

**MINUTES OF THE  
FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2015  
HUB (SUB II) Meeting Room VIP III, 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.**

**Present:** Jim Bennett, Charlene Douglas, Robert Dudley, Mark Houck, Timothy Leslie, Keith Renshaw, Suzanne Slayden, S. David Wu, J.J. Davis

**I. Approval of Minutes of January 20, 2014:** The minutes were approved.

**II. Announcements**

**Provost Wu:** First tea with faculty, staff and students [at the Johnson Center](#) went quite well, with a lot of different kinds of questions from all three groups. This is the first of two events this semester. We also held an open forum for adjunct faculty last week (February 18, 2015); my email “Strengthening Mason’s Partnership with Adjunct Faculty” (February 23, 2015) summarized outcomes for the meeting. The meeting was reasonably well attended given classes were cancelled that evening. We will form a task force co-chaired by a dean and adjunct faculty to provide channel of communication with the adjunct faculty population. NPR reported on adjunct faculty issues last week – interviewed some adjunct faculty (here) and stopped by to talk with me. The majority of adjunct faculty are working professionals contributing and sharing their expertise with our students and want to be more connected to university. Another survey painted a distorted picture, not reality of what we have here. Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup> is National Adjunct Walkout Day – we do not expect to see a big movement here on campus, but we are prepared. From our statistics, 27.6% credit hours taught by adjunct faculty; about 29% of sections; made point to reporter that their statistics were inaccurate.

Discussion:

Concerns expressed about report, "[GMU Contingent Faculty Study](#)", by sociology graduate students; we have to be careful how categories of faculty are defined. Both Adjunct, [who are part time](#), and term, [who are full-time](#), faculty are contingent faculty. Full-time term faculty comprise 28% of instructional faculty, greater than “a maximum 25% of all full-time Instructional Faculty within the University may be Term Faculty (See [Faculty Handbook, Section 2.3.3 Criteria and Procedures for Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion of Term Faculty, last paragraph, p. 25](#)). If they are teaching twice the number of courses than tenured/tenure-track faculty, then we will achieve 50% (contingent) faculty teaching load.

Provost Wu: It is a little bit below 50% (including adjunct, term and part-time faculty).

Response: Part-time faculty are adjunct faculty by definition. Do you have a plan to reduce 28 to 25% as mandated by the Faculty Handbook?

Provost Wu: Budget reality, no definitive answer at this point. We do not have a well-defined workload guideline for faculty as a whole, just broad guidelines. We need to have a better handle on this. For example: 2:2 teaching load baseline (not uncommon among research universities), buy-out and reduction policies for research-productive faculty might be 1, 2, or 3/year; not consistently (applied) across colleges. A pretty big undertaking but necessary to address issue holistically, in an equitable and transparent way across the board.

Response: With the rising number of term faculty, the number of pre-tenured faculty has gone down, yet the number of tenure-track slots remains the same.

Provost Wu: Budget allocation for tenure-track faculty did not decrease, market demand for salary increased. Institution growing dramatically while state of Virginia funding reduced. Higher workload

with smaller budget allocation. How to make ends meet? A fundamental problem we are dealing with; not sinister intentions, but a fundamental fact. We could adjust our enrollment expectations, but we cannot too openly oppose their position.

Concerns expressed among individual units included:

Full professor faculty hired at higher salaries than new tenure-track faculty, we need to increase number of tenure-track faculty. In our department we are in dire jeopardy of losing tenure-track faculty. GMU went through a fascination with NIH: as they retired from NIH, we paid them high salaries to come here. Very senior people that never had to be competitive within NIH, and then at Mason the grant money did not necessarily follow. We need the young and the hungry, not elder statesmen of research community.

Provost Wu: I agree that there needs to be a balance, important that we hire junior faculty, we can take advantage of career longevity. Over past two decades or so a bootstrap strategy to move Mason where it is today; the strategy is working, but in long term is not a sustainable strategy not to move to sustainable growth.

Question: Can we get information by unit/colleges for statistics for credit hours, not just FTE? Provost Wu has statistics by college, not by department.

**Sr. Vice President J.J. Davis:** The President will get out a notice that lobbying efforts wildly successful in Richmond. There are raises, at this point 2%, may be merit-based. Raises for classified staff to be tied to state revenues, would create a significant issue if we cannot do it. Finally, we are receiving planning funding for Robinson Hall, and \$1M more for financial aid. Governor has thirty days to line-item veto; to present to BOV in March; BOV will set tuitions in May.

Question: What about those faculty who have been here a long time with lower salaries?

Sr. Vice President Davis: State has said will be merit-based; no work on this yet, (raises) would take effect in August. Classified staff raises tied to state revenue forecast in June.

Concerns expressed about communication of proposed retirement plan? What happened between one meeting and the next?

Sr. Vice President Davis: Legislators met and said no. Plan modeled on earlier plans at VCU, UVA, and Virginia Tech plans; however the Attorney General decided not to fund at level we anticipated. We have been as open as possible, and were disappointed too.

Other Notes:

- We had the best career fair ever, the FBI only goes to 20 universities, and made 58 conditional offers.
- Export Compliance: We received clearance from OLFAC (regulatory body), they are comfortable, won't have a big reach-in from the federal government. Reorganization in the works – to streamline offices, (cited some examples such as auxiliary services), to contain costs.
- She anticipates bringing reports on Summer School and Varsity Athletics to next EXC meeting (March 17) for discussion.

Discussion about Washington Post article yesterday – a very strange article, [“In Northern Virginia, a disconnect over genomics research” \(Washington Post, February 22, 2015\)](#) Provost Wu: More of an opinion piece, they pick and choose, a lot of collaboration between Mason and INOVA for over a decade, we have joint faculty appointments, and have started direct conversations with their Vice President of Research. He see it as a reaction to announcement re Exxon-Mobil campus – see [“INOVA](#)

[plans research medical complex in Fairfax” \(Washington Post, February 9, 2015\)](#) , did not mention anyone at Mason. Unfortunate article in that sense, INOVA as organization in making somewhat strong moves – Medical school with Shenandoah University to some extent overall not such a bad thing, two big gorillas in the region, why are they not working together? We have been reaching out to INOVA for some time, for various different reasons. They may think collaboration with GMU re medical school with us would take too long, re SCHEV etc.

Upcoming events noted by Chair Douglas: President Cabrera to address Faculty Senate rescheduled to April 22, 2015; Rector Davis to address April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. Faculty Enrollment in Courses deferred to April meeting, waiting for more information, and to fix links for in-state tuition. David Long, Executive Campaign Director, – Faculty Involvement in Capital Campaign – will speak for ten minutes. Mark Smith, Director Government Relations, will provide an update on General Assembly session at March meeting.

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

#### **A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden**

No agenda items, general discussion about proposal from Janette Muir to lower TOEFL scores, to align with what other universities are doing. Provost Wu to inquire about this, issue needs to go to O&O as well.

#### **B. Budget and Resources – Mark Houck**

We met with Linda Harber and three others in her shop in an effort to get the 2015 salary data ready for posting.

**C. Faculty Matters – Keith Renshaw:** The 2013-14 Faculty Evaluation of Administrators survey results are out and we are planning for next year. Suggested improvements included establishment of 1-5 point scale for questions, and why do we ask “I don’t know”? The overall evaluation is on a 5 point scale.

**D. Nominations – Jim Bennett:** The call for nominations to serve as Faculty Representatives to the BOV Committees will be out next week. We are giving people lots of time to respond.

**E. Organization and Operations – Bob Dudley** distributed a report and the Allocation of Senate Seats for AY 2015-16. There was one change made over the summer in which the new SPGIA gained faculty from CHSS – PIA and also one Faculty Senate seat; CHSS lost one Faculty Senate seat.

### **IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives**

Brief update from Salary Equity Study Committee – Shelley Wong, Chair

### **V. Agenda Items for March 4, 2015 Faculty Senate Meeting**

- Draft FS Minutes February 4, 2015
- Provost Wu
- Mark Smith, Director, Government Relations – Update on Virginia General Assembly Session 2015. (*Announcements*)
- Reports from the Faculty Senate Standing Committees:
  - Academic Policies
  - Budget and Resources
  - Faculty Matters

Nominations

Organization and Operations: Allocation of Senate Seats for AY 2015-16

- Other Committee Reports
  - Brief update from Salary Equity Study Committee – Shelley Wong, Chair
- Faculty Involvement in Capital Campaign – David Long, Executive Campaign Director (*Other New Business*)

**VI. New Business, Updates, and Discussion**

Distribution of President/Provost Survey late February for inclusion in April 1<sup>st</sup> FS Agenda (Attachment A)

**VII. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:35 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

Meg Caniano

Faculty Senate clerk

## Attachment A

To: Committee Chair  
Name of Committee

Subject: Annual Faculty Senate Evaluation of the President/Provost

As you may be aware, at the Faculty Senate meeting on January 21, 2009 a motion was approved to "conduct an annual evaluation of how effectively the President and Provost have interacted with the Faculty Senate during the preceding academic year." The evaluation will include input from the chairs of the Senate Standing Committees, as well as from ad hoc and University Committees that report to the Senate. (For more information, see [http://www.gmu.edu/resources/facstaff/senate/MINUTES\\_FS\\_2008-09/FS\\_MINUTES\\_1-21-09.htm](http://www.gmu.edu/resources/facstaff/senate/MINUTES_FS_2008-09/FS_MINUTES_1-21-09.htm).) A resolution approved at the [Faculty Senate Meeting April 6, 2011](#) amended and elaborated the distribution of the evaluation to the Board of Visitors and the General Faculty.

This message requests information from you as Chair of your Committee. Although we would prefer to receive signed reports with some degree of specificity in the response, we also respect a desire for confidentiality: If you would prefer, you can discuss these matters in a general manner (so as not to reveal the identity of your Committee) and submit an anonymous report. Or you may contact a member of the Executive Committee and speak confidentially.

This report must be presented to the Senate at its April meeting (April 1, 2015). Time is of the essence, so we ask that you respond to the following questions by sending an e-mail to [facsen@gmu.edu](mailto:facsen@gmu.edu) at your earliest convenience -- and no later than Wednesday, March 18, 2015.

1. During the past calendar year has the President or Provost announced initiatives or goals or acted upon issues that fall under the charge of your Committee? If so, was your Committee consulted by the President or Provost in a timely manner before the announcement or action? If not, do you believe your Committee should have been consulted? Would it have been helpful to have had the input of your Committee from the outset?
2. Did your Committee seek information or input from the President or Provost or members of their staffs? If so, did they respond adequately and in a timely manner?
3. Please suggest how you believe the President, Provost and/or their staffs might more effectively interact with your Committee in the future, if necessary.
4. Please relate any additional information you may have regarding interactions between your Committee and the President or Provost or their staff.

Thank you for your help in conducting this evaluation.

Charlene Douglas, Chair  
Faculty Senate Executive Committee