GRU Governance and Communications Committee  
Annual Report  
AY 2013-2014

Purpose of the Report:
The primary purpose of this report is to provide faculty with a summary account of what actions were performed by this committee during the AY 2013-2014 and, among those, which actions are complete and which remain open. A secondary purpose, given that this was the first full year of the committee’s existence, is to provide a clear account of the committee’s function and purview. A third purpose is to enable new members of the committee to get up to speed as quickly as possible. In what follows, we first list the annual meetings in Section I, we then explain the function and purview of the committee in Section II, and we end with AY 2013-2014 actions in Section III.

Section I: Meetings
We had the following meetings between July 2013 and June 2014:
1. 2013 08 23 
2. 2013 09 27 
3. 2013 11 01 
4. 2013 11 22 
5. 2013 01 17 
6. 2014 03 11 
7. 2014 04 16 
Each meeting preceded a Faculty Senate meeting. We keep the full minutes for each meeting in a shared dropbox folder. Status reports are given to the Faculty Senate after each meeting; they are available at the Committee Status Reports website: http://gru.edu/universitysenate/comm-status-reports.php.

Section II: Function and Purview
The Committee has specific duties assigned in both the University Statutes and the University Senate Bylaws.
1. The Statutes task the Committee with reviewing and proposing updates to the Statutes themselves every two years, and with managing and coordinating voting on changes to the Statutes.
2. The Bylaws task the Committee with (a) collaborating with GRU colleges as appropriate to oversee issues of shared governance, (b) conducting and validating secure elections to the University Senate, and (c) facilitating communication among faculty. In addition, specific tasks are given to the Committee with respect to conducting elections and coordinating various votes and faculty surveys.

Section III: Actions
The following issues and subcommittees arose in that time:
1. Bylaws Change Survey Summer 2013:
   Our first completed action was a survey to approve changes to the Bylaws. 
   Status: Closed
2. Publicizing Election Results:
   An issue related to the initial survey was the process by which survey and election results are publicized. More specifically, the committee drafted a Senate Resolution, which was approved in
November, that mandated that election results shall be announced to the Faculty by the close of business one workday following the day the election ends.

**Status: Closed**

3. Faculty Evaluation of Administrators Subcommittee:
Perhaps the largest action undertaken during AY 2013-2014 was the initial GRU Evaluation of Administrators Survey. This survey was completed during the Spring 2014 semester, and the results are due to be announced at the beginning of the Fall semester 2014.

**Status: Unfinished** (as results must be properly announced)

4. Open Meetings:
   In reviewing the Bylaws, we noted that all committee meetings are required to be open to any faculty member wishing to attend “unless there are concerns regarding potential conflict of interest or confidentiality.” We made this part of the “Responsibilities of University Senate Committee Chairs” document discussed below.

**Status: Closed**

5. “GRU Policies” Initiative:
   Our committee also sought to ascertain the process by which policies are reviewed, and we did so with an eye toward faculty involvement in the process. To this end, we drafted a Senate Resolution, which was approved in November 2013, that mandated that a Faculty Representative (to normally be from this Committee) be appointed to represent the University Senate on the GRU Policy Review Board. The duties were spelled out in that resolution, which is to be included in the next review and modification of the Bylaws.

**Status: Unfinished** (as we must make sure it makes it into the next Bylaws modification)

6. The Policy Review Subcommittee:
   In connection with the GRU Policies Initiative, the Policy Review Subcommittee was established. A representative of this subcommittee participated in all GRU Policy Review Board meetings beginning in December 2013 in order to ensure appropriate Faculty input on all draft GRU Policies.

**Status: Unfinished** (ongoing)

7. “Responsibilities of University Senate Committee Chairs” Initiative:
   Chair Scott created a document entitled “Responsibilities of University Senate Committee Chairs – A Summary,” which fleshed out the Bylaws. This document was reviewed by the Senate Executive Committee, put on the Faculty Senate agenda, and approved by the Senate. Our committee needs to make sure that the language of the initiative is included in the next Bylaws revision.

**Status: Unfinished** (as we must make sure it makes it into the next Bylaws modification)

8. Bylaws and Statutes Review:
   The Bylaws do not state who will review the Bylaws and Statutes for inconsistencies and typos, but the Statutes states that a biannual review is to be conducted by our committee (see Article X Section 2 of the Statutes). The Committee worked to develop a method for how this should be done. We eventually determined that our responsibility extends only to Statutes; the Bylaws will be dealt with by an ad hoc committee headed by the Senate Vice Chair, as required by Senate Bylaws (Article V Section 1.4); the revisions should happen this Fall 2014. With this in mind, we formed a subcommittee for the Bylaws and Statutes Review. The mission and purpose of this subcommittee is to oversee our committee’s responsibilities; it will also work with the Executive Committee’s Vice Chair. The subcommittee current final report, with the their proposed changes, is included in the GCC Dropbox.

**Status: Unfinished**
9. **Senate Minutes:**
   No one had been providing the Senate with minutes from the previous Senate meetings. Instead, the Senate was provided with a summary, and they were then voting to approve the summaries. However, much was left out of the summaries, including (at times) binding resolutions made at the meeting. The existence of those resolutions and their exact wording is important. As of the spring semester, the process of producing and posting actual Senate Minutes was corrected.
   Status: **Closed**

10. **Intrafaculty Communications Subcommittee:**
    The mission and purpose of this subcommittee is to coordinate with the provost’s office not only to determine how to send email to the faculty at large, both official and unofficial, but also to communicate the process to the faculty at large. The subcommittee is also tasked to work with the provost’s office and with IT Services in order to determine whether more dedicated listservs should be created.
    Status: **Unfinished**

11. **Nomination and Election Subcommittee:**
    The primary mission and purpose of this subcommittee will be to (a) work with the Executive Committee to determine what needs to be done to organize and administer the election of a Senate Vice Chair and two senators at large this semester; (b) verify that there are no other outstanding election issues at hand; and then (c) do what needs to be done. In particular, we need to know how to solicit nominations and when they will be due. A related issue pertains to the replacement of faculty serving on GRU Committees as current committee members finish their terms.
    Status: **Unfinished**

12. **GRU USGFC Representative:**
    The University System of Georgia Faculty Council (USGFC) has one representative from each University; according to the GRU University Senate Bylaws, this representative will be the Chair of the Senate Executive Committee or that person’s designee. We discussed the fact that the Chair is in office for just one year, that the USGFC meets typically in March and October, and that USGFC Officers must be voting members for at least one year.
    a. In order for GRU to have a representative eligible for USGFC office, the Committee discussed making a recommendation to the Senate that they amplify the process of designating a GRU representative to the USGFC. This has not yet been completed.
    b. Furthermore, in order to have meaningful GRU participation, the GRU representative to the USGFC should solicit input to be discussed at least one Senate meeting in advance of the USGFC meeting, with the results of the USGFC meeting then briefed during the Senate meeting following USGFC. This should be included in our recommendation above.
    Status: **Unfinished**