

**COMMITTEE NAME:** EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF UNIVERSITY SENATE (ECUS)  
**MEETING DATE & TIME:** FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 2026, 2:30-3:15 P.M.  
**MEETING LOCATION:** ONLINE

**ATTENDANCE:**

<b>MEMBERS</b>		<b>“P” denotes Present, “A” denotes Absent, “R” denotes Regrets</b>
<b>P</b>	Alex Blazer (CoAS, ECUS Secretary)	
<b>R</b>	Cathy Cox (University President)	
<b>P</b>	Nicolas Creel (CoBT, ECUS Chair Emerita)	
<b>P</b>	Holly Croft (Library, ECUS Member)	
<b>P</b>	Stephanie Jett (CoAS, ECUS Chair)	
<b>P</b>	Joyce Norris-Taylor (CoHS, ECUS Vice-Chair)	
<b>P</b>	Holley Roberts (Provost)	
<b>P</b>	Rob Sumowski (CoE, ECUS Member)	

**Legend**

Highlighted text denotes follow-up.

**Bold denotes action or recommendation.**

**I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 2:31 p.m. by Stephanie Jett (Chair).

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

**III. Approval of Minutes:** A draft of the 31 Oct 2025 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**

**Presiding Officer Report — Stephanie Jett**

1. **Public CV** must be posted by 12 Jan 2026.
2. **Budget** We can use state money for professional development, such as a meeting or conference. Should SCC be interested, we will schedule a ECUS-SCC retreat for mid-February.
  - a. State Account: \$3,977.00
  - b. Foundation Account: \$721.67
  - c. Donation Account: \$64.17
3. **Decorum** We will remind members of decorum in a professional environment of university leaders.
4. **ECUS Discussion**
  - a. **Budget**
    - i. Comment: Our state funding can and should be used to reimburse USGFC representatives for travel to meetings.
  - b. **Decorum**

- i. Comment: The Presiding Officer can moderate the floor speech and the Parliamentarian can rule if discourse breaks the rules.
- ii. Comment: If the behavior is egregious, the member is already in contact with Human Resources. If speech is disruptive to the meeting, then it becomes a freedom of expression issue.
- iii. **Follow Up: Stephanie Jett will discuss the topic with Parliamentarian Kim Muschaweck.**

## Presiding Officer Elect Report — Joyce Norris-Taylor

- 1. **Election Oversight** We are receiving election results from colleges and departments.
- 2. **At-Large Position Election** The procedure will commence in early February. Since ECUS-SCC will not meet until mid-February, the procedure will be revised and voted upon electronically.

## V. Unfinished Business

- 1. There was no unfinished business.

## VI. New Business

- 1. **USG Faculty Council Updates — Rob Sumowski, Voting Representative**
  - a. **Online Monthly Meetings** October 21, 2025, December 16, 2025
  - b. **Fall Meeting with Chancellor Perdue and USG Administration** November 13-14, 2025 at Georgia Tech. The key meeting during Fall Semester 2025 was this session with Chancellor Perdue and USG administrative staff.
    - i. **Highlights: November 13-14 Meetings with Chancellor Perdue, Ashwani Monga, and Karin Elliott from USG** Most USG institutions are grappling with many of the same concerns we have discussed at GCSU: the rollout of merit pay during Summer 2025, the Commission for Public Higher Education (CPHE) and whether it will be mandated at all USG institutions, inconsistencies in the calculation of summer pay, faculty evaluations, the definition of the term *noteworthy* and where it should fit within the Likert scale, the need for a USG-wide salary study, and the handling of Artificial Intelligence (AI).
    - ii. **Chancellor Sonny Perdue Key Points**
      - 1. **AI Concerns** USG will offer access to TurnItIn Clarity beginning in January 2026 to assist institutions in AI detection. A goal will be not just to stop the use of AI by students but to also provide instruction on how to use AI appropriately.
      - 2. **The Commission for Public Higher Education (CPHE)** is the new accreditation option at USG institutions' disposal. Georgia Southern and Columbus State are currently using CPHE. The Chancellor anticipates that most of our institutions will continue to use SACS-COC. He noted that SACS has streamlined many of its more cumbersome processes in response to the emergence of

CPHE and he speculated whether the presence of CPHE may have actually inspired SACS to become streamlined, more efficient, and more institution-friendly. The Chancellor says he has no plans to mandate whether institutions should use CPHE or SACSCOC. He stated he does “not wish to mandate any accrediting agency based on some ideological view.”

3. **Higher Education Compact** The Chancellor noted that USG will not sign onto the current administration’s higher education compact. He said he does not feel the feds are a quality road map in mandating what USG should do.
4. **Summer 2025 Merit Raises** The Chancellor acknowledged that he wasn’t sure USG did the best job communicating how to handle merit raises. He said USG should also better train evaluators on who should received merit raises. He stated he was open to USGFC’s suggestions and ideas on how better to handle future rollouts. He thinks there may be merit raises again next year. USG will try to figure out a better way to handle merit raises next time. He noted that different campuses do performance evaluations in different ways. He said USG will try to handle future merit raises in a more standardized way.
5. **USG Administration** acknowledged concerns with the definition of the term *noteworthy* and where it should fit in with the Likert scale. It is anticipated this will be up to each institution’s discretion.
6. **Salary Inconsistencies and Salary Study** USG recognizes that newer hires are coming in at higher salaries than faculty who have been here a while. He would like to see USG come up with a unified job description across institutions (which he noted would make merit pay easier), though he also acknowledged that positions with the same title may be very different across fields and across institutions. He stated this is complex and that there are many positions that may not compare well with each other.
7. **Chancellor Perdue anticipates a 2026 USG-wide Salary Study** for faculty and staff to being in January 2026 with a consultant leading it. USGFC also has its own salary study committee. The Chancellor offered USGFC a role during discussions about salary inconsistencies.
8. **USG has discussed the possible merger of USG’s health plan** with the state health benefit plan used by P-12 institutions. Because there are differences in the programs, it would cost the state \$175 Million to merge us with the other plan. Covering GLP weight loss drugs alone would cost \$33 million. Such a switch would result in substantial increases in USG employees’ health premiums.
9. **During the 2026 GA General Assembly**, USG will request that institutions be allowed to continue to keep money from fiscal year

to fiscal year rather than implementing a “use it or lose it” policy. He would like to see institutions be able to build up strategic reserves.

10. **Faculty Visas** Research I universities have concerns about faculty from out of the country running into problems renewing their visas in light of shifting policies regarding immigration. The USG is willing to assist such faculty if they need USG to formally sponsor them in their efforts to renew visas.
- iii. **Faculty Evaluation** And in the FWIW category, here is an interesting note from the State University Sector Committee Meeting: Some institutions use a single rubric to evaluate faculty at all levels. According to its USGFC representative, Dalton State utilizes one rubric to evaluate faculty in the following positions: lecturer, assistant, associate, and full professor.

## VII. Open Discussion

1. **Classical Learning Test as ACT/SAT Equivalent** Provost Roberts noted that there is no policy yet. Two issues include lack of Classical Learning Tests in legislation funding Hope and Miller Scholarships and lack of data providing predictability of student success tied to Classical Learning Tests.
2. **Calendar and Website Updates** The calendar will be drafted and sent to the Office of the President and the Office of the Provost for review. The new website is being tested and will probably go live in the next month or two.

## VIII. Next Meeting

1. **Calendar**
  - a. University Senate Meeting – Friday, January 23, 3:30 p.m., Arts & Sciences 272
  - b. ECUS Meeting – Friday, February 13, 2:30 p.m. p.m., Parks Hall 301
  - c. ECUS+SCC Meeting – Friday, February 13, 3:30 p.m. Parks Hall 301
  - d. University Senate Meeting – Friday, February 27, 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.**

## IX. 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 3:00 p.m.**

## X. 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)

**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 <i>EFS, CoAS</i> <i>ECUS Secretary</i>	P	P	P	P				4	0	0	
Cathy Cox <i>University President</i>	R	R	R	R				0	4	0	
Nicholas Creel <i>EFS, CoBT</i> <i>ECUS Chair Emerita</i>	R	R	P	P				2	2	0	
Holly Croft <i>EFS, Library</i> <i>ECUS Member</i>	R	P	P	P				3	1	0	
Stephanie Jett <i>EFS, CoAS</i> <i>ECUS Chair</i>	P	P	P	P				4	0	0	
Joyce Norris-Taylor <i>EFS, CoHS</i> <i>ECUS Vice-Chair</i>	P	P	P	P				4	0	0	
Holley Roberts <i>Provost</i>	P	P	R	P				4	1	0	
Rob Sumowski <i>EFS, CoE</i> <i>ECUS Member</i>	P	R	R	P				2	2	0	