

Middle Georgia State College Faculty Senate
AY 2013-2014
Minutes of Meeting No. 4
PSC 112
Friday, November 1, 2013

Present:

Mr. Charlie Agnew (Associate Professor of Art)

Ms. Tina Ashford (Associate Professor of Information Technology)

Ms. Liz Aycock (Professor of Nursing)

Dr. Charla Baker (Assistant Professor of Mathematics)

Guests:

Dr. Rebecca Corvey (Dean, School of Health Sciences)

Dr. Sumitra Himangshu (Assistant Professor of Education)

Dr. Neil Rigole (Center for Teaching Innovation)

Ms. Loleta Sartin (Chair, Academic Affairs Committee)

Dr. Mary Wearn (Assistant Vice President for Academic Policy and Planning)

Dr. Bunker called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. She reminded the Senate of the SACS visit
com to orde5.B1

Dr. Bunker offered a report from Ms. Nancy Stroud. Ms. Stroud received 41 emails from across the five campuses including some containing suggestions from entire units. The suggestions from those emails that are currently being pursued are

- automatically turning off computers in labs at a certain time,
- consolidating classes into certain buildings at certain times,
- reducing inter-campus travel by using technology, and
- reviewing phone bills for unused lines.

The suggestions that require further study are

- maintaining a four-day workweek year-round, and
- moving to VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) phone service. Ms. Borck added that VoIP has been studied in the past but not pursued. Mr. Houston noted that it may be much less expensive than conventional phone service.

Among the suggestions not being pursued are

- cutting off land lines in faculty offices,
- reimbursing travel below state-mandated rates, and
- some ideas whose implementation costs would outweigh immediate savings.

The proposed efficiencies relating to buildings and grounds, facilities use, service-level positions, underused programs, staffing at the Robins Residence Center, and the staffing and use of the Macon campus health clinic have all gone forward as part of the report.

Dr. Bunker introduced Dr. Wearn for an update from the Office of Academic Affairs.

Dr. Wearn pointed out that next year's reduced budget results from reduced enrollment. The faculty's role in enrollment and especially retention should be emphasized. Faculty should reach out to students to make sure they are advised and registered.

Dr. Wearn then reminded the Senate that a new committee has been formed to work on administrator evaluations. All Schools, all campuses except Warner Robins, the Senate, and the Executive Committee are represented on the committee. Dr. Wearn stated that her connection to the committee is through the issue of assessment. Every administrative level is assessed and in the future, assessment and evaluation will be tied together. Dr. Venn has emphasized the need for administrators to focus on communication from the deans' level down through chairs to faculty.

Dr. Collins asked whether faculty members will be able to choose for themselves whom they evaluate.

Dr. Wearn stated that such an option was possible but that in any case, questions would be tailored to the relevant faculty-administrator relationship.

Dr. Collins suggested the importance of encouraging evaluation within the context of that

Dr. Bunker asked whether this issue is a matter for the Library Committee. Ms. Borck stated that it could be, but probably should not be pursued until the spring.

Dr. Bunker then introduced the subject of electronic meetings. Dr. Venn is interested in electronic meetings as a supplement to face-to-face meetings in a way that strikes an inclusive balance, advancing both governance and a sense of community. Middle Georgia State College now has that balance available through two possible technologies:

Video conferencing rooms (which are also used for classes) which will be ready for a pilot meeting in December, and

Collaborate, which is used for virtual meetings across multiple locations. Collaborate training is currently in progress.

Dr. Venn has asked the Senate, the Executive Committee, and the standing committee chairs and chairs-elect to take the lead in training and preparedness, leading to a critical mass of approximately 60 faculty members with training and experience on both video conferencing and Collaborate. Dr. Bunker will meet with Dr. Venn on November 5 to further discuss these issues.

Dr. Rigole explained the differences between Collaborate and video conferencing. Collaborate is for individual use while video conferencing is for groups. Both may also be used at the same time. However, picture and audio quality on Collaborate is much more limited because it uses a webcam. Video conferencing picture and audio quality are much better, and video conferencing is much more conducive to participation for larger groups. Some training for a video conferencing “moderator” would be necessary. In each case, a group must start by identifying the best platform for a particular meeting. On the Cochran campus, the video conferencing room in Walker 306 will be ready as soon as Friday, November 8. The Dublin and Warner Robins campuses are updating their video conferencing facilities and the Eastman campus is working on ensuring sufficient bandwidth. On the Macon campus, several video conferencing rooms are available including PSC 112 and some that belong to the Conference Center. The Senate could pilot both methods at its meeting on December 6 by holding a two-way video conference between Cochran and Macon for one hour and then an hour of Collaborate training in labs fitted with webcams.

Dr. Wallace asked whether Collaborate requires a webcam. Dr. Rigole explained that a teleconference option is possible with Collaborate but that everyone must use either traditional telephone or VoIP. Although webcam and audio are not required for Collaborate, the Senate must decide what its standard will be for participation in a meeting.

Dr. Wallace pointed out that most office computers do not have webcams. Dr. Bunker responded that Dr. Rigole is currently compiling a list of equipment that will be available for checkout. While we want to avoid unnecessary expenditure, we should document our needs. For Collaborate sessions, we may not yet need full capacity for everyone but could “practice” with the technology and figure out the best approach over the next few weeks. Dr. Venn has said that she is willing to invest in equipment. Dr. Wallace added that if the Senate could figure out the easiest and most economical way to provide that equipment, the benefits would extend beyond the Senate. Mr. Houston suggested providing a small number of cameras and microphones for checkout. Dr. Wallace added that several people could pool resources in the same room.

Dr. Bunker reiterated that the distinction of one person at a location versus many in the same place is the difference between Collaborate and video conferencing. She suggested Video conferencing is likely to be best for the Senate but a standing committee such as Campus Safety, which is a small group spread over many locations, could meet via a Collaborate session.

Dr. Wallace expressed concern about the need to check out and return equipment. Dr. Bunker suggested that doing so was likely to become a routine part of faculty procedure. Using Collaborate for smaller standing committees and boards would be practical and would save people travel time as well as money. On December 6, the Senate will have an opportunity both to video conference and to pilot a Collaborate session so that, if these technologies are viable, we can bring our expertise to other groups. Ms. Ashford added that the School of Information

