

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, August 17, 2018, 9:30 – 11:00 a.m., Johnson Center Meeting Room D (rm. 333)

Present: Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Shannon Davis, Tim Leslie, Keith Renshaw, Suzanne Slayden, Girum Urgessa, Provost David Wu, Sr. VP J.J. Davis.

I. Approval of Minutes of March 19, 2018 and April 9, 2018 : The minutes were approved.

II. Announcements

Provost Wu welcomed everyone back. Among the many updates he provided were:

New Faculty Orientation – August 20, 2018: 175 new faculty are coming in, a similar number (170) entered last year. We are rolling out a three semester mentoring program to begin within three years of their signing. It contains an extensive set of career development opportunities.

Enrollment: At this time our enrollment is 1,300 extra (above last year), we anticipate will add another 1,000 students to our enrollment (some will drop off before beginning of the semester). This continues growth trend from last year.

Adjunct faculty workshop (orientation) – Saturday, August 18, 2018

In collaboration with HR, covers all different aspects of employment issues. Occurs each semester.

New Student Orientation – Friday August 24 2018 (at the Eagle Bank arena) followed by Faculty Convocation at the Johnson Center Cinema 10:45 – 11:30 a.m. Led by President Cabrera, Provost Wu there to answer questions. He encouraged faculty to attend.

Internal Gift Review Committee: Provost Wu was asked by President Cabrera to chair the Internal Gift Review Committee. (Keith Renshaw, June Tangney and Chris Kennedy also serve on the committee.) Working hard during July-August, scheduled 8 meetings. We have reviewed and identified over 280 of them. The Committee established a set of criteria ahead of time. Also Baker Tilley helps us go through these documents. A little over 40 flagged so far based on criteria, to take a closer look. We have also reviewed other universities' best practices and policies regarding academic freedom, (15 different institutions), some with long history (Ivies); large public institutions (Univ. of Michigan, UVA, Univ. of Delaware). To get best language for us to adopt.

Structural Leadership Change at Mason Korea: will no longer have a presidential position. Will replace with campus dean. A search is now going on. Students receive GMU degree, need to have stronger academic alignment.

Questions/Comments:

How many incoming are new students? Transfer students?

Provost Wu: (does not yet have) the number for those of a net increase. There is about 4 % growth of freshmen, of that growth above 5% in-state, 3% out-of-state.

Are the 175 new faculty tenure track?

Provost Wu has not seen breakdown, most are tenure track faculty. There may be more than 175 new faculty.

Gift Review Timeline: Chair Renshaw anticipated through September, then a report will be issued and decisions will need to be made about whether to go further. Will appear on Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda at the earliest opportunity – probably November. Provost Wu noted milestones, to go back to President Cabrera (who charged us) and to the Board of Visitors. (BOV meeting October 10, 2018). Baker Tilley will draft a report, committee needs to finalize.

In terms of flagged gift agreements, what do you plan to do?

Provost Wu: will be released when we report findings. Everything we looked at will go in an Appendix. It's public information because we've already been FOIA'd. We will report to Faculty Senate.

How does this connect with the database that was proposed by FS in May?

Chair Renshaw: Report will contain recommendations, and we have to see how well they address FS proposals. He doubts a public database with identifiable sponsors is likely. Also, thinking about Faculty Senate schedule, should try to put other business in front of the report. Get as much done as we can in Sept./Oct. His feeling is November meeting is most likely for discussion of the report.

SVP Davis reported \$175M contract for Robinson signed, utility project underway. Urges everyone to remember it will be very challenging. If you see something that looks wrong, let us know.

Fairfax City has selected partnership to build 750+ affordable housing (units) on West Campus over three years. No approval yet from Fairfax County.

Compensation: President Cabrera will make an announcement in September. Looking at combination of bonus (late fall) and raise (late spring). Evaluation critically important, have to have them in to qualify for it.

Student Health Insurance rates are re-negotiated, an \$800 reduction. She asked faculty to please promote it. There is active litigation to get funding back from previous caregivers.

Departures from Mason: It has been a tremendous 5.5. years, J.J. will leave near the end of 2018, will have a national search, be very supportive of her staff.

The VP for Human Resources search has been put on hold. Shernita Rochelle Parker will remain acting VP. There are a lot of difficult issues in HR, including Pat Donini's illness – not likely she will return. More cards for Pat are OK, offer support for Shernita in time of transition.

Janet Bingham retiring at the end of campaign. President Cabrera asked Provost Wu to chair search committee for her replacement. Connected to gift committee recommendations.

Announcements:

- New Senator Orientation – Wednesday, August 22, 2018, 3:45-4:30 p.m. Nguyen Engineering Building room 1605
- Rector Davis will address the Faculty Senate on Dec. 5, 2018 and March 6, 2019
- President Cabrera will address the Faculty Senate on Oct. 3, 2018 and April 3, 2019
- FS Reception at Mathy House: Thursday October 4, 2018, 5:30 p.m.
- EC meeting with President Cabrera: Friday, November 2, 2018, 9:00-10:30 a.m.
- Appointment of Officers 18-19
 - Chair pro tem: Shannon Davis
 - Parliamentarian: Suzanne Slayden
 - Sergeants at Arms: TBD at this time

At the end of the Sept. 5th FS meeting, new FSSC members to elect chairs. Co-chairs have also worked well too.

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

A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden

The administration has changed the Drop/Withdrawal deadline without consulting the Academic Policies Comm. or the faculty, although they claim they had "academic department" input. The faculty were notified by the Registrar on Aug. 2. The new policy states that the deadline was mandated by federal financial aid regulations, however no specific regulation has been cited. There is no requirement for a 14-day drop deadline. The policy also states a desire to align with the policy at NVCC. However, the NVCC drop deadline is 20 days. The committee is waiting to hear back from the Director of Financial Aid.

B. Budget and Resources – Tim Leslie

1. Report on consultants used by institution, how much does it cost?
2. Budget model numbers for 17-18, earliest to report in October

3. Tuition and Fees grew by a formidable amount – apparent ratio between tuition and fees has changed: fees increase. It looks like tuition dropped and fees went up. Communication unclear, is frustrating to students.
JJ responds: There was a fee simplification process to streamline; asks for example she will look at it. The net difference is less than \$100K.
4. Retention – tenure stream, administration. Hiring time costs a lot of time and money. How does administrative structure affect this?

C. Faculty Matters – Girum Urgessa

1. Faculty Evaluation of Administrators: meetings with Provost Wu, President Cabrera, and majority of deans in how to improve questions and reports.
Received comments from senior administrators, including Senior Associate Dean Martin Ford (CEHD). Expectation to revise survey and administer this fall.
2. Study Leaves study concluded. Only an issue in CHSS, most units have established processes and provide them (one request denied). Over 3 years, CHSS received 78 applications for 56 slots. Does not see need to change university-wide. Faculty Handbook Section 3.6.2 description of Provost in charge of Study Leave, but it's now in the hands of colleges/schools. Provost Wu noted that, technically, the process is still centralized, but he has pushed the resources and decisions down to the college/school level. His office provides some resources, but he encourages units to leverage local funding to increase opportunities. The university-wide number was allocated to schools by population; units can add more funding.
3. Evaluation of departments chairs: Produced a report and reached out to Provost Wu. Next, will visit dept. chair group and get their feedback, then proceed.

D. Nominations – Melissa Broeckelman-Post

Good news: Many volunteers, 90 faculty vying for 40 slots. We will need to choose among 10-12 people for some slots. We tried to look at some institutional (old) people with some new people, balanced by college/disciplines (scientists, humanities). To spread work among everyone as much as possible. Everyone liked Qualtrics. Suggestions included personal outreach to Faculty Senators to encourage service where needed on FSSCs.

E. Organization and Operations

Faculty Senators 2018-19 CHHS election results pending for two Senators. Sr VP J.J. Davis met with Lisa Billingham last week and provided Pilot Faculty Liaison Program Update: Linda Harber was supposed to get it to legal re protections for faculty. JJ left it with Brian Walther (University Counsel), may not start until late fall. Legal questions need to be answered. What is the process by

which people can be requested to serve? An open question; some see no role for deans, prefers open call to faculty.

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives – none.

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion

- Motions related to academic principles, censure [Attachment A](#)

1. To state our own commitment in terms of principles of academic freedom.

Attachment A includes feedback received.

Discussion: Several EXC members strongly wish to include motion. However, perhaps would be better to wait until after the Gift Acceptance Review committee report comes out, as the report may make statement stronger or lead to desire to alter in some way.

Runs risk of seeming like FS isn't acting in a timely manner – also, might someone else bring a similar motion from the floor? Hopefully, anyone planning any big statements would bring it to us first to look at; some statements may occur out of context of Faculty Senate, or course.

Consensus to put motion on academic freedom on hold until the gift report comes out.

2. Censure discussion: To provide process by which censure motions can be dealt with in fair manner.

Suggestions include streamline to a three-step process: -1- initial vote to proceed; -2- follow up to gather info, -3- present info gathered. Need a process for facts to be considered and shared.

One EXC member struggled with navigation of this document. Framing of this is both too narrow and too broad at the same time. Needs to have specified parameters – what types of acts can be censured? Is there a committee on professional ethics? Based on the roles/responsibilities/contracts with the university? Is there accountability in terms of who can make motions?

Should we even vote on establishing a procedure? Need to find a way to get through this particular problem. Might be drawbacks of institutionalizing a process for censure. The censure motions were moved and postponed. For now, need to reach out to sponsors of censure motion to determine whether they want to proceed immediately (in which case we need to set a procedure now), they want to wait until gift review committee report is out, or they want to withdraw.

Consensus: Chair Renshaw to reach out to individual who made the motion to assess how they plan to proceed.

- Background Check Report AY 17-18 (requested from HR for September 5th Agenda)
- Brad Edwards & Dominique Banville left over from Spring 18, to reschedule Fall 18? Perhaps in October, to ask Dominique to be there too.
Suggestion made to ask President Cabrera to engage in issues with FS, cut the boasting and announcements. If a lot of faculty attend Faculty Convocation, doesn't need to repeat announcements.
- Bylaw/Standing Rule change to allow for electronic voting on ballots?
 - Would Nominations still advance one nominee per slot? If so, how to allow for names "from the floor?": Chair Renshaw asked the committee to percolate on this question.
 - Suggestions include not to change bylaws, just add something to rules.
- Faculty Engagement work – Harvard Coach Engagement survey to be led by Kim Eby; may contact Faculty Matters.
 - Faculty Initiatives Working Group
 - NVAC, other possibilities
- Term Faculty Task Force is going well. There will be a forum later this year.
- Effective Teaching Committee/CEHD group may present findings from pilot evaluation forms
- Shannon Davis mentioned that CHSS will have stickers for "First Gen" faculty members at Faculty Convocation this Friday.

VI. Agenda Items for September 5, 2018 FS Meeting

- Draft FS Minutes April 4, April 25/May 2, and May 4, 2018
- Announcements
- Committee Reports
 - Motions related to academic principles, censure?
 - Pending Chair Renshaw's discussion with Senator who proposed censure motions
 - *Grievance Committee Annual Report 2017-18*
- Nominees to the Faculty Senate Standing Committees and University Standing Committees; Faculty Representatives to Committees
 - Note – should be Special Orders, which would come *after* Committee Reports
- New business
 - Background Check Report for AY 17-18
- Post Meeting Election of Chairs of Faculty Senate Standing Committees

VII. Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Caniano
Faculty Senate clerk

ATTACHMENT A – Motions Related to Academic Principles, Censure

George Mason Faculty Senate Statement on Academic Freedom

Public institutions of higher education are tasked with generating and disseminating knowledge through research, scholarship, and education, *for the good of the public*. To realize this purpose, faculty and students at these institutions must operate with academic freedom, or the ability to search for knowledge and truth *without constraints from political or administrative pressures*.

The importance of academic freedom is endorsed by a wide array of professional organizations focused on higher education. For instance, the American Association of University Professor's (AAUP's) original 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure (<https://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-and-tenure#1>) has been endorsed by over 250 organizations. More recently, 26 professional organizations focused on higher education (including AAUP, the Association of Governing Boards, the American Council of Education, and the Association of American Colleges and Universities) all endorsed a joint statement on the essential nature of academic freedom (<http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Documents/Statement-on-Academic-Rights-and-Responsibilities-2005.pdf>).

Public funding (state and federal) for higher education has decreased steadily over the past several decades, which has resulted in an increase in the importance of philanthropic funding for public institutions. This shift has raised questions about how to balance principles of donor involvement and stewardship with academic freedom.

On April 27, 2018, George Mason University released 10 prior gift agreements, some of which allowed for donors to have influence on the selection of faculty for specific professorships (via membership of donors or donor designees on selection committees) and on the retention of faculty in those specific professorships (via membership of donors or donor designees on advisory boards responsible for annual reviews of faculty activities). In light of the revelation of such agreements, the George Mason Faculty Senate wishes to reaffirm its commitment to academic freedom. Specifically, the Faculty Senate:

1. Asserts clearly and unequivocally that philanthropic donors to the University should have no influence on any academic matters, including faculty hiring, faculty review, faculty or student research or scholarship, student selection for admission or scholarships, or curriculum. No gifts with conditions such as these should be accepted by the University.
2. Expresses disappointment in the University officials who accepted gifts with such conditions attached.
3. Looks forward to the report of the committee that is reviewing existing agreements that support faculty positions, as well as broader gift acceptance policies and practices.
4. Expects to be actively involved in formalizing policies and practices to prevent any such conditions from being attached to any future gifts.

George Mason Faculty Senate Statement on Motions of Censure

Background

On April 27, 2018, George Mason University released 10 gift agreements that allowed for donors to have influence on the selection of faculty for specific professorships and on the retention of faculty in those specific professorships. Faculty were deeply disturbed by these agreements, as they gave donors explicit say in faculty hiring and in retention of faculty in professorships. This disturbance was heightened by the history of multiple administrators – including some who were actual signatories of the agreements – having reassured faculty on multiple occasions that no agreements such as these existed at the University.

In the short time frame before the end of the semester, the discontent associated with these agreements led to multiple motions of censure against any signatories of the agreements with a University affiliation at the time of signature. These motions were postponed.

Given that motions of censure should require a certain level of argument and facts before being brought for consideration, we make the following motion.

Motion

It is moved that motions of censure in the Faculty Senate be made through the following process, which will become part of the Standing Rules of the Faculty Senate:

1. An initial motion must be made to *proceed with consideration of censure*. This motion must be accompanied by all specific details and facts that provide the full rationale for consideration of censure.
2. If this initial motion is passed, those named in the motion will be informed and provided a copy of the full motion. Those individuals will then be provided time to respond to the motion. This time will normally be 3 weeks, but individuals can request an extension.
3. If conflicts related to factual details arise between those who brought the motion and those who are named in the motion, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee will work to obtain information to clarify those conflicts.
4. A final report will be provided to the Faculty Senate containing (a) the initial motion and accompanying details and facts, (b) the response from the named individual, and (c) any clarifications made by the Executive Committee, if relevant. This report will be provided at least 1 week in advance of the meeting at which the motion will be voted on.
5. Those who made the motion for censure, and the individual named in the motion, will both be afforded the chance to speak and answer questions at the meeting at which the motion will be voted on.