



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Members of the Faculty Senate  
**FROM:** Dr. Brendan B. Kelly, President  
**RE:** President's Response to Senate Actions  
**DATE:** April 4, 2022

Following is my response to the actions of the Faculty Senate as represented in the minutes of the meeting held on February 18, 2022, which were approved electronically on February 25, 2022. All program approvals are made contingent upon the department's commitment to staff the changes out of existing internal funds. Note that Section 3.6.2 of the Board of Regents Policy Manual states, inter alia: "The termination of educational programs, degrees, or majors shall be submitted to the Chancellor for review and recommendation for action by the Board of Regents." So, all program, degree, and major terminations (as well as additions) need to be approved by the Board. Our requests should include the rationale and the plan for addressing the needs of existing students.

### **Committee I: Undergraduate Programs Committee (Karen Graffius, Chair)**

#### Action Items:

- A) College of Arts, Culture, and Scientific Inquiry
  - 1) Department of Computing and Mathematics
    - a) COMP 3310 – Mobile Development  
Request: Modify
    - b) COMP 3400 – System and Network Admin I  
Request: Modify
    - c) COMP 3600 – User-Centric Computing I  
Request: Modify
    - d) COMP 4200 – Advanced Database Systems  
Request: Modify
    - e) COMP 4420 – DevOps  
Request: Modify
    - f) COMP 4500 – Computer Forensics  
Request: Modify

*Items a-f were taken as a block and approved with 43 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention.*

**I accept this motion.**

- g) CS 1300 – Introduction to Computing  
Request: Modify

*Item approved with 44 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions.*

**I accept this motion.**

- h) Computer Science, B.S.  
Request: Modify

*Item approved with 43 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions.*

**I accept this motion.**

- 2) Department of Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology
  - a) SABH 4000 – Research Methodology  
Request: Add
  - b) SABH 4003 – Applied Statistics for Sociology  
Request: Add

*Items a-b were taken as a block and approved with 44 in favor, 1 opposed, and 2 abstentions.*

**I accept this motion.**

#### **Committee II: Graduate Programs Committee (Dena Kniess, Chair)**

Action Items:

- A) College of Arts, Culture, and Scientific Inquiry
  - 1) Department of Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology
    - a) Psychology, MA  
Request: Modify

*Item approved with 41 in favor, 3 opposed, and 2 abstentions.*

**I accept this motion.**

- b) Sociology, MA  
Request: Modify

*Item approved with 42 in favor, 1 opposed, and 0 abstentions.*

**I accept this motion.**

B) Graduate Catalog Changes 2022-2023 – International Admissions (Figure 1)

*Item approved with 44 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions.*

**I accept this motion.**

**Committee VI: Facilities and Information Technology Committee (Yvonne Fuentes, Chair)**

Action Item:

- A) Joint Parking Subcommittee Report by Heather A. D. Mbaye, Chair, and Mark Reeves, Interim Chief Business Officer (Figure 4 and Figure 5)

*Interim Vice President for Business and Financial Services Mark Reeves shared a PowerPoint presentation (see Figure 5) that summarized the proposed parking fee increase first proposed in Spring 2021 as well as the recommendations for AY23 and beyond made by the joint Parking and Transportation Subcommittee with members from the Faculty Senate Facilities and Information Technologies Committee and the Faculty Senate Budget Committee (see Figure 4). (See February 18, 2022 Faculty Senate Zoom Meeting, starting at 2:27:22) Mr. Reeves stated that the fleet of busses is aging and diesel fuel costs are increasing, so costs are constantly on the rise. The bottom line recommendation is \$73,000 in faculty/staff parking fees per year without escalation. He has shared both models on Slide 6 in Figure 5 with President Kelly, but he is unsure which will be approved. The joint Parking and Transportation Subcommittee Chair Dr. Heather Mbaye added that the subcommittee took this work very seriously and tried to work as openly and with the best intentions possible. She noted that their recommendation isn't just for an increase in parking fees as outlined in Figure 4 but also a more systematic study that includes a ridership survey and a gradual discontinuation of the apartment shuttle. Dr. Mbaye thanked everyone for their hard work, specifically Dr. Gavin Lee, Dr. David Nickell, Dr. Phillip Grant, Interim VP Reeves, and former VP John Haven.*

*When asked if it were possible to subcontract or lease busses rather than buy new or rehabilitate our existing fleet, Mr. Reeves replied that this was always a possibility, but we have had plenty of studies done on this front and our fleet is extremely efficient and cost effective. Another question posed to Mr. Reeves asked about alternative fuel transportation vehicles. He responded that they have looked into it twice, but there were challenges in getting the charging stations added for the busses and he welcomed any suggestions and help with this. Faculty Development Committee Chair Dr. Patrick Erben stated that Georgia Power is currently advertising the installation of electric charging stations around the state. Mr. Reeves stated that Georgia Power was not interested in this in the past, but things have clearly changed and he would look into it.*

*Faculty Senate Budget Committee Chair Dr. Laurie Kimbrel wanted to provide the body with the perspective of Budget Committee. She noted that the Budget Committee unanimously recommended that this be tabled until the new Vice President for Business and Financial Services is in place, as they hope that this individual will have a different perspective and more creative way to solve the problem than to lay the burden on the backs of the faculty. Dr. Kimbrel added that this is not a problem that faculty created for*

*themselves, nor were faculty asked when parking lots were financed. Therefore, faculty should not be expected to solve this problem.*

*Dr. David Nickell noted that the surplus by itself covers the fee increase, maintaining a balanced budget. He noted further that the apartment shuttle, which costs over \$100,000 per year to run, was created to help alleviate the parking issues on campus that have been alleviated by the addition of new lots. Dr. Nickell stated that we could cut that service or ask apartments to pay for a service that they use as a selling point for students. He echoed Dr. Kimbrel's sentiments that the burden should not be on the faculty, and that we should wait until the new VP is hired.*

*When asked to discuss the proposed \$5000 pay increase, Mr. Reeves confirmed that the state will not fund the Auxiliary and a \$5000 pay increase for Auxiliary employees would have to come from other revenue streams.*

*Other members of the body shared their appreciation for the time the subcommittee spent on this, while several expressed their frustration that the proposed fee schedule seemed to place the financial burden on the faculty and staff with lower annual incomes.*

*At 4:15pm, Chair Williams called for a vote for an endorsement of the Joint Parking Subcommittee Report. The resulting vote did not pass with 19 in favor, 20 opposed, and 9 abstentions.*

**I appreciate the work, input, and review of the Joint Parking Subcommittee and the discussion that the Faculty Senate has provided on the matter of parking fees. The determination of parking fees is the purview of Business and Financial Services, and the Faculty Senate comments will be considered when a final determination is made.**

## 6. New Business

### A) Discussion of SB 377 (Figure 7 and Figure 8)

*Chair Williams began by stating that he hoped that everyone had a chance to read the text of SB377 included in Figure 7, and noted that he originally intended to invite Senator Mike Dugan to this meeting. However, after receiving some communication from the administration regarding that invitation, Chair Williams stated that Faculty Senate Diversity and Internationalization Chair Dr. Mike Hester was taking notes during this discussion and would be crafting a letter for President Kelly. He then opened the floor for the continued discussion of this bill that began earlier in the meeting, as well as what faculty in attendance thought should be included in that letter to President Kelly. (See February 18, 2022 Faculty Senate Zoom Meeting, starting at 3:16:33)*

*While many reiterated the apprehensions previously shared during Q&A, others added their concerns on how this would affect accreditation, recruitment, course offerings, and both the quality and stability of our programs, as well as whether sanctions could be issued against a faculty member who was found to be in violation of any ban put into place. While some questioned the constitutionality of this bill, others feared that SB377 would be tied to recent BOR revisions to the annual review process. Others expressed concerns over what they saw as a lack of repudiation by administration of an assault on academic freedom, while others noted that this would infringe upon and*

*suppress our students' academic freedom as well. Many in attendance agreed that this would only succeed in alienating vulnerable and often marginalized students. There was considerable discussion about the problematic and often repeated language first noted in line 39 of the bill stating if "an individual should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress because of his or her race, skin color, or ethnicity," as well as the language in the bill that prohibited an educator from teaching students the history and existence of systematic racism in the United States.*

*It was pointed out that, while we cannot speak to our students and Faculty Senate cannot invite Senator Dugan to a Senate meeting, we could write a personal letter from our own private email addresses. The Provost noted that if an individual employee wishes to share their own views on political issues externally, he affirms and supports their right to do so. Within the guidelines of the USG, however, it must be made clear that they are expressing a personal view and do not represent the views of the USG or the institution, without using UWG resources (including work email account).*

*Dr. Sethna noted that UWG used to invite legislators to campus and they were pleased to come, and he felt that it would be ideal to pose the questions raised in this discussion directly to Senator Dugan. He asked for administration to give faculty some guidance as to what would be considered protected speech within the classroom. The Provost stated that he affirmed the diversity of thought and academic freedom within the disciplines across campus. He asked that faculty interested in inviting a legislator to campus coordinate their efforts with Dr. Russell Crutchfield's Office.*

*Dr. Hester stated that he has organized his notes for the letter to President Kelly into three categories: (1) communication on campus and specifically how the administration communicates with employees on campus and how employees on campus might communicate with the appropriate authorities on campus with regards to this issue, (2) the protection of faculty and academic freedom, and how the administration advocates on our behalf, and (3) the content of the bill and what it does to academic freedom and higher education generally. He invited faculty to email him to send more information and/or examples, and stated that he would begin drafting the letter this weekend.*

*[After the Senate meeting concluded, Dr. Hester drafted the letter found in Figure 8 and it was taken to the Faculty Senate for an electronic vote on Wednesday, February 23, 2022. The Faculty Senate approved the letter with 26 in favor, 0 opposed, and 6 abstentions.]*

**The University of West Georgia offers a diverse portfolio of academic programs that enable students to explore their disciplinary fields of choice. As a comprehensive university, UWG supports a wide range of faculty expertise and academic disciplines. The University System of Georgia coordinates, directs, and leads legislative advocacy on legislation that may impact higher education in Georgia. Unless directed to do so by the Chancellor, the University of West Georgia does not take independent positions on legislation. Therefore, input gathered in Faculty Senate meetings or by other means within UWG is shared with the System Office for consideration in collective legislative advocacy on behalf of the Board of Regents. Given that SB377 has been modified to exclude discussion of higher education, I have no comment specific to SB377, but I affirm the need to communicate with the university community and point to my regular newsletters**

**which provide updates to the Faculty Senate on legislative matters that may impact UWG or the USG, and to the Provost's comments during the Faculty Senate discussion wherein faculty and staff who are interested in external and legislative items regarding university matters should coordinate with Dr. Crutchfield's office, in consultation with the Office of the Provost.**

- B) Resolution on the Administration's Communication with the Faculty Senate about Government Activities (Figure 9)

*Chair Williams stated that this resolution originated through the Faculty Senate Executive Committee in response to the discussion that the Executive Committee had with the Provost about SB377. Many felt that there needed to be a statement made by the faculty to the President and the administration on the way in which the administration communicates with the faculty regarding pending legislation. There was further concern that if the Senate had not taken up the issue of SB377 that the faculty potentially would never have heard from the administration on this issue. After seeing no questions or comment on this resolution from the body, Chair Williams called for a vote. This resolution passed with 34 in favor, 1 opposed, and 5 abstentions.*

**The University of West Georgia employs a number of people with expertise who are charged with communicating and working with external constituencies and reaching out to UWG faculty and staff as appropriate when their expertise is needed. The Office of Government and External Relations and the Office of the President have and will continue to solicit input across the institution when responding to external inquiries from legislators and the University System of Georgia. As the Faculty Senate is charged as an advisory body to the Office of the President, I will continue to review legislative matters with the Faculty Senate as they emerge and/or advance.**