**Draft Minutes of USGFC at Gordon State College on 26th and 27th November 2023.**

**Attendees**

Tiang Curry-McCoy, Annie Anton, Michelle Brattain, Janet Westpheling, Ed Mondor, Doug Moodie, Todd Harper, Jeff Rebar, Richard Foreman, Sharah Grant, Robert Sumowski, Catherine Fowler, John LeJeune, John Pattillo, Chuck Robertson, Philip Omunga, Ryan Currie, Babatunde Onabanjo, Tate Holbrook, Kimberley Subacz, David Kerven, Lisa Howell, Theresa Stanely, Patrick Freer [online]

***Guests:*** Matt Boedy, Sonny Perdue, Ashwani Monga, Dana Nichols~~, Barbara Brown (virtual).~~

**Initial Events**

1. The Interim President of Gordon State College welcomed us to the meeting.
2. Michelle welcomed participants to the meeting.
3. The minutes of the April meeting were adopted with one minor change.
4. Michelle opened the floor to discuss issues for the afternoon session with the chancellors.

***General Education Changes***

What are institutions doing to get ready for the new changes to Gen Ed?

Todd stated changes are largely cosmetic, but he is worried about the timetable for the changes. Several representatives worried about the time needed to modify learning outcomes (LO). Institutions could just cut and paste them into courses. USG wanted the framing questions and LOs to be standard across USG. GSW has set up a committee to implement changes. Some courses may have to be moved from one sector to another.

***Implementation of PTR***

Chuck said at present PIPs started at same time Chairs were doing annual reviews. How do annual reviews fit into PTRs?

Michelle wanted to see how PTR implementation works across the system. Problem with research PIPs, as some disciplines have long review times. Some of the problems arising is that deans do not understand USG requirements. RACs should have been involved in developing policy.

5. **Meeting with the Chancellor.**

***Chancellor Report***

This is not a good time to talk to the legislature about the missing $66m, as the Governor is setting up a special session to discuss election boundaries. He hopes to get back the $66m next financial year, not this one. The Governor and House Speaker are committed to restoring the $66M, but Senate support is less certain. BoR could raise this amount with a new institutional fee. Operational costs are going up with inflation. Power has gone up 30-40%. Higher operational costs could lead to lower spending on academics. USG is allocated $2/ft2 for annual maintenance and operations, but the actual costs are about $7.50/ft2.

Presidential searches are messy but are going well. USG is getting good candidates in larger numbers than in the past. Recent success at UNG, CSU, and ABAC helped by consensus building.

Enrollment has recovered; 21 institutions grew this year with 9,500 (3%) more students overall. Increased marketing has helped. 40% of qualified HS graduates are not going anywhere at present but the new letters of acceptance (GA Match letters) sent to every HS graduating senior are helping. It is a buyers’ market for students. USG wants to be a “Chick-fil-A type service organization”, that is students (customers) should choose USG not only to boost enrollment, but to change their lives and future trajectories and boost economy.

Michelle asked about General Education, especially the quick implementation. Chancellor said Dr Monga can answer on the nuts and bolts. He understands it’s a big lift but has pushed the system office to get it done quickly (has been a long time in the making, predating current administration). The Gen Ed changes are not telling the faculty what to teach.

Should we take $s from under performers? USG already takes from growing institutions to support others with losses, and smooth out block grants. USG’s aim is to incentivize metrics that move the needle, not punish. USG would divide by sector (e.g., reward top performers by sector). A sector study currently underway to ensure equity in resources.

How should we help good students from rural areas where AP classes are not offered?

The last salary reset was in 2014. No likelihood of COLA. Excess revenue must be spent this year on one off costs, not recurring costs.

USG proposed a “significant increase” last year but was overturned; it will propose it again next year. Tuition increases are not on the table this year. Doesn’t expect wholesale funding formula to change soon but moving toward realignment. Performance based funding cannot be thought about until there are effective metrics to measure institutions. Just beginning to talk about performance-based budget allocation Nothing has been done or decided, e.g., maybe make 10% of allocation to reward institutions. We must make sure we get data metrics/dashboards right first.

Jan said faculty would like a letter from the chancellor to all faculty. Chancellor said it should come out by Thanksgiving.

Jan said maybe the chancellor can talk about free speech on campus, especially with all the anti-Jewish actions. How do we handle free vs hate speech? USG needs to emphasize rational dialog not violence.

The Chancellor will guide Presidents to promote free speech and academic freedom while acknowledging any atrocities and cultural contexts. The priority is safety and security and encouraging civil and respectful discourse.

1. **Dr. Monga**

No change to the Gen Ed timetable is possible. USG has talked to student affairs, enrollment, advising, etc. about implementation. Thank you for your support. USG tries to strike balance between faculty and Chancellor and BOR. It recognizes the challenges of Core IMPACTS implementation but was pushed to go fast.

There is confusion about how foreign languages courses fit in to Core IMPACTS. Nothing says courses must be added or removed, but institutions have their own objectives. History and English RACs recommended foreign language as optional, not required. The learning outcomes are broad, not exclusive. So, existing courses can fit in.

In a broader context, we must convince people (from BOR to students) that Core matters. Foundational courses teach knowledge and skills that prepare students for citizenship and life, including the “soft skills” that employers ask for. Core is critical to enrollment and student success. Faculty (especially humanities) should be excited and assert their importance. These changes will help us articulate the value, and help students articulate and find value.

Michelle called for faculty to be involved earlier in policy design. Faculty on GEC were consulted. There were no faculty comments when the policy was put on the web. Faculty must get engaged. Michelle pointed out that many staff were involved early in the conversation, but faculty were not informed until very recently of changes already approved. There is nothing about adding or removing courses. Barbara is the Gen Ed guru. These new LOs are broader than any institution LOs. Foreign languages must fit in these LOs. Do want to do anything disruptive.

Dr. Monga emphasized that Gen Ed was important for all majors. Gen Ed gave them the life skills that employers want from students. We need to tell students that. USG cannot consult everyone. Faculty must persuade students that the core matters.

USG;s AA must work thorough provosts to not undermine them. Common core helps transferability of students.

Summer notification is decided by institution, some use HR, some AA.

USG HR is looking at the rules on the 33 1/3% limit for summer.

Changes to pharmacy benefits occur mid-year as prices keep changing. CVS conducts quarterly review and changes formulary accordingly.

There is slow approval for new software, but IT is very worried about cybersecurity so is difficult to introduce new software. Dr. Monga has communicated with USG CIO and will discuss with institutional CIOS, who must balance speed with security.

New USG policy (2.2) as of May 2022 on Presidential searches, including faculty role.

Richard stated that the AAUP Censure is not going away. It is up to USGFC to talk to AAUP. USG will not go to BoR for another change. It is not affecting applicant quantity or quality. Presidential applications are up. It is not top of mind for Chancellor or the BoR. If faculty could express trust in the PTR process to AAUP (small positive change better than other systems) it would help.

Higher level people must view more compulsory videos than faculty.

**Friday, October 27**

**Academic Affairs Committee**

An advising issue is that CRM platforms (e.g., Sage, EAB/Navigate360) do not align with Degree Works when it is not scribed properly (labor intensive; constant curriculum changes). Technology shouldn’t be a barrier to retention, progression, and graduation.

* USGFC should appeal to USG for advising support and training, including better compensation to retain professional advisors. Develop new tools that can be scaled up.
* A successful model is GA State, who is not just advising, but changing how they structure curriculum and schedule classes.

**USG Staff Council Report from Scott Taylor, Chair**

January marked the thirtieth anniversary of USGSC, whose purpose is to be a conduit between staff and Chancellor and System Office. They reorganized to be more effective, including the following new initiatives:

* Meeting Schedule – now regular meetings that coincide with BOR meetings.
* Universal Participation/Representation – establish Staff Assemblies at all 26 institutions.
* Standardize Election Cycle – adjust timing so all institutions eligible for officer positions.
* Universal Executive Advisors – each Staff Assembly w/ direct connection to Presidential Cabinet
* Foundation Account – will be housed at USG instead of transferring to the home institution of Treasurer.
* New Committees on Bylaws, Standard Operating Procedures, Conference, etc.
* “Snapshot” will share top 5 takeaways from each BOR meeting for institutional affiliates to disseminate.

How can USGFC help USGSC? Please contribute to the system-wide conversation about advising needs (including staff compensation), and successes. USGFC leaders share updates, issues at USGSC meetings – collaborate on issues/initiatives as united constituencies are more powerful.

**Sector Report – Research Universities**

A student success issue is students transferring into R1 universities with credit for pre-requisites (e.g., calculus) who aren’t always well prepared for the rigor of subsequent course sequences in specialized degree programs. This affects student retention, progression, and success. Proposed proficiency exams (optional) for incoming transfer students should help identify needs and provide extra support.

R1s need to collect data to demonstrate success gap, e.g., compare performance (DFW rate) of transfer vs. continuing students by course. Then consider alternative first steps such as:

* 1. Providing Supplemental Instruction (SI) in classes with high DFW rates among transfer students.
  2. Embed intake exams into courses during drop/add period. Thes would not be graded but would be required. This would help students recognize whether they are prepared.

Start with institution-level data analysis, and interventions; then share findings (proficiency exams?) with other supplying institutions to help better prepare and advise students for transfer.