

# University Senate Committee Annual Report

**Committee Name:** Executive Committee of the University Senate (Presiding Officer)

**Academic Year:** 2025/2026

## Committee Charge:

- **V.Section1.A. Composition.** The Executive Committee of the University Senate (or equivalently the Executive Committee) shall have no fewer than seven (7) but no more than ten (10) members distributed as follows: one (1) member who is the University President, one (1) member who is the Chief Academic Officer, one (1) member who is the Presiding Officer of the University Senate, one (1) member who is the Presiding Officer Elect of the University Senate, one (1) member who is the Secretary of the University Senate, and up to five (5) additional members as specified in V.Section1.A.1 and V.Section1.A.2. The Chair of the Executive Committee shall be the Presiding Officer of the University Senate. The Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee shall be the Presiding Officer Elect of the University Senate. The Secretary of the Executive Committee shall be the Secretary of the University Senate.
  - **V.Section1.A.1. Academic Unit Representation.** For each college or the library not represented among the three (3) University Senate Officers serving on the committee, the outgoing Subcommittee on Nominations shall nominate an incoming elected faculty senator from that academic unit to serve on the Executive Committee. This process shall never result in more than four additional members to the Executive Committee.
  - **V.Section1.A.2. Chair Emeritus.** Should the Chair of the outgoing Executive Committee not be an elected faculty senator on the incoming Executive Committee, the Chair of the outgoing Executive Committee shall serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of the incoming Executive Committee to assist with continuity for the following academic year.
- **V.Section1.C.16. Operational Matters.** The Executive Committee shall be responsible for operational matters of the University Senate including, but not limited to, consulted for Presidential Appointees (II.Section1.A.5), consulted for consent agenda (II.Section3.A.4.a), receive Corps of Instruction List (II.Section2.A.1), apportion elected faculty senator positions (II.Section2.A.2), receive election/selection procedures and results and announce results for academic units (II.Section2.A.3), Staff Council (II.Section1.A.3), students (II.Section1.A.4), conduct at-large elections (II.Section2.A.4), name a parliamentarian (II.Section3.D.1), receive operating procedures of committees (III.Section1), is one source that can initiate standing committee business (IV.Section1), receive motion text (II.Section3.A.2), disseminate agenda (II.Section3.A.4) and set and publicize calendar (II.Section3.A.1) for regular meetings of the University Senate, set agenda for all meetings of the University Senate (II.Section3.A.4, II.Section3.B.3), is one source authorized to call special meetings of the University Senate (II.Section3.B.1) or its standing committees (IV.Section6.A), ensure quorum (II.Section3.C.2) and ratification of actions (II.Section3.C.3) for special meetings of the University Senate, receive and archive committee annual reports (IV.Section2), name facilitator and necessary voting proxies for standing committee officer elections (IV.Section3.A), receive committee composition report from Subcommittee on Nominations (V.Section1.D.2.e), receive or make motions for the addition of permanent subcommittees (V.Section2.A.3.a), receive ad hoc committee charters (V.Section2.A.3.b), facilitate proposed revisions to these bylaws (Article VI).

## Committee Calendar:

• Friday 5 Sep 2025 2:00-3:15pm Standing Committees: APC, BIPC, ECUS, FAPC, RPIPC, SAPC  
• Friday 5 Sep 2025 3:30-4:45pm Parks 301: ECUS with Standing Committee Chairs  
• Friday 19 Sep 2025 3:30-4:45pm Arts & Sciences 272: University Senate  
• Friday 3 Oct 2025 2:00-3:15pm Standing Committees: APC, BIPC, ECUS, FAPC, RPIPC, SAPC  
• Friday 3 Oct 2025 3:30-4:45pm Parks Hall 301: ECUS with Standing Committee Chairs  
• Friday 17 Oct 2025 3:30-4:45pm Arts & Sciences 272: University Senate  
• Friday 31 Oct 2025 2:00-3:15pm Standing Committees: APC, BIPC, ECUS, FAPC, RPIPC, SAPC  
• Friday 31 Oct 2025 3:30-4:45pm Parks Hall 301: ECUS with Standing Committee Chairs  
• Friday 14 Nov 2025 3:30-4:45pm Arts & Sciences 272: University Senate  
• Friday 9 Jan 2026 2:00-3:15pm Standing Committees: APC, BIPC, ECUS, FAPC, RPIPC, SAPC  
• Friday 9 Jan 2026 3:30-4:45pm Parks Hall 301: ECUS with Standing Committee Chairs  
• Friday 23 Jan 2026 3:30-4:45pm Arts & Sciences 272: University Senate  
• Friday 13 Feb 2026 2:00-3:15pm Standing Committees: APC, BIPC, ECUS, FAPC, RPIPC, SAPC  
• Friday 13 Feb 2026 3:30-4:45pm Parks Hall 301: ECUS with Standing Committee Chairs  
• Friday 27 Feb 2026 3:30-4:45pm Arts & Sciences 272: University Senate  
• Friday 6 Mar 2026 2:00-3:15pm Standing Committees: APC, BIPC, ECUS, FAPC, RPIPC, SAPC  
• Friday 6 Mar 2026 3:30-3:15pm Parks Hall 301: ECUS with Standing Committee Chairs  
• Friday 27 Mar 2026 3:30-4:45pm Arts & Sciences 272: University Senate  
• Friday 3 Apr 2026 2:00-3:15pm Standing Committees: APC, BIPC, ECUS, FAPC, RPIPC, SAPC  
• Friday 3 Apr 2026 3:30-4:45pm Parks Hall 301: ECUS with Standing Committee Chairs  
• Friday 24 Apr 2026 2:00-3:15pm Arts & Sciences 272: University Senate

## Executive Summary:

The 2025-2026 academic year was marked by significant institutional change, evolving University System of Georgia requirements, and opportunities to strengthen shared governance across campus. Throughout the year, the University Senate worked collaboratively with university administration, Staff Council, Student Government Association (SGA), and the broader campus community to address emerging challenges while maintaining a commitment to transparency, communication, and meaningful stakeholder engagement.

The Senate's most significant accomplishments included development and implementation of Georgia College's first institutional Artificial Intelligence Policy, implementation of new USG public syllabi and public faculty credential requirements, revision of faculty evaluation language regarding "noteworthy" performance, revision of the Academic Feedback Policy, updates to the Distance Education Policy, and continued work on professional leave and operational policies. These efforts reflected the Senate's ability to proactively address emerging issues while balancing institutional priorities, compliance expectations, and the needs of faculty, staff, and students.

A defining feature of the year was a deliberate effort to strengthen communication and engagement. Through monthly Senate newsletters, expanded collaboration with Staff Council and SGA, participation on the Senior Advisory Council, and outreach efforts including the "Tour de Deans" and "Tour de Leadership," the Senate increased transparency, gathered constituent concerns, and built stronger relationships across campus. These initiatives helped create more direct channels for communication between governance bodies and university leadership.

The Senate also served as a forum for discussions regarding campus safety, student success and retention, faculty evaluation, accommodations and accessibility, strategic planning, accreditation developments, mental health and wellness initiatives, and institutional responses to changing state and system-level expectations. Throughout these conversations, the Senate remained committed to fostering a collaborative culture rooted in shared governance, respect, and service to the university community.

#### **Committee Membership and Record of Attendance:**

Refer to Secretary Alex Blazer for Attendance Records

#### **Motions brought to the Senate floor:**

- [Motion Number 2526.ECUS.001.P AI Policy](#)
  - The creation and implementation of Georgia College's first institutional Artificial Intelligence Policy represented one of the most significant governance achievements of the year. Following extensive work by the AI Policy Review Committee during Summer 2025, Senate leaders collaborated with faculty, administration, and implementation partners to develop policy language addressing the rapidly evolving impact of AI on teaching, learning, and university operations. During Spring 2026, Senate leadership continued reviewing implementation and discussing future revisions as the policy evolved into a living governance document.

#### **Other Significant Deliberation (Non-Motions):**

##### **Public Syllabi and Public Faculty Credential Requirements:**

The University System of Georgia's requirements regarding public syllabi and publicly accessible faculty credentials generated substantial discussion throughout the year. Senate leadership worked closely with Academic Affairs and administrative offices to communicate requirements, gather constituent feedback, assist with campus implementation, and address concerns regarding workload, technology, and compliance. Successful implementation required collaboration across academic and administrative units and represented a major institutional undertaking.

##### **Student Success, Retention, and Academic Feedback:**

Student success remained a central focus of Senate deliberations. Discussions included retention initiatives, advising effectiveness, academic feedback policies, early alert programs, and student engagement. Collaboration with Student Success and Advising leadership led to discussions

surrounding formative feedback before midterm and implementation of a new Slate-powered Early Alert System. Subsequent Senate action revised the Academic Feedback Policy to strengthen expectations regarding meaningful student feedback prior to the midpoint of the semester.

#### Faculty Evaluation Policies:

The Senate devoted significant attention to faculty evaluation processes and language regarding "noteworthy" performance. Through the work of FAPC and campus stakeholders, revisions removed the requirement that noteworthy performance be defined exclusively by high SRIS scores and instead allowed departments and colleges greater flexibility in defining excellence within their disciplinary contexts. These discussions initiated broader conversations concerning evaluation practices, recognition of faculty accomplishments, collegiality, and institutional values.

#### Distance Education and Online Learning:

The Senate reviewed and revised the Distance Education Policy to define Regular and Substantive Interaction in online courses. This work supported compliance expectations while helping ensure quality standards in online instruction. The effort involved collaboration among faculty governance, Academic Affairs, and the Center for Teaching and Learning.

#### Campus Safety and Wellbeing:

Campus safety was a recurring topic across Senate meetings, college outreach visits, and constituent conversations. Discussions included classroom locks, emergency communication systems, cameras, panic buttons, campus carry regulations, active threat preparedness, CARE Team reporting processes, and wellness initiatives. Safety concerns surfaced repeatedly during meetings with academic units and administrative offices, making campus safety one of the year's most consistently discussed issues.

#### Strategic Planning and Institutional Direction:

The Senate participated in discussions related to mission revision, strategic planning, accreditation standards, graduate education strategy, enrollment growth, and evolving system-level expectations. Senate representatives provided feedback opportunities for constituents and served as a conduit between university leadership and the campus community during periods of institutional planning and change.

#### Accessibility and Student Accommodations:

Initial discussions began concerning faculty support and training related to disability accommodations and Student Disability Services processes. These conversations identified opportunities for additional education, communication, and collaboration to better support faculty and students alike.

#### Ad hoc committees and other groups:

*For each ad hoc committee and other group that was formed,*

*Specify committee or group name, membership, identify ad hoc committee officers (chair, vice chair, secretary) or leaders of other group*

*Provide a short summary of its work. Finally specify whether their work was completed, and if not whether your committee recommends that the committee continue their work in the following academic year.*

#### AI Policy Review Committee (formed April 2025)

| AI Policy Review Committee | Name               | Unit    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| EFS plus Grad School Rep   | Allen, Andrew      | CoAS    |
| EFS                        | Fowler, Brad       | CoBT    |
| EFS                        | Mugayitoglu, Bekir | CoE     |
| EFS plus Grad School Rep   | Henry, Shantee     | CoHS    |
| EFS                        | Sanford, Lamonica  | Library |

|                       |                      |                 |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Staff Senators        | Gordon, Maria        | Staff Cncil Nom |
| Appointees/ Designees | Ryall, Ezra (SGA)    | ECUS appointee  |
|                       | Else, Taylor (CoAS)  | ECUS appointee  |
|                       | Risvold, Ward (CoBT) | ECUS appointee  |
|                       | Berger, Jim (CTL)    | ECUS appointee  |
|                       | Pridmore, Jeannie    | Pres appointee  |

Worked over the summer of 2025 to create the first draft of the institutional AI policy as required by the USG. Working with the USG, revised said policy based on their feedback. Work will continue as needed until Spring 2027. Recommendation: Becomes a permanent Senate subcommittee.

#### **Committee Reflections:**

*What worked well, what did not work so well. Given your charge, how did you spend your time?*

#### **Shared Governance and Communication Initiatives:**

One of the Presiding Officer's primary goals for the year was improving communication and strengthening relationships among governance stakeholders.

#### **Monthly Senate Newsletter:**

A monthly Senate newsletter was created and distributed to provide regular updates regarding Senate actions, policy developments, administrative reports, Staff Council activities, and SGA initiatives. The newsletter became a primary mechanism for increasing transparency and extending Senate communication beyond elected representatives.

#### **Tour de Deans and Tour de Leadership:**

The Presiding Officer conducted meetings with college leadership, administrative units, and academic support offices to identify concerns requiring Senate attention and communicate ongoing governance initiatives. These conversations generated valuable feedback regarding academic integrity processes, professional leave policies, advising, retention, campus safety, faculty workload, AI implementation, graduate education, accommodations, and policy communication.

#### **Strengthening Faculty, Staff, and Student Partnerships:**

The Senate intentionally strengthened collaborative relationships with Staff Council and SGA. Increased information sharing, regular reporting, and coordinated communication efforts helped elevate faculty, staff, and student perspectives within institutional governance conversations.

#### **Senior Advisory Council Participation:**

The Presiding Officer served on the newly established Senior Advisory Council, creating an additional mechanism for faculty representation and participation in institutional planning and strategic discussions.

#### **General Reflection:**

The Senate's greatest success this year was strengthening communication and trust within shared governance. Through newsletters, outreach efforts, partnerships with Staff Council and SGA, and increased visibility of Senate activities, governance became more accessible and transparent to the campus community.

The Senate also demonstrated an ability to respond thoughtfully to emerging institutional challenges. Whether addressing artificial intelligence, faculty evaluation reform, public syllabus requirements,

distance education standards, strategic planning, or student success initiatives, Senate members remained engaged, solutions-oriented, and committed to collaborative decision-making.

A continuing challenge was balancing institution-level priorities with rapidly evolving directives from the University System of Georgia. As external mandates increase, ongoing attention should be devoted to communicating the rationale, implications, and implementation requirements of these changes in ways that are meaningful to faculty, staff, and students.

Personally, one of the most rewarding aspects of serving as Presiding Officer was witnessing the willingness of faculty, staff, students, and administrators to engage constructively in difficult conversations. Shared governance is most effective when participants approach challenges with curiosity, respect, and a commitment to the common good. The Senate's accomplishments this year reflect a collective effort that extended well beyond elected representatives and demonstrates the enduring strength of shared governance at Georgia College.

#### **Committee Recommendations:**

*Advice to the membership of the committee for the next academic year such as:*

*Are there any issues that should be considered by this committee the following year?*

*Are there any issues that this year's committee was unable to complete its work on?*

*Do any of this year's committee actions require follow-up? (i.e. a policy was drafted, but there was a recommendation for a review of the policy during the following year.)*

*Recommendations on calendar (meeting times, outline items that you expect would be considered annually)*

Continue the monthly Senate newsletter as a standing communication practice.

The monthly newsletter substantially increased awareness of Senate activities, policy discussions, administrative updates, and shared governance initiatives across campus.

Continuing this effort will help maintain transparency, improve communication with constituents, and provide a consistent mechanism for informing faculty, staff, and students about issues under Senate consideration. I have already reached out to Al Weston to get my access to Smore restored so that I can continue to create the newsletters if the PO doesn't have time.

Institutionalize regular outreach efforts between Senate leadership and academic and administrative units.

The Presiding Officer's "Tour de Deans" and "Tour de Leadership" provided valuable opportunities to gather feedback, identify emerging concerns, and strengthen relationships between Senate and campus stakeholders. Future Senate leaders should continue these listening and information-sharing efforts as a regular component of governance work.

Continue periodic review of the Artificial Intelligence Policy and expand representation as implementation broadens beyond academic applications. Consider adding AIPRC as a regular standing subcommittee.

Given the rapidly evolving nature of artificial intelligence and related technologies, the University should continue reviewing the policy on a regular basis. Future revisions should consider emerging instructional, research, administrative, and human resources applications while ensuring the policy remains responsive to institutional needs and system-level guidance.

Monitor implementation and effectiveness of revised Academic Feedback, Distance Education, Faculty Evaluation, Modified Operations, and Professional Leave policies.

Several significant policy revisions were completed during the 2025-2026 academic year. The Senate should continue evaluating how these policies function in practice and identify areas where additional clarification, assessment, or revision may be needed. We tend to implement

policies then wash our hands of them. We need to be more proactive to see how they have been working in practice and if they are achieving the goals we hoped they would achieve.

Continue discussions regarding student success, retention, academic feedback, and course withdrawal policies.

Student success was a recurring focus throughout the year. Continued collaboration among Senate committees, Academic Affairs, Student Success, Advising, and the Registrar's Office may help identify additional opportunities to support student learning, persistence, and degree completion.

Continue strengthening partnerships among University Senate, Staff Council, SGA, and university administration.

The increased collaboration among governance groups during the 2025-2026 academic year strengthened shared governance and improved communication across constituencies. Continued coordination can help ensure diverse perspectives are represented in institutional decision-making.

Maintain Senate engagement in campus safety, wellbeing, strategic planning, accreditation discussions, and institutional mission development.

These issues affect the broader university community and will likely continue shaping institutional priorities in the coming years. Ongoing Senate participation ensures that faculty, staff, and student perspectives remain part of these important conversations.

Continue efforts to improve transparency, increase constituent engagement, and communicate the impact of governance decisions to the broader campus community.

Shared governance is most effective when community members understand both the issues under consideration and the rationale behind Senate actions. Continued attention to communication, outreach, and accessibility of information should remain a priority.

Continue campus-wide conversations regarding professionalism, collegiality, workplace climate, and expectations for constructive engagement.

The Senate began preliminary discussions concerning professionalism, collegiality, workplace interactions, and the role these factors play in maintaining a healthy academic community. While these conversations are complex and may generate differing viewpoints, they raise important questions about how institutions can foster respectful dialogue, constructive disagreement, accountability, and a positive workplace climate while preserving academic freedom, due process, and robust intellectual exchange.

Explore opportunities for education and dialogue regarding professional ethics, shared governance responsibilities, and the role of Senate representatives as institutional leaders.

University Senators serve not only as representatives of their constituencies but also as stewards of the shared governance process whose conduct contributes to the credibility and effectiveness of the Senate. Future Senate leaders should consider ways to promote a deeper understanding of professional ethics, expectations for service, civil discourse, and the responsibilities associated with governance participation. Such efforts may help strengthen the effectiveness, credibility, and long-term sustainability of shared governance at Georgia College.

**Recommend items for consideration at the governance retreat:**

Shared governance partnerships among faculty, staff, students, and administration.

Shared governance communication strategies and constituent engagement.

Faculty evaluation reform and definitions of excellence.

Use of remaining state funds for funding professional development opportunities for Senate leadership

#### **Appendix: Committee Operating Procedures**

*A summary of the standard operating procedures used to conduct business during the year.*

The University Senate conducted business in accordance with the University Senate bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order, and established governance procedures. Regular meetings were held according to the Senate calendar. Business was conducted through standing committees, reports from university administrators and governance partners, committee recommendations, and action by the full Senate body. Senate leadership worked closely with committee chairs, the Executive Committee, Staff Council, Student Government Association, and university administration to facilitate communication, coordinate governance activities, and ensure timely consideration of matters affecting the university community.

Communication practices during the year included publication of monthly Senate newsletters, Senate website updates, FrontPage announcements, committee reports, and direct outreach to academic and administrative units. These efforts were designed to improve transparency, foster constituent engagement, and strengthen shared governance across the university.