

Georgia Institute of Technology
2015-2016 Annual Report
Student Academic and Financial Affairs Committee
October 18, 2016
3 PM – 5 PM
Student Center Theatre

Fall Meeting of the Faculty, Faculty Senate, & Academic Faculty Senate

Members:

Name	Term	Affiliation
Conte, Tom	[14-17]	CoC-CS
Mulford, Charles	[13-16]	Business
Nobles, Greg	[11-17]	Honors Program
Perez, Ruperto M. #		Counseling
Pikowsky, Reta †		Registrar
Pollock, Anne*	[14-17]	LMC
Poproski, Ruth	[15-18]	CETL
Mehan, Kunal	[15-16]	U Student
Eisenberg, Justin	[15-16]	U Student
Balachander, Sathya	[15-16]	G Student
Cottle, Mark #		Faculty Executive Board Liaison
Kohn, Paul ##		Standing Guest, Non-voting member, Vice Provost, Enrollment Services
Rodriguez, Omar##		Standing Guest, Registrar's Office

10 Voting members/5 required for a quorum.

- Non-voting member

- Non-voting standing guest member

† - Secretary

* Chair

Meetings: The Student Academic and Financial Affairs Committee met 6 times during the 2015-2016 year.

Meeting dates were:

- September 17, 2015
- November 11, 2015
- December 9, 2015
- February 18, 2016
- March 15, 2016
- April 21, 2016

It conducted much of its business via email, particularly in regard to requests for excused absences and athletic travel schedules. It should be noted that the work of approving excused absences continues to grow and occurs throughout the year, with far fewer during the summer term.

Dr. Anne Pollock served as Chair of the Committee. Reta Pikowsky served as Secretary of the Committee. The business of the Committee is related to academic policy matters and financial matters that impact students throughout their careers at Tech. The Committee also oversees the excused absence policy and travel schedules of teams with the GT Athletic Association.

1. The Committee members addressed Institute of Approved Absence request at some length regarding the procedure, reviewing the list of approved student organizations, and comparing the policy with other institutions. The concern is the increased volume of requests, and the Committee may need to consider workload issues if this continues.
2. The Registrar's Office compiled and presented approved absence request data for fall 2015. The total number of requests was 111, and the total number of students from all requests was 1878. The average number of student per request was 16.9 and the average length of an event in days was 2.2. It was noted that the students with more than one request were involved in groups that attend seasonal events based on their student organization. The Committee agreed that the number and nature of request are within reason and suggested to continue tracking the information including Athletic absences for the remainder of the academic year. Instructional days missed will also be included in the next absence request report.
3. Committee members also discussed the religious holiday absence request. A review of the research on religious holidays from other institutions was completed and was sent forward to the Student Regulations Committee as a suggestion for a policy statement. The Academic Faculty Senate passed the religious observance policy and the Institute for Approved Absence information website was updated along with adding the Student Honor Code information. The policy was added to the catalog in May 2016 and is effective starting fall 2016. After some discussion, outreach and communication of this policy was introduced to faculty and student interfaith groups.
4. It was noted the role that Office of International Education might play in helping students arrange absences related to immigration interviews. Also, the committee members discussed the role of Dean of Students and in what ways it might be another source of information and assistance with some types of requests.
5. The Vice Provost for Enrollment Services met with the Committee to talk about current information on financial aid regarding how many pressure points impact both students and the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid. Financial burdens of both in-state and out-of-state students, Tech Promise program, Pell-eligible Georgia Tech students and Pell Grant rules change and

the merit-based scholarships of Georgia's Zell Miller and HOPE scholarships were discussed. The Vice Provost of Enrollment Services also discussed the early decision approach that the Institute might consider to mitigate financial need.

6. Looking ahead, the Committee considered the role of SAFAC in becoming a supporting unit for academic advising system and financial aid programs, provide support in determining whether the early decision approach is an appropriate option for the Institute. Committee members can also provide advice and support on institutional policy for change of major priorities for current and newly admitted students.

Submitted by,
Dr. Anne Pollock, LMC, Chair