Georgia Southern University
Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
October 8, 2018

Statesboro Campus, 6 - 7 p.m.

In attendance:
Provost Carl Reiber; Helen Bland and Julie Gerbsch, Co-Chairs; Ashlea Anderson, Andrew Hansen, Justin Janney, Bridget Melton, and Mark Whitesel (Absent: Alisha Tolbert)

I. Committee Charge, Discussion of Model (Dr. Reiber)

The meeting commenced at 6:06 p.m. with a few minutes for Dr. Reiber’s introductory remarks. He gave a brief overview of his philosophy on strategic planning and the importance of the work the committee will be leading at Georgia Southern University (GSU). He emphasized that our completed strategic plan needs to be a “living, breathing” document, not a static or final plan to be placed on a shelf and considered “done.” Rather, it needs to reflect the current landscape and be written with the knowledge and flexibility to be revised as the needs and future conditions of the university evolves.

Throughout the meeting, Dr. Reiber also emphasized our need to fully engage and involve faculty, staff, students, alums, and the community as we create the new plan for GSU. Our success in this endeavor will be determined by how well our students, faculty, and staff can answer visitor questions about the major goals or mission of the university. Ideally, visitors should receive a ready and correct answer from any of our students and employees while touring our campuses.

Dr. Reiber spoke about the importance of inclusion and transparency in the strategic planning process. Upon every step of the process, all information will be uploaded to the university website with input options. He referenced that committee members would be reimbursed for mileage, with carpooling encouraged whenever possible. Finally, Dr. Reiber’s vision is to make GSU a top choice institution for students and employees.

II. Introductions (All)
Committee members took a few minutes to introduce themselves, followed by casual and light conversation via an icebreaker exercise. Members were asked to state the last thing they measured and why.

III. Big Buckets (All)
Dr. Reiber led the group into a 30-minute brainstorming session to create and share potential goal areas our strategic plan might address. He encouraged us to envision these areas as “big buckets” that hold other related objectives, tactics, or strategies for stakeholders and
sub-committee members to further develop and define. All members contributed to the brainstorming, with good discussion ensuing at various points. Here is the resulting list:

- Student success (academic preparation)
- Diversity in employees and student base
- Recruitment, enrollment, and retention
- Campus climate, diversity, and inclusion
- Holistic student – health and well-being, and maintaining a work/life balance
- Physical space, land use and management, and sustainability
- Community engagement and partnering
- Community resources
- Fiscal responsibility – investment for the future
- Resource development – sufficient operational budgets, HR talent, fundraising, etc., Strategic plan should drive budget decisions and investment
- Internationally friendly campus
- Affordable cost of attendance – reducing “stop out”
- Ensure safety of students, faculty, and staff on all campuses
- Strengthen university as an ‘employer of choice’
- Technological innovation
- Promote undergraduate scholarship
- Promote, support, and reward teaching excellence and innovation (e.g. fully-equipped facilities, professional development, etc.)
- Offer more and better options for continuing education and life-long learning

A short discussion ensued about increasing the presence of GSU in the communities surrounding the three campuses. Dr. Reiber likes the Statesboro incubator and downtown presence and would like to replicate this in the downtown Savannah area.

IV. Q&A, Homework, and Handouts (Reiber, Bland, and Gerbsch)

Reading materials will be distributed this week to the committee, including the USG Strategic Plan, USG College 2025 Report, SWOT analyses completed in November 2017 by various campus units, the university’s Mission Statement and Statement of Strategic Values and Priorities.

We also discussed the need to meet weekly as we get started, with the intention to use technology as a way to minimize traveling for committee meetings. Helen suggested using WebEx, which would allow committee members to meet together in a meeting room at Statesboro and Armstrong campus each week, conferencing in with the group at the other campus location.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.