

USG Staff Council Meeting Minutes May 20, 2020

Meeting began at 10am

Roll call

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| • Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College | Yes |
| • Albany State University | Yes |
| • Augusta University | Yes |
| • Clayton State University | No |
| • College of Coastal Georgia | No |
| • Columbus State university | Yes |
| • Dalton State College | No |
| • East Georgia State College | No |
| • Fort Valley State University | Yes |
| • Georgia College & State University | No |
| • Georgia Gwinnett College | Yes |
| • Georgia Highlands College | No |
| • Georgia Institute of Technology | Yes |
| • Georgia Southern University | Yes |
| • Georgia Southwestern State University | No |
| • Georgia State University | Yes |
| • Gordon State College | Yes |
| • Kennesaw State University | Yes |
| • Middle Georgia State University | Yes |
| • Savannah State University | Yes |
| • South Georgia State College | No |
| • University of Georgia | Yes |
| • University of North Georgia | No |
| • University of West Georgia | Yes |
| • Valdosta State University | Yes |

- 65 total participants on the call
- *Dalton State College unable to attend because their institution has blocked Zoom participation due to security reasons.

Minutes approved by Yvonne Landers and seconded by Sam Gurski

Financial Report – Jasper Stewart

- Balance in account: \$4,732.26

USG update – Juanita Hicks

- Dr. Hicks gave her appreciation for our agility in our new situation

- All USG institutions had to submit a model that reflects a 14% reduction that was due 5/15. They submitted it to state today.
- Plans included furloughs, volunteer retirements, layoffs and vacant positions.
- Furloughs will not be finalized in terms of how it will be used until fiscal year.
- Each institution had flexibility to submit what their furlough implementation strategy would look like. System office is working through the process of how it is managed on back end.
- Critical hire is still in effect
- There are a number of groups working on return to campus strategies. There will be a phased approach to allow for contingencies.
- USG has established a section on their website regarding COVID-19.
 - For COVID-19 related in-network provider visits and testing, out of pocket costs such as deductibles, copayments and coinsurance, will be waived (\$0.00)
 - All telehealth visits, including those unrelated to COVID-19, will be covered at 100% with no out of pocket costs for all USG healthcare plans through June 30, 2020.
- Georgia Tech was the last institution to transition to the One USG platform. Now working on continued improvements with all institutions.

| Questions | Answers |
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| Will System employees be required to take furlough days as well? Or only Institution employees? | System does not mean system offices. It is entire USG. |
| Will the individual institutions be able to choose to implement more furlough days than the required tier to better meet the 14% and help avoid layoffs? | We will use the tiered structure for planning. Won't know where we will land until we have state appropriations, so not at this time. |
| Is Telehealth covered 100% for all health plans? | Yes (Anthem, Kaiser and Consumer Choice HSA) |
| Do you know if and what benefits will be impacted by budget reductions in FY21? | Looking at all aspects of how to manage fiscal impacts. Don't know at this time if there are benefit changes. We do review benefit plan every year. Not sure if COVID-19 will impact. |
| Can furlough days be taken all at one time or one a month or some other format? | Each institution could implement a strategy and plan for use – it would be best to be answered at campus level. It could be a mixture. All at once has other impacts. Would encourage campuses to understand impacts. |
| It was disheartening for most people to find out about the closures and furloughs via the nightly news instead of the University Presidents. Is there a better way the System can communicate future changes to the employees? | Recognize communication is key. Doing everything we can to ensure presidents get messages before news, but not always the case. At this point we don't have the ability to communicate to all employees from the system office so have to communicate |

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| | through each campus. But, point taken and will take back to system office. [<i>Lashica suggested that each institution staff council can also help with communication efforts.</i>] |
| Do we know if system-wide initiatives will be cut? i.e., Well-being? | Not at this time. System initiatives can be funded through various strategies. While there is a cost, there is also a benefit. There would be a cost/benefit analysis before a final determination is made. It's not just cost we look at, but also can we support all activities? |
| Could the proposed legislation help reduce the budget cuts and/or furlough days | Legal team is reviewing consistently and constantly on how any funds we potentially receive can be utilized to support our efforts. |
| For part-time employees (say 20 hours per week), is a furlough day 8 hours? | Pending guidance on FTE. Currently threshold is 30 hours. |
| Can you talk about the CARES act funds and how USG has directed institutions to use that money? And why the System imposed restrictions on how and when it can be used? Universities across the country are able to use the funds during FY21 to mitigate the cost of dealing with COVID-19. Is the USG requiring that all funds to be used by end of FY20? If so, why and what will happen to leftover funds that do not get used? | [See answer above regarding proposed legislation to help reduce budget cuts.] |

President's report – Lashica Thomas

- USG SC website is up to date. We wanted to provide a resource that all councils can go to and receive up to date info.
- Advisory council established in March and have met 2-3 times since. Will be utilized for upcoming conferences. All documents from previous conferences will be housed in one area.

Old Business

- The current leadership team has fulfilled its goals as outlined below.
 - Created procedures and guidelines for new executive teams
 - 21 of the 25 institutions now have a Staff Council email address set up which will ensure communication continuity with USGSC. Jasper Stewart is working on remaining institutions.
 - An email address has also been set up for the USGSC Executive Leadership Team.
 - A process and electronic form has been established for hosting future conferences.
 - A process and electronic nomination form has been established for elections

- Short term goal accomplished of creating a mentor/mentee program for emerging staff councils to be paired up with seasoned staff councils. Atlanta Metropolitan and UGA are the first. A form has been set up.
- Long term goal to create a plan to address morale, physical and mental health was already being addressed by the USG Well-being program.
- Need host for 2024 conference. A form has been set up for those interested.

New Business

- Fort Valley conference update
 - Theme has changed: Coming Together To Be the Change
 - Executive committee is waiting on guidance on what they'll be doing in the fall months – will social distancing still be in place or on campus?
 - Not sure if the state fair will take place. County commissions looking at how to do that.
 - Going down on registration fees – rolling out in June. Early bird \$85/ Reg \$95, Late \$105
- USGSC Elections – Sabra Blackwell
 - Secretary - open floor nominations
 - Terence Sullivan from Valdosta was nominated and accepted the nomination
 - Motion to accept nomination was approved
 - Motion to elect was approved
 - Other Results: Chair Elect – David Brown, Treasurer – Jasper Stewart
 - Incoming Chair – Yvonne Landers, Past Chair – Lashica Thomas
- Wellbeing Report – Farrah Williams
 - People are utilizing their previous drive time to do more at home – exercise, gardening, group fitness classes, etc. Enjoy the journey.
 - Farrah gave an overview of additional wellbeing resources available on the wellbeing platform and KEPRO.

Institution Reports

- *Augusta University*
 - Launched Staff Council newsletter
 - Sent out a photo collage message
 - Figuring out how they continue to do AU day of service
- *Middle GA State*
 - Fairly new council. They've established staff development days.
- *Georgia Southern*
 - Approved council expansion from 29 to 40 to ensure representation from all 3 campuses.
 - They are continuing to check in and meet with leadership.
- *Georgia Tech*
 - Began hosting virtual office hours

- Weekly workshop series in May, “Thriving Through the New Normal”
- Will create a video thank you to Executive Leadership
- *Fort Valley*
 - Still having quarterly meetings with staff
 - Hosted workshops on career development skills and next one on workplace bullying. Very well attended.
 - Focusing on mental wellness for faculty, staff and students.

Meeting adjourned 11:30am