MINUTES

UNIVERSITY SENATE
February 11, 2021


Guests: Ashley Arnold, Carol Cohen, Miriam Madden, John Medlock, Cynthia Puranik,

ORDER: The Chair, Dr. Becker, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES: There was a motion to approve the November 19, 2020 meeting minutes and there was a second. The minutes were approved.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT: The President opened his comments by sharing that we received 500 doses of the Moderna vaccine, and all the doses have been signed up for. Because notification of the vaccine shipment is not known until less than 24 hours before, appointments cannot be scheduled in advance. We are working on ways to be more efficient in getting eligible members in the cue for administering the next batch of vaccines. To be eligible for the vaccine on campus, your Panther ID must be active. The FDA will review the Johnson & Johnson single dose vaccine information this month. As more vaccines become available and we receive the vaccines, we will provide those to eligible members of our community. As we look to the fall, vaccines should be more available which allows us to plan for a greater sense of normalcy for fall semester. We do realize that we always must be prepared to make any necessary changes as warranted due to any Covid-19 developments. Masking and social distancing will be expected.

Applications are robust for the fall freshman class. Dr. Becker shared that many individuals desire to know what will happen to the GSU Presidential Search since the USG Chancellor announced that he will retire when Dr. Becker transitions from his presidency. Dr. Becker stated that he believes the process will be slowed slightly but not stopped. GSU can likely expect that the USG Chancellor should be named by the time the GSU Presidential Search Committee have chosen finalists.
SPEAKER: Dr. Becker introduced the speaker, Dr. Michael Parkerson, Director, Government and Community Affairs. The Senate Executive Committee asked him to speak as we are well into our FY 22 legislative session. Dr. Parkerson opened by providing an overview of the Office of Government and Community Affairs. This office is the central point of contact for the executive and legislative branches of government (federal, state, and local). The office works with the U.S House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, and quite a few agencies specifically the Department of Education and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The Office of Government and Community Affairs builds relationships with these agencies to assist with research funding, any issues with student visas, CARES funding, and to provide subject matter advocacy. The office also works with the University System of Georgia, the Board of Regents, House & Senate budget offices, the Governor's office, and quite a few state agencies. The focus at the state level is legislation and funding. We have campuses in various cities and counties the office works with these local partners as well.

Today is Day 16 of 40 for the legislative session and it was successful. There was an amended budget passed the included $70.1 million dollars for enrollment growth. It will be forwarded to Governor Kemp for approval. The funds will be sent to the USG which will divide the funds among the USG institutions. Next week the session will start on the larger budget. Two of the priorities from this budget are the Convocation Center which is currently under construction and the Research Tower.

The Carry Forward Legislation allow us to roll forward 3% of tuition from year to year to make sure we are spending the funds appropriately passed unanimously. They are currently tracking hazing legislation, sports betting, early admissions, and a plethora of bills that would impact HOPE Scholarships and Grants. Dr. Parkerson encouraged the members to please inform his office of any legislation that they may be interested in or tracking through an association or advocacy group. The Office of Government and Community Affairs produces a weekly newsletter during the legislative session. Anyone that is interested in receiving the newsletter may contact the office to be added to the distribution list. There was a question in the chat regarding Representative Donahue’s letter to USG inquiring about courses. Dr. Becker reported that this information is not in any legislation. Donahue presented three questions and all 26 USG institutions responded. The chancellor has accepted the information. There was a question regarding the status of USG approving $1K to USG employees making less than $80K. Dr. Becker stated they discussed this with the chancellor yesterday and USG will be providing a follow up soon.

NEW BUSINESS:
The following motions are being presented for consideration by the Senate.

The Executive Committee recommends a “do pass” on the following agenda items:

Motions from the Admissions & Standards Committee, Patrick Freer, Chair

1. **Repeat to Replace Policy for Graduate Students** - the motion proposes that graduate-level students who have retaken courses and earned a higher grade may request to have the first grade excluded from their institutional GPA. The question was called. The motion passed.

2. **Policy for Awarding Posthumous Graduate Degrees** - the motion proposes that a posthumous graduate degree shall be awarded at the request of or with concurrence of the family or friends of the deceased if, at the time of death, the student was in good standing, with a minimum GSU cumulative GPA of 3.00. The question was called. The motion passed.

3. **Policy to Award Credit for International Baccalaureate Exams** - the motion proposes to revise the International Baccalaureate (IB) credit policy to allow for non-IB diploma seekers to receive credit for Standard Level exams with assessment scores of 5, 6 or 7. Dr. Freer informed the members that a friendly amendment needs to be made due to a drafting error. The sentence to be deleted is as follows: “The total college course credits awarded for IB assessments may not exceed 24 credits.” There was a second to the amended proposal made by Dr. Freer. The question was called. The motion passed.

Motions from the Faculty Affairs Committee, Robert Maxwell, Chair
4. **Updated Amorous Relations Policy** - the motion proposes that a revision is needed to simplify the policy and to ensure consistency with the current University System of Georgia Policy that was updated and approved by the BOR in 2018. The question was called. The motion passed.

5. **Revision to Referee Reference Letter Template** - the motion proposes that an immediate change be made to the Referee Reference Letter Template to remove a question that is prone to biased responses, and which has been removed from the P&T process of comparable universities. The question that should be removed is as follows: “Whether Professor/Dr. [Candidate name] would be [tenured and/or promoted to the rank of XXX] at your institution.” This is a permanent change to the University P&T manual. The question was called. The motion passed.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Academic Programs (Michelle Brattain, chair): The committee met two times since the last Senate meeting. The committee has reviewed many proposals for academic program changes including several for additional distance learning and existing degrees, five certificates, a new MFA, and a new minor. The committee also received the first report from academic program review that was submitted through the new process set up for that purpose.

Admissions and Standards (Patrick Freer, chair): The committee has not met since the last Senate meeting. Subcommittees have been continued to work which resulted in the three motions and the first information item listed on today’s agenda. *Dr. Becker mentioned after the first motion from Faculty Affairs that Dean Rosen typed a question in the chat regarding the IB policy that he would like Dr. Freer or Dr. Phillips to address when the Admissions & Standards Committee report is provided.* Dr. Freer stated that the committee encountered the concern regarding the credits and the IB policy during the committee discussion. The committee found that any statement of credit limit was redundant because there is a superseding policy within the university, so the committee did not need to list that within the policy revision.

Athletics (Chester Phillips, chair): The committee met has met once since the last Senate meeting. There have been 9,500 Covid-19 tests for student athletes. Athletics has only had a positive test rate of 1.4% amongst their student athletes. Any student athlete that has tested positive for Covid-19 also received a heart scan for myocarditis as a precaution. Although 2020 was a very challenging year academically for the students, these athletes maintained the same cumulative gpa as in FY 19.

Budget (Unil Perera, chair): The committee met in January. The committee has submitted a suggested list of items to HR Benefits on TRS and ORP retirement systems. The HR Benefits website should be changed to highlight the differences between the TRS and ORP. Jerry Rackcliffe is working with Legal Affairs to determine the legality of this. The committee plans to meet next Wednesday. The subcommittee on budget prepared a more detailed document to highlight the differences and suggest some ways to make both retirement systems viable in the long run. The committee will send the information to Faculty Affairs and proceed from there.

Commencement (Mark Becker, chair): There was good participation in the December ceremonies. The ceremonies were held outside in the stadium. Masking and social distancing were required. All graduates were individually recognized. The committee met in January or earlier this month to discuss the May ceremonies. The committee discussed using what they learned from the December ceremonies to make the May ceremonies even better. There will be a separate ceremony for doctoral students in May. The committee is working with Dean Armistead on the best way to safely hood those graduates with their advisors. Undergraduate ceremonies for baccalaureate with individual student recognition will be held in the stadium. Students may provide a picture to be placed on the screen and are allowed a certain number of text characters to display a favorite quote or send a thank you message. The committee also discussed working
in support of the colleges for their graduate professional ceremonies and Perimeter College for
the Associate Degree candidates.

Cultural Diversity (Leslie Meadows, chair): There was an addendum to the report from November 19th
meeting, the committee had met three times since the last Senate meeting. The committee was
invited to meet with Dr. Becker and Provost Hensel on September 15th to discuss to line items in
two letters drafted by the committee. The letter regarding the policing matter was addressed to
Dr. Becker and Chief Spillane. The second letter regarding racial equity issues on GSU’s campus
was addressed to Dr. Becker and the Task Force for Racial Equity. During the committee’s
October meeting, Dr. Galchinsky presented and discussed findings from the Mercer Faculty Pay
Equity Study. As of today, the committee has met one time since the November 19th meeting.
The committee discussed line items 30-31 from the action plan formed from part of the initial
Task Force recommendations. The line items are to create social justice programming and
pathways for co-curricular transcripts and review the use of student evaluations of instruction to
evaluate for bias. The general student related diversity and faculty related subcommittees are
actively working on those line items. The committee submitted a list of unranked nominations for
considerations as candidates in the GSU Presidential Search directly to the GSU Presidential
Search Committee and the Parker Executive Search Firm. This list was submitted to highlight the
desire for the candidates to include individuals from underrepresented minority groups that
reflect the background and diversity of the university.

Faculty Affairs (Robert Maxwell, chair): The committee has met twice since the last Senate meeting. Kim
Siegenthaler and Wade Weast represented to the committee on the work of the Academic
Dishonesty Task Force. Provost Hensel provided an update on the Covid-19 vaccination plan. The
Administrative Evaluation Subcommittee is continuing work on the Associate Dean Evaluation
tool. They are considering the addition of Diversity Equity and Inclusion metrics to all
administrator evaluations in the future. The committee completed the work on the two proposals
that were presented today and there will be an information item later in this meeting. The
committee also reviewed GSU’s Equal Opportunity Statement (updated by HR) per the request of
PRISM and Dr. Curtis Byrd.

IIT (Chris Goode, chair): The committee has met twice since the last Senate meeting. Next week each
academic and administrative unit will convene review committees to rank proposals for the use of
student technology fees for FY 22. The committees must comprise 50% students. The portal for
submitting student technology fee proposals closed last week. Committee reviews will begin on
February 15th and the reports are due March 5th. IIT and DCS will review ranked proposals and
recommend any cost adjustments. The IIT Committee will consider all reports at the April 8th
meeting and make a formal recommendation to the Fiscal Advisory Committee to the President
(FACP). FACP will then make their recommendation to Dr. Becker.

Library (LeAnne Richardson, chair): The committee has met once since the last Senate meeting. The
committee provided praise for and further requests from library staff for their assistance during
remote learning. The committee received updates on the library renovations. The committee also
discussed formulating an open access policy for the university. The Andrew Young School of
Policy Studies has been working on such a policy for their school. Currently, the Office of Legal
Affairs is evaluating the policy. Copyright implications are a concern. The committee will meet
next week and continue to discuss an open access policy for the university.

Planning and Development (Jared Poley, chair): The committee has met twice since the last Senate
meeting. The committee has heard updates on the budget, current building projects on campus,
and from the Office of Alumni Affairs. Committee members have also served on the Major
Repairs and Renovations Fund Subcommittee along with Senate Budget Committee members.
The purpose or serving on the subcommittee was the provide Senate input on the priority list for
different repairs and renovations projects.

Research (Rose Sevcik, chair): The committee has met two times since the last Senate Committee. A subcommittee of members completed the revisions for the Guidelines for the Creation and Operation of the University Research Centers. The revised document is an information item that has been included for this meeting. Committee members have also been a part of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Salary Equity and Compression. The committee has received reports on the Internal Grants Program activity and on construction activities in the science park along with efforts at examining per diem rates for research projects that use non-human animals.

Student Discipline (Anne Murphy, chair): The committee has held 78 hearings this fall semester. There were only 13 cases in Fall 2019. There has been a large increase in academic dishonesty. The committee only holds hearings for students who have had two or more offenses. The university will hopefully be able to return to face-to-face learning due to Covid-19 vaccinations. The return to face-to-face learning will hopefully lead to a significant decrease in academic dishonesty cases.

Student Life and Development (Kim Ramsey-White, chair): The committee has met four times since the last Senate meeting. The committee has approved 18 new student organizations (Atlanta campus) and one new student organization (Perimeter campus). There have been guest speakers during the meetings. The Student Engagement Committee on the Voting Campaign presented information to encourage the students to vote for the November election and plans for the January election. The committee heard proposed changes to the Student Code of Conduct from Dr. Sanseviro.

Sustainability (Terry Pechacek, co-chair): The committee has met one time since the last Senate meeting. The committee had an informative presentation relating to Woodruff Park and the related areas of development. The committee is exploring the potentials of gaining more from that in depth analysis of this redevelopment around Woodruff Park and how the committee may tie into these efforts.

University Statutes and Senate Bylaws (Todd Hendricks, chair): The committee has not met since the last Senate meeting. There is no report.

Information Items- Dr. Becker informed the members that there are three information items attached as follows: the Lewis College Early Action Admissions Policy (from Admissions & Standards Committee), the University Research Centers Application/Award/Operating Guidelines, and the Temporary Change to P& T Manual-Referee Reference Letter Template.

OLD BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT: Since there was no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Dionne Polite, Assistant to the Senate