

1. Reorganization of many of the Arts and Sciences disciplines:
 - a. The inaccurate or misleading claims of consultation or reasons for lack of consultation. *Who*, specifically, were the faculty members (not including administrators) who were consulted as to organizational sub-units, names, chair structure, selection of specific chairs, etc.
 - i) The elimination of departments serves no purpose. Had faculty been consulted, innovative and inexpensive solutions might have been found, even within the constraints of the budget.
 - ii) It was disrespectful to the faculty to claim, *without evidence, that they could not have contributed anything of value because it was the summertime.*
 - b. The dual claims of the “unprecedented” budget cut plans (\$7 million) and that 13 days was insufficient to consult anyone but for the chosen few administrators. Discussion during the last faculty senate online meeting revealed that these claims were inaccurate or misleading.
 - i) In 2010, UWG was given 48 hours (Thursday noon to Saturday noon) to submit a plan to cut \$8 million which was a significantly higher budget cut in terms of dollars and a much higher budget cut plan in percentage terms, and further, with far less time than the budget cut plan of 2020.
 - ii) In 2009, the cuts were 11.5% for the year.
 - iii) There were other years with cuts of the order of 10%.
 - iv) In all of these cases, *including the 48-hour, \$8 million cut planning*, there were meetings with faculty representatives to work through the details of cuts. The faculty senate budget committee representative from that period (2009-11) so stated during the senate meeting.

2. The Strategic Plan:
 - a. On August 5, 2020, the number, names, descriptions of the “three pillars” of the strategic plan were announced.
 - i) Publicly,
 - ii) To the entire Carrollton community,
 - iii) Without any prior faculty consultation.
 - b. No strategic plan at UWG has been done in such a dictatorial way. To the best of our knowledge, no strategic plan is done like this at any respectable not-for-profit institution. Committees have been charged, extensive deliberations have been done largely without administration even in the room, drafts have been put out on the web for faculty / staff / student / public comment, revisions have been made, and only after several iterations, has a formal announcement been made. This current plan is not a UWG strategic plan; it is one person’s strategic plan. There cannot be buy-in to such a product, except through pressure. The process was tainted the moment multiple public announcements were made without any substantive faculty input.
 - c. The message of August 21, 2020 (**16** days after the entire plan was publicly announced), states: “The *first stage* (emphasis added; how can this be the first stage when the plan was announced more than two weeks prior to this?) in the planning process, **Stakeholder Engagement**, will focus on engaging internal and external university stakeholders. Our **Strategic Planning Steering Team**, supported by Dr. Janet Pilcher of Studer Education, will lead this stage of the process. This group of thought-leaders and advocates, who represent a diverse cross-section of forward-thinking professionals from throughout the institution, will work to gather, analyze, and organize data throughout the process, using diverse perspectives to identify recurring themes and push the institution toward next-level priorities. The members of this esteemed steering team are (in alphabetical order) ...”

- i. Apparently, there is one, and only one “thought leader” at UWG who is a (non-administrative) faculty member, out of a committee size of 19. Apparently, there are no faculty at UWG other than that one who are “forward-thinking professionals.” The structure of the committee is very disrespectful to the faculty. It sends a message that, if you are looking for thought leaders and forward-thinking professionals at UWG, look to administrators, *not* to the faculty.
- ii. There has been no faculty consultation or nomination process or election as to who would serve on this committee. The committee gives the impression that it was likely selected by the same person or persons who designed the entire plan.
- iii. There is no indication of what role anyone or any such committee would play, because the names and details of the pillars of the plan have already been publicly announced. The Committee appears to be in place just to fill in a few blanks and give the appearance of consultation.
- iv. The very name of the strategic plan, “Becoming UWG,” is offensive and disrespectful to anyone who was at UWG in 2019, 2018, or prior to that. What *were* we in January of 2020 – if not UWG? Again, the disrespectful name of the plan is the creation of people who believe that the clock of UWG started ticking in March of 2020, that it did not fully exist, and that nothing that we did prior to the arrival of this top administrative team matters one iota.

3. The Reopening Plans:

- a. While it is recognized the USG (and the State) plays the major role, the mandatory mask protests started by Georgia Tech and echoed at UWG prove that those minds *can* be changed. UWG administration is so enamored with reopening, that it comes across as being cavalier and totally dismissive of concerns of our health, our safety, and our lives. As the Notre Dame student paper editorial <https://ndsmcobserver.com/2020/08/observer-editorial-dont-make-us-write-obituaries/> says: “...***Don’t make us write a professor’s obituary. Don’t make us write a classmate’s obituary. Don’t make us write a friend’s obituary...***” Deaths in Georgia are on the rise as of the start of the third week of classes. Are we waiting for the death of one, two, 10 of us at UWG to wake up?
- b. Where is the *evidence* that the vast majority of students want the campus in the face-to-face mode in fall, 2020? Either the evidence by way of a representative survey exists and is being hidden from the faculty, or the evidence does not exist and that claim is about as strong the other claims made by administration listed earlier in this document.
- c. Here is some evidence that not all students are as enamored of a face-to-face reopening as the administration is. See WakeUpBrendan: <https://twitter.com/UpBrendan>
- d. Even given the regrettable decision to start face-to-face classes, the faculty were *not* consulted as to how best to meet the needs of instruction. *Who*, specifically (non-administrative faculty) participated in the construction of the reopening plans? Dr. Kelly’s description of the learning styles of his three children seems to be the rationale for reopening plans. He said in one of the discussion forums that knowing that his kids prefer three different modes, why would we not want to meet those needs? That may be a reasonable point, but not necessarily all in the same course. And, again, the point is not whether he is right or wrong, but that *no* faculty discussion or deliberation is invited or tolerated. Faculty were simply *told* that they were to teach in dual modality for every class session.

There are other examples perhaps, but these three different and distinct concerns show common, recurring, and disturbing themes:

- an autocratic, if not dictatorial, style,
- with no substantive faculty consultation, and indeed disrespect for the faculty,

- with a pretense of coopting a couple of faculty to go along with the myth of consultation, and
 - with complete disregard and disrespect for the past.
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What is the state of the sabbaticals for FALL 21? We are not sure where we stand.

Faculty want the ability to change the modality of Spring 21 courses. We're being told no, probably by the USG, but it's an issue of equity. Those who are shouldering the face-to-face/dual modality this semester will have to do it again next, if there's no vaccine. I hope that the Deans will discuss this with the Provost as well, fyi.

- According to SACS modality is a faculty determination, not USG or upper administration.
- Students were requesting more online course this fall, so there's a demand.

Promotion and Tenure expectations: Folks are relieved by the optional extension for this academic year. However, because of the re-org and loss of faculty and staff to VSP and the reduction in force, AND the loss of stipends, course releases, etc. for folks who were coordinating areas within programs, more service is being expected of faculty than ever before. The faculty wonder if the Handbook should be revised in terms of P & T to reflect this. To be clear: should P & T expectations change with the heavier service expectations the institution is now demanding? Dual modality also affects professional development, as does the loss of travel support.

I send a list of concerns from colleagues and faculty:

COVID:

- My concern is about having a Covid testing plan and reporting numbers. There are many rumors going around that I hear from students about outbreaks on campus. Information is critical. I read that GCSU is reporting daily numbers: <https://www.gcsu.edu/coronavirus/managing-covid> So they can't look to the USG to say their hands are tied....
- I am very concerned with the late announcement of Covid numbers on campus and the way it came about. First, the fact that they announced this information *not an hour after the fee deadline passed for our students is very disconcerting*. It gives the impression that their plan was to withhold information just long enough to get past the full refund deadline.

Second, the issue about the phrasing "not required to be notified" is problematic as there seems to be a culture in place already of backlash against that do notify their students of exposure. There is a Twitter thread making the rounds on social media right now that includes a faculty member's CourseDen announcement to their class about being notified of exposure, and then an email response stating from administration that the faculty member is being dealt with (<https://m.facebook.com/groups/381022648941666?view=permalink&id=1210799435963979&sfnsn=mo>). So, what happens if we are exposed and have to quarantine? Are we not

allowed to inform our classes that we have to quarantine due to exposure? We just disappear from the classroom for a couple weeks?

Third, I already have several students that were notified by UWG that they need to quarantine due to exposure. Is this something we should also be using UWG Cares for an additional reporting metric? Or are we just supposed to rely on the students to self report?

Fourth, do we know what the threshold will be to cause another shutdown? It's the first week, we already have 57 total cases, and they are only reporting things on a weekly basis. As we all know this virus is capable of exponential growth and infection at a very fast rate. What is the magic number administration will use to draw the line in the sand and say enough people are infected to warrant a shutdown? My students are already scared (as am I!), and if administration allows that line to be too high then I fear we will lose more students altogether due to mishandling of the situation in general. I already have students that have made the decision to opt out of the f2f portion of my courses because of their safety concerns (and I don't blame them!). What is going to happen when the number of cases reaches well into the hundreds? Will they trust the university enough to return in future semesters?

I would also have concerns about student employees since so many are employed across campus. Many departments don't have enough remote work to go around and keep student employees busy enough, if at all, if they are required to quarantine. So, if a student employee has to quarantine due to exposure, they are unable to work at all. Likewise, if they become infected they obviously can't work.

Many of our students rely on the paychecks they receive from campus work. So, if they have to quarantine from exposure or infection, it will affect them financially. To my knowledge, student employees do not accrue sick days like faculty and staff (please correct me if I'm wrong here). So, how do we deal with that side of things? Do we still give them hours even though they can't work or do we do what the university system seems to be doing and turn a blind eye to their needs? And if we do give them hours and pay to help ensure their wellbeing while they are out, will there be repercussions from the administration? Is there something we can do to ensure student employees are given paid sick days, too?

- My questions are specific to how to respond to the class given certain covid risks/testing positive etc...

Much of the issue surrounds our roles as mandatory reporters and is complexified by the nature of personal medical information and our desires to protect one another, our students, and the community.

If a faculty member teaching f2f **tests positive**, after they self-report as the policy requires, are they permitted to 1) immediately discontinue f2f meetings (until advised to continue), and/or 2) inform their students that they, themselves have tested positive? The answer should keep in mind that a faculty member may find out with very little to no lead-time before the next in-class session. An explicit statement forbidding this type of information sharing should be made if "violating it" will result in disciplinary action.

If a faculty member **self-identifies** as having been in “close contact” are BOTH above actions permitted? Or must they wait on “being identified” as “close contact” by GDPH? Or are in either case these actions not up to the Faculty member?

What do we do if a student reveals they've tested positive but continues to attend f2f and voices their refusal to self-report to the University?

What do we do if to our knowledge, despite a student testing positive and self-reporting, no contact tracing is being performed?

- At what point is it counterproductive to run class f2f with low attendance?
When specifically do we personally have the responsibility to cancel classes for safety concerns? If the answer is "never", then that needs to be in writing, otherwise I know I'd exercise my best judgment ethically in several situations with or without guidance.
When and how will testing on campus be available? (that we haven't heard more on this is completely not ok)
- 1) Why is there no free and readily available testing available to faculty teaching ftf and staff in ftf settings?
- 2) What is the nature of student housing, and the administration's partnership with housing companies in relation to the COVID outbreak? I ask because I recently had to write to housing on behalf of a student who made the decision to move back home after a week on campus, seeing that things were not so safe as promised. I had to tell housing that she was permitted to complete all of the course work online before they would let her out of her contract.
- 3) Contact tracing only works if everyone knows about it and all potential close contacts also quarantine. Why is there such an emphasis on being under-cautious? What end will that serve? It will only accelerate our campus pandemic and cause deeper impacts.
- 4) We need to see cumulative, longer term data statistics that will enable us to gauge as a community how much worse the local outbreak has gotten on campus and in Carrollton since reopening. The administration is accountable to all of us, and we need that information.

REORGANIZATION/SHARED GOVERNANCE

- Dear Chairs of the Standing Committees of the Academic Senate, this communication is a follow up to the Faculty Senate meeting of August 6. I believe a central issue we need to address is the process used by the President and VPAA during the recent appointment of Deans and Chairs. COSS Bylaws and Procedures (<https://www.westga.edu/academics/coss/assets-coss/docs/COSSBylawsandPoliciesProceduresAugust2018.pdf>) outline a careful collaborative process for the selection and evaluation of Deans and Chairs (see Article II Sections A and B). In reference to the appointment of a Dean the bylaws state “The Search Committee shall consult with the Administrative Council and the Faculty Council of the College prior to making its recommendation to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.” Associate and Assistant Deans are appointed “In consultation with the Faculty Council and the Administrative Council.” In reference to the appointment of a Department Chair the bylaws state: “Recommendation for appointment shall be made only after consultation with all

members of the department concerned or with an elected committee of that department.” I do not believe these procedures were followed in the recent appointments of CACSI Dean and Chairs.

It is possible that the President and VPAA believed COSS bylaws were irrelevant given the dissolution of the College. If this was indeed the case, what was the stated rationale for the appointment of permanent rather than interim positions? Appointing an Interim Dean and Interim Chairs would have provided CACSI the time needed to develop new bylaws and procedures.

Please provide a written description of the procedures the President and VPAA used in these recent appointments. Please also provide information on the length of appointment for these positions as well as procedures for Dean and Chair evaluations.

Will new policies and procedures adopted by CACSI supersede the processes used in these recent academic appointments? If so, what might such bylaws mean for these Dean and Chair appointments, particularly if the bylaws outline procedures markedly different from those used by the President and VPAA? Will newly developed bylaws and procedures be enacted *ex post facto*? Be ignored?

Bylaws and procedures are a central way for the University to ensure procedural justice. Given the importance of these documents and decisions it is imperative we move forward with clarity regarding what took place over summer and with full faculty input as we move forward. It is in this spirit of collaborative governance that I offer these observations and questions. I want to clearly state that my concerns do not reflect any concerns regarding the competence of the current Deans or Chairs; indeed it is quite possible these same appointments would have resulted from a process in keeping with COSS bylaws.

Thank you in advance for your careful attention to these issues.

- need for substantial acknowledgement of the faculty-excluded process they used to reorganize the campus: there is no excuse for that; they could have found ways to be more inclusive, even if all the business needed to be done late Spring and into the summer. And some things, like choosing leadership (chairs and assist/assoc deans) could have waited until this Fall. In addition to acknowledgement, there is the question about reparations for that AND demonstrated commitment to a new model moving forward.

What would faculty engagement/governance look like to us? Not sure, and that needs to be a topic of discussion at Senate: what would make faculty feel involved. Maybe we need another campus climate survey?! I feel like our leadership has a lot of explaining to do, and a lot of effort will need to be made to make us trust them. The re-org + the lack of transparency and clarity about the COVID response (seems like they are replicating the model of deciding everything themselves and then communicating it inadequately--is Senate involved at all? Any faculty at all?) together are problematic and don't seem to suggest a future of faculty inclusivity. What role does President WANT faculty to play? Individual feedback isn't enough: we need robust dialog and engagement - through Senate.

Also, what's this commitment to diversity and what does it look like? Before he announced that at the Gen Fac meeting (or wherever he made that public announcement), he hadn't even mentioned it to anyone on campus whose service or job descriptions include working toward diversity. With whom is he talking? what's the plan? So far he's only talking to himself and his cronies in his office, it seems. When I asked, he blew off the re-org changes as 'oh that was so last month', but we are seeing the pattern continuing.

- I am deeply concerned about the lack of shared governance and the total erasure of faculty voices in the decision making processes that have shaped UWG over the last two years in particular. Our autonomy as educators and our investment in the institution has been eroded further and further to the point that we feel decisions are announced to us that we have no say in or knowledge of until it is released by the administration. The non renewals last year are a clear example of this, as is the way restructuring was carried out and the dismissal of staff etc.

Figure 6: Election Procedures

Election Procedure for Faculty Senate Chair, Fall 2020

Given that the Faculty Senate by-laws authorize elections of the Faculty Senate Chair only in the spring, and that the by-laws do not describe a particular method of voting except to specify that “the University faculty will vote in such a fashion that the winner of the election will have received a majority of votes cast,” the Executive Committee voted on August 14, 2020 to authorize deviation from the by-laws to allow for an election in the fall and voted on September 6, 2020 to authorize the use of preferential voting to enable the election of a Chair by majority vote.

In cases where continuous re-balloting without removing any candidates is not feasible, Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised (45:62) identifies preferential voting as the preferred election method (in contrast to runoff elections in which some candidates would be removed from subsequent ballots). We will use the method of preferential voting (also known as ranked-choice voting or instant-runoff voting) described in Robert’s Rules 45:63–66; more information on this method of voting can also be found [here](#).

While more details can be found in those sources, briefly, this method works as follows:

1. Each voter will cast a ballot ranking the candidates from first preference to last preference. Should a candidate receive the majority of the first-preference votes, that candidate will win the election.
2. In the case that no candidate receives a majority of the first-preference votes, the ballots cast for the candidate who received the fewest first-preference votes will be reassigned to the second-preference candidate indicated on each of those ballots.
 - a. A new count will be conducted. If at that point, a candidate has received a majority of votes, that candidate will win the election.
 - b. If there is still no candidate with a majority of votes, the procedure will repeat, with the ballots for the candidate with the fewest votes being reassigned to their most preferred candidate still in the running.
 - c. This process will continue until one candidate has received a majority of the votes cast.

The election for Faculty Senate Chair will take place via Qualtrics over a period of five business days ending at 5 PM on Monday, September 14. At the conclusion of the election, a Qualtrics report detailing the election results will then be sent to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for acceptance. The Executive Committee will meet to discuss the results the week of September 14, and the winner will be announced shortly thereafter.