

General Faculty Meeting Minutes
May 1, 2026 2:00 PM
College of Education, Room 1-3

A. Call to Order and Announcements (Provost Preston)

- a. Called to order at 2:30pm by Provost Preston.
- b. HelpWest: faculty are encouraged to participate.
- c. Cybersecurity training is due per USG policy. Accounts will be locked on Monday if training is not completed. Easy to reactivate if the deadline is missed, but training must be completed twice per year.

B. Presidential Announcements (President Johnson)

- a. Enrollment. The President noted a productive first nine months in office. Freshman cohort was 1,495 this year, incoming class will be just as high if not higher. University is turning around from COVID declines. Housing applications also up and continuing to rise year to year: 70% occupancy of housing beds right now; will increase through the summer. Campus culture is improving and we are forging opportunities with sister institutions. Of the last freshman cohort there was a retention drop of 140 students or so; of that number, 109 dropped out and did not transfer to another institution. These students had GPAs largely above 3.0: need to do better job of retaining capable students. Will explore reasons as possible and improve monitoring tools for next cohort.
- b. Commencement upcoming, conferring more than 1800 degrees across five ceremonies. Reflects power and impact of regional comprehensive university mission. Faculty serve as important mentors for these students.
- c. Strategic Plan. UWG Next: goal for new plan in 2027, but will take time to create the best plan for the university. Faculty senate chair and other faculty will be part of the steering committee. Engagement opportunities for students and alumni will also occur: goal to receive as much feedback and input as possible. Faculty are encouraged to reach out to the President or steering committee members if there are questions.
- d. License plate. Brought back license plate: \$35 to register, of which \$10 comes back to UWG to support undergraduate scholarships.
- e. State budget. Session ended; higher education continues to be well supported at state levels. Chancellor is retiring, but wants to have formula funding re-evaluated after many years. Online instruction is being evaluated, with an argument that it should cost less. Issue is more nuanced than anticipated, resulted in a \$32 million cut to the budget (not specifically regarding online). Small tuition raises across the board to offset the \$32 million. Cost would have been about \$7 million to UWG; only \$12 million is usually unencumbered. Funds classrooms, vehicles, etc. Cut of \$7 million would have been a serious problem with larger

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ramifications. May be an indication of how online courses will be perceived and funded in the future. Right now we are about 50% in each modality: warrants further investigation. If enrollment is maintained and budget projections align with plans, will move to Phase II to help bring faculty and staff up to career midpoint salary levels. Faculty and staff identified as currently below these levels already received one time \$2 thousand supplemental pay. Small cap dollars received to finish Perry building, goal to also finish maker space; ribbon cutting in October.

- f. Enrollment management. Positive indicators that numbers will continue to increase.
- g. Leadership. National search resulted in Erin Williams as VP of Legal Affairs and Alicia Hargraves-Bradford as Chief HR Officer. Brought on Joseph Miller as VP of Enrollment Management: has private university background that will help in enrollment perspectives. Mark Clark brought on as Chief of Staff.
- h. President Johnson noted that UWG has achieved a great deal during his first academic year. He hopes that faculty are getting the conversations that they need from him; his goal is to be open and answer questions and explain logic behind decisions, with an emphasis on flexibility where appropriate. Faculty are encouraged to wear red on Fridays to promote transformational change and community identity; UWG should be destination instead of a stop along students' educational path, should be first choice. Chief story-teller: faculty help to write story, President gets to be a part.

C. Faculty Senate Business (Dr. Dylan McLean)

- a. Strategic planning. Faculty should understand their role in this process and should realize the President listens to faculty voices. Sal Peralta, Shelly Elman, and Jason Swift to represent faculty on the steering committee. Faculty should embrace idea of what is next; if we engage with one another, steering committee, etc. we can help the President take UWG to the next level.
- b. Minutes approval. Approved unanimously.
- c. Senate Chair and Parliamentarian elections. Serving has been a privilege and he hopes that many in the room are able to do this in the future; thank you. Erich Bergiel and Martin McPhail are the candidates for Senate Chair; both have been involved in faculty governance, have invested in our future and will represent us well. Statements are on the ballot. Parliamentarian candidate is Richard LaFleur.

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- d. Elections for post tenure review will be on ballot. Policy changes regarding statutes and bylaws, created in conjunction with the legal office: will be included in the ballot. Senate Chair criteria revision will also be on the ballot. Rules committee expanded eligibility.

D. Faculty Workload Timeline (Dr. Levi Ofoe and Dr. David Newton)

- a. Evolved from faculty senate charge. Looking at handbook section 127; includes vague language so it needs to be re-evaluated and expanded. Faculty Affairs Committee began working on revisions. Gathered information from sister institutions including Kennesaw, Georgia Southern, and Houston. Will be using information within different colleges here as well to expand and clarify language in the section. Provost convened the committee in March.
- b. Moving forward, will work on developing policies and drafts in the fall semester; will share with faculty senate and leadership. Academic programs will work in parallel regarding tenure and promotion and annual evaluation policies so that all are aligned. Goal for January 2027 implementation. Group has been meeting with faculty and relevant units to help understand process from a number of different perspectives. Guided by USG policies, although those are very broad as well; looking at internal documents. Goal to make language more helpful in designing workload guidelines. Workload models from other institutions are more developed than ours; happy to share with faculty, contact Deans or Drs. Ofoe and Newton with questions. Faculty are encouraged to talk with colleagues at other institutions to inform feedback. Credit vs. contact hours are one question: talk with others to see best practices. USG teaching and learning conference networking and feedback as well.
- c. Opportunities and challenges: defining courses as units of work across academic disciplines; defining appropriate expectations for teaching, scholarship, and service; alignment of workload policy with other professional review policies; defining cycles of evaluation (annual and multi-year); faculty workload supporting institutional and student success priorities; defining specific objectives and measurable goals with evidence. Need for model that can be applied across units and colleges. Deans need to be involved as they make approvals and recommendations to Provost and President. Need to be in alignment with tenure and promotion and annual evaluation policies. Ensure that faculty work aligns with institutional and student success priorities. Making sure that objectives and measurable goals have evidence.

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d. Questions:

- i. Q: How will work in parallel occur regarding the policy development? A: Thinking of the aspects that go into our work so that different types of faculty work can be accounted for; what constitutes service and scholarship in disciplines. Identify now, work in aspirational goals, consider grants and how that translates to workload.
- ii. Comment: If we are proposing a policy and identify what is important to the institution, factor it in now, and build in now instead of adding later.

e. The Provost encouraged faculty to be engaged in this process.

E. Teaching and Excellence Awards (Mandi Campbell)

- a. USG Regent's Teaching Awards. Highest level of recognition in the system. Nominated the Philosophy Program, School of Communication for high impact practices and experiential learning. Drs. Deline and Wilcox were faculty nominees.
- b. Governor's Teaching Fellows Program. Drs. Claire Ezekial and Melissa Jackson were selected for UWG's Governor's Teaching Fellow Academic Year Symposia; Dr. Michael Orsega was selected for UWG's Governor's Teaching Fellow May Symposium.

F. Grants and Contracts (Dr. Brian Mosier)

- a. 17% growth this year, \$5.5 million in awards. Congratulations to faculty. 43 proposals submitted, 28 awarded. About half submitted were awarded. Acknowledged work of PIs and co-PIs.
- b. ALG recipients. First year of research grant in this process. The Provost mentioned important impact on student success and access to materials.

G. Promotion and Tenure

- a. College of Education (Dean Dishman)
 - i. One out of every five undergraduates in the USG system went to UWG for education degrees; 1 in 3 at the graduate level. Second largest education college in the system.
 - ii. Dr. Jennifer Allen, professor of literacy education.
 - iii. Dr. Laura Sheneman, senior lecturer of library media.
 - iv. Dr. Jessica Thompson, senior lecturer of library media.
 - v. Dr. Morgan Jenkins, first clinical associate professor; counseling, higher education, and speech pathology.

General Faculty Meeting Minutes
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- vi. Dr. Levi Ofoe, associate professor of teaching and research.
- b. CHASS (Dean Samples)
 - i. Dr. Stephanie Chalifoux, professor of history.
 - ii. Dr. Larry Rivers, professor of history.
 - iii. Dr. Talia Weiner, associate professor psychology.
- c. Perry (Dean Butler)
 - i. Dr. Venna Paliwal, professor of mathematics.
 - ii. Ms. Holly Wallace, senior lecturer of chemistry.
- d. RCOB (Dean Upson)
 - i. Dr. Yun Cheng, professor of accounting.
 - ii. Ms. Constance Lantz Farrell, senior lecturer of management.
- e. SCFM (Dean Yates)
 - i. Dr. John Sewell, professor.
- f. University College (Dean Owen)
 - i. Senior Lecturer
 - 1. Ms. Brittney Baxter, discipline.
 - 2. Mr. Kyle Carter, communication.
 - 3. Dr. Sheikh Drammeh, civic engagement and public service.
 - 4. Mr. Ricky Johnson, general education.
- g. The Provost extended congratulations to all and thanked all faculty who participate in reviews and help support the promotion and tenure process.

H. New Business

- a. None.
- b. The Provost echoed the importance of being true to ourselves. Every day at the university, faculty are making an impact. Was asked recently about an event that made him smile: there are different answers each day including today celebrating faculty, commencement, etc. emblematic of work being done here. Faculty work is life-changing, extended thanks.

I. Adjourned

- a. 3:51pm by Provost Preston.

Respectfully submitted by Laura McCloskey Wolfe, Art Program faculty member and Executive Secretary.