

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes for the September 2016 meeting
Report presented by Janet Frick, Chair
September 21, 2016

President Morehead, Council Colleagues and Guests:

The Executive Committee of University Council met on September 7, 2016 in the Peabody Boardroom of the Administration Building. A quorum being present, Chair Janet Frick called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

We opened our meeting with a brief orientation for new members on the purpose of Executive Committee in relation to how University Council operates. Briefly, the purpose of Executive Committee is to decide whether a proposal is ready to be placed on the University Council agenda. Executive Committee may ask questions or seek clarification, but we do not vote on our opinion of the relative merit of a proposal. Discussions and debates about the merit of proposals should take place in standing committees where proposals are first considered, and then at the full Council meeting.

We also briefly discussed ways to ensure that information from standing committees is best made available to the broader Council membership. According to the bylaws, all of Council's standing committees are to meet at least once a semester, the times and locations of those meetings are to be posted in the University Calendar, the meetings and materials discussed are open (unless dealing with a specified exception, such as personnel issues), and committee chairs are to provide minutes of their meetings to the Council Secretary for distribution to the public. We will work to make sure that all committee minutes and materials are available and that members of Council can seek additional information if desired. Dr. Frick then recognized Professor Usha Rodrigues, University Parliamentarian, who spoke to the Executive Committee about her role as Parliamentarian and reiterated Dr. Frick's remarks regarding the meetings of standing committees being open, and minutes being made available to anyone who requests them, unless the subject of the meeting concerns personnel or other confidential subject matters.

<https://apps.reg.uga.edu/UniversityCouncil/publicCommittee/showBylaws/13>

See "Basic Charge to Standing Committees"

Following this brief orientation, the minutes of the April 13, 2016 meeting of the Executive Committee were approved.

We then turned our attention to the action items that had been brought to Executive Committee. First, we heard twelve (12) proposals from the Curriculum Committee; those proposals were all approved for inclusion on our agenda today.

Next, we had a rather lengthy discussion on two proposals concerning the academic calendar. These will both be presented today. One proposal is an action item from the Educational Affairs Committee, and the other is a petition signed by 50 faculty members; such a petition is one of several mechanisms for bringing an item for consideration to University Council. This faculty petition, it should be noted, was initiated prior to the Educational Affairs Committee meeting; thus, the two proposals were developed independently of one another, and neither should be seen as a response or reaction to the other proposal.

Since both proposals will be presented this afternoon, I will not attempt to summarize our 45 minute discussion of these two motions. We heard a range of opinions and viewpoints about the impact of our current academic calendar on students, particularly the fact our semesters are longer and start earlier than our peer and aspirational institutions, including the other two research universities in Georgia. One important point to note about the motions that, because of the bylaws, the executive committee could not modify or amend the petition before it came to Council; thus we have two proposals which are currently incompatible. However, once these proposals are on the floor and have been discussed, they can be amended or modified; our parliamentarian will advise us on how to proceed on this front. It was the consensus of the executive committee that it would be preferable if both proposals could be presented prior to discussion or amendments on either one being undertaken, so that our discussion can be informed by the full range of perspectives.

Following this extensive discussion, we had a further brief discussion of executive committee protocol, which I have already summarized in my earlier remarks, and which is also further detailed in the posted executive committee minutes.

There being no further old or new business, the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Janet Frick, Chair
UGA University Council Executive Committee