I. Call to Order: Chair Shannon Davis called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes of January 22, February 17, March 18, April 7, 2020: The minutes were approved.

III. Announcements

Onboarding efforts for Dr. Washington: Chair Shannon Davis has been in communication with Chief of Staff Dietra Trent to identify options for welcoming Dr. Washington and engaging with him prior to start of Fall semester. These include meetings with both full Faculty Senate and Executive Committee.

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

A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden
   No report

B. Budget and Resources – Tim Leslie
   A number of related issues and concerns were raised regarding training for online teaching being offered by Stearns Center. These include: a) mandated training required by some colleges to be eligible to teach online, b) concerns about requiring faculty to complete 25 hour training during summer without compensation, c) faculty who already have developed online course(s) with Wiley being asked to undergo training again, and d) confusion regarding developing courses and compensation.

   Associate Provost Janette Muir: The training was designed to help people who need support, and it was left up to individual units and faculty to decide if it was suitable. The goal is to provide faculty with support to help develop asynchronous online courses for use in Summer and Fall. Each college has differing needs and budgets and is approaching this differently in terms of training requirement and compensation offered to faculty for developing online courses.

   Chair Davis: Despite work of Instructional Continuity Group to provide guidance, there is different emphasis from deans and dept chairs which often quite literally a differing interpretation of the same language. To provide clarity on what summer school expectations are, it was recommended that communication sent to deans be also shared with faculty to minimize misunderstanding.
Interim Provost Ginsburg: Agreed that the support for development is necessary, and so is the need to get the communications right.

C. Faculty Matters – Joe Scimecca
The Faculty Evaluation of Administrators is now available. The Joint Resolution with the Budget and Resources Committee on Faculty Office space in the Robinson replacement building, is on the April 22nd Faculty Senate meeting agenda.

D. Nominations – Melissa Broeckelman-Post
Zachary Schrag and David Wong were elected as the new Faculty Senate representatives to the Master Planning Committee.

E. Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham
A memorandum to Lester Arnold from the Committee “Background for the Development of GMU Ombudsperson Office December 2, 2019” was distributed. Also noted recommendation to join the International Ombudsman Association (IOA) made during meeting with University of South Carolina ombudsperson: “The IOA requires that you become an institutional member and there is training that occurs a few times a year (with a notable waiting list) and an annual conference which is most helpful to universities as they begin the process to build an office and position.”

HR is not a suitable place to house or manage the function. Faculty Liaison training would have to be billed through HR. We need to build training for person who becomes the ombudsperson, whether half or full-time position. Provost Wu has left with the pending question and will be decided upon by new incoming leadership.

Discussion:
Mason had an ombudsperson for students only which was followed by a person in Compliance, Diversity and Ethics. A structure not suitable for an ombudsperson.

Is this an ombudsperson for students and faculty or for faculty and graduate students?

It was decided that the history as well as recommendation for an independent office be made to President Washington. The office should have one person for faculty, one for graduate students.

Chair Davis expressed how appreciative she is of Lisa and the O&O Committee’s work. There are two questions coming forward:

(1) Given recommendation of ombudsperson independent of HR, it requires reorganization of structure for the next President. Given four institutions in Virginia have moved in this direction in recent years, this information should be helpful as well.

(2) By putting forward the ombuds office, would the liaison process continue? What is the state of this, out of the Faculty Senate multiple times?
Senator Billingham expressed concern with liaisons – the way it is set up, there is no structure for formal training. With no training in place, it is difficult to have faculty serve in this role.

Sr. VP Kissal: Agreed with trying to get training part right, but there is a lack of knowledge across campus about this. Now with a new president, to ask Faculty Working Group to put a recommendation in writing and to include liaison or ombudsperson. She sought clarity on where there were two recommendations, or just one recommendation – that of ombudsperson?

Chair Davis suggested to stand up the ombudsperson recommendation along with other lower priority recommendations. Suggested making this as part of the FS agenda and to collectively move forward, capturing the O&O committee work, in a strategic way.

V. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives

- Faculty Handbook Revision Committee: As the BOV has changed their meeting schedule (from May 6th to May 20th), will there be a problem with getting the Faculty Handbook revisions on their agenda? Associate Provost Guilford will make sure it gets on the APDUC agenda.
- The Faculty Working Group met last week. Talking through multiple set of comments, the general themes were a) need for a faculty committee to be an evaluation space within review process; b) need for non-partisan individuals to adjudicate in process. Nuances raised included relationship between grievance process and misconduct in the workplace. In addressing all of these and bringing congruence, a revised set of guidelines will not be ready to come before the Faculty Senate by the end of this academic year.

VI. New Business, Updates, and Discussion

- Team for Instructional Continuity – contingency plans for Fall term
  Interim Provost Ginsberg: Planning for fall and consideration of options for fall as one of the most important items for university in its recent past. Hard to do, with many ambiguities and uncertainties. Borrowing on the inspiration of Tiger Team formed when Apollo 13 ran into catastrophic failure in space, Mason is standing up a Tiger Team. It will be nimble, small, will identify scenarios with consideration of experts. To think about range of options we must consider – including infrastructure, university life, dining, events sponsored by the university, music, athletics, facilities. From fine grained to large scale, the impacts on university, its finances, the larger community, brand, and reputational impact both in the short term and in longer term. The team begins this week led by Michelle Marks (outgoing VP for Academic Innovation and Ventures). It will include about ten people that will serve as the tactical group which will link in with others, including the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The members include Keith Renshaw, past FS Chair, and chair of Psychology Department, one dean, other administrative people, and others who design scenario and options. Time frame very important since decisions need to be made, not later than June 1st, earlier if possible. Tiger Team’s work ends May 8th which will then inform the work on a final plan for Fall. Incoming President Greg Washington is also involved.
Discussion involved composition of the team, the timeline of work, and most importantly communication with faculty as well as engagement of faculty in this process.

Provost Ginsberg: Agreed on importance of input and involvement of faculty in the decision making.

Associate Provost Muir: Requested a special meeting with Faculty Senate Executive Committee to discuss revisions of the calendar.

Chair Davis: We are committed to represent the faculty when university is not in session over the summer. Executive Committee will work through concerns raised here and also to communicate that out to faculty. In the past faculty were part of decision-making and not credited with it, or not communicated out as how this is a collaboration. We have been able to do that up to now, and to continue to communicate with faculty.

Provost Ginsberg: Reiterated the need for faculty to be engaged and involved in the decision making as there are going to be tough issues and decisions, and uncertainty about what the context will be in September, October.

The Executive Committee expressed its appreciation for working collaboratively and stressed the importance of clear communication.

Associate Provost Muir raised question about when to open registration dates for fall. If we wait too long it could impact student retention. Tentatively, to put off registration for a week with some qualifiers and hope we can make decision sooner so students can make the best decisions they can.

- JMuir/R Guilford request input on study leave deferrals – draft -for spring 2020 and AY 20-21 as well
  The current draft was displayed. Associate Provost Renate Guilford is happy to address any questions or concerns.
  Are pre-tenured faculty getting study leave?
  Yes, both tenure-track and tenured.

If a lot of faculty defer study leave to next year, will this impact the instructor load. Sr. VP Kissal noted whether to defer 2020-21 Study Leaves already awarded would be followed by dean’s offices.

Can someone be on leave for academic year 50%?
Associate Provost Guilford: We added on for those faculty who got through most of semester, but final decision will be based on conversation between faculty member and LAU.

Follow up: half a semester? We could put them on ½ leave, they could teach reduced load.
Chair Davis: LAU deadline receipt May 7th, to give a time period so faculty members want to know when dean can make decision?

Associate Provost Guilford: Whether May 7th is a reasonable deadline as well is a question, but future ones will have more discretion.

The issue of potential conflict of interest was raised as this may create an inequitable situation for a lot of faculty. As far as deans go, changing scenarios faculty arguing for 100% being deferred, chairs and deans incentivized to deny 100% or offer 50% because they need the teaching power.

Associate Provost Guilford: Earlier version to have VP of Research make decision, but these have been to the deans and have offered to continuing funding from central standpoint.
Provost Ginsberg noted as a group that deans’ committee have been provided guidance to be flexible, fair, and consistent.

Chair Davis asked for any suggestions from the EXC members and dates to make requests or to get a decision? Make it so it gets attention.

Associate Provost Guilford is happy to assist in the process and will go to all faculty and into the Provost newsletter.

EXC members discussed various scenarios, the deadlines seem reasonable. How long to be comfortable to wait, to hear a response? Does not know how many Study Leaves are granted by each college. Would college need three weeks to make a decision Preference for shorter turn around – 2 weeks, not 3 weeks – but would depend on what their workload is.

Associate Provost Guilford: There are 50 study leaves for AY 19-20. Does not know how many tenure-track, another 50 granted for Spring 2020 from all the colleges, proportional.

Chair Davis: Can we push to 2 weeks instead of 3 weeks to hear from the deans?
Associate Provost Guilford: We can go to the deans with this.
What is timeframe for deferral? To consider options. E.g. subsequent semester may not work, is there a timeframe you must defer is the next 2-3 weeks?
Associate Provost Guilford: We left his open, “next semester”, “next AY”, to launch a conversation at LAU level. She thanked everyone for their input.
Chair Davis asked committee members to send suggestions to Provost Ginsberg and Associate Provost Guilford.

• Evaluation of the transition to online this semester – student experience and faculty experience
One of the COACHE focus groups was reframed to focus on transition online. Gesele Durham and OIEP have been contacted re how to share these experiences with students.
Associate Provost Muir: Gesele working on evaluation to understand trends, of tools they use, comfort with it, recommends circulating to her.

- **Response to University Town Hall (4/17) - is this the GMUFS/GMUAAUP Joint Resolution Calling for Faculty and Staff Commitments by the Administration During the Covid-19 Pandemic** (draft text circulated in advance of meeting)
  Chair Davis thanked Senator Slayden for her quick edits to resolution this morning, incorporating into the same text.
  Sr. VP Kissal suggested remove “by email” in the last line of the third paragraph from the bottom, so the revised text reads: “with the University community by the Senior Vice President via email on April 17, 2020.
  Other suggestions included resolves telling BOV what to do what we are asking them what to do, to recast as an “ask” rather than a “tell”.
  Chair Davis will share on OneDrive for comments, to include in April 29 FS Agenda. Joint resolution from B&R/FM included on April 22, 2020 FS Agenda.

**VII. Agenda Items for April 29, 2020 FS Meeting**
- Draft FS Minutes April 22, 2020
- Committee Reports
  - Executive Committee: Joint Resolution with GMU AAUP Calling for Faculty and Staff Commitments by the Administration During Covid-19 Pandemic
  - Organization and Operations – Ombudsperson Report
- Annual Reports of the FSSC, UNIVSC including committee’s evaluation of collaboration with President, Provost and Sr. VP ’s offices.
- New Business
- Announcements
  - Interim Provost Ginsberg
  - SVP Kissal
  - Gesele Durham, Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, and Tom Wood, Associate Professor for Integrative Studies - Communication about new web-based teaching evaluation tool (Expecting this but it may be delayed)
- **VII: Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Kumar Mehta
Secretary