

Georgia Southwestern State University

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Date: September 8, 2025

Time: 3:02 PM

Location: Carter Two, Room 236

Attendees: MacLennan, Carter, Hart, LeJeune, Berggren, Cook, Crosby, Ghosh, Gosa, Kaus, McKie, Meador, Parkinson, Stovall, Wynn, Johnston (Ex Officio)

Absent: Abbott (Ex Officio)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Senate President Jamie MacLennan at 3:02 PM.

2. Approval of Agenda

- Motion to approve the agenda: Carter
- Second: Berggren
- **Result:** Approved

3. Approval of Minutes

- Motion: Berggren
- Second: Cook
- **Result:** Approved with amendments to correct spellings

4. Senate Activity Updates

- President's Cabinet Meeting Report - Dr. MacLennan
 - Cabinet meeting will be every third week of the month. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 16, at 2:00 p.m.
 - Merit pay increases
 - The FY2026 USG budget provides for a merit-based pay increase for up to 15% of faculty and staff with a focus on teaching and student success.
 - Generally, merit raise recipients require an overall rating of five. Dr. Johnston clarified that this does not necessarily exclude faculty and staff with an overall rating of four.
 - Master Plan

- Budget hearings will occur in October.
- Provost Search
 - The search currently has eight semifinalists. Four candidates will be invited to campus.
 - Candidates will be on campus late September, with finalization in October. The new provost is expected to start in Spring 2026.
- USG Faculty Council update – Dr. Crosby
 - Potential 10-month faculty contracts with summer availability.
 - Some USG institutions provide Faculty Senate Presidents with course release time or a stipend.
 - The Commission for Public Higher Education (CPHE) is a multi-state accrediting agency as an alternative to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The University System of Georgia will decide if CPHE will be chosen to replace SACSCOC.

5. University Updates with Q and A – President Johnston

- National Institute of Student Success (NISS) documents and playbook will be available on myGSW. Dr. Johnston is encouraging faculty to look over the four recommendations.
- Library construction on schedule; ribbon cutting expected week of October 13.
- Faculty contracts have moved to 10-month models.
- Chancellor's Office expects the university office to be open in core work areas and that faculty are available. Remote work will be considered on a case-by-case basis
- Performance-based funding to be tied to retention and campus availability. USG institutions typically require 5–7 office hours per week.
- Carter raised concern about inconsistent messaging on faculty availability during breaks. Dr. Johnston indicated three significant points:
 - Faculty are only required to be available during the breaks.
 - Meetings will only be called if there is a good reason not to have them when class is in session.
 - Notification of meetings will be given in advance.

- Carter asked about the AI Taskforce—Laura Kim Gosa serves on it; next meeting scheduled.

6. Agenda Adjustments

- Due to the absence of the Provost and HR Director, items 5b and 6 were removed.

7. Strategic Planning Brainstorming Session - Dr. Wendi Jenkins

- Senate members broke out into groups to continue discussions (which took place in Spring 2025) regarding the direction of the Strategic Plan. Dr. Jenkins encouraged participants to think “big picture”.
 - Participants keyed on excellence and articulating the relationship between the community, faculty, and students in partnership.
 - Members discussed the need for more honest conversations regarding items within the Strategic Plan and more transparency in campus discussions and information sharing.
 - Master Plan Brainstorming
 - Add pedestrian sidewalk paint
 - Creating spaces for student projects (maker and studio spaces)
 - Potential uses for the Lake House

8. Announcements

- Dr. Gosa- The GSW library will launch a digital repository for students and faculty to upload work; demo session planned. Details on a position to support the repository will be forthcoming.
- Dr. Gosa – A memorial service for Dr. Ramona Mulleins-Foreman, Associate Professor of Nursing, will be held in the Nursing Building.

9. Adjourn at 4:52 pm

Minutes by Dawn Hart