

UWG ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FACULTY AND STAFF (ARFS)

Coordinating Council Meeting MINUTES

UWG Campus Center

March 27, 2026

Present: Micheal Crafton (presiding), Meg Cooper, Rolanda Farmer, Cecilia Lee, Ann McCleary, Jerry Mock, Anne Richards, Francie Taylor, Trish Wells; Kate Petty (Alumni and Constituent Relations)

Guests: Dr. Michael Johnson, UWG President; Dr. Mark Clarke, UWG Chief of Staff

Absent: Patricia Pinkard, Mike Renfrow, Clois Reese, Sally Roberts, Erma Shooks

Call to Order: Micheal Crafton called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 pm.

Visit from UWG President, Dr. Michael Johnson

- Dr. Johnson shared some information about status and plans for UWG: enrollment (total c. 16,000, including 2,000 dual enrolled and 6,000 graduate students); efforts to increase the presence of both students and faculty on campus (with residence halls at 70% occupancy, hoping to increase to 100%); the #1 priority being to increase graduation rates (currently 40%; plans to increase the high school GPA for admittance from 2.0 to 2.5 may help with this effort); increasing financial support through research and grants (currently receiving \$730,000.00 in federal money); and athletics (have finished 2nd of 3 years of an expedited transition to Division 1). He also reported that UWG expects to have a 7 million dollar cut from state funds related to distance learning, although details are not clear yet.
- Dr. Johnson then took questions from Council members:
 - Emeriti applications(Micheal) – Three applications are on his desk, waiting to be processed. Anne and Meg brought up some issues they are hearing from faculty running into problems with the application process at the dean level. Dr. Johnson is concerned that awarding of emeritus/a status be a function of truly outstanding performance and discouraged self-nominations. There was discussion about some revision of the UWG policy in the near future, and ARFS should be able to participate in the process in some manner. There will be additional discussion. It was later suggested that something about an appeal should be included in the policy.
 - Asked about what he saw as the role of ARFS (Ann), Dr. Johnson expressed interest in retirees supporting UWG in a variety of ways – e.g., promoting the brand to the community, mentoring junior faculty. Work on UWG's strategic plan may give us an opportunity to be engaged, although UWG can't be static and look only to the past.
 - Concerns about student academic performance (Cecilia) – Dr. Johnson noted that professors complaining about student performance is not new. He noted that nature of our students (e.g., lots of first-generation students) and issues related to how distance learning should be available (or not) to different groups.
 - Male-female ratio (Jerry) – Dr. Johnson reported that 60% of UWG students are female and that females tend to do better academically.

- Counseling Center (Anne) – Dr. Johnson said that he would have to check to see if staffing had fallen to 2 counselors (from 10 in the past). He discussed some of the resources used for supporting students at his previous employer in Houston.
- Continuing liaison -- Meg asked if the person identified by Dr. Monga as a problem-solving liaison is continuing to serve that role for ARFS. She is not; we should rely on Kate Petty and Julia Key (Alumni and Constituent Development).
- In additional discussion, Dr. Johnson indicated he would be open to additional questions if we had some follow-up. We also learned that Tyus Hall is being demolished and that the old Baptist Student Center has been purchased by UWG.
- Additional questions for Dr. Johnson may be submitted to Micheal. In addition, Micheal is meeting with Hope Cole and Alicia Hargraves-Bradford from Human Resources, and we may give him questions to ask them.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the January, 2026 Coordinating Council meeting were approved (M-Anne Richards, S-Trish Wells).

Annual Report: The 2025 annual report is not quite ready yet, primarily needing some additional information related to expenditures.

Alumni Updates (Kate Petty): The Alumni office is now fully staffed. Kate and Julia should be our main contacts. If the question/issue is outside their purview, they can still help us in figuring out how to take care of the matter. We have officially been allocated a budget of \$5,000.00 annually. It looks like our spending has been under this limit in recent years.

Retiree Legacy Scholarship: Carla Powers (or Wendy Cooley) are contacts related to the scholarship. Micheal attended the Scholarship Luncheon, apparently a new event.

Upcoming Events:

- 2026 Annual Reunion: Kate reserved the Campus Center Ballroom for November 7th; we are waiting for final confirmation. The initial planning meeting will be set up soon.
- “What To Expect in Retirement” panel presentation, moderated by Melanie McClellan, is scheduled for March 31st, 12:00-1:30 pm.
- The USGRC (University System of Georgia Retiree Council) Spring, 2026 meeting is scheduled to be held on the UWG campus on May 1st.

The Rejuvenator: We briefly discussed some possible content to include in the next issue.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Friday, July 10th, at 10:00 am.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meg Cooper, Secretary