

Georgia Southwestern State University

Faculty Senate Meeting

Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 4 p.m.

GSW Nursing Building, Room 106

Minutes for 9/26/2023, approved 10/25/2023

Members in Attendance (11): John LeJeune (President), Amber Stovall (Vice-President), Ashley Jones (Secretary), Michael Crosby, Michelle Dykes, Chadwick Gugg, Anne Jacobs, Sai Mukkavilli, Thelma Sexton, John Wilson, Keaton Wynn

Ex-officio Members in Attendance (1): President Neal Weaver

1. Call to Order

- a. 4:01 Meeting called to order by Dr. LeJeune
- b. No Proposed Amendments to Agenda

2. Approval of Minutes from August 15, 2023

- a. Dr. LeJeune motioned to approve the minutes with the correction that the meeting took place in Nursing Room 106; John Wilson seconded.
- b. Motion passes unanimously.

3. Public Address

- a. No public address sign-up.

4. Senate Activity Updates

- a. **Executive Committee Meeting with Dr. Drake – Summer Contracts, No SAT/ACT issue, Website:** Dr. LeJeune discussed an Executive Committee meeting with Dr. Drake in which it was established that the Provost would soon send an email to faculty regarding summer contracts; and that meetings would soon be scheduled involving the principal stakeholders in (a) the implementation of a new in-house math test for incoming freshmen, and (b) the creation of Faculty Senate Committee webpages.

- b. Faculty Survey Update:** Dr. LeJeune summarized the recent steps taken to move forward with a Faculty Senate Faculty Survey. A draft survey has been created and reviewed by the Senate and Dr. Drake, and we hope to receive feedback from Dr. Weaver in the near future.
- c. Senate planning re: other issues from last meeting – Bylaws, Summer classes, Academic Integrity:** For the next Faculty Senate meeting, Dr. LeJeune will provide a submission form for approval, with the goal of establishing a formal and general policy for how to bring issues to the Senate.

5. University Updates and Q+A

a. President Dr. Neal Weaver: Dr. Weaver discussed the following topics:

i. Computer Science: Received accreditation. Good job!

ii. Day of Giving: Last week over \$125,000, over 400 donors, all 50 states

iii. Enrollment #s: Not quite official- Oct. 13th census day:

a. 3,411 students, 10.8% increase overall from last year, 8% increase in freshman, 9% increase in continuing undergraduate. Graduate programs are trending flat. Occupancy Rate in dorms is 92%.

iv. Library Renovations:

a. Shortlisted architects; Architect chosen in October/Early Nov. Library renovation survey was sent out, and faculty are encouraged to fill out.

v. New Science Building:

a. BOR approved \$1.6 million to design new science building, \$21 million project in total.

b. Architect process starting this legislative session; the new building will be located on back of Carter II. The current Science & Roney buildings will eventually be demolished.

vi. Other Construction:

a. GSW has been asked to demolish Duncan Hall and Jordan Hall.

b. Dr. Weaver is hopeful for additional demolition funding in January

vii. Midterm Grades:

a. Having midterm grades is not a system policy, not a requirement. Dr. Weaver is unsure about maintaining this practice, and has asked the Senate to investigate the future of having Midterm grades at GSW. Is it a good idea or bad idea?

viii. Faculty/Administrative Lines:

a. Dr. Weaver discussed how, when replacing GSW employees who leave or retire, admin will take the same attitude towards administrative position as faculty ones—namely, to examine whether a rehire, restructuring, or alternate use of the line would increase efficiency. This will apply, for example, to anticipated openings in the Library – the future of any open position there is yet to be determined.

ix. QEP:

a. SACS on-site visit will be in March. Much of what SACS will evaluate is attached to the QEP process with integrative learning.

x. Southwestern Week Activities:

a. Responding to concerns expressed during Southwestern Week, Dr. Weaver affirmed the GSW administration's commitment to supporting academic freedom among faculty in their classrooms in relation to teaching their subject, while noting the importance of not using the classroom as a forum for compelling students to adhere to thoughts and opinions not related to the lesson.

xi. Q&A: In Q+A Dr. Weaver discussed the high likelihood of a re-routed GSW Drive accompanying the new Science Building. Dr. Weaver also clarified that the Observatory will not be moved or rebuilt in the new Science Building, and discussed the limited classroom space anticipated in the new Science Building, which will require that a 60-seat classroom be included in the new Library renovation plans.

b. Provost Dr. Jill Drake (availability permitting): Dr. Drake was unable to attend due to prior engagements.

6. Discussion Items

a. USG General Education Refresh: The Senate briefly discussed implications and concerns related to the USG General Education Refresh. Relevant issues included: What courses will be included in the new version of "Area B"? What will the "soft-launch" of this refresh look like in the spring semester? And how will the assessment process (which now includes a career training component) work? The Senate should communicate with Dr. Drake and Krista Smith about these questions as necessary.

7. Committee Recommendations

a. Faculty Affairs Committee

i. Faculty Handbook: Changes to Tenure/Pre-Tenure Review Language:

Dr. LeJeune motioned to approve the Faculty Handbook changes approved by Faculty Affairs regarding clarifying Tenure/Pre-Tenure Language, specifically related to the number of Annual Evaluations required; Dr. Sexton seconded; and the motion was approved unanimously.

8. Faculty Survey Planning

a. Formation of Review Subcommittees:

- i. In anticipation of implementation of the Faculty Senate Faculty Survey, Dr. LeJeune motioned to create five subcommittees of three Senators each, corresponding to the five questions on the survey, and to adopt the pre-circulated Subcommittee Report Form as the official method of communication between these subcommittees and the Senate; Dr. Jacobs seconded the motion
- ii. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Announcements

- a. **Institutional Research:** Bryan Mallett from Institutional Research remarked that Institutional Research is both happy and able to help gather any data that the Faculty Senate may need.
- b. **Midterm Issue:** After brief discussion, it was determined that Dr. LeJeune will send a form to the Faculty Senate to begin to gather information in response to Dr. Weaver's request to examine the utility of having Midterm grades at GSW.

10. Adjourn

- a. Michelle Dykes motioned to adjourn; seconded by Anne Jacobs; and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.