The meeting was called to order by the chair, Murray Brown, at 2:04 p.m. The first item of business was the approval of the October minutes. After some discussion, the minutes were approved with no changes.

There was a discussion of the role of the Committee on Statutes and Bylaws in Senate business. A review of the University Statutes (Article XIV: Amendments, Section 2) indicates that the committee “shall serve to initiate and review proposals to amend the University Statutes”. A review of the Senate Bylaws (Article IX: Amendments) indicates proposals that will amend the Senate Bylaws are routed through the Statutes and Bylaws Committee for review and recommendations. Clearly, this committee has a central role in Senate business. Dr. Brown stated that he would like for committees who are sending proposals to S&B for review to provide “working language” and a rationale as well. This would expedite the work of the S&B Committee.

The next item of business was a discussion of the proposed changes to the Senate calendar. John Marshall suggested a change in the proposed text, University Statutes, Article VI, Section 3 because a new records retention policy had recently been passed: “Records older than twelve (12) months and not needed by the new committee shall be deposited in the University archives handled in accordance with the policies of the Board of Regents and the Georgia Records Act of 1975, as amended.” Dr. Brown will contact John de Castro regarding Senate meeting times. A motion was made to accept the proposal with the changes Dr. Marshall proposed. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

The next item of business was a discussion of a proposal to add the ad hoc Committee of Chairs to the Senate Bylaws. It was stated that the Committee of Chairs, as proposed, is not consistent with all other standing committees in that there is no representational breakdown by college and academic unit. Also, the duties, as listed, are vague and overlap with the duties of the Senate Executive Committee. [Senate Bylaws, Article VII, Section 1.C.5. “…the Executive Committee shall, when consideration is being given to referring any matter to a standing committee, determine the standing committee which shall have jurisdiction…”] If the Committee of Chairs becomes a standing committee, it would have the power to bring forth policy to the full Senate rather than have it routed through one of the other standing committees. This would differ from the current policy as stated in the Senate Bylaws (Article VI. Section 1) which states, “the regular operations of the Senate shall follow a committee review procedure. Unless the Senate by a two-thirds majority votes acts to suspend committee review of a specific matter and act as a committee of the whole, all matters of substance shall be submitted for committee study, recommendations, and/or action prior to definitive action by the Senate. Standing committee business may be initiated by each committee, the chair of the University Senate, an individual member of the University Senate, or by a vote of the general faculty.”

Currently the ad hoc Committee of Chairs can discuss matters and if it is determined that an issue needs to be reviewed, it can recommend which standing committee needs to review the issue. That standing committee has proportional representation from all academic units and members of that committee have an interest or expertise in the area. If the Committee of Chairs becomes a standing committee, it could circumvent the current committee structure by bringing policies forward without that representational review. There was some discussion on what a committee chair’s role is. Chairs are elected to be the leader of that particular committee and not to represent their committee members on another committee. It is the Executive Committee that is elected to be the leaders of the Senate not the individual committee chairs.

A motion was made and seconded that the committee rejects the recommendation for the formal establishment of a Committee of Chairs. The committee rejects the notion that a standing committee can be created that can bypass the established jurisdiction of the other standing committees of the Senate. An amendment was made and accepted that states that as the Committee of Chairs is proposed, it does not have any mechanism to ensure representation by the various academic colleges and units. The motion passed unanimously. Dr. Brown added that the Committee of
Chairs could operate as a subcommittee of the Executive Committee.

Dr. Brown distributed a proposal given to him by Christine Gallant, chair of the Cultural Diversity Committee. Dr. Brown had just received it and the committee had not had any time to review it. It was agreed that this item would be put on the agenda for the next regular meeting.

There was a brief discussion of electronic meetings as stated in the revised edition of Robert's Rules of Order. Dr. Brown agreed to summarize the discussion and send the summary to John de Castro.

Since there was no further business, the chair adjourned the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Nell Stone,
Committee Assistant