GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
STAFF COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2009
Sinclair Suite, Student Center


Excused: Amanda Brown, Nigel Harris, Carla Hines, Kevea Mickey, San Miller, Karmen Milton, LaRose Raston, David Smart, Frances Williams

Absent: Jess Aaron, Fred Childs, Carolyn Copeland-Simmons, Sharon German, Toure Heywood, Cherecia Kline, Elisha Jarrett, Phillip Mitchem, Teresa Rucker, John Streater, Cassandra Thornton, Kim Walker, Valerie Woods

Guests: Mark Becker, Dione Morton, Linda Nelson, Lisa Shepard, Chad VanGordon, M. Qureslu, Derrick Morse, Annette Butler, Debbie Rupp, Andrea Be, Eric McGovern

Opening Business
John Medlock called the meeting to order at 3:00. The minutes from the January 21, 2009 Staff Council meeting were approved as presented.

Dr. Mark Becker

Georgia State University President Mark P. Becker discussed the fluidity of the current budget situation at the February 19 Staff Council meeting. After his remarks, he gave council members the opportunity to ask questions and share concerns.

Dr. Becker started the meeting with good news: student enrollment for spring 2009 is very high and record numbers of students are applying for admission in the fall. He also noted that the recently passed federal stimulus package should flow much-needed dollars into the state’s budget and will provide additional funding for Pell Grants and research projects.

The current economic downturn is like none any of us has experienced, President Becker said. Facing dwindling revenues, the Governor has recently announced an additional one
percent cut to the FY09 budgets of state agencies, bringing the total amount cut thus far to 10.5 percent. Dr. Becker indicated that the additional cut had been anticipated by the university, and it could be accommodated through existing budget reduction strategies.

Shrinking the FY10 budget will be more challenging, according to Dr. Becker, because the university will need to include permanent cuts in the original budget. He reiterated that the factors that will shape the FY10 budget are still very much in flux. He indicated that he would look for effective ways of informing the university about the budget as soon as more is known, likely after the Legislature adjourns in March.

Budget-savings ideas that have already been implemented or examined by the university include cutting back on travel expenses, hiring in only critical areas of need, increasing the university’s teaching capacity, and expanding conservation efforts. In the latter regard, council members suggested the development of a group focused on energy and water conservation. Creating a website for submitting and sharing cost-cutting ideas was also proposed.

Staff Council members thanked Dr. Becker for the important information he shared at the meeting and for hearing their suggestions and concerns.

**Human Resources**

Linda Nelson, the Assistant Vice-President of HR, was in attendance at the meeting. She indicated that HR has been doing a great deal of research and is looking at options for the current budget conditions. She discussed ‘working smarter’ and implementing lean six sigma. The HRAC committee is also discussing current options and policies for lay-offs are being discussed. The Staff Council looks forward to building a relationship with HR and hopes to provide guidance on future policies that affect staff.

**Recognition**

John Medlock recognized Staff Council members who would be ending their term. He thanked those members and invited them to return. All outgoing members will receive a certificate.

**Annual Report**

The annual report was presented to the Staff Council. Any suggestions or corrections can be emailed to John Medlock.

**Elections**

Staff Council elections will end on Friday, February 20, 2009.

**Schedule**

- March 10 – New member orientation
- March 18 – First Staff Council meeting of the new term. We will submit preferences for committees at this meeting.
- New committee meetings will be held in late March or early April and the chair of the committee will be elected at that meeting.
Senate Reports

**Culture and Diversity**
Kenée Stephens discussed topics, including sustainability and the infrastructure, that the committee is preparing for a Senate report to Dr. Becker. The committee is reviewing the Advancement for Women annual report.

**Academic Programs**
Shelly-Ann Williams announced that the committee approved several new business concentrations.

**Planning and Development**
Sandra Garber stated that the committee discussed topics for the report to the president including safety on campus, pedestrian safety, and the importance of strategic plans. She will also be chairing a sub-committee on sustainability.

**Research**
Sandra Garber discussed the committee’s topics for Dr. Becker which included budget concerns and the impact of the stimulus and the legislature.

**Faculty Affairs**
MaryAnne Gaunt stated that the committee discussed their topics for Dr. Becker which included governance.

**Budget**
Amber Amari announced that the committee discussed budget reduction strategies, including faculty and staff furloughs and salary reductions. The current faculty contract would not allow furloughs unless voluntary.

**FACP**
John Medlock reported that the committee heard an update on current budget developments and discussed possible strategies for making FY10 budget reductions.

**Announcements**
- Sandra Garber announced that Georgia Tech is attempting to start a Staff Council program. She introduced Andrea Bé, a former GSU employee who is now at Tech, who is considering developing a council proposal.

**Adjournment**
The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.

*Recorded by Susan Vogtner.*