTE: Even if these first two criteria are met in a strict accordance to the letter, the SEC may decline to pursue an RFI if in their judgment the intent is or the outcome will amount to prosecution of a largely personal agenda on the part of the submitter.

The SEC may refer the matter to a standing committee, but more frequently the Chair will contact whoever seems most likely to be able to provide an answer; often, this will be a high-level administrator.

If the above criteria is not met, the SEC will post that response to the RFI on the Senate web page. If the SEC has gathered the requested information to the best of its ability, that information will be posted as the SEC response to the RFI on the Senate web page. Sometimes the response will first become available via an oral report at a Senate meeting either by the Senate President or by the SEC’s source(s), often a University administrator.

RFIs often are submitted when the individual is not in a position to know what source to approach or access for an answer; when SEC access to upper-level administrators is the best means to facilitate an answer; or when formally, collegially, and publicly asking the question seems the best or only means of garnering the information.

RFIs should be just that. They should be questions, and should be professionally, succinctly, and collegially phrased. The questions asked should not be phrased so that they appear to be rhetorical, i.e. not phrased so that it appears the questioner already knows (or thinks he/she knows) the answer and is using a question format largely or wholly in order to make a statement. RFIs presented in this format will be returned for updating and reformatting. Time permitting, the SEC leadership will review RFIs in order to help them adhere to these requirements. Statements, including background information and data – such as how long the issue has existed, and what other avenues to an answer have been unprofitably pursued – that have led to the RFI question(s), can be included in the Rationales section.

Any faculty or staff member can submit an RFI. Please use the link on the Faculty Senate Resources page (<http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/facultysenate/resources/>). If you are unable to access SharePoint to submit the RFI, please use the format included in the appendix, and email that RFI to the Senate President.

“Discussion Items” and “Motions”

Marc Cyr, 2009 (updated Dustin Anderson, 2018)

As with RFIs, “Discussion Items” and “Motions” must deal with items that involve two or more colleges, or some University-wide issue. Any member of the faculty may submit a “Discussion Item” or “Motion” request to the Senate Executive Committee. If the submitter is not a Senator, he/she can arrange for a Senator to actually bring the item forward at a Senate meeting, or the SEC will find someone to do so.

“Discussion Items” generally serve two purposes:

1. for a Senate or non-Senate body (like a committee or task force) to update Senators on some ongoing business.
2. to give to and receive from the Senate information pertaining to a potential action item, and perhaps gauge Senate attitudes, prior to coming forward with (or deciding not to) a Motion for Senate action.

“Motions” are requests for the Senate to take action of some kind. Often, motions come from Senate committees arising from their standing charges, such as curriculum items from the Undergraduate and Graduate Committees, or suggestions for changes to the Bylaws or the Faculty Handbook by the Faculty Welfare Committee or the Senate Executive Committee. There could be motions:

- requesting the formation of ad-hoc committees to deal with an issue not covered by the standing charges of standing committees (for example, to revise the Faculty Grievance procedures), or
- for the Senate to recommend administrative action of some kind (for example, to institute a remote parking and shuttle bus system), or
- for the Senate to offer its support for some other body’s initiative (for example, support of the Student Government Association’s request for a “Green Fee”).

But these are only examples, and other kinds of motions cannot be *a priori* ruled in or out, but must be judged by the SEC as they arise.

These agenda item requests (RFIs, DI, and Motions) are for use exclusively by Georgia Southern University faculty, staff, and administrators. Submissions are reviewed by the SEC for relevance to the mission and business of the Faculty Senate. They are a tool not for debate but solely for information exchange. Redundant and contentious submissions will not be accepted.

Writing Motions

Marc Cyr, 2009

On occasion, motions come to the Senate Executive Committee that are written in a fashion ill-designed to get them passed and achieve their desired effects. Motions should be written so that not only can they be understood, but they can be put to a simple yea or nay vote at the various levels through which they pass.

A Poorly-Written Motion: An Example

TITLE: *Sic Semper Tyrannis*

MOTION: We, the members of the Senatorial Caucus of the College of Rehabilitative Programs (CRP), pledged inexhaustibly to the rights of faculty to academic freedom and the rights of freedom of speech granted to all Americans by our noble foreparents at the dawn of this great nation, and in sheer defiance of retribution, and in immutable support of all those who toil in the vineyards of our noble campus, feel compelled to cry out unto the multitudes of our Senatorial brethren that Tyranny stalks our hallowed halls! We here denounce the so-called Senate President – could anyone be *more* immoderate? – of the Faculty Senate, Dr. Jay Swift of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS). In his tenure, he has heaped calumny on colleagues, used harsh tones and mean words, sought to impose his despicable will on our community, and sullied our meetings with frequent use of language and imagery suited only to the most base of country two-hole outhouses. That the Senate might rise and stand, let us o’erthrow him, remove him from his seat (he thinks it a throne) as Chair of the Senate Executive Committee, drive him from the podium of our meetings, strike his name from the rolls and banish him from the Senate entire! Rid we ourselves¹ of this beast, can Spring be far behind?

RATIONALES: See above. So there.

¹ *Try saying that three times fast. We did.*

Analysis

STYLE: Overwritten. It is best to keep the language cool and business-like, particularly if the Motion is intended to become part of the University’s written policies. The central question to ask is “What do I want to accomplish?” Limit Motion language to a bald statement of that goal. And consider the use of bullet-point-type structure.

ORGANIZATION: The majority of the Motion material here belongs in the Rationales section. The Motion should include only language pertaining to the very action being requested, and that language should be open to a simple yea or nay on the acceptance of every element of that language: Each bit of non-essential material included is a potential reason to defeat the motion.

CONTENT: In the Rationales section, greater specificity is needed, including examples of offenses. Also, the Motion calls for an action outside the authority of the Senate: the removal of Dr. Swift as a senator. While the Senate can remove him from his position as Chair of the Senate Executive Committee and perhaps suggest that the college hold a recall vote, they cannot strip him of his position as Senator. And avoid notes in the Motion since it is unclear whether they form part of the language of the Motion or not. While sources for ideas and language must be credited, such citations belong in the Rationales section.

A Well-Written Motion: An Example

TITLE: Recall of Dr. Jay Swift

MOTION: That Dr. Jay Swift immediately be removed from his position as Chair of the Senate Executive Committee and President of the Faculty Senate.

RATIONALES: Dr. Swift has abused these positions of trust and authority and brought the Faculty Senate into disrepute:

As tapes/transcripts of Senate meetings show, Dr. Swift insists, despite college faculty objections, on turning the acronym for the College of Rehabilitative Programs (CRP) into a one-syllable word via the insertion of vowels, which practice opens the college to derision.

At the meeting of 2-14, during spirited debate over the child-care center's lunch menu, Dr. Swift became so incensed that he rapped his gavel till it shattered, and when told that he frightened some senators, made an obscene remark about those senators' sense of humor.

As the above items indicate, Dr. Swift is prone to foul language and the employment of images focused on bodily functions (*see the handout for numerous examples excerpted from meeting tapes*).

During the meeting of 10-31, when the Senate defeated a lengthy motion because most/all senators could not understand it, Dr. Swift insulted all senators by giving revision guidance to Dr. Pound (CHHS) that consisted of adapting advice given to his subordinate officers by Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.: "Keep it clear and simple. Whenever you write a motion, remember you're writing it for a damned fool." [[Link to the minutes.](#)]

Appendices

Standing Faculty Senate Committees' Meeting Times

| Standing Committee Meeting Times | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------------|---|
| day of the week | time of day | week of the month | committee |
| Academic Standards Committee | | | |
| * | * | * | (meets twice ahead of each semester) |
| Faculty Service Committee | | | |
| M | 9:00-11:00 | 1st week | (meets once a term) |
| Libraries Committee | | | |
| M | 9:00-11:00 | 2nd week | |
| Faculty Development Committee | | | |
| T | 11:00-1:00 | 3rd week | |
| Undergraduate Committee | | | |
| T | 3:30-5:30 | 2nd week | (3 weeks head of SEC) |
| Planning, Budget, and Facilities Committee | | | |
| W | 9:00-11:00 | 3rd week | |
| Faculty Welfare Committee | | | |
| W | 1:00-3:00 | 2nd week | (3 weeks ahead of SEC) |
| Senate Elections Committee | | | |
| R | 9:00-11:00 | 1st week | (meets once a term) |
| Graduate Committee | | | |
| R | 9:00-11:00 | 2nd week | (3 weeks ahead of SEC) |
| Student Success Committee | | | |
| R | 1:00-3:00 | 2nd week | |
| Faculty Research Committee | | | |
| F | 12:00-2:00 | 1st & 3rd weeks | (will not meet every two weeks in the Fall) |
| General Education and Core Curriculum Committee | | | |
| F | 1:00-3:00 | 4th week | (2 weeks ahead of UGC) |
| Senate Executive Committee | | | |
| F | 1:00-3:00 | 1st week | (adjusted August and January) |

Request for Information

Senate Executive Committee Request Form

SEC via campus mail: PO Box 8033-1

E-Mail: fsoffice@georgiasouthern.edu

Request for Information

Date

SHORT TITLE:

(Please provide a short descriptive title.)

QUESTION(s):

(Please state your request or requests in question form as concisely as possible.)

RATIONALE(s):

(Please explain why this issue is one of general concern for the Faculty Senate or for the University and not a matter concerning only an individual college or administrative area. Please note what other, if any, attempts you have made to garner this information before submitting this request to the Faculty Senate.)

If you have an attachment, press the button below to attach to form and send.

SUBMITTED BY:

PHONE NO:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

Motion Request

Senate Executive Committee Request Form

SEC via campus mail: PO Box 8033-1

E-Mail: fsoffice@georgiasouthern.edu

Motion Request

Date

SHORT TITLE:

(Please provide a short descriptive title.)

MOTION(s):

(Please state your motion in the exact form/wording on which you want the Senate to vote.)

RATIONALE(s):

(Please explain why the motion should be considered by the Faculty Senate, remembering that the Senate does not deal with issues limited to individual colleges or administrative units. Include pertinent data and source references for information and/or language.)

If you have an attachment, press the button below to attach to form and send.

SUBMITTED BY:

PHONE NO:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

Discussion Item Request

Senate Executive Committee Request Form

SEC via campus mail: PO Box 8033-1

E-Mail: fsoffice@georgiasouthern.edu

Discussion Item

Date

SHORT TITLE:

(Please provide a short descriptive title.)

SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION:

(Please state the nature of your request as concisely as possible.)

RATIONALE(s):

(Please explain why this issue is one of general concern for the Faculty Senate or for the University and not a matter concerning only an individual college or administrative area.)

If you have an attachment, press the button below to attach to form and send.

SUBMITTED BY:

PHONE NO:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

Policy Change Request



POLICY
NAME

Area: Division of Academic Affairs
Subject: Subject Name
Applies To: Scope of Application (e.g. University, Division, or Department)
Sources: Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Number:
Issued:
Revised: n/a
Page(s): 1 of 1

I. Purpose

State the purpose and scope of the policy.

II. Policy Statement

This is the policy statement.

1. Number multiple policy statements if necessary

Descriptive text

III. Exclusions (if applicable)

These are exclusions and exceptions to the policy.

1. Number major exclusions if necessary

Descriptive text.

IV. Procedures (if applicable)

State any major procedures. If the procedures are extensive or very detailed, consider breaking them out into a separate document that references this policy.

1. Number major procedures if necessary

Descriptive text.