George Mason University Faculty Senate Admissions Sub-Committee AY 19-20 Report

Faculty Senate Admissions Sub-Committee membership:

- Ana M. Stoehr, College of Health and Human Services
- Tim Curby, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Karen J Reedy, College of Visual and Performing Arts
- Ashley K Yuckenberg, School of Business
- Andrew Bunting, Director of Admissions Operations
- Cameron Harris, School of Business
- Megan Erb, College of Science

Admissions Sub-Committee Charge:

Follow the admissions process in order that the faculty might better understand it; make recommendations regarding admissions standards to the Dean of Admissions; report admissions recommendations and statistics to the Faculty Senate on an annual basis.

Undergraduate Admissions:

Andrew Bunting, Director of Admissions Operations was able update the committee on enrollment numbers for Fall 2020. He said the freshmen were running on par with previous years (in fact, have been a little higher) and transfer application numbers are running slightly behind previous years, most likely due to a combination of additional ADVANCE pathway options, and the COVID-19 crisis. Conversely, admitted numbers are up year-over year, ad that those number continue to grow as the admissions committee continues to make decisions. As with last year, lower application numbers can be attributed to rising costs of higher education (especially out-of-state students), and the high school graduation rates are declining in the Northeast region. These would all help account for that difference in applications.

Mason has fully installed our five regional recruiters across United States in North Carolina (covering Southeastern US), Florida, New Jersey/New York, California, and Texas, all areas where high school graduation numbers are increasing. Over the past year, with the exception of New Jersey/New York, each of these strategic locations has experienced application growth.

Overall though Mason is up in the number of admits, and we have not decreased our standards. Overall students are of a higher caliber, and more students are receiving scholarships. Mason has moved to give awards as soon as possible after admission to students to help with their decision process.

As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis, all admissions-related events (including all recruitment travel and on-campus tours) have been suspended. The Office of Admissions has invested considerable time and resources to revamp the online visit opportunities, as well as create new digital content to connect with prospective students. These new opportunities include an interactive chat feature, text message-based marketing, and improved video content.
Admissions will go through an annual updates period beginning in July the Common App will go down for a week to refresh with updates. It relaunches August 1. The TargetX will be updated in mid-July. Applicants never know the system is down as the interface remains the same but apps are held.

Below are the Fall 2020 numbers as of 3/31. Freshmen applied and admitted numbers will remain fairly similar for the rest of the year, and the IE numbers will continue to rise as we approach the deposit deadline (formerly May1, now June 1 in response to the COVID-19 crisis). Transfer numbers will continue to rise in all categories throughout the remainder of the Spring and Summer. Final numbers are not published until after the last day to add classes for the term.

### Fall 2020 undergraduate enrollment (as of 3.31):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Applied</th>
<th>Admitted as of 3.31</th>
<th>Intent to Enroll Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen Out-of-state</td>
<td>8807</td>
<td>6916</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen Virginia</td>
<td>13082</td>
<td>10253</td>
<td>1065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Out-of-state</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Virginia</td>
<td>3653</td>
<td>1085</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Graduate Admissions:

The TargetX implementation is now complete, and Graduate Admissions is now working on system enhancements to further improve the experience.

Last year, Graduate Admissions did an application date consolidation, and went from over 300 deadlines to 24. Programs can now select a deadline of either the 1st or 15th of the month. This new deadline structure lead to fewer instances of processing error, thanks to the simplification of the data.

Central Admissions and enrollment management are continuing to make the application and review process as easy as possible. They are learning from the process and can make changes quickly. They were able to make changes after they hosted several town halls to get feedback from stake holders. Admissions also visited each of the academic units to see what the challenges are and how the process/system can be supported.

As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis, all admissions-related events (including all recruitment travel and on-campus tours) have been suspended. The Office of Admissions, along with our academic partners, have invested considerable time and resources to revamp the online visit opportunities, as well as create new digital content to connect with prospective students. These new opportunities include an interactive chat feature, text message-based marketing, and improved video content.

The new system is helping to shorten the days to decision. This process is helpful in attracting students, improving the student application experience, as it is more streamlined and easier to use for the student.

The numbers below are for Fall 2020 graduate enrollment. Please note that these numbers are relatively small, as most graduate units do not have deadlines until much later in the summer, especially for master’s programs. These numbers will continue to grow through the last day to add classes for Fall 2020 term. Note further that many graduate units have requested to push back deadlines as late as
possible. While this would not normally be allowable, based on the rules of the system, Admissions Operations is putting in a tremendous amount of resources to make this happen in order to garner additional applicants.

Fall 2020 graduate enrollment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Applied to date</th>
<th>Admitted to date</th>
<th>Intent Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Out-of-State</td>
<td>4741</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Virginia</td>
<td>2676</td>
<td>1467</td>
<td>642</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*as of 3/31/2020

**Admissions Initiatives:**

Admissions is progressing with the ADVANCE program, with more than 100 pathways now established through the program. As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, we expect more students to take advantage of this opportunity, versus coming to Mason directly to begin their educational careers.

Admissions is continue t to work to improve the transfer credit evaluation. Major enhancements were made last year, and that work continues. We are looking for ways to couple this with the Online Undergraduate Expansion initiative, designed to deliver online education to a greater number of undergraduate students.

Mason is still accepting Freshmen and Transfer applications through the summer for Fall 2020. The May 1 national deposit date for freshmen has been moved to June 1, with the possibility to extend. Admissions continues to work closely with applicants, families, and counselors to provide the best possible experience for our applicants.