

Senate Minutes for October 5, 2020

Attendance: James Gambrell, Michael Harper, Daniel Ferreira, David Buckman, Michael VanDyke, Stephen Collins, Jennifer Dickey, Jeffrey Yunek, Mary Beth Maguire, Joanne Lee, James Davis, William Griffiths, Gail Markle, Lin Li, Daniel Rogers, Ann Mills, Noah McLaughlin, Cristen Dutcher, Walter Thain, Douglas Moodie, Hassan Pournaghshband, Randy Stuart, Heather Pincock, Austin Brown, Nicholas Ellwanger, Peter St Pierre, James Wright, Rebecca Hill, Irene McClatchey, Diana Gregory, Laurie Tis, Lei Li, Ying Wang, Abhra Roy, Paul McDaniel, Giovanni Loreto, Snehal Shirke, Sanjuana Rodriguez, Ken Hoganson

Opening Remarks

- 1) Welcome – Humayun Zafar. Online Faculty Senate Meeting Expectations
 - a) Please complete the attendance survey (link in the chat window) if you are a senator or a guest.
 - b) Voting will be carried out electronically (link will be available in the chat window) and will be tracked. **Please only vote if you are a senator.** A non-senator voting will result in an immediate permanent ban from the faculty senate.
 - c) Use the “Raise your hand” feature in order to be recognized.
- 2) Parliamentarian nominee – Jeff Yunek : Todd Harper motioned, Bill Griffiths. Senator Yunek approved as parliamentarian.

President’s Report: (Pamela Whitten, PhD)

- 1) Dr. Whitten provided an update on the number of cases, which remains low. She noted that she was extremely pleased with campus cooperation. Testing for the virus is readily available on campus, including rapid testing sites in collaboration with WellStar. Additionally, the presidential taskforce for reopening the university continues to plan for Spring 2021, as does the COVID Response Teams. All reported cases are reported to Cobb Health Services within 24 hours. The University continues to face its biggest challenge with infections through off-campus contact with friends and relatives.
- 2) Dr. Whitten stated that she has been meeting regularly with the presidential taskforce on reopening the university.
- 3) KSU’s enrollment was up, including an increasingly diverse student population. Interestingly, an equal number of men and women attend the university. (National trends tend to reflect more women than men who attend college.)
- 4) The Upper-Administration engaged in a first-year student call campaign. First-year students were contacted by the upper-administration to see how they were adjusting during the pandemic. (This, by the way, was the biggest first-year class in the State of Georgia.) Dr. Whitten noted that these students seem to understand and are adjusting well to life within the pandemic.
- 5) Dr. Whitten wished all faculty, staff, and students to stay well and to take care of their physical and mental selves.

Provost’s Report: (Kat Schwaig, PhD)

- 1) Dr. Schwaig thanked the Faculty Senate for their work, especially during the pandemic.
- 2) The presidential taskforce on reopening the university continues to meet to plan for Spring 2021. The academic subgroup met with UITS to discuss ongoing faculty and student issues with technology.
- 3) Dr. Schwaig thanked the Compression and Inversion Taskforce.
- 4) Dr. Ron Matson will retire at the end of the semester. Currently, Academic Affairs is trying to plan an event to honor Ron—it will likely be virtual. Moreover, a search committee has already been formed. She asked that Senators encouraged colleagues to apply.

Old Business:

- 1) GEC Curriculum Committee (Anissa Vega, PhD; Brendan Callahan, PhD; Trina Queen, PhD)
 - a) After introducing Drs. Callahan and Queen, Dr. Vega noted that this was a Senate Initiative to reevaluate representation on the General Education Council. The Committee researched a number of models, which they reduced to three until voting on one.
 - b) Drs. Callahan and Queen noted that the favored model was the Executive Model, which included voting representation from each of the colleges. This would include a larger advisory group made up of representatives from the various Gen Ed programs.
 - c) Senator Stephen Collins, Political Science, asked why a more representational model of the General Education programs was not chosen. He also asked whether the advisory group's recommendations binding on the GEC. Drs. Callahan and Queen responded that the other models that were considered were too wieldy, often placing additional pressure on small departments whose faculty were spread thin. They also noted that the GEC follows BOR policy and makes recommendations to the Senate since it is a Senate standing committee.
 - d) Doug Moodie motioned; Jeff Yunek seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- 2) Plus/Minus Grading System (Cristen Dutcher, JD)
 - a) Dr. Dutcher noted that the Senate's request that KSU be allowed to use a plus/minus grading system. (Senator Doug Moodie, Coles, stated that this had been tried under Papp. At that time, the USG rejected the request. However, since then, KSU has grown in size and stature. He suggested that the USG might be more amenable now.)
 - b) Senator Ken Hoganson noted that there are two systems in the state (UGA and Georgia State). He asked whether ours was a combination of the two?
 - c) Someone suggested that the proposal eliminate the A+, which will likely make it easier to be passed by the USG. Another person wondered if we should not include a points system alongside the pass/fail letter grades. Senator William Griffiths, Mathematics, responded that we do not do this now and wondered if it would be appropriate to pick it up now.
- 3) UITS updates – (Veronica Trammell, PhD, and Jaime Fulsang)
 - a) Cyber Security Awareness Days were coming up. (October 5 and October 21). Several faculty and students will be participating. They encouraged for KSU faculty, students, and staff to look for information on KSU Today.
 - b) KSU now has Secureshare, which allows colleagues to share sensitive documents.
 - c) All information is in the UITS letter.
 - d) Other programs that KSU now has access to include Gradescope, Blackboard Ally, Peermark.
- 4) Provost's Taskforce on Conversion and Inversion – (Darina Lepadatu, PhD)

- a) Motion to approve the recommendations of the Provost's Taskforce on Conversion and Inversion was made and seconded. Motion approved unanimously.
- 5) Consent – (Humayun Zafar, PhD)
- a) The Senate unanimously passed the Military Leave Policy and changes to the Faculty Handbook that had been proposed by Ron Matson.
- 6) Cross-listing and Cross-Leveling Motions – (Doug Moodie, PhD)
- a) Senator Rebecca Hill, Interdisciplinary Studies, noted that this motion negatively impacts such programs as Interdisciplinary Studies, whose classes are often cross-listed and cross-leveled. Felt that the motion does not take into account.
 - b) Anissa Vega, PhD, noted that we should have the authors of the motion present it. She asked that we postpone to next meeting.
 - c) Motion to move the motion to the next meeting was successfully passed.

New Business

- 7) Approval of Minutes – (M. Todd Harper)
- a) Minutes Approved Unanimously
- 8) USG PTR Resolution – Heather Pincock, PhD
- a) Senator Heather Pincock, Conflict Management, presented a resolution that express support for the KSU@AAUP letter sent to Provost Schwaig in regard to the USG PTR taskforce. The initial letter noted that PTR itself contributes to low faculty moral, especially in the fact that it needlessly duplicates the work of annual reviews.
 - b) Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.
- 9) Covid – 19 Motion – (Steve Collins, PhD)
- a) Senator Steve Collins, Political Science, presented a resolution that would add to the KSU Covid-19 graph that tracked trends of the virus as it impacts campus. His motion would also require KSU to provide information on where infections occurred.
 - b) Motion passed.
- 10) Compression Plan Motion – (Steve Collins, PhD)
- a) Senator Steve Collins, Political Science, proposed a motion that would augment the recommendations of the Taskforce on Conversion and Inversion with a recommendation to the administration to commit to a specific funding plan and a specific timelines to redress issues of conversion and inversion.
 - b) Senator Randy Stuart, Marketing, asked what the budget for this would be.
 - c) Several senators offered solutions to determining the budget from asking the consultant to put one together asking the administration.
 - d) Provost Schwaig noted that it is important that Deans and Chairs are involved in these conversations because it will be difficult to determine a path forward otherwise.
 - e) Motion approved: 36 in favor, 2 against

11) Extending pay raise to previously promoted faculty motion – (M. Todd Harper, PhD)

- a) Senator M. Todd Harper, English, put forward a motion that would also augment the recommendations of the Taskforce by addressing an equity raise for Full Professors and Senior Lecturers, as well as providing an equity raise for those who successfully completed promotion before 2020.
- b) Senator Steve Collins, Political Science, noted that the current taskforce recommendations do not provide any equity raise to Full Professors and Senior Lecturers who were promoted before 2020 as well as to faculty who have been successfully promoted to Associate Professor before 2020.
- c) Two senators asked about how far back the motion would go, say, 5 years. Senator Collins responded that he sees no limitation.
- d) Senator Randy Stuart, Marketing, asked if we know the budget for this. Senator Heather Pincock, Conflict Management, responded that it is impossible for us to formulate a budget when the Senate does not have access to the full university budget.
- e) Senator William Griffiths, Mathematics, wondered if it might not be a good idea to continue this conversation online so that the Senate could engage in a more robust debate.
- f) Senator William Griffiths further pointed out that faculty of legacy SPSU received even less than the 5% promotion raise assumed in this motion.
- g) Unanimous vote in favor.

12) Randy Stuart motioned to adjourn.