Background to 2014 Draft *Faculty Handbook*

Incorporating Changes in Faculty Governance for New Faculty Definitions

The Statutes Committee receives requests for modifications to the *Faculty Handbook*. They review the requests, gather input from stakeholders, and obtain Executive Board input. The committee votes on presenting the recommended changes to the General Faculty for consideration and vote.

A Provost task force reviewed the use of the general faculty classification and faculty governance. This task force presented several options to the Georgia Tech Executive Board. They found that the term “general faculty” is not commonly used in universities and carries little meaning outside Georgia Tech. They recommended that this term be eliminated and job titles be designated as academic faculty, research faculty, or staff. They also recommended the establishment of a staff advisory body.

The Executive Board chartered and charged a subcommittee of the Statutes committee. This subcommittee was charged to develop and refine a plan for revised definition of faculty categories and recommend changes to faculty governance to support the revised definition.

The subcommittee has carefully and methodically worked to meet the needs of this request. The main goal has been to expand and clarify mechanisms through which members of the campus community are heard. This effort has led to the term “General Faculty” category being replaced with “Academic Faculty” and “Research Faculty”. Curriculum roles for tenure-track faculty are preserved through committee structures and voting rules. A staff council is being formed, as well as forums for people in post-doctoral positions. Also, opportunities are included for an expanded voice for academic professionals and research faculty in the colleges.

Modifications to Faculty Governance are recommended to support the two faculty categories. The General Faculty Assembly and Academic Senate are replaced with an Academic Faculty Senate and Research Faculty Senate. The Academic Faculty Senate will function very similar to the way it does now, but the definition of Academic Faculty is expanded. Elections to the Senate will include nominations and elections only from Academic Faculty. The Research Faculty Senate is modeled after the Academic Faculty Senate with members nominated and elected from the Research Faculty. This will provide for better representation from Research Faculty working in academic units. The Faculty Senate will be the sum of these two senates and would be the representative body designated to address research policies and others of interest to all Faculty.

The Georgia Tech Faculty Executive Board will be similar in size to the current Board and the purpose will remain to coordinate faculty governance. The elections for members to the Faculty Executive Board will be different than today as representation will come from the Academic Faculty Senate and the Research Faculty Senate. Each unit will be allowed one member per 150 for representation from their academic faculty and one member per 150 from their research faculty; representation will be capped to no more than four members from each Unit in each category. Each college will be allowed to have at least one member to the Executive Board. For representation from the Research Faculty within an academic unit, it may be necessary to form aggregates among colleges for an election.

There are currently fifteen standing committees. There are a few recommended changes to these standing committees. The main change is to clarify the membership of these committees to ensure, when needed, that tenured-track faculty will serve on the committee. There is a separate effort to review standing committee duties and membership that may bring additional changes in the future.

The establishment of a staff advisory council leads to recommended changes to Faculty Governance. These include the ability to have joint meetings between the Faculty Executive Board and a Staff Council when needed to discuss items of interest to the entire campus. The *Faculty Handbook* has provided support for joint meetings, but the details are still to be determined. In addition, there may be joint committees formed between the faculty and the staff.