

Minutes – SAC SPRING CONFERENCE 2009
Georgia State University

Friday, February 6, 2009

- Welcome from Pamela Anthony, Director of Student Life. Encouraged students to explore Atlanta's history as well as gain good experience from the conference. She recognized the Ga. State campus Administrators who were present and introduced the SGA President, Mr. Evan Eskridge. Mr. Eskridge welcomed the group and introduced his SGA representatives. He asked Dr. Douglass Covey to introduce the new President, Dr. Mark Becker.
- Dr. Becker mentioned that the first Sac was held at Georgia State and he was thrilled to start his tenure with them again on his new campus. Dr. Becker talked about the impact students make on each campus and their ability to join together to have a voice for the system.
- Invocation by MS. Josie Bailey
- Dinner was served
- Jarrell Anderson, Vice President of GSU Student Government introduced Chancellor Davis.
- The Chancellor thanked everyone for the opportunity to be with Sac. He talked about traveling around to campuses and getting a feel for the differences and the similarities in each one. He stated that he had some comments to make on the State of the budget and the impact that students could expect plus he would welcome any questions.-Chancellor presented data on Financial Situation for the State. The Chancellor explained Formula Funding and the changes that have occurred from 2000-1009. He stated that as funding has gone up so has enrollment so even though it looks like a rise, we still have to accommodate more students in more classes, more resources for success etc...
- He shared the SREB (Southern Region Education Board) statistics on tuition for four year and two year institutions. It revealed that Georgia's USG institutions are in the lower portion for tuition costs.
- The Chancellor discussed his work on Capital Hill and what he has been trying to convey regarding the need to continue to fund our institutions. He stated that we would not compromise lower quality education for enrollment and that we might have to limit our enrollments to be able to afford quality education in the State. Again, he cautioned everyone that these decisions have not been made yet so this is not what is happening.

- He expressed his opposition to state furloughs as well as any merging of institutions. He has a strong commitment to shared services among institutions that are close in proximity. He sees a way to make this happen without having institutions lose their missions and purpose.
- The chancellor opened up the floor for questions:

Q: What were some of the other decisions you had to weigh when deciding on the temporary fee for students?

Response: We looked at everything. We had to create scenarios that would allow for all units to be asked to give but for no individual entity to carry the entire needs. Even employees were impacted by their health benefit costs.

Q: Is there going to be a CAP on institutions?

Response: We did not say we were going to put a cap. If we have to decide between cap versus quality, we might have to limit access.

Q: What would happen with student with disabilities if we limited access?

Response: We are not at a point to limit access so we can't answer that issue at this time. We are committed to all students gaining an education.

Q: How serious is this plan to merge two year colleges?

Response: A group discussed it and currently we are looking at synergies that can be merged not institutions. Synergies refer to combined business services and other types of service provisions.

A STUDENT commented on the impact of online coursework. It increases numbers and allows for collaboration among institutions. The Chancellor agreed and stated we had a 1% goal to increase these courses by the coming academic year.

Q: How was the break-down decided for the mandatory fee?

Response: Research and Carnegie II institutions were asked to pay the higher fee.

Q: Since Spring 2009 had an assessed 8% fee increase, would fall 2009 have an 11% assessment?

Response: We will be looking at tuition policies and waiting for the final budget in April 2009 from the legislature. No determination has been made on any additional temporary fees. Many options are on the table.

Q: What about mandated furloughs?

Response: The Chancellor went over where money comes from regarding the support of institutions and what our portion is based on the overall needs for the State. He encouraged folks to write the general assembly about their concerns. He stated that research funding, grant funding and endowment funding will not be impacted by furloughs or the budget. Staff and Non-faculty who have actually been cut in some places will be impacted by furloughs.

Q: If the temporary fee would become a part of the overall tuition.

Response: The only response given is that if necessary, tuition may go up and as reflected in the slides from the SREB, it would definitely be a rise from the bottom to more the median.

Students were asked to share at least one challenge and one opportunity that they were facing on campus. The following notes were taken to reflect their issues:

STUDENT CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES:
SPACE	AERONAUTICAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND TRAININGS
NO STUDENT CENTER	NEW PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH
LACK OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT	CREATING WAYS TO CONNECT TWO CAMPUSES
NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENT POPULATION	NEW STUDENT CENTER
PRESIDENT LEAVING	NEW HOUSING TO BUILD COMMUNITY
LOSING TECH PROGRAM/4 YEAR STATE COLLEGE GROWTH	ALSO A PLUS TO BE GROWING
LOST 3 STUDENTS IN VEHICLE ACCIDENTS ON THE SAME ROAD NEAR CAMPUS	NEW PRESIDENT- DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC PLAN
SPACE- PARKING AN ISSUE	STARTING TEXTBOOK EXCHANGE
“uga dawg” JEALOUSY	EXCELLENT ADMINISTRATION
PARKING CONSTRUCTION/NEEDS	NEW ONE STOP SHOP!
SMOKING BAN – 30 FEET FROM BUILDINGS – PEOPLE IN MIDDLE OF ROAD☺	CAMPUS ETHOS
AS THE NEWEST SCHOOL ON THE BLOCK, SO MUCH SCRUTINY	WE WILL BE A LEGACY FOREVER AND WE HAVE A TREMENDOUS PRESIDENT (KAUFMAN)
PARKING/SPACE	NEW CONSTRUCTION
PARKING ACCOMMODATIONS	PILOTING A RIDE SHARE PROGRAM
RETENTION ISSUES	SIGN A TAG AGREEMENT WITH MOREHOUSE

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH	LIBRARY NEEDS
ECONOMIC ISSUES/APATHY	MORE STUDENTS INVOLVED IN COMMITTEES/PARENTS WEEKEND PLANNED
IMPROVE CAMPUS SAFETY/24 HOUR LIBRARY ACCESS	FOOTBALL & NEW PRESIDENT
PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION	WHITE PAPER TO ABOLISH FIXED FOR FOUR, NEW STUDENT LEARNING CENTER
COMMUTER INVOLVEMNET, RESIDENCE LIFE POLICIES OUTDATED	NEW STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER
DIVERSECAMPUS – MORE STUDENTS/LESS FUNDING, NEED FOR ON-CAMPUS JOBS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS	“FEED THE FUTURE” INITIATIVE TO HELP STUDENTS WHO DO NOT HAVE FUNDS FOR FOOD
CLUB ACTIVITIES TIMES NEED TO BE ADJUSTED, SPEAKING TO LOCAL COMMUNITY FOR MORE RECRUITMENT	NEW PROFESSIONAL SCIENCE COMPLEX/ CONFERENCE CENTER
WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THE LAND THEY HAVE – NO MONEY TO DO ANYTHING WITH IT	DEVELOPMENT OF NEW MEDICAL PROGRAMS WITH UGA
NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENT POPULATION; FINANCIAL AID ISSUES	NEW RESIDENCE HALL
DIVERSITY ISSUES/INTERACTION WITH EACH OTHER; SCHOOL SPIRIT OVERALL	BASKETBALL COLISEUM AND GREEK HOUSING BEING COMPLETED, NEW FOOTBALL ACCOMODATIOS FOR FANS, 800 MORE PARKING SPACES
DIVERSE GROUPS TO INTERACT	NEW RESIDENCE HALLS, NEW STUDENT CENTER & PARKING DECKS

Students split up into their groups based on their “type of institutions” They were asked to think about the issues that we would be discussing on the next day: **fiscal affairs, legislative issues and student fee issues.**

The groups recorded their responses and then we adjourned at 10:00p.m.

Saturday, February 7, 2009

8:30a.m. Breakfast

9:00 a.m.

Tonya Lam, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs welcomed everyone and introduced our first speaker.

Usha Ramachandran, Vice Chancellor for External Affairs

At 6%, 8% and 10%. The state reduced our cash allotment for the first quarter by 6%, and clearly this was the minimum cut we could expect. And so, in the first slide we recommended 6% cuts by institution. In August, the measure to cap the indemnity plan premium for the employer at the PPO level was approved and went into effect in January to help institutions with at least a part of the reduction this year.

Usha stated: A reduction of \$136M will no doubt impact the institutions of the University System. But we have excellent presidents at our institutions that are committed to preserving our core mission of teaching and research, and protecting the services to students in the classroom.

After 2 months of revenues trailing last year by 6.6% and 7%, revenues, we moved into positive territory for the first time in September. Revenues increased 4.5% over last year. Since it wasn't large enough to wipe out the deficit from July and August, at the end of the first quarter, the state was short 2.6% in revenues.

To get a better sense of the shortfall, we should look not only at how revenues this year are doing compared to last year, but we need to see how revenues for the current year are stacking up against the budgeted revenue for the current year.

Fiscal year 2008-2009 – 614 million and we had 549 million that went to salary, buildings, insurance and retirement

Costs were cut in 10 areas:

1. 35million from employee increased health care contributions
2. Elimination of 833 staff positions in acctg, budgeting, plant ops, custodial, counseling
3. Layoff of 62 staff and no increases for system level staff
4. Increase efficiencies with automated services, paperless transactions and energy management.
5. Lengthen replacement cycles of current equipment
6. Reduce operational costs such as travel, supplies and periodicals/databases.
7. Reduce Library Acquisition
8. Eliminate 5050 faculty positions, not start new programs
9. Eliminate low enrollment programs; 28 academic programs were removed.
10. Temporary student fee

Discussion:

- HOPE issues – Since 12 credits is full time, a suggestion was made to have HOPE pay for up to 16 credit hours and let it be free and count towards the degree.
- Usha stated that the line for HOPE is about to cross into a cost-effective problem which will cut the number of students gaining HOPE and cut money for books (150 from 350).
- Enrollment will increase by 5% or 14,000 students.
- Budget reduction of 9.5 or 185 million has to be saved somehow.
- Nick proposed a resolution to abolish Fixed for Four – it is good in theory but isn't practical given the current situation.
- Incremental tuition increases to help keep up with the costs since we are at the low end of the SREB institutions. If we were to be at the median we'd have to pay at least 50% more. This was not seen as a positive – tuition should be increased over a period of time.
- Georgia Gwinnett is in the process of being accredited and that would make 36 institutions to be funded.
- Budget is done at the end of March and decisions will be made after we know how much money we'll get from the legislature.

Regent Potts summarized the overall presentation stating that the numbers are clear and that we have to be supportive of what needs to be done to hold onto our quality education. He thanked Usha for her hard work and encouraged students to stay involved and interested.

Tom Daniels, Senior Vice Chancellor for External Affairs

- Students in the room were born the last time the economic situation was similarly poor. However, this is the best time for the university system. We have the best faculty, staff, resources, and facilities in the history. Better qualified, better prepared students add to that quality.
- We've experienced a double digit drop in revenue from 1 year ago. The state will certainly have less money to spend this fiscal year than the previous year. The university system has already faced 200 million dollars worth of reductions. All state government including the university system will be asked to take further cuts. It will be difficult for the university system to do that due to current operation.

- We feel that if we lose the reputation of the university system that we will never get it back. It is important that we keep the interest in our reputation.
- The investment you make in the university system should be a worthwhile request. That is not an unfair request.
- When we talk about the level of tuition we ask you to meet, it is also important to think about the amount of money the state has invested in you based on their contributions to your cost. Georgia contributes more to the cost of tuition compared to other states in the southern region.

Open Floor – Questions

- Issue about guns on campus: the lieutenant Governor has sent the information that he does not wish to debate the issue of guns on campus. There is still ample time for this issue to be discussed, so more information may appear in the future.
- Lottery Proceeds: if they decline, the first would be to reduce the book allowance from 300 to 150, if they decline for a second year they would decline from 150 to 100. If they decline for a 3rd year then the coverage of fees would decline.
- Merge: There is an urging resolution sent by a member of general assembly to merge HBCU institutions with surrounding institutions. (Albany State & Darton – Savannah State and Armstrong Atlantic) The BOR would respond to this emphasizing that there is distinct differences with these institutions.
- Student Question: The chancellor mentioned that this merger was not supported by the board of regents. What can we do to assure our students that this is case? Response: The man who has submitted the resolution is the chair of the appropriations committee. He has been informed that we are not in favor of the resolution. You should encourage your students to share with their senator that they are opposed to the merger. This is the 3rd time that this issue has come up; it is still not supported by the Board of Regents. We are handling the issue this way in order to bring as little attention to the issue as possible. No students should be planning on transferring based on this issue.
- Merger/Technical College: Local articles are misrepresenting the institutions due to little response from the Board of Regents. With local media coverage it brought up much concern from the local area in addition to confusion.
- Response: Recommendation was that the State of Georgia create a community college system that would be assigned to the technical college system. There will be a letter written to clearly specify the charge of the committee. This is not a charge of the board of regents but more a charge of the technical college system. The letter will be released next week.

- 8% reduction (Hope): State Rep Ben Harbin introduced this resolution. It is predicted to pass the house and could pass the senate. What people are watching is that our lottery has been extremely successful; the concern involves the slowing down of the state and the effects of the lottery. We are not there yet, but we are trying to be prepared for it.
- Homeowners: wanted to return 423 million to homeowners. The governor says that we cannot go forward with that because the state cannot afford it. This is good news for the university system. If the 423 million is funded, even though the governor has not recommended it, the budgets will be cut again to accommodate the funding. The BOR is supporting the governor's position. We expect the governor to lower the revenue aspect for the rest of this fiscal year. If this happens, then the university will have to participate in this in the case the letter submitted by the governor.
- Capital outlaying – means construction. The university system received 325 million dollars for construction on our campuses, including new structures and renovating structures. The governor looks at this as an investment as it will also help the construction industry. (See handout of FY10 Budget – At a Glance)

John M. Fuchko, III, MBA, CIA, CCEP
Assistant Director of Compliance

- Ethics Policy

Most campuses have student codes of conduct, but now the University System has a code. As SGA leaders, you are subject to the Ethics Policy. But the Ethics Policy is mainly geared towards alumni boards, etc. SGA leaders set tone for campuses, so you are important messengers back to your campuses about ethics for staff and faculty.

- Student Fee Audit

Performance state auditors look at how funds are spent for selected state agencies. Compliance, efficiency, and how funds are being used. They looked at P-Cards over the past couple of years. Performance auditors do not have set format for their reports. They are now looking at student fees. Student Life Directors have a lot of guidelines which they must follow. The scope of the student fee audit might include minutes from student fee committees, transferring monies between accounts, internal controls over expenditure of funds, the use of state funds for personal benefit (**), trends in student fees over the past 10 years (i.e. use of fees to pay student leaders). You might have opportunity to sit down with the auditor, so it will be important to educate them about the realities of student life. Talk with your Student Life Directors about this upcoming review. Auditors will not visit all campuses. Student fees are state funds! Establish a good relationship with your Business Offices!

- SAC as agent for change

Talk to Tonya! War Story from January 2000. You have a unique opportunity as SGA leaders to represent your campus and engage in real policy issues. It is easy to waive signs and banners trying to get more money. But you have more unique opportunities. Meet with your state rep b/c they will listen to you more than they will listen to staff! If you have an interest to get involved on the "Hill", then talk to Tonya because opportunities exist.

LUNCH – Students were asked by Ms. Lam to think about how they found out about college. What did they know and what didn't they know? She asked them to offer resources that helped them in obtaining knowledge also.

After Lunch students were introduced to a new vehicle for communication. A Google community was set up to use as a forum for sending up to date and current information to them. Expectations for using the group and responding to questions were requested of the participants. Everyone seemed thrilled. Apparently a FACEBOOK group is also active but we asked if student would try this one vehicle for a month and a half to see if it helps with communication issues.

Dr. Rachele Lehner, Assistant Dean of the Medical School at Emory University Staff Development led the group in a NOMINAL GROUP PROCESS

Purpose: To take all the ideas for action and fine-tune them into one a few feasible workgroups.

The group started with brainstorming:

- **Student representatives at the system Level**
- **Recruitment of International Students**
- **Need to talk about issues between institutions and between institutions and the System**
- **Update SGA Websites to share system initiatives**
- **Student lobbying/communication with legislature**
- **Student proposals to the Board**
- **Creating Joint Resolution instead institutional ones**
- **Problem solving about student fees**
- **SAC Newsletter idea**
- **Unification of student services**
- **Retention follow-up – why are students leaving?**
- **Accountability of professors regularly teaching well**
- **Schools individually setting fees**
- **Polling Students**
- **Pre-planned Tuition rates**
- **Retention/Attract top professors (and keep them!)**
- **Teach freshmen how to get "voice heard"**
- **Smoother transitions from 2 year to 4 year schools**
- **High School Outreach**

- **Similar campus meetings together**
- **Improve communication between institutions**

After brainstorming, the group had to rank importance.

The top “vote getters” were:

- Student Proposals to the board
- Student lobbying
- Communication top-bottom and bottom to top
- Polling Students for Opinions

The top numbers of issues voted on were:

- Student Proposals to the Board
- Student lobbying
- SAC Newsletter of information among institutions
- Polling Students

Students were handed out a sheet to be able to conduct this type of technique on their campuses with their SGA groups.

2009 Calendars were disbursed and highlighters were given so students could be reminded to upcoming SAC events and BOARD meetings. – David Dial conducted this activity.

Final Evaluations were handed in and a group photograph was taken outside the by the Georgia State Panther. Evan gave out free t-shirts for students and the meeting was adjourned at 2:15p.m.