

UWG ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FACULTY AND STAFF (ARFS)
Coordinating Council Meeting
Neva Lomason Memorial Library
July 14, 2023

Present: Anne Richards (presiding), Meg Cooper, Michael Crafton, Patricia Durrough, Kevin Hibbard, Cecilia Lee, Ross Miller, Lauren Niedringhaus (HR Liaison/Ex-Officio Council Member), Sally Roberts, Francie Taylor, Anita Thomas, John von Eschenbach, and Nancy Watkins.

Absent: Frank Pritchett.

Guests: MaKena Burns (University Advancement) and Mardel Shumake (ITS).

Call to Order and Approval of Minutes: Anne Richards called the meeting to order at 10 am in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Neva Lomason Library. A motion by Meg Cooper with a second by Anita Thomas to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2023, meeting passed unanimously.

Human Resources/ITS Updates: A significant amount of time was devoted to the issue of retirees losing their UWG email accounts. Lauren Niedringhaus and Mardel Shumake faced several questions including (1) What is driving the retiree email concerns at the USG? (2) We were told the USG ITS handbook says “no” to retiree email accounts even though we have learned that not all USG institutions have developed policies similar to those at West Georgia, and this is not factually correct. Why is this? (3) Will an error response be set up to redirect emails to new accounts? (4) Will the process at the Regents’ level be explored?

In addition, concerns were raised about an “image problem” regarding how retirees are looked upon due to such matters as the lack of transparency regarding a dedicated budget, the decision to terminate retiree retention of campus email, the inability of our scholarship chair to sit on a campus scholarship committee, and the issue of retirees being denied access to mechanisms designed for getting information or making contacts regarding various services available on campus. It was further mentioned that some university personnel may believe that a retiree’s contacts with former students end at retirement or when a course has been completed. Yet this is not typically the case. Long after their involvement in particular courses, students seek out former faculty and staff for letters of recommendation, career counseling, and so forth.

Lauren Niedringhaus and Mardel Shumake approached these questions and concerns with the following information:

- President Kelly is aware of the ARFS listserv email responses, but this decision is a piece of a much larger process related to running the business of an institution of higher education; the focus is not on retirees only.
- There has been an increase in costs for cybersecurity insurance, accompanied by a decrease in coverage for problematic events. In addition, many insurance companies have dropped their policies altogether due to escalating costs. Once coverage is lost, the

cost to get it back is huge, and the cost to rebuild everything once a system is compromised is considerable.

- The cost is high because the reality of the issue is not “if you will be hacked” but “when you will be hacked.” Most breaches are occurring when someone accesses an existing email account.
- Although faculty have already been advised not to provide students with personal email addresses, the question of what happens when a retiree whose campus email has been discontinued returns to teaching has yet to be addressed.
- The August 31 deadline (which many CC members indicated is too soon to be able to move all their existing contacts to their new email accounts) will not be extended.
- The gmail interface is the one being chosen by most retirees.
- The FAQ’s page regarding the email issue is being updated regularly to include information on how to move folders from the old to the new email account. Other than this, retirees who find transitioning from one email address to another daunting are advised to contact the ITS Helpdesk.
- For the time being, emeritus/emerita faculty will be able to keep their westga.edu email accounts. It is unclear, however, when a decision will be made about them or how long emeriti faculty will have to make this change if this is eventually mandated. Some emeriti are moving off campus email anyway.
- Pending retirees are being told there will be no westga.edu email account, but anyone needing an extension to the August 31 deadline should contact the ITS Service Desk.
- Hang tags for retiree cars will be available shortly once a link is established by HR. Given the delays, there will be a grace period for those who can’t renew parking passes by August 1st. There will be some changes to parking options which will be detailed once hang tags are available; there are no parking restrictions between 4 pm and 7 am (with the exception of handicapped spaces which are only for those eligible). ARFS was asked not to send out the link for parking permit applications until issues are resolved, and we are given the go-ahead; those who have already applied are on hold in terms of receiving their permits. Retirees and one guest can still enter any athletic event for free.
- There is a possibility that an ARFS representative will be allowed to access the ALL-FAC and ALL-STAFF listserv.

ARFS Network/University Advancement: MaKena Burns reported that ARFS is now identified as a unique type of network under University Advancement but remains affiliated as well with HR as it relates to retiree benefits, the ARFS website, and the ARFS listserv. In essence, ARFS is now a hybrid association. (The *UWG Chapter and Network Guide*, which was distributed, does not really apply to us—among other things, we are already an organization.) Under the University Advancement umbrella, *UWG Weekly* could be sent to retirees once all emails are changed. MaKena could do something focused on retirees, if we wish. ARFS could become more involved with UWG through volunteer opportunities, and access to the reservations system and other campus processes could be simplified. Budget and expenses still require approval (by either HR or University Advancement depending on the situation) but will continue to be handled using the existing HR account for ARFS.

Annual Reunion/Annual Meeting: The annual reunion will be October 7, 2023, in the Education Center Rooms 4 and 5. Meg handed out a list of retirees for this year, including those

to be honored at the annual reunion, and reviewed the agenda for the program. It was agreed that since the event will be occurring under the Advancement umbrella, the time for the event will be 2.5 hours. Cecilia Lee will share one of her own poems with the group. Following the reception honoring new retirees and the annual business meeting will be an HR session on topics of interest to retirees led by Lauren Niedringhaus and a Cybersecurity session led by Mardel Shumake. Meg will check to see if the College of Education dean or another COE representative would welcome the attendees. The commemorative tribute booklet is in its final stages, and Meg Cooper is continuing to check on retirees who have passed away and are to be listed on the “In Memoriam” page.

Updates on USG Retiree Council/GA-HERO: Anne Richards identified the new leadership team for the USGRC; it will be led by Ed Rondeau, Georgia Tech. Anne also mentioned that information will be provided in the next issue of *The Rejuvenator* about a means of establishing greater cybersecurity protection on the post-65 retiree’s Alight account. She also distributed copies of the finalized information from the USG for survivors upon the death of a retiree. Anyone wishing to attend the next meeting of the GA-HERO executive committee on September 6, 2023, via ZOOM is welcome to do so.

Committee Reports:

- Nominating Committee – Current officers will continue for another year, but at-large members will be needed. Meg will seek several volunteers to serve on the committee and will present the full slate of candidates, first at the next Coordinating Council meeting and then at the annual meeting. The goal is to bring more diversity and broader representation on the Coordinating Council. The group felt that we could make accommodations for CC members who do not use email if that is needed.
- Program Committee – see annual reunion/annual meeting information above.
- Scholarship Committee – John von Eschenbach reported that applications go out in November, a decision is made in March, and the September issue of *The Rejuvenator* will publicize the timeline and recommend that retirees urge eligible candidates to apply.
- Widow/Widower Committee – A former student sent Anne a packet of the materials he created after his wife died to help him deal with his grief and loss. A copy of these materials has been forwarded to Julie Dobbs, Ingram Library, who created a support group for widows/widowers.
- Ad-hoc Newsletter Committee – Anne will tweak the upcoming issue of the ARFS newsletter, *The Rejuvenator*, as Frank Pritchett is dealing with health issues.
- Ad-hoc By-Laws Committee – The by-laws committee will revisit several items based on comments received from the CC. These include Article 3, Section 2, to include missing words and rework the number of those pre-retirement eligible for ARFS membership in order to broaden the category of those able to join; and Article 5, Section 2, to eliminate repetitious use of “president.”

Information/Discussion Items:

- Emeritus/Emerita Policy Development – According to the USG, each institution is expected to develop its own policies within the guidelines approved by the BOR in April of 2023. Farooq Khan is chair of the Faculty Development Committee of the Faculty

Senate that is developing the UWG policy. Anne sent some suggestions to this committee for consideration based on issues raised in the past by retirees. She also sent out an email survey to emeriti faculty to inform them of the new BOR policy guidelines and shared information she had provided the committee and invited emeriti faculty to let her and/or the Committee know of any additional thoughts they wanted to make known on this topic. Of the 151 persons with emeritus/emerita status, 33 have passed away, 5 were seriously ill, no email addresses were available for 20, and 6 were bounced back due to nonfunctional addresses; 87 were successfully surveyed, and the responses received indicated they continue to be actively involved with professional activities in keeping with their status.

- Naming of Observatory for Bob Powell – A suggestion to name the observatory after Dr. Powell based on his 50 years of service to UWG and the Physics Department had been conveyed to Anne. In following up on this suggestion, Anne learned that the cost to name a building after someone is at least \$25,000—and likely more. As a result, no action was taken at this time.
- Retiree-related Scholarships/Endowments – There remains confusion regarding which of those reported to Anne initially are active vs. inactive, who can apply for them, what their purposes are, etc. More information has been requested and is expected to be available before long.
- A request from a soon-to-be retiree who wanted to be included in the ARFS listerv and receive our newsletter was discussed. Until a change in the bylaws is considered and approved, it was agreed that Anne will simply forward information of interest to this person individually via his campus email account.

The next meeting, which will focus in large measure on the annual retiree reception and annual meeting, is tentatively scheduled for early September. Anne will confirm the date and location in the near future.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Francie Taylor