Present: Lisa Billingham, Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Shannon Davis, Sr. Vice President Carol Kissal, Tim Leslie, Keith Renshaw, Suzanne Slayden, Provost S. David Wu.

I. Approval of Minutes of Tuesday, January 22, 2019: The minutes were approved.

II. Announcements

Chair Renshaw welcomed Sr. Vice President Carol Kissal, introductions were made around the table, and there was a brief review of dates and logistics.

Provost Wu provided several updates:

Online University Discussion Panel takes place Monday March 25th, 1:00 -2:30 p.m. in the Johnson Center Cinema. Close to 110 people signed up to participate. Keith Renshaw will moderate four panelists. Please come if you have time.

In response to the Faculty Senate resolution passed at the last meeting (March 6), a Gift Acceptance Policy Implementation Committee was formed, including the two faculty members recommended in the resolution (Betsy DeMulder (CEHD), Bethany Letiecq (CEHD, President of the GMU AAUP Chapter)), as well as Senate Chair Keith Renshaw (CHSS). Keith also served on the Internal Gift Review Committee last summer/fall. Other members include Trishana Bowden (new VP for Advancement) and Kathleen Diemer, Associate VP for Advancement Relations) who runs the day-to-day operations piece. Hopefully we will hold 2-3 meetings.

An email was sent out this week announcing several meetings. Michelle Marks will hold a Town Hall meeting with Wiley. Each meeting will have a slightly different focus, people sharing experiences. Michelle will hold a few more meetings for those interested in the nitty-gritty details, to provide as many opportunities as possible for people to come and understand.

Sr. VP Kissal reported: On April 3rd, the BOV will hold a public hearing to see what the shape and form of what the annual budget will be. Per state recommendation, there will be a zero increase in undergraduate tuition. The state has contributed more money to the (budget). All other public institutions are doing the same thing.

Salary Compensation: State proposes 2.75% increase for classified staff, with a 2.25% merit increase for staff; the first time merit increase for staff offered. Looking at hourly wages, GTAs etc., need to raise to living wage. Minimum wage in
Virginia now $8.00/hour. For faculty, a 3% flat increase proposed, we are working to also offer merit raise with additional 1% merit pool.

Provost Wu: added funding also in budget to raise faculty minimum salaries: affected 146 faculty university-wide.

Discussion:
Are fees increasing? Are we doing anything to address the credit window (no additional tuition charged between 12 and 16 credits)? It looks like every unit pays around the same to credit window: S-CAR 13%, others 16%. About 15% of undergraduate tuition goes back to credit window. If you close it starting with 16, some students will be adversely affected. Important to communicate to students.

Provost Wu: We have analyzed the impact: 1 credit UNIV classes will have the smallest impact. This primarily favors full-time, residential students, as part-time students are not able to take advantage of that the credit window, anyway. So the question is how to allocate resources, and offer discounts where needed? The analysis indicated that charging for the 16th credit would have lowest impact on retention. So that is what we plan to do. All of this has to be approved by the BOV first.

Sr VP Kissal: After the BOV meeting, we will have a Town Hall April 9th.

Senator: Are adjuncts included in the raise pool? Graduate Lecturers?

Provost Wu: In reality how it works: There is a $3M budget for adjuncts /GTAs: there will be a 3% increase in that pool. Then there will be instructions to give colleges for how to increase accordingly.

How do we monitor whether those instructions are followed?

It’s not only that the adjunct pool increase is the same as faculty, we are also looking at raising minimal table for adjuncts.

Graduate lecturers teach as adjuncts (get one semester paid), but they don’t even get the tuition benefits that adjuncts do – and they get paid less ($897 per credit hour, which is lower than the minimum adjunct pay on the salary matrix). GL is a graduate student without a stipend package.

Question: How can they teach as current students?

Senator: They might be teaching a lab session, with the instructor of record being a full-time faculty. GTAs have a full support package, including tuition. It might be helpful to summarize this for new SVP.
Chair Renshaw suggests we think about a concerted push in all the colleges on this issue.

It's an issue of well-being for students, as some take longer to finish than others. As a way to be more humane, supportive – at least allow them to be compensated consistent with adjuncts while they are still students of the university. Members of Exec were identified to summarize issue for Provost and SVP.

President Cabrera and Visitor Ignacia Moreno will attend April 3rd FS meeting. Rector Davis will attend April 24th FS meeting

III. Progress reports, business, and agenda items from Senate Standing Committees

A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden

Drop deadline: Meeting with Provost Office, Registrar’s Office and Policy Group to come up with a drop deadline. There was a spike of drops a few years ago with 2-week drop deadline; fewer using 3-week drop deadline. Only 30 people in the entire university were recorded as dropped during second week of classes – very odd number; it is difficult to get data. For Fall 2019-Spring 2020, the drop deadline will be three weeks, with stipulations about whatever sliding scale of tuition refunds seems best to the administration. The long-term question is “What is the sweet spot?” Three weeks doesn’t seem to make people unhappy, so maybe that will be it. But we need to have a full vote and get back to approving calendars 3 years in advance.

Certificate Guidelines: Not sure where to go with this. The AP rules are not clear. I have been back and forth several times with Jesse Guessford (Associate Director for Undergraduate Education- Provost Office), but I don’t get answers to three big questions:

1. He has mentioned “SCHEV Guidelines,” which I have requested, but I have only received SCHEV “Definitions”. The policy as written continues to put post baccalaureate and undergraduate students in the same cohort of people.
2. We need a prototype – have made a request for certificate that does not fit existing guidelines.
3. Finally, by allowing these certificates without a degree, you could have someone completing 9-15 hours with 50% of credits at upper level, but without a core requirement like English 101 completed. This points to the fact that this may be a good time to work on Mason Core. One question, why not simply hard code English 101?

Overall, the certificate could be seen as a money grab, without any clear guidelines.
(So that could be in purview of AP). In looking at our charge, there are many things
in it – it’s not a degree program, but it requires admissions guidelines. Is there a
difference between students in a “certificate” program and standard undergraduate
students?
Provost Wu: Does this come up in Undergraduate Council?
Jesse Guessford from Undergraduate Council is corresponding with AP Committee.
I’m not sure what to do with it exactly, except to keep pressuring – I’m concerned
they do not provide answers.
Chair Renshaw: If we wanted to say anything on this, should it be within the
purview of Mason Core or AP/FS?
Suggestions included:
Both. With regard to ENGH 101, hard coding can be done. We did that with the
attempt limit – for any course, 3rd attempt limit was hard coded.
It’s not quite so simple to make COMM 101, English 101, English 302 hard-coded
requirements, because a third of students are not incoming freshmen.
This has been going on for year, a long long time.
You could block 200-300 level classes requiring English 101.
Provost Wu: Involves several different groups, such as Banner, or to order groups
to make the changes.
They reneged on pulling in 3 limit level.
To modify something, you have to get into queue of their workflow
Sr. VP Kissal noted We just did that for N = 3.
It is unclear how these certificates are distinct /different from a minor.
Not coming from program to be a minor.

B. Budget and Resources – Tim Leslie
We have attrition Info for ten years: Discussed with HR, they do not have the
bandwidth to work on it. Also talking to Faculty Affairs, to include in COACHE
survey. Planning to report on the Budget Model at April 24th FS meeting. College-
wide revenue, to provide context, information online without context. Need for
clearer methodology,
Sr. VP Kissal noted the budget model has 65 tabs, giant spreadsheet. Doesn’t
make sense to her, she does not feel prepared to have it documented to share with
other people. Her current staff is down a few people.
Provost Wu: Are you looking for context of how colleges spend their reserves?
KR to TL: Are you getting this data by FOIAing?
Sr. VP Kissal: There is no way faculty should be doing FOIA requests, ask and you
will get it.
C. Faculty Matters – report provided in advance by irum Urgessa.

1. Meg has been extremely helpful with finalizing the FEA report. The report is almost done and should be released very soon.

2. HR (Shernita) promised that data on the number of faculty who are required to generate some portion of their 9 month AY salary will be sent to FM by Feb 22. We did not receive the data by the promised date and I have reached out to her again. I have not received a response as of today. The FM committee discussed this issue at its recent meeting (without the coveted data). We noted that this issue has been of interest to FM for a long time (e.g. see a note on the 2017 FM annual summary to the Faculty Senate).

http://www.gmu.edu/resources/facstaff/senate/ACR-16-17/Faculty%20Matters%20Committee%20-%20Annual%20Report%204.17.17.pdf

Receiving no data or no explanation as to why the data cannot be released exacerbates the notion that the administration is unwilling to cooperate with the Faculty Senate on this matter. We felt that the administration should be able to easily say xxx number of faculty from xxx units have these distinct contracts. In the last Exec meeting, the Provost stated that Mason longer issues these contracts. While I believe that is the case and I relayed this message to FM, some committee members were not convinced because data is unavailable that shows the extent of these issue. We continue to hear that a few faculty outside of COS are also affected but cannot verify the claim without the requested data.

Discussion: Why is Girum not getting responses on the 50% contracts?
Provost Wu: These are all contractual agreements when faculty arrived here – e.g. hired from NIH 50% salary paid by university, 50% paid by grant. I have discouraged deans from doing this, legacy practice.
But a non-response, even the courtesy of a response saying we can’t get it now – that’s problematic.

This is a broader HR issue, as they are severely understaffed right now.

4. FM also discussed the concern raised by a Faculty Senator regarding enforcement of increased teaching loads at her unit. At this point, the FM committee members (representing 4 different academic units) were not aware of this kind of enforcement in their respective units. The committee’s decision is to keep an eye on this issue while understanding different units have developed different workload policies. To be proactive, one committee member was asked to summarize teaching load variations across campus. The Provost office has
posted workload policies for all units (except our Law School) here.  

Discussion: What is concern about enforcement of increased teaching load. To ask irum for clarification.

D. Nominations – Melissa Broeckelman-Post
We need four nominees for Faculty Representatives to the B0V Committees. Should we include possible new responsibility of Fac Reps to the Development Committee’s service on Gift Acceptance Committee also? A few people on the Research Advisory Committee also serve on the Research Council.

E. Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham
Planning to put out a call for Faculty Liaisons, still clarifying the option of payment.

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives
Effective Teaching Committee
Discussion: Some concerns expressed about course evaluation form, e.g. not representative of what most people are doing in the classroom. We can give them feedback on the items.
How does this come forward procedurally? As a report from UNIVSC. Can they put motions on the floor? The Faculty Senator on the committee can make recommendation from the floor. Anybody can put a motion on the floor.
Suggestion to put their recommendations separate from the form (as listed in 10 page document). To present recommendations first, then form? Then to vote? Or to come back next fall for a vote? An EXC member observed there is no such thing as a really good teaching evaluation form – as for as evaluation forms go, about as good as it gets. Demonstrably better than the one we have now. How are evaluation forms used? Chair Renshaw will contact the ETC. Provost Wu added we are the only institution left in Virginia using paper evaluation forms.

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion
• Affiliated organizations who use email servers, etc. – draft report distributed, general discussion. Ostensible issue: a whistleblower letter in which IHS using gmu.edu and domain names through their own server. Sr. VP Kissal suggests going to Ed Dittmeier (auditor) to investigate it, offers to send it on to him. The EXC will continue working on draft report.
• Online Education Forum: Chair Renshaw thanked all who responded with their suggestions. The presentation is next Monday.
• Who can access salary data, FEA? An emeritus faculty member wants to access it; professional faculty cannot access it. Who should access it? Discussion: people wanted to know salaries; student did FOIA, items often inaccurate, as an attempt to make information public, but not go outside the institution. Partially to know it about others sometimes to lobby for raises. Broader goal to look at compensation to see equity, compression, etc. as a better way to do that. We’ve been talking about it for 40 years. An EXC member has never worked in a state where this data was not available.

• Class and Room Scheduling: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: Where are we headed on this? Rules regarding number of MWF classes are there but not enforced. Received reminder last year about the rule (can’t have more MW classes than MWF classes). Enforcement of that rule to begin in Spring 2020. Provost Wu: At a department chairs meeting, he presented a report on classroom usage to chairs. The analysis found that classroom use dropped dramatically on Friday – even more than VA peers and Research I peers. (Not sure where Provost Wu ended):

Senator: Okay, but should we be having discussion in FS? What is the plan to engage faculty and students impacted in the solution to this problem? People were upset by suggestion of Friday classes, because it interrupted their research in other locations. Regardless, the question is whether there will be campus-wide discussion on this?

Provost Wu: At the end of the day, need enough classrooms to accommodate the schedule. Need to utilize Sci/Tech and Arlington campuses more than now. It’s a question of access to space at desired times – everyone wants to teach Tuesday/Thursday. Some programs need to use Sci/Tech and Arlington space much better.

Is this just a short term problem, while campus is being reconfigured? No.

Should we consider fundamentally changing the schedule to Mon-Thu, Tue-Fri classes, with Wed for once/week classes?

The bigger issue here is what’s the plan for faculty engagement in discussion? Just to “market” whatever solution is generated? Or actually engage them in the discussion?

Consider: What are enrollment implications for the colleges? Those who agree to have more Friday classes will have enrollment implications. These are university-
wide implications, need a university-wide approach. Also important to include students in process.

In the past M, W, F melted away because students did not want to be here on Friday. Are you looking at M-W, Tuesday-Friday solution? Essence of the question in the long term, five years from now?
Provost Wu: Overall environment will change, may not follow past.

Instead of looking at R1 peers, also look at commuter populations, transfer students. In the past, we had to operate classes at night, students had jobs. Also, bus line schedules – 4 hour classes too long. What are our other options? E.g. First credit hour online, other 2 credit hours in classroom.

Provost Wu: Online option absolutely part of conversation. Some resident students on campus take online classes.
KR: We’ve had a couple instances in the past – the academic calendar issue is analogous this – where faculty were not adequately involved. To avoid past – I strongly recommend this conversation happens out of this room, with the broader faculty.

Provost Wu agrees, study not completed yet. Prematurely sharing with chairs as a progress report – in context of smart growth analysis, let’s plan for the future. Do we have enough space to grow as we are? Even larger, how to make use of space we have on campus? Biology department concerned about majors and need to teach classes in labs. Perhaps 1/3 of dept/fac on Sci/Tech campus, they like it there.
To bring in instructional faculty and student perspectives, to make it easier to get there, less problematic to get to Arlington, impact of being on more than one campus here and in another campus. Pilot planned to run two shuttles to Arlington and back. Plan for Fall to be a major engagement opportunity.
Not to forget students – they will be partners with it. If some colleges comply and others do not...We have to tell all students applying for admission in the fall – a big picture message.
Provost Wu: Envisioning two modes: student goes back and forth. There is an increasing number of students from Loudoun and Prince William campus who prefer not to come to Fairfax at all.

VI. Agenda Items for April 3, 2019 FS Meeting
- Draft FS Minutes March 6, 2019
- President Cabrera
- Provost Wu
• Announcements
• Committee Reports
  Effective Teaching Committee – final recommended changes to items (?)
• Unfinished Business (motions regarding new gift acceptance policy)
• New Business

VII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Caniano
Faculty Senate clerk