Georgia Southwestern State University

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 25, 2026

Admin 135

Attendance: Jason Berggren, Jonathan Carter, Mike Crosby, Debaleena Ghosh, Dawn Hart, Justin Hodges, Aliana Kaus, Jamie MacLennan, Brian Mallett, Benjamin Meador, Michele McKie, Satyaki Nan, Brian Parkinson, Jesse Russell, Rachet Abbott, Provost (Ex Officio), Kerry Palmer, President (Ex Officio)

Absent: Laura Gosa

Guest: Anne Jacobs

1. Called to order by President: Jonathan Carter, 10:03 am
2. Minutes and Agenda
    a. Approve September Agenda: motion: MacLennan, second: Meador
    b. Approve April Minutes: motion: Meador, second: MacLennan

3. Senate Activity Updates
    a. President's Cabinet Meeting Report: MacLennan
        i. New strategic plan has been implemented.
        ii. 90-hour bachelor's degree offered at Valdosta State University
        iii. New chancellor: Thomas A. Fanning

    b. Faculty Evaluation Task Force: MacLennan
        i. Committee will submit faculty evaluation revisions to faculty by October 5 for the Town Hall Meeting on 10/12
        ii. Requests in addition to recognition, a salary increase be considered for those individuals completing post-tenure review.

4. Public Address: Ann Jacobs
    a. Office of Access and Accommodations – suspected student cheating could be addressed by additional proctors or cameras in testing areas.

5. University Updates and Q+A
    a. President Kerry Palmer
        i. Governance: President Palmer emphasized the value of shared governance, supporting the Faculty Senate to make faculty feel their role is vital and respected.
        ii. Possible 90-hour degree: Dr. Abbot's will be exploring the possibility of GSW offering a 90-hour bachelor's degree which cannot duplicate a current program and must meet regional workforce needs.
        iii. Salary Study: USG salary study may be delayed with transition to a new chancellor; will explore start and end time. President is willing to conduct a study at GSW.
        iv. Small Group Listening Sessions: Dr. Palmer will meet with GSW departments in small-group settings to personally connect with faculty and staff, hear their perspectives, and better understand their experiences and needs.

v. Office of Access and Accommodations: Dr. Palmer will look into cameras in the Office of Accommodations (will talk to Bob Slenker about cost and protocols).
vi. USG environment: USG units operate in an environment where workforce development is a priority. USG charge is to ensure it is attractive for industry to come to our region.

b. Provost Rachel Abbott
   i. Strategic plan – underway and new template is in effect.
   ii. Bachelor of Applied Science for reduced credit. Cannot be a program we already have; will need one to two partners to provide letters of support; CORE impacts 34 credits. Career core, at least 30 upper-division hours, and last 30 career electives.
   iii. Dean searches for Education were extended and will close Oct. 18; Arts and Sciences 10/21 on-campus interviews around Thanksgiving break to have a goal to begin in January.
   iv. The ZKNU partnership ended in July 2026, and GSW is in the early stages of exploring a new partnership structured so that faculty would not need to travel and instruction would be online.
   v. The Office of Access and Accommodations received its audit results on Friday, September 18. The audit included four findings, including recommendations related to policies for emotional support animals and communication between faculty and the Office of Access and Accommodations. Faculty training may also be implemented in response to the findings.
   vi. Faculty Evaluation task force rubrics remain in process.
   vii. Friendly discussion about faculty evaluation rubrics.

6. Committee Recommendations
   a. Academic Affairs
      i. Biology Major Changes - approved, motion: Meador, second MacLennan
      ii. Biology Minor Changes – approved, motion: Berggren, second Meador
      iii. Master of Science in Computer Science (MSCS) Curriculum change – approved, motion: Berggren, second, MacLennan

7. Announcements - none

Adjourn: 10:59 am, Jonathan Carter

Respectfully submitted: Dawn Hart, Secretary