Faculty Senate Meeting

Minutes from Meeting on Friday, October 3, 2014

Call to Order:

Faculty Senate meeting was called to order by Ms. Amanda Urquhart, President, at 2:24 pm

Members Present:

Amanda Urquhart (Science/Math), James Galt-Brown (Liberal Arts), Shawn Seat (Science/Math), Diantha Ellis (Business), Carlos Lopes (Business), James McCrimmon (Agriculture), Chrissy Dent (Nursing), Susan Roe (Liberal Arts).

Prior to the meeting, Donna Campbell (Human Sciences) appointed Etta Lee (Human Sciences) to vote as her proxy. Appointment was submitted in written form to the Faculty Senate President.

At 2:15, Jeannie Paulk (Nursing) appointed Chrissy Dent (Nursing) to vote as her proxy. Appointment was submitted via text message to Sen. Dent and verified by Sen. Ellis.

Guests Present:

Dr. Gail Dillard (Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs).

Presentation of Minutes:

Sen. Pres. Urquhart presented the minutes from the meeting of Friday, 5 September 2014. Sen. Galt-Brown made a motion to accept the minutes as written; Sen. Dent seconded. Minutes of Friday, 5 September 2014 accepted unanimously as written.

Address to the Faculty Senate from the Interim VPAA:

Dr. Gail Dillard, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, stated she was present to answer any questions or concerns the Faculty Senate may have.

Sen. Pres. Urquhart asked for clarification of faculty load calculations the Cabinet is reportedly discussing. Dr. Dillard stated nothing has been settled on as of yet, noting that every time the Deans and Cabinet get together the subject comes up as faculty compensation is the greatest expenditure in the budget.

Dr. Dillard made reference to the President’s memo of 29 April 2014 in regard to extra compensation / overload pay. Noting a 4/4 teaching load is indicative of a senior institution, Dr. Dillard pointed out her view of this is that faculty will use the time to engage in scholarship, grant writing, mentoring and other activities vital in moving the college forward. She stressed the point that she understood faculty were teaching overloads, teaching for other institutions or teaching for e-core for reasons related to economics and stretching their own family budgets. Still, Dr. Dillard encouraged the Faculty Senate to think of this issue from the point of view of moving ABAC forward.

Sen. Galt-Brown noted ABAC’s policy had long been faculty had a 5/5 teaching load but no scholarship burden. Then, when the college shifted its focus, faculty are now expected to pursue
scholarship. However, he pointed out that putting the load release to scholarship is like unto placing the cart before the horse as the faculty involved in the development of new courses need to apply the “extra time” toward developing and preparing those courses.

Sen. Galt-Brown also noted in relation to this issue was a strong concern for the ability of ABAC to retain quality faculty. He pointed out that Liberal Arts has experienced a lot of turnover since the changes went into effect as people are enticed by offers from other institutions to receive the same or better pay for less work. Dr. Dillard responded that ABAC is constantly looking at national averages and noted the starting salaries for Assistant Professors have increased.

Sen. Galt-Brown responded that faculty are reaching a breaking point. He noted that several schools in states within our region (Florida, Alabama, South Carolina were examples used) are starting to pay more for qualified professors and stressed the point that ABAC needs to be competitive. Dr. Dillard responded there are budget realities that must be faced and costs are increasing.

Sen. Ellis questioned whether the faculty who were teaching overloads (which had not been requested but were required out of necessity due to the growth of the baccalaureate programs and limitation of quality part-time instructors in the teaching area) or who were teaching for another institution or eCore yet had not dropped the ball on scholarship and furthering the college would be limited in their pursuit of part-time income within the state. Dr. Dillard stated the promotion and tenure process would be helpful in reviewing this.

Sen. Pres. Urquhart noted there were equity raises and performance raises last year. However, she pointed out a bit more transparency might put more minds at ease, especially since tuition is increasing but salaries are more or less remaining the same.

Sen. Galt-Brown suggested the purchase of an off-site property which could be used for faculty gatherings off campus or to house new faculty or Fulbright scholars in search of place to live might help up ABAC’s competitive game.

Old Business:

1. **Continued Discussion of Changes to Summer Pay Scale:**

   a. Sen. Pres. Urquhart opened the floor to discussion of summer pay, referencing again the Presidential memo of 29 April 2014 which cited a reduction in summer pay. She noted the e-mail from then Senator JoAnn Brannen who noted a timeline for a fixed number of years for which the reduction would be in effect before it would be re-evaluated. Ms. Brannen also suggested a tiered rate for summer pay reduction in lieu of the overall reduction to adjunct pay.

   Sen. Ellis stated that other Stafford School of Business faculty were of the opinion that the summer pay should remain at the same rate as had been advertised at the time of their employment – tiered according to rank with no reduction in effect for additional classes taught. Faculty discussions from the School of Business also noted that competitive summer pay can be a drawing card for quality faculty in faculty recruitment efforts.
b. Sen. Dent stated at minimum there should be a time frame or a tiered reduction, but she pointed out many will opt out of teaching in the summer simply because they can make more working somewhere else. Sen. Pres. Urquhart asked if there was a motion for either the timeline or the tiered reduction ideas. No motions were made. Discussion for summer pay concluded.

2. Revision(s) to the Constitution (term limits):
   a. Sen. Pres. Urquhart noted the following from the meeting of 05 September 2014:

   *Sen. Pres. Urquhart noted that election of the new officers of the Faculty Senate was in order. She pointed out the Constitution reads that officers are “elected annually” and that “no officer shall serve in any capacity for more than two full terms in succession.” Therefore, since officers are elected annually, it appears (according to the Constitution) that officers who have served two years in a position should not serve another term as an officer.*

   *Sen. McCrimmon pointed out that experience in the position is imperative to doing the job well. Sen. Pres. Urquhart stated the only way to serve more than two terms (one year each) is that the Constitution be amended again. Sen. Galt-Brown pointed out that per parliamentary procedure, the Constitution would require a second reading for another amendment to take place. He recommended a second reading and discussion of amending at the next meeting.*

   *Sen. Galt-Brown made the motion to delete the following sentence in Article III, Section 1: “no officer shall serve in any capacity for more than two full terms in succession.” Sen. McCrimmon seconded. Motion and second was tabled to next meeting for the vote after the second reading of the Constitution.*

   b. Sen. Galt-Brown made the motion to revise the Constitution and By-Laws of ABAC’s Faculty Senate concerning term limits as previously discussed in session. Sen. McCrimmon seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

   c. Sen. Galt-Brown suggested the Faculty Senate might want to discuss establishing a different definition of what constituted a quorum, for instance 50% plus 1. Sen. McCrimmon stated it would help in instances when the Senate was held up from beginning the meeting due to waiting for a few members to arrive to meet quorum. Sen. Galt-Brown noted it would require a first and second reading of the motion to make the change.

   *Sen. Galt-Brown made the motion to move the subject to table and discuss with faculty of respective schools that the Faculty Senate change quorum to 50% plus 1. Sen. McCrimmon seconded. Motion to table unanimous.*
New Business:

1. Fall 2014 USG Faculty Council Agenda:
   a. Sen. Seat shared with the Faculty Senate the recommendations from the USG Faculty Council. He asked if there were any issues in particular the ABAC Faculty Senate wanted addressed.
   b. Sen. Galt-Brown noted point # 3 of the USGFC: “There is general concern about the academic rigor and supervision issues within the Georgia eCore program. How do we deal with challenges to a quality education as universities and students go ‘online’?”

   Sen. Galt-Brown stated there were issues of which he was aware of grade distributions required in eCore which brings rigor into question.

   Sen. Pres. Urquhart pointed out students who take a less rigorous course in eCore as a prerequisite to an on-site ABAC course are more likely to fail in the second course.

   Sen. Seat stated he would bring this issue to the USGFC discussion.

2. Regent’s Advisory Committee Report:
   a. Sen. Galt-Brown brought the Faculty Senate up-to-date on issues regarding the transfer of TCSG classes to schools in the USG. He noted a PowerPoint distributed to the Regent’s Advisory Committee in which the TCSG has not given comprehensive data and quantified analysis of TCSG students to USG schools, noting a 200% withdrawal rate for these students when transferred to the USG. He questioned whether SACS is applying the same rigor to TCSG classes transferring to the USG.

   b. Sen. Galt-Brown noted Faculty Senate input is needed if the TCSG is not doing what it said. He suggested we revoke the articulation agreement, noting this issue affects USG school RPG numbers, not the TCSG’s so it is an issue of vital concern to USG schools. Sen. McCrimmon stated this issue should go forward to the Faculty Council via Sen. Seat. Sen. Pres. Urquhart asked Sen. Seat to add this item to the Faculty Council agenda.

   Sen. Galt-Brown made the motion to adjourn; Sen. Dent seconded. Motion carried. The Senate adjourned at 4:01 p.m. The next meeting will be held 31 October 2014.