COMMITTEE NAME: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF UNIVERSITY SENATE (ECUS) WITH STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS (SCC)
MEETING DATE & TIME: FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2026, 3:30-4:45 P.M.
MEETING LOCATION: PARKS HALL 301

ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS	**"P" denotes Present, "A" denotes Absent, "R" denotes Regrets**
P	Alex Blazer (CoAS, ECUS Secretary)
R	Cathy Cox (University President)
P	Nicolas Creel (CoBT, ECUS Chair Emerita)
P	Holly Croft (Library, ECUS Member)
P	Stephanie Jett (CoAS, ECUS Chair)
P	Joyce Norris-Taylor (CoHS, ECUS Vice-Chair)
P	Holley Roberts (Provost)
P	Rob Sumowski (CoE, ECUS Chair Emerita)
R	Andrew Allen (APC Chair)
P	Hedy Fraunhofer (BIPC Chair)
P	Jennifer Flory (FAPC Chair)
R	Talecia Warren (RPIPC Chair)
P	Amy Pinney (SAPC Chair)
GUESTS	
Serena Semere (SGA President)	

Legend
Highlighted text denotes follow-up.
Bold text denotes action or recommendation.

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 3:34 pm by Stephanie Jett (Chair).

II. Approval of Agenda: A **Motion** *to approve the agenda* was made and seconded. **The agenda was approved as circulated.**

III. Approval of Minutes: A draft of the 13 Feb 2026 minutes of the Executive Committee had been circulated to the meeting attendees via email. A **Motion** *to approve the minutes* was made and seconded. **The minutes were approved**.

IV. Reports

University President — President Cathy Cox

1. **Regrets, No Report** As President Cox had extended *Regrets* and was unable to attend this meeting, there was no President's Report.

University Provost — Provost Holley Roberts

1. **Graduate Education Task Force** has been charged to develop a strategic plan for graduate education.
2. **ASPIRE Meeting** took place between the Provost and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Ashwani Monga. Discussion topics included the Masters of AI Strategy program proposal and student enrollment in degree programs with multiple concentrations.
3. **BOR Update** The BOR is considering reducing the number of credit hours in an undergraduate degree from 120 to 90.

Academic Policy Committee (APC) — Vice Chair Nathan Bedsole for Chair Andrew Allen

1. **Academic Feedback Policy** The APC voted to adopt a revision to the Academic Feedback Policy to align with USG language and articulate our institutional commitment to timely, useful feedback.
    a. At the beginning of each course, faculty must clearly define for students the basis on which grades will be determined through written notification in the syllabus. In addition, they must provide timely academic feedback as the course progresses. This could include the following:
        i. Prior to midpoint of the total grading period, all assigned and "turned in" graded class assignments and examinations should be graded and available to the student.
        ii. The instructor and student should make every effort to be available during instructor's office hours for discussion of the student's academic standing prior to the midpoint of the total grading period (particularly for classes that use subjective grading)."
2. **Distance Education Policy: Regular and Substantive Feedback**
The APC voted to adopt a proposed addendum to the Distance Education Policy. The approved addendum is as follows:
    a. "Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI)
    b. The U.S. Department of Education mandates that all online courses and programs include regular and substantive interaction between students and their instructors.
    c. **Regular Interaction:**
        i. In learning environments of any kind, regular and substantive interactions must be:
        ii. With an instructor as defined by the institution's accreditor.
        iii. Initiated by the instructor.
        iv. Scheduled and predictable.
        v. Academic in nature and relevant to the course
    d. **Substantive Interaction:**
        i. Substantive interaction is defined as engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, and must include at least two of the following:
        ii. Provide direct instruction
        iii. Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework
        iv. Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency

    v. Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency"

3. **<u>Course Withdrawal Policy</u>** The APC voted to approve a drafted Course Withdrawal Policy.
    a. "A student may drop courses from their schedule with no penalty through the last day to drop without penalty as published in the Academic Calendar for each term or part of term. Students with an advisor hold must obtain approval from their academic advisor to drop a class; no additional approvals are required during this period. Courses dropped during this period do not receive a W grade, do not count in the student's attempted hours and do not appear on the academic transcript. Students will not be charged tuition and fees for courses dropped during this period as long as they remain enrolled in other courses for that term or part of term.
4. After the last day to drop a course with no fee penalty and with no W, but on or before the last day of class of each term or part of term, students may drop courses online via <u>MyGCSU/PAWS</u> or by submitting an <u>Add/Drop Card (Course Change Card)</u> to the Registrar's Office. Approval of the academic advisor (if an advisor hold exists) is required. No other approvals are required. Students will receive a W grade for courses dropped during this time period. Courses dropped during this time will count in the student's attempted hours, which will affect the student's financial aid and HOPE eligibility. They will also appear on the academic transcript. No refunds will be issued for individual courses dropped during this period. Students may not drop courses during this period if they have previously been assigned a grade of F for excessive absences by their instructor or have been assigned an F for disciplinary reasons."
5. **<u>ECUS-SCC Discussion</u>**
    a. **<u>Distance Education Policy: Regular and Substantive Feedback</u>**
        i. Question: Did the RSI policy address CTL Director Jim Berger's concerns about the rigor of distance learning and the distinction between distance learning and correspondence learning?
        ii. Answer: Yes.

Belonging and Inclusion Policy Committee (BIPC) — Chair Hedy Fraunhofer

1. **<u>Disability Training</u>** In its March 6, 2026 meeting, BIPC continued its discussion of the implementation of the employee training previously recommended by the GCSU Student Disability Resource Center. Since implementation in department meetings will require the active cooperation of department chairs, BIPC member Nancy Mizelle will, with the help of Mike Martino, design a survey that will go out to Department Chairs to assess the latter group's ideas and concerns. Since BIPC's discussion of this issue is an advisory issue that will most likely not require any formal policy recommendations, Chair Hedy Fraunhofer sent (after the meeting) an advisory memo to the SDRC informing the Student Resource Center of BIPC's recommendations and ongoing developments concerning this issue. We recommend that the SDRC send the list of available Vector training modules to Nancy Mizelle and Mike Martino so that they can share it with the Council of Chairs. CTL Director Jim Berger has recommended implementation in Fall

2026 (potentially coinciding with Disability Awareness Month in October), since CTL is busy with implementing the new WebContent Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1 Level AA) this April.

2. **Civility and Collaborative Effectiveness Policy** BIPC then moved on to a longer discussion of a proposal by BIPC member and GCSU Human Resources Director Eric Johansen for a new university-wide Civility and Collaborative Effectiveness Policy. As part of his presentation, Eric referenced other universities and university systems nation-wide that already have similar policies on the books. BIPC discussed at length potential benefits of such a policy, as well as concerns, such as cultural prescriptiveness, in particular for minoritized populations. As part of this discussion, BIPC noted that GCSU does not currently have an anti-bullying policy. Committee members decided to continue this discussion during their next meeting in April.
3. **ECUS-SCC Discussion**
    a. **Civility and Collaborative Effectiveness Policy**
        i. Comment: We currently do not have a mechanism for addressing faculty civility as civility is not part of faculty review.
        ii. Comment: Collegiality is part of CoBT faculty evaluation.
        iii. Comment: Collegiality is part of my CoAS department faculty evaluation.
        iv. Comment: The School of Nursing has a civility policy.
        v. Comment: My concern is that the policy could mistake individual crisis for patterns of behavior. Neurodivergence is also an issue.
        vi. Comment: The research on professionalism and white supremacy suggest that this policy will be weaponized against minorities.
        vii. Comment: I do not trust half of the chair to assign Likert scale numbers to faculty civility.
        viii. Follow UP: ECUS-SCC advises BIPC to review the policies of professionalism, civility, and collegiality already included in the Policy Manual and send the policy proposal to FAPC and the PO for review.

Executive Committee of University Senate (ECUS) — Chair Stephanie Jett

1. **BOR 08.03.04.01 Voluntary Resignation by Faculty** The PO will meet with Drs. Jarriel and Muschell to talk about incorporating the new abandonment policy into the PPPM.
2. **Standing Committee Discussion Decision Tree** The document helps committees navigate routes between policy recommendation and procedural advice.
3. **University Senate Budget and Foundation Updates**
    a. State Account: $3,977.00
    b. Foundation Account: $721.67
    c. Donation Account: $64.17

Faculty Affairs Policy Committee (FAPC) — Chair Jennifer Flory

1. **Post-Tenure Review Recognition** Final suggestions were reviewed by the relevant administrator; the list has been sent to Academic Affairs **as is**.
2. **Professional Leave Policy** Reviewed proposed edits; passed motion; identified three areas:

a. **Change 1** Add purpose language to include **“professional development as teachers and scholars.”**
b. **Change 2** Clarify return-to-service obligations (1 year after a 1-semester leave; 2 years after a 2-semester leave).
c. **Change 3** Consider striking the older **“seniority”** reference (which we vetted with ECUS before any action).

3. **Faculty Workload** Circulated an options document for feedback; discussed campus impacts (costs, staffing/adjunct needs, curricular effects) and the timing sensitivity given **AACSB** review next year in the College of Business. Feedback period active; concerns logged about costs, adjunct reliance if loads change, and accreditation timing; WLE concept recognized as promising but implementation-intensive.
4. **Faculty Review Policy** A member flagged an online inconsistency in the faculty review policy; FAPC chair will examine and route appropriately.
5. **Annual Evaluation of Faculty Performance** Confirmed that numerical scores are reported by the Provost’s Office to USG and that Deans round values when reporting.
6. **ECUS_SCC Discussion**
   a. **Professional Leave Policy**
      i. Comment: Some faculty use professional leave to regenerate.
      ii. Comment: My guess is that the purpose of the refresh and reinvigorate language was part of the rationale when this policy was originally created. Because the policy is approved, the rationale isn’t necessary to be included and can be excised.
      iii. Comment: Since the requirement to apply for professional leave is six years of service, seniority isn’t needed as a criteria in the policy.
   b. **Faculty Workload**
      i. Comment (Provost): The policy requires thorough consideration from deans and chairs as well as a broader conversation regarding accreditation.
      ii. Comment (FAPC Chair): I don’t foresee a motion this year; and if substantive changes are proposed, they would take 3-4 years to phase in.

Resources, Planning and Institutional Policy Committee (RPIPC) — Chair Talecia Warren

1. **Regrets, No Report** As Talecia Warren had extended her regrets, there was no RPIPC report.

Student Affairs Policy Committee (SAPC) — Chair Amy Pinney

1. **Will** We continued our discussion of student wellness and mental health and reviewed UWill, as I’d been getting questions. The explanation on the counseling page is comprehensive.
2. **Wellness Day** We then had a robust debrief of Wellness Day that included perspectives from faculty, staff, and students.
3. **Bobcat Code** Riley-Kate gave us a status report on the Bobcat Code after the SGA update, we adjourned.
4. **SGA Updates from President Serena Semere**
   a. **Academic Affairs** SGA is looking forward to meeting with Academic Affairs.

b. **Active Minds** SGA is participating in the Active Minds mental health advocacy initiative.
c. **Student Success Roundtable** SGA will hold a roundtable on student success.
d. **Officer Transitions** SGA has begun officer transitions, and the next SGA President will attend the April ECUS-SCC meeting.

5. **ECUS-SCC Discussion**
    a. **Wellness Day**
        i. Comment: I think it is concerning, for privacy and academic mission reasons, for a state institution to conduct psychological assessments of students.
        ii. Comment: I grew up taking assessments in school; they are not problematic.
        iii. Comment: It is not the researchers' responsibility to treat survey participants.
        iv. Comment: I wonder if students felt forced to participate. Classes were cancelled, they were put in a classroom with other students, and faculty proctored the surveys as if they were tests. One of my students reported that, even though the survey asked for consent, she felt like she had to complete it.
        v. Comment: We need research data on anxiety and depression so we can obtain resources to help students.
        vi. Comment: There is an irony about the college asking students about their drug use when drug use is prohibited by the code of conduct.
6. **ECUS-SCC Action**
    a. A **Motion** *to extend the meeting* 15 minutes was made and seconded. **The motion to extend the meeting was approved.**

Subcommittee on Nominations (SCoN) — Chair Joyce Norris-Taylor

1. **At-Large Position** Jamie Downing is going on professional leave and will not be able to serve in the at-large senator position. Amelia Malcom has agreed to serve as she was the runner-up in that election.
2. **2026-2027 Committee Preference Survey** Qualtrics for committee preference will be sent out soon.

VI. Unfinished Business

1. There was no unfinished business.

VII. New Business

1. There was no new business.
2. **Steering of Items to Committees**
    a. There was no steering of Items to Committees.
3. **University Senate Agenda and Minutes Review**
    a. **Tentative Agenda 27 Mar 2026**

i. Motions:
    1. APC: Academic Feedback Policy
    2. APC: Distance Education Policy
    3. APC: Withdrawal Policy
    4. FAPC: Professional Leave Policy

ii. Reports: Administrative reports and committee reports will also be agenda items.

i. Supplemental Items of Business: None.

b. **University Senate Minutes Review** A **Motion** *that the DRAFT minutes of the 27 Feb 2026 meeting of the 2025-2026 University Senate be circulated for university senator review* was made and seconded. **The motion to circulate the minutes was approved.**

VIII. Open Discussion

1. There was no open discussion.

IX. Next Meeting

1. **Calendar**
    a. University Senate Meeting – Friday, 27 March 2026, 3:30 p.m., Arts & Sciences 272
    b. ECUS Meeting – Friday, April 3, 2:30 p.m., Parks Hall 301
    c. ECUS+SCC Meeting – Friday, April 3, 3:30 p.m., Parks Hall 301
    d. University Senate Meeting – Friday, April 24, 2:00 p.m., Arts & Sciences 272
    e. University Senate Organizational Meeting – Friday, April 24, 3:30 p.m., Arts & Sciences 272
2. **Tentative Agenda** Some of the deliberation today may have generated tentative agenda items for ECUS and ECUS-SCC meetings. Stephanie Jett will ensure that such items (if any) are added to the agenda of a future meeting of ECUS or ECUS-SCC.

X. Adjournment

1. As there was no further business to consider, a **Motion** *to adjourn the meeting* was made and seconded. **The motion to adjourn was approved and the meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.**

XI. Supporting Documents

1. There are no supporting documents.

Distribution: First, these minutes will be sent to committee members for review; second, they will be posted to the Senate website.

COMMITTEE NAME: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE (ECUS) WITH STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS (SCC)
COMMITTEE OFFICERS: STEPHANIE JETT (CHAIR), JOYCE NORRIS-TAYLOR (VICE-CHAIR), ALEX BLAZER (SECRETARY)
ACADEMIC YEAR: 2025-2026

AGGREGATE MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR:
"P" denotes Present, "R" denotes Regrets, "A" denotes Absent

Acronyms		EFS = Elected Faculty Senator CoAS = College of Arts and Sciences; CoB = College of Business; CoE = College of Education; CoHS = College of Health Sciences

Meeting Dates	9/5	10/3	10/31	1/9	2/13	3/6	4/3	P	R	A
Alex Blazer *EFS, CoAS* *ECUS Secretary*	P	P	P	P	P	P		6	0	0
Cathy Cox *University President*	R	R	R	R	R	R		0	6	0
Nicholas Creel *EFS, CoBT* *ECUS Chair Emerita*	R	R	P	P	R	P		3	3	0
Holly Croft *EFS, Library* *ECUS Member*	R	P	P	P	R	P		4	2	0
Stephanie Jett *EFS, CoAS* *ECUS Chair*	P	P	P	P	P	P		6	0	0
Joyce Norris-Taylor *EFS, CoHS* *ECUS Vice-Chair*	P	P	P	P	P	P		6	0	0
Holley Roberts *Provost*	P	P	R	P	P	P		5	1	0
Rob Sumowski *EFS, CoE* *ECUS Member*	P	R	R	P	P	P		4	2	0
Andrew Allen *APC Chair*	P	P	P	R	P	R		4	2	0
Hedy Fraunhofer *BIPC Chair*	P	P	P	P	P	P		6	0	0
Jennifer Flory *FAPC Chair*	P	P	P	P	P	P		6	0	0
Talecia Warren *RPIPC Chair*	P	P	P	P	P	R		5	1	0
Amy Pinney *SAPC Chair*	P	P	P	P	P	P		6	0	0