

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING
NOVEMBER 6, 2019
Robinson Hall B113, 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.

Senators present: Alan Abramson, Christine Barthold, Jim Bennett, Alok Berry, Lisa Billingham, Virginia Blair, Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Carol Cleaveland, James Conant, Richard Craig, Shannon Davis, Betsy DeMulder, Christy Esposito-Smythers, Daniel Garrison, Tamara Harvey, Anne Holton, Dimitrios Ioannou, Brett Josephson, Larry Kerschberg, Jenna Krall, Timothy Leslie, Bethany Letiecq, Kumar Mehta, Daniel Menascé, Linda Monson, Robert Pasnak, Daniel Polsby, Karen Reedy, Keith Renshaw, Esperanza Roman-Mendoza, Catherine Sausville, Zachary Schrag, Joe Scimecca, Julia Shadur, Solon Simmons, Suzanne Slayden, Cristiana Stan, Kun Sun, Susan Trencher, David Wong, S. David Wu, Masoud Yasai, Jie Zhang.

Senators absent: Ali Andalibi, Ann Ardis, Kenneth Ball, Dominique Banville, Sonia Ben Ouagrham-Gormley, Henry Butler, Meagan Call- Cummings, Lloyd Cohen, Rick Davis, Mark Ginsberg, Aditya Johri, Germaine Louis, Alpaslan Özerdem, Maury Peiperl, Pierre Rodgers, Mark Rozell, Donglian Sun, Rebecca Sutter, Andy Yao, John Zenelis.

Visitors present: LaShonda Anthony, Director, Academic Integrity; Jeannie Brown Leonard, Dean, Student Academic Affairs, Mary Lee Clark, Communications Officer, Office of Communications; Patricia Coray, HR and Benefits Director, Human Resources/Payroll; Ed Dittmeier, University Auditor; Kim Eby, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and Development; Harold Geller, Associate Professor, College of Science; Maoria Kirker, Teaching and Learning Team Lead, University Libraries; Sr. Vice President Carol Kissal; Lauren Reuscher, Chair, Staff Senate; Dr. Matthew Smith, Director of Accreditation, Provost Office; Bethany Usher, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education; Tom Wood, Assoc. Professor, School of Integrative Studies/Chair, Effective Teaching Committee.

- I. Call to Order:** Chair Shannon Davis called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
- II. Approval of the Minutes of October 2, 2019:** The minutes were approved.

Remarks by Shannon Davis

I want to begin with some brief personal remarks. First, thank you to all in the university community who attended the presidential search community session last week either in person or online. We had a vibrant, authentic discussion, in which members from across the university spoke about what they are looking for in the next president. As almost half of the search committee was in the room, that was a very valuable conversation for all of us to have and to hear. In the conversation, people spoke from their own personal location, noting often that they represented more than one constituency group when they spoke. They were speaking, among others, as student and staff, lecturer and graduate student, faculty member and committee co-chair. When we speak, we bring our full selves to the discussion and the conversation, and sometimes, the behaviors associated with one of those roles gets in the way of performing the other. Our intentions and our behavior in the moment end up at odds with one another. I stand before you today to apologize for my behavior in an interaction with a student, Cassidy Pollard, that was not consistent with my intentions of creating a welcoming environment for all to speak and to be heard. I am apologizing publicly to the community and to Cassidy directly. Cassidy and I have been trying to meet privately, and while scheduling has been difficult, we will be

doing so. Listening is one of the highest forms of respect and all community members deserve to be heard. I thank the entire university community for being so engaged and for bringing your full selves to all conversations and ask that we continue to listen to and work with one another in all of our tasks with as much engagement as we are on the search.

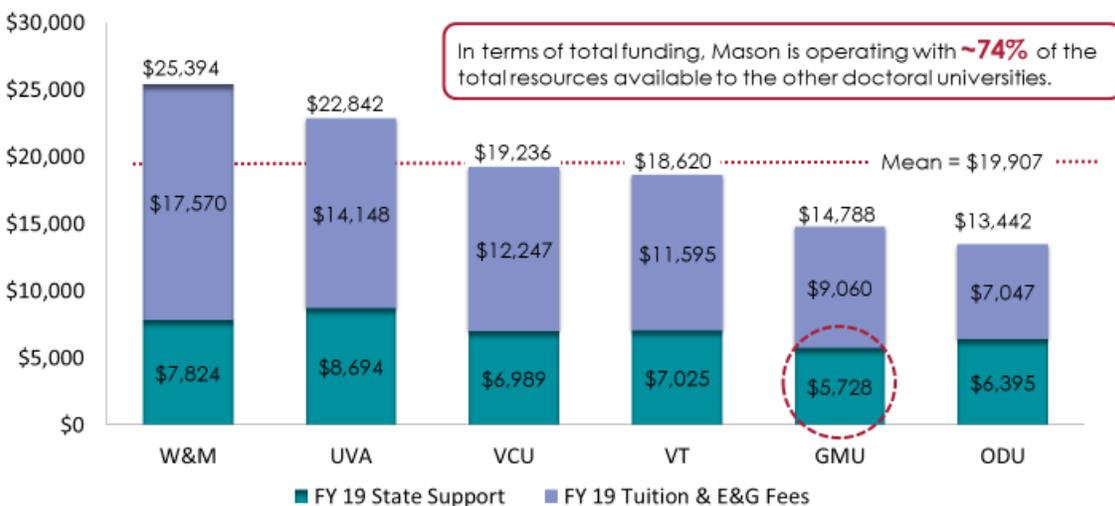
III. Conversation with Interim President Holton

Interim President began by thanking everyone and shared her overall priorities and area(s) where faculty’s help is needed. She has now reached ninety days in her interim role; and thanked everyone for your wisdom, help, and all they have shared with her. She is enjoying filling in the interim role, but hopes to be back in faculty role next year. This role of Interim President was not on her radar when Rector Davis called and asked her to step in. Her focus is to help the university stay on course and not deviate from the priorities already identified. She emphasized that her whole career has been about equity and access to success in education.

- A. Equity: Helping people with all sorts of circumstances get success in life
- B. Excellence as an R1 institution. She has learned a lot more about this since coming to Mason, opportunity to do research of consequence matters every day
- C. Understanding of our role as participant in northern VA economy, and preparing students for our workforce.

She has one extra project she hopes Provost Wu and the BOV add to their list this year: To put a real focus on resources allocated at the state level. Prescient change of elected leadership in Richmond, indicates significant shifts in demography of political representation, with more elected representatives who are Mason champions and in key roles on state committees. Mason plans to make a strong case to address long-standing inequities. To this end, she shared a few metrics.

Mason Funding Disparities Remain



*FY 2019 mean state support for VA doctoral institutions (excluding GMU) – \$7,385/In-State FTE; GMU would need an additional \$1,657/In-State FTE to reach the doctoral average.

2020-2022 Biennium Operating Budget Request Highlights

Mason Strategies		General Fund 2020 - 2021	General Fund 2021 - 2022
1	Financial Aid: Provide Affordable Access for All Students	\$5.0M	\$6.5M
<i>It will take \$41M of additional state support to address Mason's funding disparity. Recognizing this will require a multi year strategy. Mason proposes the following for this biennium:</i>			
2	E&G: Enhance Student Success -- Improving Student Outcomes Attract & Retain Top Faculty Talent, Lower Student/Faculty Ratio Expand ADVANCE Pathways, Enhance Student Success Initiatives	\$15.0M	\$20.0M
3	Tech Talent Initiative: Mason Allocation	TBD	TBD

2020-2022 Biennium Capital Budget Request Highlights

	Proposed Projects for Submission	\$ Request	Funding Source
1	Arlington Innovation District Maximum 400k square feet	\$84M \$166M	GF NGF
2	Improve Telecom/Network Infrastructure – Phase II	\$25M \$20M	GF NGF
3	Virtual Online Campus	\$11M	GF
4	Academic VIII-STEM Planning Authorization	\$186M \$7.5M	GF NGF

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The state support per student for In-State undergraduate tuition as essence of what state commitment is E&G funding. Among VA doctoral institutions, Mason is lowest in Virginia by a wide margin. It would require an additional \$1,657/In-State FTE to reach the doctoral average of \$7,385/In-State FTE. This would require \$41M – a 25% increase in overall E&G support. Mason is also lowest in tuition, with greater proportion of students in need of financial assistance. The simplest explanation is Mason has grown beyond its appropriation. The state allocates pots of money, so when our denominator in enrollment grows, there is less money per student. The appropriation from Richmond has grown, but not commensurate with our enrollment growth. The \$41M deficit is not going to be covered in a single year. Mason leadership is proposing a multiyear effort – aiming for the deficit to be addressed over next four years. This is a bold proposal and may not happen easily. The state cabinet leaders are in agreement regarding the need to address the allocation disparity, but there are competing needs for the budget surplus.

Interim President Holton asked to send suggestions to Dietra Trent (dtrent@gmu.edu), Paul Liberty (pliberty@gmu.edu), Mark Smith (mesmith@gmu.edu). They need stories about what hurts, what’s not being done; to tell stories we can use – voices of students and faculty willing to meet with legislators, to influence opportunities with legislators. She cannot say we will win, but to take advantage of opportunity to fight this fight, the best opportunity we’ve had in years.

Discussion:

Senator: The first line is unbelievable. Mason is not just underfunded, but other metrics combined indicated it is delivering most for its resources.

Interim President Holton: We are in an expensive part of state, serving the neediest students. Our graduation rate is not highest in state, but it is very good for Pell grant recipients.

Senator: Initiatives in millions of dollars, how does it compare with GMU’s overall budget?

Sr. VP Carol Kissal: GMU budget: \$1.2B, state funding 25% of budget. If state funding decreases, our biggest donor but by no means only donor (E&G \$150M) it is primary operating funding. GMU fares well on financial aid in-state. On Tech Talent initiative related to Arlington Campus and Amazon HQ2 – governor to make an [announcement](#) tomorrow regarding state investment.

Senator: Do you have any insight on VCU's appropriation?

Interim President Holton: Some of it is sheer influence in legislature. Mason is responsible for 65% of state degree growth in the recent years.

Senator: With change in elected political leadership, do you think our situation might improve?

Interim President Holton noted Janet Howell will become chair of the Finance Committee, Dick Saslaw as majority leader, (Delegates) Eileen Filler-Corn, Charniele Herring, and Rip Sullivan will be in leadership roles, all friends of GMU. Met with Governor Northram – even we get more. During the McAuliffe administration, GMU received more money, but we have grown out of it. There are mandatory increases in K-12 education, Medicaid expansion, 3% surplus, but 6% in obligations growth.

Senator: We have known these metrics of disparity at GMU, but nothing has happened all these years. Can we be optimistic?

Interim President Holton is cautiously optimistic, we have a good strong case. SCHEV has recommended \$75M increase in higher education spending, Mason is asking for \$15M increase in one year.

No further questions. She expects to be often in Richmond. Tech Talent Initiative announcement tomorrow includes increased funding and increased obligations – undergraduate school of computing in Arlington, VA increase by several-fold in twenty years. Fundraising to maximize this. To help us serve our existing students. At a meeting with leader who praised Mason grads who are technical because they can write – employer noted his Mason employees can do this because Mason makes me learn how to write. Thank you and looks forward to learning and you for rest of meeting.

Chair Shannon Davis thanked Interim President Holton.

IV. Unfinished Business

A. Resolution on Presidential Searches

Senator Bethany Letiecq moved that the language shown on the agenda today be used to replace the language from the last Faculty Senate meeting (October 2, 2019):

Attachment A

Language for NOV 6 Faculty Senate Motion

Whereas, the *George Mason University Faculty Handbook* (provision 1.2.5), states, “The Board of Visitors provides for participation on presidential search committees by faculty who are elected by the General Faculty;”

And, whereas the *George Mason University Faculty Handbook* states, “The search and selection process must include opportunities for the General Faculty to meet with candidates who are finalists for the presidency;”

And, whereas “The *George Mason University Faculty Handbook* defines and describes the conditions of full-time instructional, research, and clinical faculty employment; the structures and processes through which the faculty participates in institutional decision-making and governance;”

Now, therefore be it resolved that the George Mason University Faculty Senate calls for a search process consistent with the requirements of the Faculty Handbook to include a public forum for each finalist where s/he is invited to give a presentation to include the General Faculty as well as students and staff followed by a question and answer period;

And, be it further resolved that faculty, students and staff be invited to submit feedback regarding each finalist to the search committee;

And, be it further resolved that this phase of the search should be of adequate duration to allow for the search committee’s consideration of such feedback.

Senator Letiecq also presented a list of over 300 faculty who signed the original resolution. She also heard from a lot of faculty, thanking her for doing this. Afraid to sign on, faculty have no power, but fear retribution. This resolution upholds the Faculty Handbook. Many feel they don’t have a voice, power as a body, if we don’t uphold our Faculty Handbook, the BOV will not.

The Faculty Matters Committee voted unanimously in favor of the resolution, and jointly sponsored another motion against violations of the Faculty Handbook during the previous presidential search. Our role as members of the Faculty Senate is to represent and report to the faculty. Another Senator noted two vital precepts: (1) Confidential search to get the best candidates and (2) If we do not support Faculty Handbook here, what about grievance procedures, parental leave, tenure, etc?

Senator Letiecq reminded body about the resolution sponsored by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee in 2011, which was much longer and asked the President to uphold transparency, shared governance.

Discussion:

A Senator requested clarification in language: The Faculty Handbook does not talk about students and staff. He does not oppose the idea, not consistent with the Faculty Handbook. Senator Letiecq: in the spirit

An amendment was proposed to insert two commas in the fourth paragraph, one following “General Faculty” and the second following “students and staff” so that the revised paragraph reads:

Now, therefore be it resolved that the George Mason University Faculty Senate calls for a search process consistent with the requirements of the Faculty Handbook to include a public forum for

each finalist where s/he is invited to give a presentation to include the General Faculty, as well as students and staff, followed by a question and answer period;

There was no discussion on adding the two commas, and the amendment was approved.

Discussion continued on the replacement motion as amended:

Senator: We had the same text in 2011, so if we vote for this, will have the same outcome concerned the motion and others like it seen as screaming. Also what of other things to be done with Faculty Handbook approval.

Senator Letiecq: We've had eight years as a body to change the *Faculty Handbook*, but we have not. We as a body uphold this and fight for it. Now is the time to demand BOV stop running roughshod over us.

Senator: All the spirit of this, does not see the Faculty Senate as an organizing body. What is the rationale for the motion? Refers to the motion on the agenda later in the meeting, would rather get together with people to work on a set of possible solutions and options to uphold Faculty Handbook, then Faculty Senate could vote yea or no on those options.

Senator: Will Faculty Senate hold their part of the bargain as non-negotiable? The Faculty Handbook 2009 is a legal contract, good faith negotiations, people very involved in the process, at end of the day, not a contract -- not honoring it is disrespectful on both sides. BOV not to honor the pledge as dishonorable.

Senator: How many applicants are there? Is there really an impact of numbers upon people who may not apply?

Senator Letiecq: Clarification: This affects confidentiality of search committee to reach best finalist. At the end of the day, BOV has hiring authority. We have a right to at least meet them and give feedback.

In 2011-- similar resolution was passed to create opportunity for Faculty Senate to meet with finalists. Faculty Senate was given opportunity to meet only one finalist hours before announcement of who the President of university was. They may still be able to abide by the resolution by having only one finalist. It should be clear in wording as to what we mean by finalists and at what stage of search.

Senator: Process point -- Rector Davis said last time the BOV is not bound by Faculty Handbook. Question more concerning to us: How does the process translate itself? As a person who works to translate process into events, not necessarily a 1:1 process. Has seen it done, piece he doesn't know, technically resolution is unobjectionable, what should a good process look like? Rector Davis says we have a big committee on verge of becoming a too big committee. He does not know what ideal size of search committee is. Perhaps an open committee might not be the right process, could be wrong. A little skeptical about main point of the resolution. It is on the BOV to get the job done of recruiting the President of University, and BOV may not care what Faculty Handbook says. Is not ready to vote on what a good process is or what Faculty Handbook.

Senator: Process to involve faculty as much as possible. BOV can do what they want to do – pragmatic equation. We can vote on process and not likely to get it. It is better to figure out a process and how to go about it by working together. How we can do this to persuade getting work involved, doable, persuadable?

Senator Letiecq: This is about our principles to uphold, process to figure it out.

Senator: Voting on principle good, does not exclude how to do it. Listened to forum last week – she is a big proponent of the Faculty Handbook.

Senator: If a large number of faculty feel they should have a say, we should find ways to allow them. By not allowing such, we will be disadvantaging the incoming president. President cannot successfully lead if faculty do not take ownership of their selection to lead the university.

Senator: The Senate has to support the faculty role. We don't know about the actual risks with the pool. There need to be more than the nineteen people on the committee vetting the candidates; we should not be willing to take the risk of not participating. I object to the idea as sounding shrill and demanding – if this is seen as aggressive, someone's not listening. To have conversation about compromise if you can.

Senator: Rector Davis made clear objections to public forums, would cost us best candidates. There are many candidates – might elevate excellent faculty interacting with the faculty to influence BOV decision, as additional information, even if we lose a couple of fine candidates.

Senator agrees with those who see as either/or – we can do both, important to stand up for Faculty Handbook as written and possible to negotiate also.

Interim President Holton is not involved in the Search Committee, offered a couple of suggestions: act on the assumption everyone here and on BOV acting in interests of the university. There are conflicting principles: open search, more information about candidates, but some candidates are not comfortable in open forum. She feels the strongest candidates may be in current positions as president. If someone does not want to be in an open forum it may not be that they don't want to face the community but do not want the people at their current institution to know about their candidacy. She also noted the open question of how to honor requirements of Faculty Handbook.

Senator Renshaw moved to call the question. To vote on whether or not we want to approve the replacement motion with comments attached (Attachment A).

Secret ballot requested from the floor – (distributed by Sergeants at Arms) only to those eligible to vote.

The motion was approved, 29 votes in favor and 12 votes opposed.

V. New Business

Motion from Senator Renshaw regarding Presidential Search Process

I move that a working group of 3-5 Faculty Senators work with the 3 faculty representatives on the Presidential Search Committee to develop a set of possible methods to ensure that faculty have an opportunity to meet with each finalist in the Presidential Search, as dictated by the

Faculty Handbook. One or more options should then be presented for discussion and possible vote at the December FS meeting.

An amendment to the motion was proposed to remove “3” from the first sentence to that the revised sentence reads : I move that a working group of 3-5 Faculty Senators work with the faculty representatives on the Presidential Search Committee. The amendment was seconded and approved.

Discussion:

Someone coming in who does not meet with faculty will face a tremendous amount of resentment. If we pass this resolution, it empowers the people on the committee.

When the interviews for Provost position, there was a public forum, the same kind of predicament with presidential candidates for this reason a number of people say we can vote on this and then compromise on it, so it does not send a message that we are unwilling to discuss. What people wanted in their president: to trust the person, in order to have that happen, has to be an open forum. Last presidential search was veiled in secrecy, meeting with candidate(s) in a secret location if we checked our email between 10 pm – 12:00 am on Saturday night to go to secret location. You had to sign a non-disclosure agreement to get this email.

Motion to develop solution, not to preclude anything, to ensure the general faculty have a voice.

A motion was made and seconded to close discussion. The motion was approved.

Chair Shannon Davis asked committees to hold onto the reports (not presented today).

VI. Committee Reports

A. Senate Standing Committees

Executive Committee – Shannon Davis, Chair

Shannon Davis is serving on SACS-COC Reaffirmation Committee and Solon Simmons is serving on the Term Faculty Task Force (as a representative from Faculty Matters Committee).

Faculty Matters Committee – Bethany Letiecq, Chair

Faculty Evaluation of Administrators Survey is open until Dec 2, 2019. [Survey link](#). She encourages Senators to participate and ask faculty to participate.

Nominations – Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Chair

In accord with the bylaws, we will distribute a call for nominations electronically.

B. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives

Adult Learning and Executive Education

After a reorganization, Brett Josephson in the School of Business will direct Executive Education for CEO level personnel and Marc Austin in the Provost's Office is Executive Director for Professional Education and Academic Ventures, which is for mid-level personnel and others. Input from both was very positive. The committee will await developments to see how it can be helpful.

VII. Announcements

Veterans Day Luncheon

The Office of the President and the ROTC unit at George Mason University invites all Mason community members who have proudly served the country to attend the Annual Veteran's Day Luncheon. The event will take place on Friday, November 8, 2019 from 11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. (11:45-13:15) in the Center for the Arts Concert Hall, Main Lobby. Following the luncheon on Grand Tier III, guests are invited to a 30-minute Patriotic Concert presented by George Mason University's School of Music's Tuba Euphonium Ensemble. Please REGISTER to attend. Registration is NOT required but recommended as space is limited.

Nominations for Mason's QEP

[Attachment B](#)

Believe it or not, it's time to begin considering potential topics for Mason's next QEP! The QEP is a five-year initiative focusing on improving student learning and/or student success. The Reaffirmation Leadership Team is currently accepting topic proposals. Proposals are due December 16, 2019. For information on the requirements of a QEP, as well as details on preparing and submitting a proposal, see the attached flyer, and contact Dr. Matt Smith (msmit55@gmu.edu) with any questions.

Mason Speakers

Mason Speakers is the university's pro bono speaker's bureau. All faculty and staff are invited to sign up <https://masonspeakers.gmu.edu/faculty-staff-participation-form/>. Once speaker information (brief bio and topics/ description of lecture) is uploaded to the web, community and business groups can read about their work. Groups have the opportunity to invite the faculty to come to meetings to discuss their area of expertise. There is no obligation to speak, any invitation can be accepted or declined. Contact Sarah Gallagher, Associate Director, Office of Community and Local Government Relations (sgallag5@gmu.edu) for more information.

Alumni Association Award Nominations

The Alumni Association is now accepting nominations for the 2020 George Mason University Alumni Association Awards. For more than 30 years, the Alumni Association has recognized outstanding alumni, student, and faculty accomplishments with these four annual awards: Alumnus/a of the Year, Alumni Service Award, Faculty Member of the Year, and Senior of the Year. The deadline for nominations is Wednesday, Nov. 13. For more information, visit [here](#).

VIII. Remarks for the Good of the General Faculty – none.

IX. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kumar Mehta
Secretary

Attachment B

SACSCOC Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Topic Selection

- The QEP is 5-year initiative that focuses on improving student learning and/or success
- Developing and successfully executing a QEP is a required component of our reaffirmation of accreditation with SACSCOC

What is a QEP?



- Tied to Mason's Strategic Plan
- Identified through Mason's ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes
- Supported broadly across institutional stakeholders
- Focused on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success
- Driven by institutional data
- Makes appropriate use of institutional resources

What are the Requirements for a QEP?

- You are encouraged to submit your ideas!
- Topic proposals from teams are now being solicited.
- Please visit the QEP webpage (see below) for details on what to include in your proposal and how to submit that proposal

What if I have an idea for a topic?

- Proposals are due on **December 16, 2019**.
- Visit the QEP Webpage at: provost.gmu.edu/QEP
- Please contact Matt Smith (msmit55) if you have any questions!

How Do I Submit a Proposal?

Selection Timeline

October

- Announcement of process
- Solicit topic proposals

December

- Topic proposals due
- Proposal review begins

January

- Identify top potential topics
- Solicit teams to provide information

March

- Final proposals due for campus engagement

April/May

- Final input received
- Announce QEP topic selection