



Faculty Senate Meeting – November 6, 2018

President's Report

Theme:

SSU Momentum Year: Meticulously Monitoring and Measuring Meaningful Matriculation

Greetings Faculty Senators,

As we prepare for the 128th Founders Day ceremony this Thursday, let us reflect on the rich legacy of this great institution and the sacrifices of those who served before us. As we face budget and enrollment challenges, let us remain mindful of our Momentum Year Charge for “meaningful matriculation for all of our students.” This week the Chancellor of the USG sent the Semester Enrollment Report that indicated fourteen USG institutions faced declining enrollment. This is a major concern nationally at public institutions.

Since our last meeting, we held two campus forums and our faculty meeting on October 16 where we discussed the impact of declining enrollment on Savannah State University's budget and the need to align resources to address the associated decrease in state funding.

On Friday, I released a statement that 26 non-tenured faculty members have received notification that their contracts will not be renewed for the 2019-20 academic year (fiscal year 2020). The affected faculty members will continue to teach at SSU through the duration of their 2018-19 contracts. The faculty notification process comes as the university realigns its resources in light of declining enrollment and state-allocated funding. While this was one of the most difficult decisions we had to make, it was necessary as we must address our declining enrollment impact on our already low student to faculty ratio and class sizes.

In the meantime, these faculty reductions have been coordinated across the university to ensure that SSU students will continue to have the academic support and course offerings they need to succeed and thrive. Staff reductions will take place in early 2019.

As you are aware, we have assembled two teams on campus to take an in-depth look at our operation and who will recommend strategies to improve efficiency: The Strategic Alignment of Resources (SAR) Planning Committee and the Comprehensive Administrative Review (CAR) Committee. These teams are meeting weekly to help us address our challenges. Two members of the executive committee as well as other faculty and academic staff serve on these committees.

We are receiving support from the USG to address our challenges and this week there are two colleagues working with enrollment management. We welcome their input.

Congratulations to Dr. Carol Pride as you serve as the Graduate School Coordinator or Director.

I look forward to seeing you at our Founders Day on Thursday, November 8 at 9:30 a.m. in Tiger Arena. The keynote speaker is Dr. Amir Jamal Touré, who teaches Africana Studies at SSU. Mr. Charles G. Young will receive the Cyrus G. Wiley Distinguished Alumni Award and the Richard R. Wright Award of Excellence will be presented to an SSU retiree, Mrs. Shirley Barber James. Please come out and support Founders Day. You may want to bring your classes.

I am committed to full transparency as we go through our challenges and welcome your feedback, suggestions and innovative strategies to enhance our enrollment and retention challenges.

Thank you!



Faculty Senate Meeting – January 15, 2019

President's Report

Theme:

SSU Momentum Year: Meticulously Monitoring and Measuring Meaningful Matriculation

Greetings Faculty Senators,

As we begin this New Year 2019, with the news of my retirement at the end of this fiscal year, I first and foremost want to thank all the members of the Faculty Senate especially members of the Executive Committee over the last eight academic years for your commitment to faculty and institutional governance and your service on the many Senate and institutional committees. I am proud of the many accomplishments some which were shared at the general Assembly and in my campus letter.

During the General Assembly, I shared with you some university priorities during my transition over the next six months. I am taking this opportunity to revisit those with you and to seek your support.

Some of the priorities in the coming months are as follows:

- Address recent state budget reductions due to the decline in enrollment;
- Review and adopt recommendations from our two campus wide committees: the Comprehensive Administrative Review Committee and the Strategic Alignment of Resources Planning Committee;
- Creating a one-stop shop for enrollment management service areas and hiring a senior administrator for enrollment management;

- Increasing funding for need-based scholarships;
- Completing activities of the current strategic plan, which ends in 2020;
- Continuing the implementation of Momentum Year and student success initiatives;
- Continuing to enhance campus safety and security initiatives; and
- Restructuring athletics and completing the transition to NCAA Division II.

In the Chancellor's news release attached he has shared the transition plans, naming of the Interim President and a transition committee and plans for a national search!

As we begin this semester, we do have some challenges in approximately 500 students who have not met the minimal payments , those who are dropped on Friday have till the 15 January to be reinstated and they should continue to attend class.

I hope that you are settling in and please continue to assist our students succeed to graduation or the next level of their academic program of study.

We are excited to announce that we are now able to offer the Mechanical Engineering and Technology program and the Certificate in Virtual Forensic Science. Thank you to everyone who played a role in making this possible.

Each year the University System of Georgia Board of Regents hosts Academic Recognition Day, where the top academic student is recognized from each of the USG institutions. Our Academic Recognition Day representative is Aaliyah Buckholts, a math major pursuing teacher certification in secondary mathematics. She will be recognized at the February 12 meeting of the Board of Regents.

The 30th Annual Savannah Black Heritage Festival, is sponsored by SSU, City of Savannah and Cultural Affairs February 1-22, 2019. Thank you to all faculty, staff and students who are participating in events across campus and throughout the city.

Thank you!



Faculty Senate Meeting – February 5, 2019

President's Report

Theme:

SSU Momentum Year: Meticulously Monitoring and Measuring Meaningful Matriculation

Greetings Faculty Senators,

I am impressed with all of the activities on campus that are focused on student success and excellence.

The Strategic Alignment of Resources (SAR) Planning Committee has completed its primary role and will be sharing recommendations today with the Faculty Senate and at upcoming Campus Forums. The Comprehensive Administrative Review (CAR) committee will continue its work and we appreciate all the faculty and staff who have worked with these two committees as we work to improve operational efficiency.

Please plan to attend one of two campus forums to hear updates on Savannah State University's budget status and plans moving forward. The forums will be held at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Thursday, February 7th.

The University System of Georgia Transition Team arrived on campus, Monday, February 4th, and will be on campus several days monthly through early April. Members of the team will be meeting with various colleagues on campus. Some of our colleagues have already met with them including the Faculty Senate executive committee and Staff Council.

Savannah State will be participating in an open house at the Liberty Center in Hinesville, Georgia, on February 7th, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. We are expanding our academic offerings in Homeland Security and Emergency Management and certification in Virtual Forensic Science to residents of the area. Thanks to those academic departments and faculty for your support of these efforts.

SSU alumnus and Retired Naval Officer Donnie Cochran, will receive a 2019 Regents' Hall of Fame Alumni and Distinguished Friends Award from the University System of Georgia (USG) Foundation Board of Trustees. The award will be presented at the Regents' Scholarship Gala on Friday, February 8th.

The Savannah State University Annual Scholarship Gala is April 6th, at the Savannah Marriott Riverfront. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend.

Thanks to all the faculty, staff and students who are participating in the Savannah Black Heritage Festival events and those who have served on the committee and who are hosting events on campus and in the community.

“The function of **education** is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus **character** - that is the goal of true education.” --*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Thank you!



Faculty Senate Meeting – March 5, 2019

President's Report

Theme:

SSU Momentum Year: Meticulously Monitoring and Measuring Meaningful Matriculation

Greetings Faculty Senators,

Spring semester is one of the busiest times of year for us and I appreciate all that you do to help students matriculate and graduate. We are halfway through the semester and I hope all is progressing well for you.

On February 7, we held two campus forums facilitated by USG Transition Team Leader Stuart Rayfield. Dr. Rayfield shared the make-up of the transition team who will be working closely with our team members in their respective areas to improve operational efficiency.

At the February 12 meeting of the Board of Regents, there was proposed new policy language that relates to all full-time and part time faculty and staff: 8.2.18.2 Conflicts of Interest and Conflicts of Commitment; 8.2.18.2.1 Conflicts of Interest and Appearances of Conflicts of Interest; 8.2.18.2.2 Conflicts of Commitment (A USG employee shall not engage in any occupation, pursuit, or endeavor that will interfere with the regular and punctual discharge of that employee's official duties.); and 8.2.18.2.3 Compensated Outside Activities. These revisions will be sent out in the coming weeks.

March is Women's History Month. The annual Savannah State University Women's Leadership Institute, is Friday, March 8. There will be several panel discussions, which will include faculty. Our morning keynote speaker will be Cynthia Blandford, the Honorary Consul General for the Republic of Liberia to the State of Georgia and the president and CEO of Global Strategies for Good, LLC. The luncheon keynote speaker will be Dr. Lian An, a professor of economics in the Coggin College of Business at the University of North Florida, where her research focuses on international economics and currency exchange rates.

Professor Amir Jamal Touré, of Africana Studies, was recently recognized during two Georgia legislative body events. He received the Outstanding Georgia Citizen award from the Georgia Secretary of State during a Senate session. He also accepted a Soldier of Justice award from the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus. Please join me in congratulating him.

Last Thursday, SSU receive a \$50,000 scholarship check from the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. as part of the HBCU Initiative. Savannah State was among 32 HBCUs who received checks from the organization. We expect even more funding to support student scholarships at the SSU Scholarship Gala, April 6. Your invitation is in the mail.

“Woman, if the soul of the nation is to be saved, I believe that you must become its soul.” –Coretta Scott King

Thank you!



Faculty Senate Meeting – April 2, 2019

President's Report

Theme:

SSU Momentum Year: Meticulously Monitoring and Measuring Meaningful Matriculation

Greetings,

Today we held our Annual Research Conference with more than 175 presentations. Joining our undergraduate and graduate students in making presentations were our faculty along with students from the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System. Kudos to Dr. Chellu Chetty, faculty mentors and students for a successful conference.

We will celebrate Honors Day on April 11 by recognizing our amazing students and acknowledging some extraordinary faculty with the President's Faculty Award for Innovation and Excellence. Please join me on Honors Day to congratulate both students and faculty who are seriously impressive.

We are continuing to focus on security at SSU. We have installed a guard post at University Commons to provide increased monitoring of access to that area. We are continuing to make upgrades to security, fencing and lighting where appropriate.

We were successful in getting legislative approval of our capital project to safeguard electrical lines and enhance drainage. The \$4.1 million infrastructure improvement project will be submitted to the governor as part of the budget the Georgia General Assembly will send forward. We are grateful to our legislators for their support of this effort.

We still need your help in enhancing enrollment: recruitment, retention and graduation of our students. We must all continue to be intentional with our students and colleagues about your critical role as faculty in ensuring matriculation to graduation. Retention of our current students is critical!

Thank you for your support of Open Campus Day. The academic marketplace was staffed by faculty and students who enthusiastically shared their disciplines as great majors for the

prospective students. Kudos to the Office of Admissions and all the staff and faculty who supported this event! Well done.

We continue to work with the University System of Georgia Transition Team as we prepare for the change in leadership. I appreciate the support you have provided to the team and ask that you continue to do so.

We are expecting one of our largest graduating classes with 437 students (388 undergraduate students and 49 graduate students) who have applied for graduation. Thank you for the dedicated work you have done in preparing these students.

Please support our students and colleagues by planning to attend the following events.

- Honors Day Convocation, April 11, 9:30 a.m., Tiger Arena
- NROTC Spring Review, April 12, 11:30 a.m., Tiger Arena

Thank you!



Faculty Senate Meeting – April 30, 2019

President's Report

Theme:

SSU Momentum Year: Meticulously Monitoring and Measuring Meaningful Matriculation

Greetings,

As the spring semester draws to a close, I thank you for the phenomenal work you have done in promoting student success and completion not just this semester but across the years of my tenure.

I want to commend this year's Faculty Senators, Committee Chairs and especially the executive committee and Vice Chair Halpin. This was one of the most active senate with all committees staff and regular reports. Kudos to each of you for your dedicated work and service! Faculty Governance is critical to the success of this institution.

I commend the Faculty Handbook committee, Dr. Christina Davis, and all Senators for your work on passing an updated handbook. I am in receipt of the Faculty Handbook and have approved it with several non substantive edits primarily to section one. The changes to section 2 are the timeline that ends on March 10 versus February 10 th.

In an ongoing effort to enhance security on campus, we are using a new mass notification called Everbridge. While your SSU e-mail account has been automatically registered, I encourage you to add other contact information and download the application.

Many members of the leadership team have worked closely with the USG ITransition team under the leadership of Dr. Stuart Rayfield. They have been instrumental in areas of enrollment management, student financial services, academic affairs, momentum Year, campus communications and they are making recommendations to current leadership ,Chancellor and Incoming Interim President Kimberly Ballard Washington.

We now have 460 students who have applied for graduation, the largest group of graduates for May commencement in the history of the university. Our commencement ceremonies are for Graduate,May 10th and Undergraduate on May 11th and the joint military commissioning is May 10th

Please welcome Interim VP Elaine Campbell who will respond to questions from faculty regarding status of raises for the faculty and update on any current or future staff reductions (including when notifications of such might be distributed to affected individuals).

Please welcome Atty Devine and Professor Darryl Thompson Norton to share an update on the newly charged initiative, President's Think Tank On Civility, Diversity and Inclusion, and Campus Culture that was announced at the Honors Convocation. This will continue under the leadership of the new Interim President.

It has been a pleasure serving as the 13th president for Savannah State University during the past eight years. I see a university full of promise with a bright future. Your support is vital to its success.

I look forward to celebrating you on the Monday after commencement for a reception to be announced!

Thank you!

