

Governance Retreat Notes
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9 August 2021

- Dr. Holley Roberts and Dr. Diana Young, Co-Directors, Strategic Plan Steering Committee
 - Noteworthy accomplishments
 - hire admissions recruiter for AfAm students
 - 15% increase in student HIP participation
 - Areas of Concern
 - increase merit/need based scholarships needed
 - Advising, fac training for transformative experiences
 - Recurring funding for grad studies advertising
 - Recommendation for changes
 - effectiveness of 1st year experience redesign
 - look at redesign senior capstone
 - Tracking participation rates in GC Journeys and evaluate overall effectiveness
 - Timeline: extension of current strategic plan, develop process for next strategic plan, effect of COVID on higher ed, leadership transition
- Provost Spirou
 - Thanks for extraordinary effort over last year
 - COVID-19
 - Multiple meetings to discuss USG COVID-19 guidance: Provost, Deans, Chairs meeting; Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and all provosts; Provost and VP for Student Life
 - USG guidance
 - f2f student experience (both teaching and social events) with no social distancing
 - Vaccines offer safe protection
 - Encourage vaccine and masks
 - This guidance could change
 - No student, staff, faculty member should be treated differently because of vaccination status
 - Students and employees should not be asked about vaccination status or be segregated. Everyone must be treated the same in class seating arrangement, group work, and office hours.
 - Students and employees can be asked about their vaccination status if they have been exposed to COVID-19
 - Students may be required to be vaccinated by off-campus partner for experiential learning purposes.
 - Any change in modality of course delivery due to instructor isolation or quarantine requires approval of chair, dean, and provost. The change of modality is subject to a specific end date.
 - Department chairs will arrange for class coverage due to instructor illness.
 - Faculty should be prepared to accommodate students isolating or quarantining. Examples of accommodation include such processes as

- posting notes on D2L, holding individual conferences with students, and giving online quizzes.
 - Accommodations for employees with high risk of severe illness expired over the summer.
 - No institution may change their overall modality of their instruction.
 - All institutions receive the same guidance.
 - Reflections on the last year: the work of the faculty has been remarkable.
- CoAS and CoB developed a BS in Data Science. Nursing is plan a third cohort to graduate 40 additional nurses.
- New Provost Office program: Week-long scholar in residence visits in departments. Application process under development.
- Hired Faculty Success Coordinator to help faculty compete for regional/state/national awards, similar to Student Scholarship Office, that focuses on student success as we seek national distinction. Developed awards database that includes 900 awards; 35 submission in one year for faculty and program awards; win 11.
- Jenny Flaherty receive NEH summer grant.
- Post-Tenure Review: USG committee gathered data and made recommendations. BOR scheduled to discuss on Tuesday, Aug 10
- SACS-COC: Successful 5-year review; launch of 10-year reaffirmation. Next step is to identify QEP topics by spring 2022; look for announcements for faculty engagement this fall.
- Cluster hires: University exploring possibility for a cluster hire initiative which would show commitment to diversity/inclusion, would help with Honors College and Institute of Rural Studies
- Agreements with three institutions; Gordon, Highlands, Coastal Georgia
- White House COVID-19 College Vaccine Challenge: GCSU participating in White House vaccine initiative
- Question and Answer (Provost answers, unless otherwise noted)
 - Q: if student quarantined or diagnosed, how deliver class to that student? What if some students quarantined one week and other students next week? A: There is an end date to quarantine/isolation for particular students. A (VP for Student Life): USG directive is return to normal operations. We do everything we can to encourage students to wear masks indoors and outdoors. Student Health Services will provide vaccination clinics every Thursday. Student Life will provide sophomore students with Welcome Back to integrate last year's freshman to college.
 - Q: To clarify, if a student is in quarantine or isolation, then we can deliver the course to that student online? A: Provost; we cannot convert the course to hybrid; instructors can give notes and quizzes on D2L.
 - Q: If a person is vaccinated and exposed, then that person is not supposed to quarantine? A: Fully vaccinated individuals don't have to quarantine.
 - Q: If a student is required to be vaccinated for clinical or external learning experience, and the student does not get vaccinated (for instance, for medical reason), will the university protect student learning? A: Students who are required to be vaccinated by an external party such as an internship or clinic, but do not wish to be vaccinated should contact the department chair, who will find an alternative educational experience.
 - Q: The vaccine is not safe for people with certain immune disorders and those people can't take vaccine. Will the university treat those individuals as high risk of severe

illness, like last year? A (Associate VP for Finance & Administration): If an employee falls into that category, reach out to HR and apply for ADA accommodations. We communicated to those individuals telling them of the new process, and we made a FrontPage announcement.

- Q: In addition to the vaccination clinic every Thursday, I recommend testing to accompany the clinic due to breakthrough cases. I recommend offering and advertising testing. A (VP for Student Life): We widely advertise the availability of testing.
 - Q: The USG states that institutions cannot have mask or physical distancing requirements, but the CDC recommends masking and physical distancing in areas of high transmission. Can instructors require masking and physical distancing in small group work? A: We can encourage masking, but we can't segregate by masks or vaccination status. I believe that if someone is asked to wear a mask, then the person will wear a mask.
 - Q: If a vaccinated student wants to quarantine, are they allowed? A (VP for Student Life): USG guidance says no.
 - Q: Can we send reminders about isolation and quarantine protocols to students? A: Yes, good suggestion.
 - Q: Can we delivery our courses in a hybrid rather than fully virtual manner? A: The system guidance is F2F course delivery.
 - Q: What is occurring with the block party? A (VP for Student Life): We are following USG guidance of offering student experiences with no social distancing.
 - Q: What is the guidance for vaccinated instructors who get breakthrough cases, should those instructors teach in person? A: Those instructors who are symptomatic for or test positive with COVID-19 should Inform their supervisor; their supervisor will inform HR; and HR will discuss next steps, which could include isolation. A (Associate VP for Finance & Administration): We are updating the decision trees for employees and students.
 - Q: Can we return to daily reporting on dashboard? A (Associate VP for Strategic Communications): Most universities update their dashboards weekly. We will continue to update the dashboard on Monday mornings.
 - Q: What is the legal exposure of the university if someone says I wish not to be exposed, because I am this age or have this underlying condition, the university say no accommodation, teach or learn in person, and then contracts the virus. . . . is the university liable? A: I direct your question to Legal Affairs.
 - Q: How do vaccination, masking, and physical distancing protocols work with artists and scholars visiting our campus? Is it possible for us to require students to be masked? A: We can encourage visitors to vaccinate and mask, but we cannot require it. Atlanta has instituted a mask mandate but USG institutions in Atlanta have to follow state guidelines.
 - Q: Are we allowed to require masks in our office space? A: No, we can encourage masks. My first goal is to be transparent with the policy. My second goal is to do all we can to protect health and safety within those guidelines. I wish we had more flexibility. Thank you for your efforts last year, which was difficult both personally and professional, thank you for working so hard with the students. Feel free to contact department chairs and deans if you have questions. Shawn Brooks, Lee Fruitticher, and myself will try to help. This is a rapidly changing situation. If anything happens, I'll share with you quickly.
- Question and Answer Chat Comments

- the link to the Strategic Plan site: <https://www.gcsu.edu/strategic-planning>
- You can check out the database here: www.gcawardsdatabase.com
- You can check out our website at undergraduateresearch.org
- The video cameras have all been left in the classroom in case you all want to deliver content via dual-format (in-person and video conference).
- So dual-format content is allowed?
 - That was one of my primary questions regarding accommodations this fall.
- May we request a copy of the USG's Covid Guidelines to share with our faculty constituents?
- Will the University provide masks in every classroom for students who want to wear them?
- If a student is required to be vaccinated for a clinical or external educational experience, should the student not be willing to be vaccinated, what is the role of the university in making accommodation that the student educational experience is protected?
- The safety of the vaccine is unknown for people with certain autoimmune disorders as per the CDC guidance, should individual with these disorders be treated as high risk?
- For faculty we must go through ADA accommodations
- Will COVID-19 cases be reported daily or weekly?
- clarification; students designated to engage with visiting artists and scholars and CBEL/TE/QEB events - can they be required to mask up?
- faculty are accommodated, what about students?
 - students are protected by ADA. I'm not sure if they received an email like the one faculty received.
 - That is my point, ADA protected students may be unaware of their possibilities
- I've heard many concerns from constituents about the parties and other events for incoming students. Is it really wise to allow and encourage large-scale recreational gatherings?
 - 8 – 11 p.m. WELCOME TO GEORGIA COLLEGE BLOCK PARTY – Greene Street
 - You are cordially invited to the 3rd Annual Block Party! Come out and enjoy music, art and fun. Student organizations will be on hand to provide information on how to get involved on campus. Now that you are on campus, remember the Campus Life Challenge: Get involved in at least one organization or team in the first two weeks. You will even have an opportunity to enter a drawing for prizes including a semester of free books! You don't want to miss out!
- I understand that we are not allowed to transition to fully virtual classes, but are we allowed to implement hybrid delivery if we have a number of students who are quarantined?
- <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section4/C334/4.8> Immunizations
- What are the university's protocols for quarantine? When a student tells me she/he/they need are sick/might be sick, what's the script I can provide them. I need the script to avoid students using this as an excuse just not to come to physical class. Thank you.
- Will the student decision path be updated to reflect symptoms of the delta variant?
 - Employee decision tree: <https://www.gcsu.edu/sites/default/files/documents/2021-02/2021%20Decision%20Path%202200px.pdf>
 - Updated to add new delta symptoms?

- <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/standards>
 - CDC Guidelines as of July 27th for fully vaccinated individuals regarding masks: "To maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission."
 - Baldwin County was raised to high risk yesterday.
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.htm>.
 - Again, if there is an outbreak, will this policy be considered <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section4/C334/>
 - 4.8 Immunizations
 - 4.8.1 Immunizations Against Disease During an Outbreak or Epidemic
 - During an epidemic or a threatened epidemic of any disease preventable by immunization at a University System of Georgia (USG) institution, and when an emergency has been declared by appropriate health authorities of this State, the President of the institution, in conjunction with the Chancellor and appropriate health authorities, may promulgate rules and regulations specifying diseases against which immunizations may be required.
 - Any individual who cannot show proof of immunity or adequate immunization and refuses to be immunized shall be excluded from any USG institution or facility until valid evidence of immunization against the disease is presented or the epidemic or threat no longer constitutes a significant public health danger.
 - Immunizations required. It is there. It is a policy.
 - If we have another outbreak like last year we have a vaccine. Will the policy follow the USG policy and require immunizations. It is there in black and white in the USG policy manual. <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section4/C334/>
 - Will President Dorman leave us and do the right thing to protect us?
 - DPH says vaccinated people exposed to COVID should wear masks and social distancing, but USG is not allowed to social distance: <https://dph.georgia.gov/contact>. Students and faculty who are vaccinated and exposed should not be forced into the classroom where they can't socially distance.
 - CDC says at top of Considerations for IHEs page that everyone should be wearing masks indoors and outdoors in area of high transmission, which is 90% of the country if I remember correctly: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>
 - As to liability - long story short, no GCSU doesn't really need to worry about it
 - For one, proving causation is next to impossible - how can one prove where they caught the virus?
 - Workplace illness is also usually covered thru workers comp - precluding lawsuits from staff/faculty
 - Also, GA passed a liability shield that likely covers GCSU
 - The faculty handbook allows us to our office hours online. (This is a longstanding, pre-covid policy.)
 - It will soon have full FDA approval (likely September for Pfizer).
- ECUS Follow Up Conversation with Provost Spirou
 - Provost: If an instructor can control the number of students who are online, i.e., only those with excused absence from Student Life, then the instructor can accommodate individual students with hybrid learning; however, instructors cannot change the modality of the class to hybrid learning. Student Life will continue to send excused absences for COVID-19.

- Comment: Instructors can use Zoom waiting rooms to admit only those students with excused absences from Student Life.
- Provost: I will support instructors in any way they choose to accommodate individual students (D2L notes, individual conferences), but instructors cannot change the modality of the entire class.