

University of West Georgia

General Faculty Meeting

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

Minutes

Approved October 30, 2009

- I. President Sethna called the meeting to order at 9:05am. with a warm welcome to the faculty and especially those who were new. His opening remarks to the faculty centered on the theme: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly. Dr. Sethna indicated the “Good” is that UWG is solid and firmly cast as one of the robust tier of institutions in the state and that we are building a first class destination university (defined as excellent students choosing UWG on a first or second choice basis). There are many positives, including, including buildings, that lead to becoming a destination university and UWG is on track. The “Bad” revolves around the budget challenges and the almost 12% reduction in the budget this past year with other budget cuts looming for this upcoming fiscal year. In spite of that, the President was positive that UWG would continue on a course of excellence. He encouraged faculty to attend the budget meeting later this week that would provide more details. The “Ugly” was highlighted by a power point and talk that he has been presenting to community groups and leaders. He explained and presented data showing that higher education in Georgia is efficient and that UWG is very efficient in the context of both Georgia and the United States. Investing in higher education is “visionary” in terms of helping our economy recover and grow. Data was also presented showing the effectiveness and time spent by faculty at UWG in teaching, research, and service. Some attacks on higher education were highlighted as, in fact, misplaced and inaccurate.
- II. Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the April 30, 2009 General Faculty Meeting were approved (with modifications as proposed by Chris Huff).
- III. Election of Parliamentarian: Mike Hester was elected as the Parliamentarian.
- IV. Cheryl Rice, Director of the Excel Center, presented the faculty award to Dr. Karen Smith from the Department of Mathematics.
- V. Dr. Robert Sanders presented information about the AAUP and made a case for support of this organization. He encouraged faculty to join.

- VI. Dr. Mary Hooper and Ms. Deirdre Haywood-Rouse presented information on the UWG Annual Fund (formerly known as A Day) and encouraged all to contribute.
- VII. Dr. Bruce Lyon and Ms. Patricia Pinkard presented the Ombuds Office and explained the purpose and benefits provided by the office to faculty, staff, and students.
- VIII. Dr. Jon Anderson, who is coordinating the SACS Fifth Year Report, explained the process, a general timeline of completing the work, and the committee structure. He urged all to get involved and to help in this important effort.
- IX. Ms. Jane Simpson was introduced as the new University General Counsel and spoke of her desire to be of help UWG. She expressed her intent to meet with Department this year.
- X. Dr. Sandra Stone, Acting VPAA, presented a motion to change UWG's Policies and Procedures, By-Laws of the Faculties and Faculty Senate, Article V. Amendment or Repeal of By-Laws, to remove the requirement for only working within "regular" meetings so as to allow for more rapid change of By-Laws while retaining adequate deliberation of such changes. The motion carried.
- XI. Professor Chris Huff introduced as a "first reading" a motion to approve various changes to the UWG Policies and Procedures Manual (appended to the agenda). This will be a formal motion at the next meeting of the General Faculty.
- XII. Dr. Sandra Stone (Acting VPAA) thanked the faculty for their support and for those in the Provost and VPAA Office for their work. She spoke to the faculty and presented major projects for 2009-2010 which included: implementing the new strategic plan; becoming a "destination" university; the SACS Fifth Year Report; and development of an academic master plan. She showed a video called "Shift Happens" which highlighted the rapid changes taking place in the world with resulting challenges. Faculty were challenged to identify strengths and needed resources. Along with this challenge, Dr. Stone asked faculty to consider what could be "let go" and how additional resources could be obtained. Examples of the results of strategic thinking and planning were presented such as retention, student growth, and doctoral programs. Additional challenges were also identified such as improving the graduation rate, NSSE survey results, and competition from others. A vision of how UWG can reach goals was shared. Dr. Stone presented ways in which Academic Affairs can be of help and encouraged faculty to ask themselves, "Why are we here?"

XIII. Brief closing remarks were presented by Dr. Sethna. He thanked the staff in his office for their help and also thanked those in the audience for attending.

XIV. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15am.

Submitted by Brent M. Snow