I. Call to Order: Chair Keith Renshaw called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

II. Approval of the Minutes of October 3, 2018: The minutes were approved.

III. Announcements

Chair Keith Renshaw thanked everyone for attending the meeting, relocated in Marten 1201. Robinson Hall B was affected by a power failure this afternoon. He introduced Visitors Karen Alcalde and Bob Witeck, noting they both served on the Internal Gift Review Committee, along with Professors June Tangney and Chris Kennedy, Kathleen Diemer, Associate Vice President, Advancement Relations; Julian Williams, Vice President, Compliance, Diversity and Ethics, and student representatives.
IV. Committee Reports

A. Senate Standing Committees

Executive Committee – Keith Renshaw, Chair.

Our next meeting is November 19th. If you have agenda items, please send them a few days before the meeting.

Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden, Chair

Chair Slayden presented the following three motions:

1) George Mason University Three Year Calendar: Fall 2018 – Summer 2021 8-Week Modular; Online Only (https://registrar.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/3-Yr_8-Week-Modular-Calendar_online-only_FINAL-25-June-2018-Web.pdf) was posted 6/25/2018. The Faculty Senate was not asked to review this calendar, which pertains only to the 8-week on-line "Wiley" courses. The Add and Drop deadlines are 1 week; the self-withdrawal (W) period is through the 4th week.

The Academic Policies Committee moves that it is not necessary for the Registrar to submit the Modular Calendar to the Faculty Senate for annual approval unless there is a change in the Add or Drop deadlines.

The motion was approved.

2) Last year, the Faculty Senate approved the 2018 Summer Calendar with newly calculated Add/Drop dates that were proportional to the 15-week Academic Year dates. The Drop deadline for AY 2018-2019 was changed suddenly, and the deadline for AY 2019-2020 has not yet been established. Changing the deadlines for the short summer term would only involve a shift of a day or two.

The Academic Policies Committee moves that the 2019 Summer Calendar use the same Add/Drop deadlines as were used in Summer 2018.

The motion was approved.

3) Until Fall, 2018, the Drop deadline had been 5 weeks for the regular Academic Year semesters. The administration changed the deadline to 14 days in August, 2018. On Sept. 5, 2018, the Faculty Senate approved a Drop deadline of 22 calendar days after and including the first day of classes. The AP committee continues discussions with the administration regarding an acceptable Drop deadline. In the meantime, it is necessary to choose a temporary deadline for next semester.

The Academic Policies Committee moves that the Drop deadline for Spring, 2019 be established as Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2019, which is 22 calendar days after and including the first day of classes; and that the 100% tuition refund, or a substantial percentage of the refund, be available throughout the Drop period.
Questions/Discussion:
Chair Slayden noted that although earlier the AP Committee stated that the extent of tuition refund during the drop period was not an academic policy concern, it was evident from the data gathered for this semester that the 100% tuition refund after two weeks, but 0% refund in the final third week of the drop period, profoundly affected student decisions in dropping after two weeks. In order to see the full effect of a three-week drop deadline, some amount of tuition refund needs to be available during the entire drop period, as has been the practice in the past.

A Senator asked for clarification from the motion regarding what constitutes a substantial percentage. The Chair suggested at least 50%.

The motion was approved.

Budget and Resources – Tim Leslie
We are waiting to receive salary data, budget model information, and retention data from Human Resources.

Faculty Matters – Girum Urgessa
The committee urged faculty to fill out the Faculty Evaluation of Administrators. So far there has been a 23% response rate (~340 faculty). The deadline is December 4th. Chair Renshaw noted a lot of effort was made to revamp the form over the past year with input from faculty and deans on the process. He encouraged all senators to reach out to faculty in their schools and local academic units to complete the evaluation.

Nominations – Charlene Douglas
The Nominations Committee presents the following nominees to fill four vacancies on the Effective Teaching Committee:

Divya Varier (CEHD)
Tom Wood (CHSS)
Alexandria Zylstra (SBUS)
Gabriele Belle (COS)

The membership of the committee increased from 5 to 7 members; the other two nominees fill two vacancies on the committee.

No further nominations were made from the floor, and the nominees were approved.

Organization and Operations - Lisa Billingham
The committee is still working on the process for selecting Faculty Liaisons. More information should be forthcoming soon.

B. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives
Report of the Internal Review Committee on Gift Agreements– Provost Wu
(The Provost’s presentation slides used during this report can be found here.)
Provost Wu thanked the committee members from the Internal Review Committee, acknowledged those in attendance including Visitors Karen Alcalde and Bob Witeck here today. A number of resolutions were passed by the Faculty Senate meetings (in late April and May) focused on gift agreements at the university. President Cabrera ordered an internal review of all gift agreements, endorsed by the Board of Visitors, forming the committee that I chaired. The Internal Review Committee on Gift Agreements spent four months on this task, meeting eleven times.

The gift report shows how the work of the committee addresses those resolutions passed by the Faculty Senate. All 314 agreements examined by the committee are available on the website which contains the Report of the Review of Gift Agreements – October 9, 2018, see Organization Content: Gift Agreements. In the presentation, the Provost documented how the committee, in performing their duties and producing the report, responded to the resolutions passed by the Faculty Senate. As a note, in the presentation, yellow circles indicate partially addressed issues or items that were not exactly prescribed to the committee through their charge. For example, in Slide 3, “The Task Force will review: b. Current or future faculty fellowships or student scholarships: the task force was not charged to review student scholarships, we looked at specific support of all different forms of faculty support. c. Current or future academic programs or curricula: These two items were not part of the committee’s charge but are part of the recommendations for future work.

Questions/Discussion
The Provost agreed to a suggestion from a Senator to extend the time for Faculty Senate input on the report (from Dec./Jan. to Dec./Jan./Feb.) in response to concerns the next meeting of the Faculty Senate (December 5th) falls before the presentation of the first set of policy recommendations to the BOV at its December 12th meeting.

A Senator read the following prepared statement and question: “Given that the review included previously FOIA’d gift agreements (e.g., the Nye agreement) that President Cabrera called problematic (w/donor representatives on search committees/ having advisory roles/influence over faculty retention) AND included new gift agreements (e.g., The Ali Vural Ak Center for Global Islamic Studies; Institute for Immigration Research; Energy and Enterprise Initiative) that revealed MORE evidence of undue donor influence (e.g., donor involvement on search committees; donor influence over research foci and dissemination of findings; donor to pull gift if personnel changes), isn’t it true that the review DID FIND violations of academic freedom and undue donor influence that are of concern?”

Provost Wu began by noting that if someone were to go through the 27 agreements that were flagged, many still have remaining funds, requiring correction, dating from the 90s, and early 2000’s. There are a number of details to understand in the five-year active period but the specific accounts that were flagged were a very, very small minority. University policy has no language on this issue so there was technically no violation of policy so there should be difficulty coming forward. They were careful not to give impression of more problems than there were, and though the current flagged gifts were not egregious, they would likely be written differently today.
Several Senators were concerned about the violations of academic principles and the need for greater transparency, asking for all agreements to be fully open.

Provost Wu noted that it was a balancing act, balancing the needs to provide transparency and protect donors’ privacy.

Several questions were raised about the relationship between the GMU Foundation and the university, including whether there is a difference between giving to the GMU Foundation vs. gifts to a specific unit and whether the university can accept a gift which compromises the university. When GMUF accepts gifts with conditions, does the university have to specifically accept the gift or it can decide not to accept money?

Provost Wu noted that all gifts go through the Foundation; they accept the gifts. He also referenced the new MOU component proposed by the committee and how it would allow for greater transparency. He described the distinction in the relationship between the university and GMU Foundation as the Foundation exists to support the university. The Foundation is a 501C3, an independent organization, by law. Because of incompleteness of policy to date, the relationship with the university is not spelled out as clearly. It needs to be made clear, be made public.

Chair Renshaw noted the distinction between GMU Foundation and Advancement as they are different parts of the university. The Foundation can accept the money but Advancement raises the money.

Chair Renshaw made a motion to close discussion for now, and handle questions by email or at our next meeting.

The motion was seconded and approved.

V. New Business
A Letter of Solidarity with Catholic University was brought to the floor by Senator Betsy DeMulder.

Catholic University of America (CUA) is seeking faculty senate support and solidarity.

BACKGROUND: According to the CUA webpages,
Since 2010, CUA has watched the University’s administration under President John H. Garvey respond to steadily falling enrollment by making ever deeper cuts to the budget; by calling on staff and faculty to take buyouts and early retirements; by repeatedly raising student tuition; and by firing staff members and adjunct faculty, sometimes at the cost of expensive legal settlements. CUA has watched buildings and infrastructure crumble, and has seen departmental and research budgets frozen and graduate support severely compromised…Over the past academic year, CUA provost, Andrew Abela, put forth a plan called “A Proposal for Academic Renewal.” The proposal purports to solve
enrollment problems by a) firing tenured and tenure-track faculty, as well as full-time contract faculty [without cause]; b) classifying academic units as either research, professional, or teaching units, each of which would have a different status and teaching load; and c) reorganizing separate schools into combined units without providing a rationale or sufficient funding.

THE ASK

CUA faculty reject the proposal and have successfully negotiated some new terms. However, they are seeking solidarity with other institutions of higher education locally as they continue their fight. They are asking us to sign on to their letter, as shown here and printed below:

**Joint Statement of Solidarity**

**Washington, DC, October 2018**

We, the undersigned, are university faculty organizations, as well as individual university faculty members, in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region.

At many universities in the region, our colleagues are experiencing threats to academic freedom, the weakening of faculty governance, and the decline of tenure via the expansion of full- and part-time non-tenure-track (contract) positions. Contract faculty, including graduate student workers, lack the essential protections of tenure.

At the same time, universities are accepting external funds from powerful political lobbies that seek to fill faculty positions with people who adhere to their ideological or political preferences. The increasing influence of business-world models, the hiring of presidents and other executive-level administrators from outside academia, and the commercialization of learning diminish the influence of faculty, staff, and students as stakeholders in the pursuit of the university’s mission. In the name of financial accountability, faculty have been excluded from decisions about the restructuring and elimination of academic offerings.

We urge all universities in the region to take action to counter these disturbing trends by taking the following steps:

- Uphold the principles of academic freedom, shared governance, and tenure as defined by the American Association of University Professors;
- Abide by faculty handbooks or equivalent handbooks explicating policy and procedure;
- Protect tenure and non-tenure-track faculty members, and support the efforts of tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty to expand tenure and improve their economic welfare;
- Decline any funding, internal or external, from organizations or individuals that seek to undermine, or are ideologically opposed to academic freedom, shared governance, and tenure;
- Solicit and heed the voices of all stakeholders in the process of achieving the mission of the university;
- Commit to transparency of communication with the community about initiatives or changes that impact the fundamental purpose of the university.

We stand in solidarity with all faculty, students, and university administrators working to realize these goals.

**Signed.**
The Catholic University of America Faculty Assembly
The George Washington University Faculty Association (GWUFA)
Gallaudet University Faculty Senate

**Motion to sign the Catholic University Joint Letter of Solidarity:** Mr. Chairman, I move that Mason’s Faculty Senate stand in support and solidarity with The Catholic University of America’s faculty, students, and university administrators who are working to uphold the principles of academic freedom, shared governance, and tenure as defined by the American Association of University Professors, by signing on to their Joint Letter of Solidarity.

The motion was seconded.

Discussion followed with senators noting concerns of a similar nature occurring at Mason, especially with concerns about the balance of power around faculty and administrative interests. Other senators noted that this motion would not change the effects of the market on Catholic University.

A motion was made and seconded to postpone adjournment at 4:20 p.m. The motion was approved.

The Motion to sign the Catholic University Joint Letter of Solidarity was approved.

**VI. Remarks for the Good of the General Faculty**
Buildings and Grounds people are doing a nice job; would like to recognize them.

**VII. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon N. Davis
Secretary