

EAST GEORGIA STATE COLLEGE
University System of Georgia
Swainsboro, Georgia 30401

FALL SEMESTER 2017 FACULTY MEETING
Friday, December 1, 2017
Vice President Deborah Vess, Presiding

The Fall Semester General Faculty Meeting began at 1:00 p.m. in C101 of the Academic Building on the EGSC Swainsboro Campus. The meeting was also live streamed to EGSC Statesboro in H133 and to EGSC Augusta in B003.

Dr. Deborah Vess called the faculty meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Approval of the Minutes

Dr. Vess presented the minutes of the Spring 2017 Faculty Meeting. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Dr. Walt Mason with a second from Dr. Yelena White. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Approval of Fall 2017 Graduation Candidates

The following order of business was to vote on the fall 2017 graduation candidates as provided by Dr. Donald Avery, Vice President of Student Affairs. Motion to approve the list was made by David Strickland with a second from Dr. Breana Simmons. The faculty voted unanimously to approve the graduates. Each graduate must satisfy all requirements to graduate from EGSC.

Budget Updates and Concerns

Further consideration must be given to budget reductions due to a drop in enrollment which impacts the budget for this fiscal year. It appears enrollment may continue to dip for spring and fall. State appropriations are expected to remain level. Because enrollment has decreased we will also lose tuition revenue and further budget cuts are possible for next year.

Dr. Vess and the Deans worked to address this situation by prioritizing positions and allocating resources in the most effective way possible. There is currently a hiring freeze therefore and open positions were eliminated. These initiatives did not get us to the needed reduction. There must be a 10% decrease in operation expenditures and a 5% personnel cut. This will be difficult because there are few areas that can spare any faculty or staff. Academic Affairs cut open positions, streamlined PT allocation, and gave less release time for spring and fall. The emphasis was on maintaining all of our full-time faculty positions and the initiatives described above enabled us to save 2-3 full-time positions. Other measures include the practice of eliminating the use of partially benefitted part-time faculty (those teaching more than 7 contact hours). In some lecture courses in the Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, labs were separated from lectures in the areas of Math/Science. This will allow part-time STEM faculty to continue to teach two lecture courses.

There could be further cuts next year and possibly for spring to include as many as 20 positions. Individuals in those positions will be shifted to other areas if possible so that no jobs are lost.

Questions from the Floor

Dr. Eric Wruck asked if eCore came out the EGSC budget. Dr. Vess responded that does not and was not factored into the budget cuts. eCore is a separate entity from which we do not receive tuition revenue. It is helpful to faculty however, because it provides additional income.

Dr. Walt Mason inquired about recruitment efforts. Dr. Vess responded by stating enrollment is down in Statesboro as well as Swainsboro but continued recruitment efforts are underway. Measures are in place to increase enrollment. Dr. Avery noted we have two dedicated recruiters and two that have other jobs as well. Dr. Mason noted there should be a greater recruitment presence at events such as Cross Country Track Meets, Wrestling matches, etc.

Retention is an issue. It appears course scheduling issues such as overlapping courses, course availability, and number of seats available could be affecting retention. There were measures put in place to ensure better access to courses. Program Coordinators, as well as advisement staff, are going to be asked to take a look at the fall 2018 schedule to ensure that there are no overlapping courses in the degree plan pathway for that term. Our future depends on the retention of students and available programming. The 3rd and 4th semesters seem to be the greatest areas of concern. Dr. Rozier noted the need for more student interaction and involvement in student organizations. One option is to offer more honorary organizations and to embed the Service Seal of Distinction in some of our courses.

Dr. Rozier has been very busy with two accreditation projects. The SACS site visit is coming up to address a substantive change in Health Sciences. EGSC did not previously offer the baccalaureate in any health sciences area or any other health sciences programs. Dr. Rozier is also preparing for accreditation through ACEN.

The question was posed as to when faculty will be notified of job loss. Dr. Vess assured faculty that their positions were not likely to be affected. There will be a decrease in operating expenses, and so travel will be more restricted. Faculty may also be asked to take on additional students in courses.

Dr. Howell expressed concerns regarding scheduling to include under and over filling classes as well as support for academically challenged students. Dr. Vess noted we will begin to offer block scheduling to incoming freshmen. Faculty will be encouraged to adopt more learner-centered approaches to increase engagement and, therefore, student success.

Other Business

The question was posed as to whether we have a Cell Phone Usage Policy. We will look back and see if something went through APCC and the Faculty Senate. We also be taking a look at our attendance policy because students are not going to class. An early intervention policy would be helpful in addressing this issue. GradesFirst is a good tool for monitoring attendance when used.

Dr. Tristin Denley, Chief Academic Officer, will be making a visit to EGSC in the new future. He will be discussing the new learning support requirements. We will no longer be offering the Learning Support Foundations courses. Changes will be made to the catalog to include pre-requisite and co-requisite changes. Studies show students in co-req models perform better. The student feels they are acquiring needed credit and they are engaged for a longer period of time with the faculty member. This approach will be implemented by fall 2018.

Dr. Sharman posed the question of course expansion at the Statesboro location. Dr. Vess noted that it is important for us to determine whether we have the right programs available for our students. For example, should we have more programs in Health Sciences, Education, and Business? EGSC is currently working on a Bachelor of Applied Science program proposal.

Dr. White asked if Swainsboro students could take Statesboro classes. Dr. Vess noted the students would have to pay increased fees and space and course availability is limited.

A new Advising Policy is in place. We want advisement to be performed by faculty for the students in their majors and faculty should form a collaborative relationship with the ACE Center.

To increase student success, there will be additional sections of Quantitative Skills and Reasoning available for the fall. Faculty and advisors should be mindful of the appropriate math course for their chosen pathway. Many of our students don't need Algebra if they are not STEM Majors.

Another option for our students will be to offer Area A Courses in an 8 week format. We would have the student engaged for a longer period of time every day. Many students do better on a short-term format.

We will be having workshops for DegreeWorks training to address advising challenges. Faculty are strongly encouraged to attend.

Students on the AA CC transfer pathways need to be transitioned to our new Associates degrees with disciplinary distinction. Faculty advisors are encouraged to take an active role in getting these students moved.

G2C Update-A team has been working on the College Algebra course and a redesign of this course. Eventually Four courses will be updated in the A&B areas of the core curriculum.

Motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Walt Mason. The meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Williams

Dr. Deborah Vess, Vice President for Academic Affairs