

**GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
SCHEDULED MEETING OF  
THE ACADEMIC FACULTY SENATE**

**Tuesday, April 21, 2020, 3:00  
Blue Jeans event (due to COVID-19)**

**MINUTES**

1. Professor Joe Hues, Chair of the Faculty Executive Board, opened the Blue Jeans event at 3:00 pm and turned the meeting over to President Ángel Cabrera.
2. The President then shared the following information of interest:
  - a. He thanked Joe for setting up this meeting and stated that this is the first time in our history that we have ever held a faculty senate meeting in this manner. He appreciated Joe and Jeanne adjusting the agenda to effectively host this meeting.
  - b. The President expressed an appreciation to the entire faculty for what has been done for the last month and the incredible accomplishment it has been to take the entire instruction portfolio of Georgia Tech and put online with little notice. The commitment to our students has been remarkable. We are still in the middle of it; this is still a unique and complex situation for the foreseeable future. We will continue to operate with instruction online. We will see if classes or research can come back this summer.
  - c. This year will more than likely be a difficult year for budgetary standpoint. He has been contacted with other colleges and universities, AAU, APLU, ACC; what he is understanding is our peer institutions across the country are bracing for what most likely will be a difficult budgetary year. The first hit has been with the return of fees and room and board to our students. The hit will come to us from a variety of directions. First and foremost, priority is to keep everybody safe and every decision will be guided by that. An additional priority is for the interest of our students' academic progression does not suffer in any way. The challenge is going to be interesting; what he has seen is the innovation and commitment that all have shown and will serve us well.

The President officially called the meeting to order and asked Joe Hughes, Chair of the Faculty Executive Board, to provide rules of engagement for the meeting and will then proceed with the agenda.

3. Prof Hughes commented on a few items that would help the meeting run smoothly. He said the chat feature is the only way for someone who is not a presenter to share comments or ask questions. He will monitor that throughout the meeting and will make sure the presenters see those if need be. Most votes will be done by consent, if possible. If there is a motion, the question will be asked if anyone objects to the motion. If no one objects, then the motion will pass; if someone objects, they will need to respond in chat. If there is an objection to a motion, then we will use the poll feature to vote on a motion. Presenters can share their presentation by sharing their screen or Jeanne has the presentations to share if needed. He then returned the meeting to the President.

4. The President asked for the minutes of the February 11, 2020 meeting to be approved. He indicated that the minutes were posted on the faculty governance web site and no additions or corrections had been received. (See **Attachment #1** below for web site reference). **He asked if there were any corrections and asked they be entered in the chat feature; seeing no corrections, the President asked if there were any objections to approving the minutes. No objections were shared so the minutes were approved by consent.**
5. The President then called on Ms. Reta Pikowsky, Registrar, to present the candidates for the spring commencement. There were connectivity issues so she asked for Jeanne Balsam, Secretary of the Faculty to share the presentation. Jeanne shared the presentation in **Attachment #2** that shows the number of undergraduate and graduates for May and compared the graduating numbers for 2020 with 2019 and there are increases in each category. **The spring list of degree candidates has been reviewed and revised as necessary. She moved to approve the candidates. She asked if there were any objections to approving the degree candidate list. No objections were shared in chat, so the President declared the motion approved by consent.**
6. President Cabrera called on Dr. Chris James, Chair of the Statutes Committee to share recommended changes to the *Faculty Handbook (FH)*. Dr. James used the presentation and request in **Attachments #3**. He said he would be sharing recommended changes. Some are a second reading after an approved first reading at the previous faculty meeting. In addition, he has a new request to share with the faculty. He said he would share a second reading of proposed changes to Section 2, 2.1, and 2.6.1; a first reading of the revision to the proposed changes to section 3.3.6, and a first reading of the proposed changes to section 2.6.1 that if approved will still need a second reading to be conducted at the next scheduled meeting of the faculty in October.

Four were suggested from the Faculty Executive Board (FEB) and the other from the Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Faculty development. The first four are in Section 2 on Faculty Governance are Statutes and will require two readings and approvals from the faculty, the other needs only one reading and vote. Today will be the first reading and if approved, the second reading will be at the April meeting.

- a. 2, Faculty Governance: Secretary duties. The request is to add three bullets to the list of duties to reflect additional responsibilities the secretary already performs.
- b. 2.1, Faculty Executive Board: Replacement of Members. Adding information to detail how a member is appointed when a vacancy occurs on the board.
- c. 2.1, Faculty Executive Board: University System of Georgia Faculty Council. There is a process used for the FEB to appoint a representative to the USG Faculty Council. The request is to add the text for this process in the *FH*.
- d. 2.6.1, Faculty Benefits Committee. The current text has membership for the Staff Council and the Retiree representative to be appointed by the FEB. The thought is to have these members designated by the Staff Council and the Silver Jackets.

**Dr. James made a motion to approve these four recommended changes as a second reading and vote. He asked if there were any objections; none were shared in the chat so the motion was approved by consent.**

- Dr. James continued with additional modification requests:
- e. 3.3.6, Promotion for tenured-track academic faculty. The request by the Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Faculty Development is to bring the language in this section into compliance with the Board of Regents Policies and procedures on early promotions of tenure-track academic faculty. The request is detailed in the presentation to clarify the time in rank at the time of promotion.

**Dr. James moved to approve this request to section 3.3.6 the *Faculty Handbook*. He asked if there were any objections to approving this motion. No objections were shared so the motion was approved by consent.**

- f. The next request is to section 2.6.1, Faculty Benefits Committee, as a first reading to update the duties for the committee.

**Dr. James moved to approve this request as a first reading to section 2.6.1 of the *Faculty Handbook*. He asked if there were any objections to approving this motion.**

There was a question in chat about removing the duty “Review annually institute policy, plans, and procedures on such matters as insurance, retirement, sick leave, death benefits, and vacations.” The response is the USG is overseeing these benefits so there is no ability for the committee to handle this. The newly worded duty does allow for the committee to work with OHR and VPGEFD to review and make recommendations.

**There was a request to vote on the motion. A poll was opened to approve the motion for the changes to section 2.6.1, Faculty Benefits in the *Faculty Handbook*. The poll remained opened for three minutes; with a vote of 70 yes and 11 no, this motion was approved.**

7. The President called on Dr. Bonnie Ferri, Vice Provost Grad Education and Dr. Colin Potts, Vice Provost Undergrad Education to discuss class operations during COVID-19. They shared the presentation in [Attachment #4](#). Dr. Ferri said we need to put this in perspective as they have addressed a lot of changes in a short period of time. How do we learn, how do we make those decisions, how can we make improvements going forward as we look toward the summer. She shared information that there were 628 faculty who participated in technology integration and training in the first week that was offered by GTPE with CTL and OIT.

Going forward there is a Summer Academy that will start April 27<sup>th</sup>. The Summer Georgia Tech Remote Teaching Academy is offered by collaboration with GTPE, CTL, OIT, C21U, the Library, and the summer office. They are doing interesting things like design your summer syllabus for remote teaching and learning, course engagement, and effective assessment under these circumstances. This is a deeper dive for items done in the first week of training. She encouraged people to look in to participating in the summer academy.

She shared a one-day snapshot of use that shows we are definitely delivering courses online: there were 24,247 unique logins into canvas, over a million minutes of Blue Jeans, and over 10 thousand minutes of Kaltura video added and nearly 200 thousand Kaltura minutes viewed.

Another area she wanted to share was about the rules and regulations that were being made for academic guidance for faculty. They had to go through and make decisions very quickly

and this included rules about final exams. Dr. Ferri wanted to share how decisions were made for academic guidance that was posted on the provost's website. It included the VPGEFD, VPUGE, registrar's office, associate deans; all the colleges were involved and it was reviewed by the chair and co-chair of the Student Regulations Committee. Looking towards the summer they have asked the SRC to have the entire committee go back and review this and determine if any changes are needed.

CIOS was not done this semester because in the middle of the semester we went quickly from face-to-face to an online and it is not fair to have this assessment. They replaced it with three levels of feedback from a faculty level, school and college level, and campus level. This was issued institute wide so we can learn about this situation and how can we move forward.

Dr. Potts said the general consensus from the students is that an institution we have responded ordinarily well to the challenges we face. Conducting a survey of students to see at the end of the semester of how they think we did and how we can improve and most importantly how did we interface with the students. We want to learn from this experience and think the students may be less forgiving and more demanding of how things go forward. Interviews with groups of students and hearing unique stories from our students. Some students have explained that the faculty members have been accommodating and adaptable, yet there are some student situations where the faculty member is not responding. Regarding incomplete, he and the registrar are drafting communication for using incompletes and to use in rare situations; be mindful that an incomplete means that the student must complete the incomplete in the next semester they are in attendance. Also an incomplete can impact financial aid and progress towards graduation. Academic integrity is still at the same high standards that we expect. He asked those in attendance to share this information with their colleagues and to be accommodating and understanding.

8. The President asked Bonnie to continue to the next topic about tenure and the adjustment to tenure due to COVID-19. She used the presentation in **Attachment #5**. A one-year extension is added to the probationary period for faculty currently in their 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> years of service; a faculty member may choose to use the extension or not. This increases the window a faculty member can go up for tenure; by extending the last year they must go up. Someone in the three-year critical review may use the extension before or after this year. It was recommended that the Faculty Status and Grievance Committee review this plan for their comments.
9. President Cabrera asked Prof Hughes to share actions the board has taken in the last few weeks.

Prof Hughes stated that the board has appointed the representative to the University System of Georgia Faculty Council (USGFC). The board followed the procedure that has just been approved for the Faculty Council; nominations were solicited from members of the faculty senate, members of the Board, and the chairs of Standing Committees of the faculty. Four persons submitted interest statements. They were invited to a Board meeting to introduce themselves. The Board voted to appoint Dr. Julia Kubanek, Associate Dean for Research in

the College of Sciences, as Georgia Tech's new representative to the Faculty Council for a three-year term starting July 1.

At the last faculty meeting, Jeanne Balsam announced she would be retiring from Georgia Tech this summer and stepping down as the Secretary of the Faculty. A search group was formed that included Jeanne, Bonnie Ferri, Joe, and two staff representatives from the Provost's office. The committee sent emails to over 200 people inviting them to apply and sent targeted emails to almost 30 individuals the committee and others identified as likely candidates. Seven individuals submitted statements; the committee identified four and interviewed them online with Blue Jeans meetings. The committee made a recommendation to the board last week who endorsed Prof Rhett Mayor as the next Secretary. Under our bylaws that recommendation comes to this body for their endorsement and then to the President for his consideration. Prof Hughes asked if there were any questions; none were asked. **He made a motion on behalf of the Executive Board to endorse the recommendation of Rhett Mayor as the next Secretary of the Faculty; he asked if there were any objections to the motion. There were no objections so the motion passed and Joe on behalf of the Executive Board will make a recommendation to the President to appoint Rhett Mayor as the next Secretary of the Faculty on July 1, 2020.** Joe congratulated Rhett and thanked Jeanne.

10. The President then said we will start the approval of committee actions and minutes (**Attachment #6**). He called on Dr. James, Statues Committee Chair. Dr. James said there were two sets of minutes to approve, but they had not been posted to the Faculty Governance website. Those minutes will be held for approval at the next meeting of the faculty.
11. He called on representatives of **Standing Committees of the Academic Faculty** to present minutes and action items requiring approval. In most cases the representatives followed closely the reports in the committees' files on the faculty governance website noted in **Attachment #7** below and so that text was not repeated here. The following provides an outline of the material presented showing the representatives that appeared to make the presentations. Where presenters utilized additional presentation materials, they are noted below and provided as attachments.

#### **Standing Committees of the Academic Faculty:**

- a. Institute Graduate Curriculum – Prof. Kristie Macrakis, Chair, presented the minutes and action items utilizing the presentation in **Attachment #7a**.  
Minutes: 03/05/20, 04/09/20.  
**Action Items: From 03/05/20:** Mod Lang: degree mod; Grad Studies: 1 new course;  
**From 04/09/20:** Building Const: 1 new course, degree mod; Physics: 1 new course; CEE: 1 new course; IC: 1 new course; ME: 2 degree mods; Math: 2 new courses; Schools of CSE/CS/IC/AE/ECE/ISYE/Math/BME: degree mod.  
**Prof. Macrakis moved for the adoption of the action items and the minutes; she asked if there were any objections. No objections were shared so the action items and minutes were approved by consent.**

- b. Institute Undergraduate Curriculum – Prof Angus Wilkinson, Chair, presented the minutes and action items utilizing the presentation in [Attachment #7b](#).  
Minutes: 02/18/20, 03/03/20, 04/07/20, 04/14/20.  
**Action items: From 03/03/20:** Academic Enrichment: course deactivation; CS: 1 new course; Mod Lang: 2 new courses, decree mod: **From 04/07/20:** Mod Lang: 2 new courses; Econ: 1 new course, new minor; **From 04/14/20:** ISYE: 1 new course, Program mod.  
**Prof Wilkinson moved for the approval of the action items and meeting minutes. He asked if there were any objections; having no objections, the committee action items and meeting minutes were approved by consent.**
- c. Student Regulations – Prof. Jerry Seitzman, Chair, presented minutes and items of interest utilizing [Attachment #7c](#).  
Minutes: 01/31/20. No action items.  
**Prof Seitzman moved for the approval of the minutes and asked if there were any objections. No objections were shared so the minutes were approved.**
- d. Student Academic & Financial Affairs – Prof Hamid Garmestani, Chair, used [Attachment #7d](#) to present committee minutes.  
Minutes 01/28/20, 02/26/20. No action items.  
**Prof Garmestani moved for the approval of the minutes. There were no objections to approval of the minutes so they were approved.**
- e. Student Activities – Mr. Ameet Doshi, Chair, presented the action items and minutes of the committee using [Attachment #7e](#).  
Minutes: 02/21/20, 03/06/20, 03/27/20.  
**Action items:** Approval of all student activity charters and constitution revisions recommended by the committee as documented in their minutes.  
**Mr. Doshi moved for the adoption of the action items and the minutes and asked if there were any objections. No objections were shared so the actions and minutes were approved.**
- f. Student Computer Ownership – Dr. Emily Weigel, Chair  
Minutes: no minutes. She shared a report seen in [Attachment #7f](#) from the committee. Dr. Weigel said the responsibility of the Student Computer Ownership Committee is to identify the base requirements for students to own a computer. They were approached by Dr. Colin Potts to determine if there were any additional requirements in light of remote instruction. The committee discussed a lot of potential items to include microphone, ear buds, and other devices. Ultimately, they decided these items should be a recommendation and not a requirement based on strong suggestions from the students as they were averse to these items being required. They state these items are strongly recommended to students as they come in and faculty be who are going to require any items, for their class should place that information in the syllabus. The action today is to determine if these items should be posted alongside the items they usually post for computer requirements. This did not come to the faculty as an action from the committee because they did not meet; therefore, a motion and second is needed.  
**A motion was made to approve these recommendations to be included with the posted computer guidelines. The motion was seconded and there were no objections so the motion was approved.**

12. The President said we have concluded the formal business from the agenda. He asked if there was any other business.

The Provost reminded the senate and faculty members they hope to have and plan to have a very robust summer session. The students are demanding larger activity. They are putting together the guidelines and asked the faculty to work with their colleges to offer as many programs as possible. The students and graduate students will appreciate it.

Ian Bogost used chat to express a matter he believes the senate needs to hear. His comment is about Georgia Tech's relationship and the USG. Others are agreeing that is a good question. President Cabrera addressed it by saying we are part of the USG and are governed by the board of regents; that is shared with 25 other institutions. There may be tension between the matters the board decides for all the institutions and matters they allow the institutions to decide. There may always be tensions because that is the way we are governed. He works very closely with the system. It is fair to say we are in an unprecedented time and we need to be aligned with the system and state policy. There is an ongoing communication between us and the other institutions and the system and board; ultimately the board decides.

The President stated he hopes the next time we meet we can meet in person. No additional new business was shared in chat so President Cabrera moved the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeanne Balsam  
Secretary of the Faculty  
July 26, 2020

**Attachments:**

1. [Minutes](#) of the February 11, 2019 meeting of the Faculty and Faculty Senate (Academic Faculty Senate & Research Faculty Senate)
2. Spring 2020 degree candidate [information](#)
3. Faculty Handbook modification [presentation](#) and [request](#)
4. Class Operations during COVID-19 [presentation](#)
5. Discussion of Tenure Clock Adjustments Due to COVID-19 [presentation](#)
6. [Annual Reports and Minutes](#) of Faculty Standing Committee
7. [Annual Reports and Minutes](#) of Academic Standing Committees
  - a. IGCC [presentation](#)
  - b. IUCC [presentation](#)
  - c. Student Regulations [presentation](#)
  - d. SAFAC [presentation](#)
  - e. Student Activities [presentation](#)
  - f. Student Computer Ownership [report](#)