



**FACULTY SENATE  
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Activities

**Minna Rollins**, Budget

**Jamie Brandenburg**, Rules

**Mike Hester**, Diversity and  
Internationalization

**Jason Swift**, Teaching, Learning,  
and Assessment

# Faculty Senate Newsletter

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## Report from the Faculty Senate Chair

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, I would like to express my appreciation to our senate committee chairs and the senators, college and school representative, administrators, and staff who have worked so diligently on their tasks and agenda items this semester. These senate committees have met regularly, carefully examined and passed forward many course and program modifications, evaluated policies and procedures, and made valuable recommendations. A lot of good and meaningful work has been accomplished. I am also thankful for our senate executive secretary, Laura McCloskey Wolfe, for her hard work, and I appreciate how smoothly and efficiently she has taken on the responsibilities of her office. Finally, I want to express my gratitude to Colleen Vasconcellos and Dan Williams for their ongoing training and guidance in helping me and Laura learn our duties. It is an honor to work with all of you.

I have two things to report on since the last newsletter. First, I announced to the senate in our last meeting that the executive committee of the senate would like to serve as a faculty welfare committee to provide support and assistance to faculty impacted by strategic alignment. This includes most immediately our colleagues whose contracts will not be renewed, but also faculty whose teaching, service, and professional development duties and workloads have been or will be affected by changes in their program resulting from strategic alignment. I will announce dates for possible gatherings of the committee to begin in the spring semester. Until then, please reach out to me, Laura, or any chair of a senate committee and let us know of your needs and concerns, so we can be prepared and appropriately responsive in our efforts to provide support and assistance to you. As I am also aware that the Institute for Faculty Excellence is similarly mindful of these needs for support of faculty impacted by strategic alignment, I will be in contact with IFE about coordinating our support efforts with theirs.

Second, I did receive some valuable questions and comments in my first “chat with the senate chair” that will help me focus my work with administration and the senate in the coming weeks. The themes that emerged from those questions and comments include a better understanding of the upcoming equity analysis, information on recruitment trends, especially among underrepresented minorities, possible access to raw data used to determine budget allocations, clarifying the vision and role of liberal arts at UWG, and better understanding existing and possible teaching load options (specifically teaching workload as a designated 4/4 track option for tenured/tenure eligible faculty). I have already passed these themes along to the relevant committee chairs to address, where applicable, and I will plan to address them with the Provost and other relevant administrators in upcoming meetings. The next “chat with the senate chair” will be on Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup> at 1:30, beginning in the foyer of Melson Hall. Please come if you can and please continue to share questions, ideas, and comments with me via email or in other ways.

## Committee Reports

### Undergraduate Programs Committee (UPC)

As fall winds down, the UPC is setting up its schedule for spring. The UPC agenda deadlines for spring are these Fridays by 5 pm:

January 6 (leading to the Jan 20 Senate meeting)

February 3 (for Feb 17 Senate meeting)

March 3 (for Mar 17 Senate meeting)

March 31 (for April 14 Senate meeting)

These are the dates by which proposals need to reach the UPC stage in Curriculog to be processed at the UPC meeting in time to move on to the Senate agenda.

Undergraduate program changes made recently include new courses, programs, and pathways. During the November meeting, the Faculty Senate approved two new courses in the Department of Natural Sciences (cross-listed to multiple discipline prefixes). The Introduction to Science Pedagogy course provides guidance about teaching for students who are TAs in science labs, and the Scientific Communication course is designed for students who are studying to become science teachers. Two proposals approved from the Department of Sport Management, Wellness, and Physical Education included an accelerated bachelor's to master's pathway in sport management and a new Nexus program in digital entertainment, esports, and game development. Georgia is becoming a hub for the esports industry in the U.S., and the Nexus provides interested students a path to focus their studies and skill-development experiences in this field.

UPC also approved over 40 courses or sections of courses to receive the undergraduate research high-impact practice designation. The work of assigning the designations each semester is done by the Undergraduate Research Committee which reviews courses that are submitted by instructors and determines the category and level of research to be indicated by an attribute in Banner. If you have questions about UPC, don't hesitate to contact the chair, Kim Green, at [kgreen@westga.edu](mailto:kgreen@westga.edu).

### Graduate Programs Committee (GPC)

At its November 1st meeting, the Graduate Programs Committee (GPC) approved three program proposals that streamline requirements for graduate students. One modification for the English, M.A. program would remove the GRE requirement for applicants, while another would replace the foreign language requirement with an embedded diversity/global studies course requirement. The approved program modification for the Ed.D. in School Improvement would change the application process to replace the requirement for recommendation letters with inclusion of contact information for three professional references on the required resume or CV.

The GPC also approved four new proposals for the cross-listed course, Scientific Communication, to be offered in the Department of Natural Sciences as BIOL 5411, CHEM 5411, GEOG 5411, and GEOL 5411. Science majors taking these courses as part of the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's (ABM) program would be able to earn a Master of Arts in Teaching in one year.

In addition, GPC approved two graduate policy proposals. One proposal was a modification of the Graduate Course Loads policy, reducing a full-time graduate course load to six credit hours (from nine credit hours), while reducing a half-time graduate course load to three credit hours (from 5 credit hours). The reduction in credit hours to meet half-time status allows graduate students to be eligible for Federal Student Aid with enrollment in a single three-credit hour course.

The other approved policy officially describes the university year and defines a credit hour. This new policy would mirror that in the Undergraduate Catalog.

The first GPC meeting for 2023 will be held via Zoom during the first week of Spring Semester classes in January. The date and time for the meeting will be announced in the December edition of the Faculty Senate newsletter. Contact GPC Chair, Patrick Hadley ([phadley@westga.edu](mailto:phadley@westga.edu)) to request a Zoom link to join a GPC meeting.

### Faculty Senate Committee for Diversity and Inclusion (FSCDI)

The Faculty Senate Committee for Diversity & Internationalization was excited to have Dr. Natasha Ramsay-Jordan attend our November meeting. Dr. Ramsay-Jordan will be acting as liaison between the FSCDI and the Provost's Office, a welcome addition for optimal communication among decision-makers in Academic Affairs.

## Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Committee (TLA)

In TLA we are working with the Institute for Faculty Excellence to collect faculty feedback to aid in the development, design and future piloting of a common CourseDen template. This initiative is in the early stages of development and IFE's instructional designers have designed three CourseDen templates and are soliciting feedback from faculty and students. The goal of this work is to ensure that all UWG students have a consistent experience when engaging with and navigating CourseDen, thus this is about student centeredness and faculty driven feedback for design. We are in the early, initial stages and are collecting feedback about three early designs. More faculty feedback will be sought as the process of design proceeds. Please share the link and information with your constituents, program, and departments. The link to sign up to view, explore and provide feedback of the three initial designs is below. Faculty feedback is valuable and crucial in the design of a CourseDen template and the goal of student centeredness. If faculty would like to be enrolled in the three model courses and/or a course with resources on best practices for online course navigation, please use [this form to sign up](#). Remember this is in the early stages and faculty feedback is helping drive the design along with meeting accessibility needs, Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) and student-centered importance.

Faculty can set up CourseDen sandboxes for their upcoming courses prior to the official opening of CourseDen. There is a Knowledge Base article that tells the steps and has the link for the request form. Follow this link to the [KB article - Faculty: Requesting a Sandbox](#). Sandboxes allow you to set up your courses' CourseDen shells early. For more help regarding CourseDen contact UWG Online at [online@westga.edu](mailto:online@westga.edu).

## Helpful Links and Reminders

### Main Faculty Senate Webpage

[Faculty Senate](#)

### Committee Rosters and Meeting Information

[Senate Standing Committees](#)

- Includes committee meeting dates, agendas, and meeting minutes.

### Agendas

[Faculty Senate Agendas](#)

- Agenda items are due to [Jeff](#) (and copy [Laura](#)) by 5pm the Friday before each meeting.
- Agendas for each Faculty Senate meeting are posted the Wednesday before the meeting.

### Minutes

[Faculty Senate Minutes](#)

- Faculty Senate minutes are available approximately one week following each meeting.

### Link to Livestream and Recordings of Faculty Senate Meetings

[Laura Wolfe's YouTube Channel](#)

- Senate meetings are open to the public.
- Livestreams begin shortly before roll call.
- Recordings are available through this same link immediately following each meeting.