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Faculty Senate Executive Committee Minutes

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## Senate Executive Committee Minutes

Georgia Southern University, Faculty Senate SEC

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SEC Meeting with the President and Provost  
October 7, 2022  
11 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.

In attendance: Kyle Marrero (President), Carl Reiber (Provost), Bill Dawers (senate president/CAH), Sheri Carey (WHCP), Christine Bedore (senate librarian/COSM), Annie Mendenhall (CAH), Ed Mondor (president-elect/COSM), Wilhelmina Randtke (Libraries), Scott Taylor (staff council), Rob Terry (senate secretary/CAH), Bill Mase (JPHCOPH); Hayden Wimmer (PCEC), Kymberly Harris (COE), Marieke Van Willigen (CBSS)  
Not in attendance: Kwabena Boakye (PCOB)

Meeting began at 11:03 AM

Provost Reiber and President Marrero began the meeting with a discussion about collaboration between South East Technological University and Georgia Southern in Wexford, Ireland. They spoke about the two institutions, the possibility for student travel, and the institutions' similar missions.

After that, President Marrero said that since he had just given major updates the previous evening at the faculty senate meeting, he was going to spend this meeting going more in depth on any specific topics of interest to the SEC.

A first question was about the dean search for the Paulson College of Engineering and Computing. Provost Reiber responded that a search committee had been formed and that after the PCEC dean search was underway, the College of Science and Mathematics would get started, followed soon after by the College of Arts and Humanities dean search. He wanted SEC members to help spread the word that these searches are going forward and that any rumors to the contrary are inaccurate.

Bill Dawers (CAH) then said Mike Nielsen had submitted a Request for Information (RFI) that Bill hoped could be addressed during this Q&A. The RFI asked for background on the decision to move Safe Space training to the Office of Inclusive Excellence and asked when the training would resume. President Marrero said that the move occurred in fall 2021 and that he would contact Dominique Quarles (AVP IE/CDO) for more information.

In an email shortly after the SEC meeting, Dr. Quarles provided the following:

- Drs. Wilson and Little decided to move Safe Space training to the Office of Inclusive Excellence at the onset of hiring our Manager of Inclusive Excellence Education, approximately a year ago.
- Two offices were offering Safe Space: the Counseling Center and the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Both offices had their own curriculum for their program. The decision to move Safe Space to the Office of Inclusive Excellence allowed DEI/IE

education to come from a singular, central unit who is responsible for providing DEI/IE education to the campus community.

- Safe Space is currently off-line to allow those involved with its instruction to design a singular curriculum for the program. The plan is to relaunch the program in spring 2023.

President Marrero then shared more detailed information about the Armstrong Task Force and said how pleased he was with the great work and quality recommendations that have been put forward by the committee. President Marrero emphasized the alignment of the recommended programs with students' expressed interests, market needs, and university resources. President Marrero shared additional details about the recommended programs but stressed that decisions are still being finalized.

President Marrero said that the task force's work is important not only for Georgia Southern and the Armstrong Campus but also for Savannah State University. He said that if the USG institutions in the region do not step up to meet the needs of the market, someone else will. He stressed that he is in regular communication with the SSU president. President Marrero added that faculty and staff should not expect to see new billboards everywhere or press releases on the news; the marketing strategies related to the Armstrong Task Force will be optimized to reach potential students wherever they are.

Ed Mondor (COSM) said that he had seen advertisements for the College of Education on streaming media and asked about ads from other colleges. President Marrero said that the advertising efforts are data-driven and targeting people who are likely to be interested in the programs being advertised.

Provost Reiber noted that marketing is a dynamic process. He shared the example of a teaching certification program that reduced the number of hours from 36 to 30 and lowered the overall price as a result, thus becoming more attractive. He stressed that marketing is not simply about ads but about making sure that we are truly competitive and not just dependent on Georgia Southern's brand for differentiation.

Marieke Van Willigen (CBSS) said that numerous faculty had reached out to her after the previous day's senate meeting to express concerns about President Marrero's discussion of enrollment declines and the need for further budget reductions. Provost Reiber said that the university will have to keep finding efficiencies and identifying vacant positions that do not need to be filled immediately. President Marrero agreed that cuts can be made through attrition and efficiencies. Bill Dawers noted that state funding for USG institutions had declined on a percentage basis over a period of many years and shared [a 2011 PowerPoint about the state's formula funding](#) via the chat.

Sheri Carey (WCHP) expressed concern that delays in admissions, enrollment, and advising are sometimes hurting enrollment. President Marrero said this was an area of focus and continued improvement. He added that transfer students are especially a challenge because

each application has to be considered individually and often requires a level of department evaluation. Provost Reiber said that part of the concern is that advisors have a number of processes that must be done manually that prevent them from spending more time meeting with students. He said that he is working with IT to see how much of this work can be automated to free up advisors to respond more quickly to students and to have more time for student meetings. President Marrero said that we must adopt a “We cannot be in our own way” attitude and that we need to identify and address bottlenecks.

Marieke Van Willigen said that faculty might benefit from a better understanding of why funds might exist for new construction but not for other important projects or obvious needs. She said that during her time at a previous institution, a presentation about the various funding streams and limitations on spending had been well received by faculty. She said that this type of presentation may help faculty better understand the decisions that are being made. President Marrero and Provost Reiber agreed, and President Marrero said that while people may not always agree with his decisions, he feels that he owes it to faculty and staff to explain the reasoning.

The meeting adjourned at 12:16.