GSU University Senate Committee of Chairs Meeting Minutes
July 9, 2018
25 Park Place, Suite #2040, 20th Floor

Attendance
Michelle Brattain, Shelby Frost, Chris Goode, Todd Hendricks, Trisha Kanan, Elizabeth Lopez, Anne Murphy, Chester Phillips, Jared Poley, Rose A. Sevcik, Kris Varjas

Call to Order
Dr. Michelle Brattain called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. The meeting began with a round table of introductions by all attendees. The committee members were informed that they need to elect two individuals to serve on FACP. Dr. Anne Murphy volunteered to serve on the committee. Dr. Shelby Frost made a motion to nominate Dr. Rose Sevcik. The motion was moved and second for her selection and then closed.

Old Business
Dr. Shelby Frost asked how many of the chairs were new. Dr. Todd Hendricks and Trisha Kanan, J.D. were identified as the two new chairs. Dr. Hendricks is the Chair of the University Statutes and Bylaws Committee. Dr. Kanan is the Co-chair of the Sustainability Committee.

Dr. Brattain asked the two new chairs, if they have any questions or concerns as they move into their new positions. No concerns were identified.

Dr. Chester Phillips asked if the committee could revisit the status of a resolution for the motion that the Cultural Diversity Committee submitted to the Senate Executive Committee. Dr. Jim Ainsworth, Chair of the Committee, worked with the Executive Committee to assure the language was correct. There was discussion that the item came before the Senate and the item was passed. Dr. Laura Fredrick, former Chair of the Senate Executive Committee, also worked to assist with changing the language of the motion. Unfortunately, Dr. Ainsworth was not pleased with the changes. The committee feels that a possible revision of the motion will definitely come back to the Senate again.

New Business
Dr. Phillips asked if any other members had previously served on the Student Life Committee. He began his position as chair one year ago. He expressed he felt the committee only served to approve student organizations (rubber stamp approval only) all year. Currently the Student Life Committee meets once per month. He feels as if the meetings are rather unexciting. He wanted to
know if there were any other committees that they students could utilize to go through another vetting process. Dr. Shelby Frost and Dr. Kristen Varjas stated that they have served on the committee in the past. They expressed that there used to be a lot of students on the committee and this committee served as the student’s “main voice” to get things done on campus. There used to be a Student Activity Committee sub-committee. They agreed that the meetings were rather dull but at one time there used to be speakers that would address the committee. Some of the topics were athletics and student issues.

Dr. Phillips informed the members that the student participation is low. He has decided that the committee should not meet once a month but meet when it’s important to hopefully have a quorum present. Dr. Sevcik suggested that he review the previous Student Life Committee meeting notes for guidance on how many meetings were held, what exciting things may have taken place in the past that may circle back. Dr. Brattain asked him to refer to the Statutes and Bylaws first to be sure to meet the obligations to meet regularly. She also mentioned faculty oversight is probably an important function of the committee. She suggested that he may want to reach out to Elizabeth Burgess since she chaired the Student Life Committee for years.

Dr. Brattain asked if there were other things that newer chairs needed to know. Dr. Hendricks stated that he felt Statutes and Bylaws Committee is more reactive than proactive. He explained that someone notices a problem and the committee acts on it as necessary. Dr. Frost stated that there are some lingering issues that need to be cleared up and Dr. Chris Goode brought them to her attention. She stated that the consolidation with Perimeter College generated more activity in that committee recently. They are in the process of figuring out how to work the Perimeter faculty in to Statutes and Bylaws. The hope is that the committee would not be rewriting the bylaws frequently; however, the committee could be more proactive if they saw something that needed to be changed.

Dr. Frost stated that as the Chair of the Nominations Committee, she must rely on the bylaws to assign individuals to committees. This is the reason that she feels that items should have specific language or wording. Dr. Anne Murphy stated that she loved the new nominations form that Dr. Frost created. Dr. Frost said that she appreciated the feedback (here and via email) and did receive a little kick back. She stated that the direct feedback from individuals was definitely helpful in helping her to see individual preferences. She stated that she will continue to utilize the form and train Dionne Polite to utilize the form as well. The form was used last spring for the first time.

Dr. Kris Varjas stated that the Executive Committee usually encourages any individual or group that submits items to them to first seek collaboration with other relative committees, i.e. budget or another committee as responsibilities may be shared. She noticed that many were surprised when their items were pushed back and they were asked to collaborate. This will enable more people to view the item, therefore there will be more opinions and perspectives added before the proposal makes it to the Senate floor. It’s not a delay tactic but the university’s policy is that items must go through Legal Affairs when putting together documents that will become practice for the university. Individuals need to be mindful that just because a resolution makes it to the Executive Committee, it does not mean that it will go to the Senate. Dr. Brattain stated that she
was glad Dr. Varjas mentioned the collaborative effort by committees. She stated that Admissions and Standards and CAP work together often.

Dr. Brattain asked the newer chairs if there is anything else that the committee may do to assist them. She then provided the committee with the location of the University Senate Office on the first floor of Adherhold. She informed them that there is a small conference room available as a meeting space in the University Senate Office. She asked that they please check with Dionne regarding meeting in the space. It was suggested that this may be a good place for Student Disciplinary Hearings to convene or subcommittees. Dionne informed the group that there are approximately ten chairs in the space. Damon Lynch, IT Support Specialist, checked the equipment (projector) in the conference. He stated that the equipment was antiquated and needed to be updated. The space is good for meetings that do not need audio visual equipment. Dr. Brattain urged the members to utilize the conference room. Dionne asked that the committee allows her to work with Damon on upgrades due to the fact that no audio visual needs can be met with the current equipment prior to requesting to reserve the room. Dr. Brattain mentioned that there are three seminar rooms in the History Department that may be used. She suggested if the members are short on space that they may check with her or Jared Poley. WebEx (in theory) is accessible in all the rooms.

Dr. Brattain mentioned that one frustrating issue that she had as CAP chair is being able to conduct online meetings with WebEx. There is a large number of faculty members from Perimeter that are on the committee and they aren’t always able to come to downtown during the day for a meeting. She suggested that all chairs need to try to get tech support for WebEx as it would be beneficial. She suggested that maybe Dr. Chris Goode would be able to assist them with their IT needs.

A committee member asked if they need to use WebEx or if they could use Zoom. Dr. Goode stated that you could use another system; however, GSU pays for WebEx. He stated that WebEx has worked well for the IT meetings. He stated that they meet in the Commerce Building on the eleventh floor. They use the tripod digital phone with the remote microphones for their audio meeting needs. A committee member asked if there was a list of all the rooms that are WebEx certified. Chris stated that he will ask about the list. A member also asked if most of the meetings need just audio or video. Two individuals stated that they utilize both audio and video.

Dr. Brattain informed the group that she would be reaching out to them via email soon regarding their committee plans for next year. This is something that the former Senate Executive Committee chair, Dr. Fredrick, required as well. Dr. Fredrick used these items to make a report at Administrative Council meetings. She gave them the option to share their plans in the meeting as well.

Dr. Anne Murphy stated that the Student Discipline Committee has student discipline meetings as needed all the time. A member mentioned that there has been a significant increase in disciplinary cases but it was expected due to the consolidation with Perimeter and other branches. Dr. Frost mentioned that she wasn’t sure if the cases increased due to an increase in student academic dishonesty or if the faculty have gotten better at detecting or reporting it. Dr.
Hendricks mentioned that he was not aware that one group handled all the disciplinary cases. A few members explained that the cases are usually handled on the individual college level as he thought; however, these are cases that have escalated and moved up the chain if the student appeals to the college. This committee is very active and busy.

Dr. Chris Goode informed the group that the IIT Committee reviews student technology fee proposals. At the end of last year, a couple of units asked how to proportion/restructure different fees to different administrative/academic units. This is something that the committee had not done before but historically it has happened. The committee will have to come up with a process for changing the percentage of student technology fee allocated per unit. The problem is the zero sum game- that some units get more funding for student technology and other units get less.

Previously, the allocation was determined based on a giant subcommittee of IIT that would review all technology fees regardless of the unit that it came from. Then it was left for each unit to create their own tech fee review committee. College of Arts & Sciences has one, all units have one with at least 50% students represented on the committee to fulfill Board of Regents requirements.

Initially to come up with the original process of determining the amount of student technology fee each college/unit will receive, the IIT Committee looked at each college/units previous five years of funding that was determined by the sub committees. The sub committees reviewed the different proposals. This number was averaged out over five years to establish the amount of the first allocation. The committee had to take into consideration that colleges/units come and go. For example, there was a split between College of Arts and Arts & Sciences. They looked at various proportions as a guide. He was thinking initially the number of students served, etc. could be used as a guide to come up with the process for determining the fee. Since unit needs change over time in the amount of credit hours they provide, the number of majors offered, etc. this will be very arduous. This is something that the committee will definitely need to take some time and think about a process that is fair for each unit. The committee will require each unit (school/college) that desires a change to provide a rationale, meet with them and a consensus across the affected unit. As sometimes enrollment may decrease for a unit and it would not be fair to have the pay the same technology fee that was previously paid when enrollment was higher. Dr. Frost mentioned Center for Teaching and Learning (CETL) and their funding allocation. Dr. Goode stated that CETL has a couple of funding sources that they may make proposals to use.

Dr. Goode then asked if any other committees have a similar role regarding portioning budgets for students. He stated that Student Life Committee portions budgets for student organizations. Dr. Chester Phillips, Chair, Student Life Committee, informed Dr. Goode that seemingly the Student Life Committee has no say in funding for student groups. He stated that according to the Bylaws, someone from the Student Life Committee is required to serve on the Student Activity Committee (budgets funding for student organizations). Dr. Frost informed the group that she previously served on the Student Activity Committee and the students were myopic, the set of students changes each year and each year the students wanted funding just for their organizations. A Student Life Committee member mentioned it was amazing to watch the
students in the Student Activity meeting. He stated that if a student that is passionate about an issue has the floor, basically the entire time is spent on that subject and all the other students usually side with the cause, no matter what it may be. The group advised Dr. Goode not to model the allocation process after Student Activity Committee. He asked if there was any advice on how to approach the allocation of the student technology fee. He was advised to approach it carefully.

Dr. Frost asked Dr. Goode if the IIT Committee role is to ultimately approve the division of the technology fee funding. Dr. Goode stated that they, the individual committees, review those proposals. The rule is that there has to be at least 50% students reviewing the tech fee funds and approving (because it’s the students money). IIT approves it after the students turn in their plans for their fees proposal, they (IIT) makes a recommendation to FACP who then makes a recommendation to the president.

A committee member suggested that the IIT Committee try to come up with a formula to determine student technology fee allocations. Dr. Goode stated that formulas may be a good guide post but wouldn’t necessarily work. They would definitely need to look past those things that are not formula driven with the units. This is due to the fact that some units utilize and depend heavily on technology while other units have basic needs for technology. The technology needs and fee for Biology (or a heavy tech research unit) may cost more than the technology fee/needs for the History Department or Music Department for example. The technology fee may cost a lot more because of the type of technology needed; however, there may not be a significant difference as far as the number of students in each unit.

Dr. Hendricks mentioned that in the past at Perimeter if a unit made a request for $15,000 but the committee only had $12,000 to allocate, the group could go to the Foundation for the additional funds. Dr. Goode stated that this is still another options here at GSU as well. The Board of Regents has clear guidelines regarding utilizing multiple funding sources for a request. Dr. Brattain asked if the IIT Committee works with the Council of Deans. Dr. Goode responded, no. He stated that those tech fee committees proposed expenditures of their allocation within a college is technically a recommendation of the committee to the Dean and the Dean sends it to the IIT Committee for review. Dr. Brattain asked if IIT anticipated creating policies to guide the decisions regarding technology fees. Dr. Goode stated that this is something that they will be working on in their first few meetings.

Dr. Brattain informed that group that the Committee on Academic Programs, CAP, deals with anything that comes in with regards to any changes or alterations to academic programs. She thinks there will be another look at the graduate faculty policy. Dr. Frost mentioned that she feels as if they just did that. Dr. Brattain agrees but explains that there has been some discussion in the Associate Dean’s graduate group regarding making changes that would make the structure a little more complex. It would however make it easier for exceptions to come through although there have always been exceptions. This would make it clear as to what categories exceptions fall under and less bureaucratic. The change will not come from CAP, it will come to CAP.
Dr. Jared Poley, Chair, Planning & Development Committee, is looking into the completion of graduate schools. Three committees will be involved in the graduate school process. Dr. Frost mentioned that this item isn’t really new as it has been discussed in the past. She asked why it didn’t go through in the past. Dr. Poley explained that there was opposition to it partially from administrators and deans in the past.

Dr. Trisha Kanan, Co-chair, Sustainability Committee, informed the group that she looked for sustainability policies but was unable to find a recycling policy, etc. She stated that she and Valerie Koonce, the other co-chair, met with the Sustainability Initiatives Program Manager. They discussed issues the program manager has seen that the Sustainability Committee may be able to provide support for her. Dr. Kanan informed the group that one thing she has heard anecdotally while being on the Sustainability Committee is regarding recycling at the Perimeter campus. Recycling on that campus was nonexistent for a while. Dr. Hendricks explained that there was a vendor issue with the recycling piece. He stated that the vendor that usually handled trash did not want to pick up both trash and recycling. There was a cut back and GSU was paying less and the vendor decided that they were not going to pick up the recycled items. Now the vendor is willing to handle both trash and recycled items.

Dr. Kanan informed the committee that according to the Sustainability Initiatives Programs Manager they are still having issues with getting fines. The fines are for food contamination with recycled items. The issue has to do with proper training. The Sustainability Manager manages five staff here on the downtown campus but she doesn’t have any authority over the Perimeter campus. The issue is there doesn’t seem to be enough funding to have designated crew members for recycling on Perimeter campus to ensure that these items are separated. There seems to be more people recycling on that campus now. Dr. Kanan stated that the Sustainability Committee is trying to see what they can do to assist. She asked the committee for any suggestions. Dr. Brattain stated that she wasn’t really sure since the Senate advises and makes recommendations but they don’t allocate funds. She asked if that was something that maybe could go to FACP. She said she was asking because she wasn’t sure. She’s never served on FACP. Dr. Sevcik suggested perhaps a policy needs to be created first. She also stated there seems to be some leg work done regarding seeking funding resources for sustainability.

Dr. Brattain stated that maybe the Sustainability Initiative Program office could let the Sustainability Committee know what’s required/their specific needs and then they could take those needs to FACP. Then that could be something to bring to the Senate floor. Dr. Kanan asked if they should begin with taking the recycling policy to the Senate and then to FACP? The group agreed that this would be good. Dr. Brattain stated that Dr. Kanan had learned a great deal regarding sustainability from the sustainability office in a short period of time and maybe there could be some best practices and provide them with more information regarding the sustainability efforts.

Dr. Brattain asked if anyone else had any comments. Dr. Sevcik commented that Jared Poley forecasted about the three committees that would be involved in the graduate school process. Lisa Armistead from the Provost Office and the attempted managing Admission. The committee itself has an ongoing effort with Jim Weinmeyer, VP for Research for GSU, and is trying to get
an external look as far as what is needed for GSU’s infrastructure. This will determine how many people we need, how many more people we need, etc. to drive this effort. The committee is actively laying the groundwork. Managing internal grants for the university and IRB are typical things for the committee.

Dr. Brattain reminded the committee to send her the information regarding their committee and their plans for this year via email by the first of August. A committee member asked when the Administrative Council will meet since the information is needed to report to them. Dr. Sevcik said she believes they meet in September.

Dr. Brattain thanked everyone for attending and welcomed the new members again. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.