Annual Report of the External Academic Relations Committee: AY19-20
Chair: Jim Olds, University Professor of Neuroscience and Public Policy, Schar School

The Committee met by on October 31 and set out an ambitious agenda aimed at enhancing the role of faculty shared governance at Commonwealth public institutions including George Mason University. Among the areas of concern for the committee were the following:

- Higher education budget for Virginia
- Transparency in decision making on the part of administrators, particularly presidents and provosts
- Proliferation of “deanlette” academic administrator positions and implications for budgets
- Research competitiveness of Virginia R1’s

The Chair had ample opportunity to meet with the Interim President and the Rector here at Mason to discuss these issues, and also had the opportunity to travel to Richmond, Blacksburg and Charlottesville for discussions with faculty and administrators from other Virginia public institutions.

Unfortunately, the outbreak of COVID19 resulted in the massive curtailment of the Committee’s activities during the Spring semester. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that Mason’s faculty were well represented to other Commonwealth institutions during this academic year.