I. Approval of Minutes of January 28, 2014: The minutes were approved as distributed.

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

A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Scott, Chair

The committee presents the following motions for inclusion on the March 5th Faculty Senate meeting agenda:

**Double Counting Categories in the Mason Core**

Currently:

Students must take discrete courses in each area of the Mason Core. That is, they are not allowed to count a course in multiple areas, even if the course seems appropriate for that category.

Proposed:

The Mason Core committee has voted to allow students to count up to 6 credits in Mason Core categories. Categories restricted from double counting would be: Quantitative Reasoning, Oral Communication, and Written Communication (lower and upper level) since these are viewed as foundational areas of the Core.

Procedure:

If a unit would like a course to count in multiple areas, the unit would need to explain how this course meets the learning outcomes for both areas. If a course is already on the Mason Core list, and another category is desired, the Local Unit would need to put the course forward, and it would need to be approved by the Mason Core committee for that particular category.

Catalog copy (under Mason Core requirements): (new language in **bold**)

University General Education is divided into three sections: foundation, core and synthesis. Each section contains courses that have specific learning outcomes for students and are assessed on a regular basis. In some instances, student may be able to double-count courses that meet the learning outcomes for more than one category (maximum 6 credits). Courses that apply to more than one category are indicated on the full Mason Core list.
Discussion: To insert “double-” before count in the first line of second paragraph Proposed so the first second phrase in first line reads: to allow students to double-count up to 6 credits.” Recall motion to change “General Education Committee” to “Mason Core Committee” was previously approved by the Faculty Senate at its December 4, 2013 meeting.

Introduction and Discussion: Undergraduate Leave of Absence Policy
Senator Scott noted Dawn Anderson attended last week’s Academic Policies Committee meeting and wishes to bring the Undergraduate Leave of Absence Policy forward. Among the advantages for students for keeping in touch with us, anticipate extensions may be granted, and students continue to have access to libraries and still on the rolls; a good retention tool. What this will mean is extra paperwork for the Registrar and need to make sure advisors know the policy. All of the public universities in Virginia already do this.
Ann Lewis noted academic units want to be able to keep track of students. If approved, anticipate beginning Fall 2014.
Chair Douglas stressed new policy must be well-rolled out, so everyone knows about it.
Ann Lewis: A subcommittee of APAC will promulgate it.
Chair Douglas: This is a problem. We cannot depend on a subcommittee letting faculty know. You are the Registrar’s Office and have big feet and asked that this policy is rolled out to everyone, students and faculty.
Senator Scott seconded the suggestion, adding that the policy has to be approved by the Faculty Senate first. If the Faculty Senate approves it, then it is up to the Registrar’s Office to inform faculty and students. Suggestion also made to include policy in new student orientation packets.
Question: Will this go into the catalog? The deadline has passed.
Dawn Anderson: We can get it to the Registrar in time. Policy will impact everyone here, not just when they are admitted.
Question: Who approves the Leave of Absence form?
Dawn Anderson: The form is approved by the advisor and then sent to the Registrar’s Office. The student will then be registered in leave status.
Follow Up: So those students who re-appear and did not do this would have to re-enroll.

UNDERGRADUATE LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY
Current Catalog – Admissions Section
Enrollment after Previous Attendance
Students in good academic standing who have missed two or more consecutive semesters of enrollment (excluding summer term) at Mason and do not meet any of the excluded categories listed below under Readmission after Previous Attendance may re-enter by completing a re-enrollment form available through the Office of the University Registrar at registrar.gmu.edu/forms/. For graduate students and some undergraduate programs, academic department approval is also required.
Readmission after Previous Attendance
Students who have missed two or more consecutive semesters of enrollment (excluding summer term) at Mason must apply for readmission through the Office of Admissions if any of the following conditions are true:

- The student has not been enrolled at Mason for five years or more.
- The student is an undergraduate returning after any absence during which he or she studied at another institution without prior written permission of his or her school or college. Such students must reapply as transfer students.
• The student is in F-1 or J-1 visa status.
• The student was suspended or dismissed from any college or university for nonacademic reasons.
• The student was academically dismissed from Mason.
• The student was ever convicted of a felony.

**Proposed Changes to the catalog**

**Enrollment after Previous Attendance**

**Undergraduate** students in good academic standing who have missed one or more consecutive semesters of enrollment (excluding summer term) at Mason and do not meet any of the excluded categories listed below under Readmission after Previous Attendance may re-enter by completing a re-enrollment form available through the Office of the University Registrar at registrar.gmu.edu/forms/. Undergraduate students do not need to submit a re-enrollment form if an approved Leave of Absence is on file. Upon re-enrollment, undergraduate students who do not have an approved Leave of Absence on file will be required to meet new catalog year requirements. Some academic programs require departmental approval prior to re-enrollment.

**Readmission after Previous Attendance**

**Undergraduate** students who have missed one or more consecutive semesters of enrollment (excluding summer term) at Mason must apply for readmission through the Office of Admissions if any of the following conditions are true:

- The student has not been enrolled at Mason for more than 2 years.
- An approved Leave of Absence form is not on file.
- The student is an undergraduate returning after any absence during which he or she studied at another institution without prior written permission of his or her school or college. Such students must reapply as transfer students.
- The student was suspended or dismissed from any college or university for nonacademic reasons.
- The student was academically dismissed from Mason.
- The student was ever convicted of a felony.

**Additions to the catalog - Registration and Attendance section**

**Re-enrollment after previous attendance**

Undergraduate students who have missed one or more consecutive semesters must follow the requirements detailed in the Enrollment after Previous Attendance section in the Undergraduate Admissions section of the catalog. Graduate and Non-Degree students who have missed two or more consecutive semesters must re-enroll. All graduate students must receive departmental approval prior to re-enrollment.

**Leave of Absence**

All Undergraduate students who are planning an absence from George Mason must submit a formal request for Leave of Absence to the Office of the University Registrar. This form is available at http://registrar.gmu.edu/forms/.
Students do not need to complete the Leave of Absence form if they are participating in a George Mason University sponsored study abroad program or have received permission to study elsewhere.

Leave of Absence Policy and Eligibility Requirements

1. The maximum time allowed for a Leave of Absence is two years.
2. A new admission application will be required if a student is away for more than 2 academic years OR a Leave of Absence form was not submitted. Re-admission is not guaranteed.
3. Prior approval is required. Advisors approve one semester requests. Advisor and Dean approval is required if the leave of absence requested is for more than one semester.
4. The Leave of Absence form must be submitted by the last day to drop for the semester in which a leave is requested.
5. Students are not permitted to study elsewhere while on a Leave of Absence.
6. A student who was admitted as a new first semester freshman or transfer student but did not attend will not be eligible for a Leave of Absence. Instead, he or she must contact Undergraduate Admissions.
7. A student who was re-admitted but did not attend will not be eligible for a Leave of Absence. He or she must contact Undergraduate Admissions.
8. Requests for extensions on a previously submitted Leave of Absence require submission of a new Leave of Absence form.
9. The following criteria are also required.
   A student must:
   i. Be eligible to register for classes
   ii. Be a degree-seeking undergraduate student
   iii. Be registered during the semester immediately prior to the beginning of the Leave of Absence
   iv. Have no holds (e.g., disciplinary, financial, etc.) which would restrict registration

B. Budget and Resources – Susan Trencher, Chair
No report.

C. Faculty Matters – Joe Scimecca, Chair
The Faculty Evaluation of Administrators Report 2012-13 was distributed. The Faculty Evaluation of Administrators Survey 2013-14 will be distributed soon.

D. Nominations – Jim Bennett, Chair
Lisa Billingham (CVPA), Doris Bitler-Davis (CHSS), Carol Cleaveland (CHHS), Robert Dudley (CHSS), and Keith Renshaw (CHSS) are nominated to serve on the new Ad Hoc Textbook Affordability Committee.

E. Organization and Operations – Star Muir, Chair
University Standing Committee Chairs election pending: Academic Initiatives, UPTRAC – to appoint chairs. Allocation of Senate Seats 2014-15 requested from IR&R,
to include on March 5th agenda. To develop and distribute suggestions for charge for the new Ad Hoc Textbook Affordability Committee.

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives
Faculty Handbook Committee to present revisions from February 5th Faculty Senate meeting for approval by the Faculty Senate at March 5th meeting.

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion
Change in Summer Session Length
There is a brouhaha over Summer Schedule. Faculty strongly feel they were not notified of date changes. The last date of the “C” session is August 8th; very close to “two weeks availability” nine month instructional faculty contracts stipulate. Provost Stearns noted federal financial aid guidelines mandate summer course lengths of six weeks. Attempt to begin the “C” session earlier overlaps with “A” session. There is really no way around it.

Questions and concerns included:
• Is there a change in the number of course hours/contact hours? No.
• Courses during spring/winter(?) break not eligible for financial aid.
• If we have a course in which none of the students receiving financial aid, can instructor lessen it?
• “X” session classes meet for less than six weeks provided you meet contact hours requirements.
• Our college dean did not receive information about this. Another school aware of date change; they run a vigorous summer program.
• When faculty apply to teach summer courses, at the top of the form change in course times (dates) noted. Information is also posted where students enrolling in summer school can see. Suggestions included asking the Provost Office to send out notice to all faculty with more information about the changes.
• Susan Trencher serves as the only faculty member on the summer school advisory committee; key to canvass constituencies, and will ask department chairs to report also. We need to think about ways to better communicate with different constituencies.
• Cathy Evans, Director of Summer School, will appear at next Faculty Senate meeting to answer questions.

President/Provost Survey of Committee Chairs to distribute this week.

Graduate Council/PhD Time Limits/Faculty Governance Discussion: Last Monday Chairs in CHSS voted to change PhD time limit from 7 years to 11 years. Who has the responsibility and the right to make this change? Via the Graduate Council through the Faculty Senate? The Graduate Council membership serves long terms. The Graduate Council Bylaws say representatives have to be elected by unit and must be graduate faculty, this did not occur in CHSS. How many other units are out of compliance? Seven! For many years, cannot claim they have the right and not follow their by-laws. This is a major issue for faculty governance. Individual unit curriculum decisions have standing with Graduate Council but something affecting a large number of students in a major way (not limited to one unit) should go to the Faculty Senate. Cody Edwards (Associate Provost for Graduate Education) disagrees, he says Graduate Council has been doing this for years and knows the issues, a dedicated group
representing all the different units. Suggestion made for deans to bring issue for reconsideration and suggestion letter of support from either Faculty Senate Executive Committee or the Academic Policies Committee and then send to Cody Edwards as Associate Provost of Undergraduate Education. Also issue of when clock begins – immediately after admission or not until student admitted to PhD candidacy.

Faculty Senate reception for Provost Stearns will take place directly after April 2nd Faculty Senate meeting in Mason Hall Atrium.

VI. Agenda Items for March 5, 2014 FS Meeting
- Draft FS Minutes February 5, 2014
- Provost Stearns (Announcements)
- Cathy Evans (Announcements)
- Double-Counting Categories in the Mason Core (Academic Policies)
- Undergraduate Leave of Absence Changes (Academic Policies)
- Lisa Billingham (CVPA), Doris Bitler-Davis (CHSS), Carol Cleaveland (CHHS), Robert Dudley (CHSS), and Keith Renshaw (CHSS) are nominated to serve on the new Ad Hoc Textbook Committee (Nominations)
- Allocation of Senate Seats 2014-15 (Organization and Operations)
- Ad Hoc Textbook Committee Charge (Organization and Operations)
- Faculty Handbook Revisions (Faculty Handbook Committee)

VII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Caniano
Faculty Senate clerk