GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, August 23, 2017, 9:00 – 10:30 a.m., HUB VIP Room 3

Present: Alan Abramson, Mark Addleson, Lisa Billingham, Tim Leslie, Keith Renshaw, S. David Wu.

I. Approval of Minutes of April 10, 2017: The minutes stand as approved.

II. Announcements
Provost Wu provided the following updates at the start of the beginning of a new semester:

Welcoming New Faculty Orientation: We had a great two days, close to 100 faculty attended. A packed agenda, really beefed up over the past couple of years. To see the whole spectrum of the university, not just the academic side, including University Life and various different aspects of research. We visited the new Teaching and Learning Technology Center – to be named the Stearns Center – in Innovation Hall, which will have a grand opening this semester. We also hosted a reception at the Mason Club. Over the summer they obtained a liquor license, may serve liquor after 5:00 p.m., with a cash bar. The bar was open for the first time yesterday. Faculty Senate chair Keith Renshaw has received a lot of positive comments about the New Faculty Orientation. Several Executive Committee members recounted their respective orientations, which were not as elaborate or comprehensive as this.

Orientation for Adjunct Faculty took place last Saturday (August 19, 2017) in Merten Hall. Over 100 adjunct faculty attended. A slightly truncated version of New Faculty Orientation, it provided one-stop ‘shopping’ for Human Resources and other services in Merten Hall. It went well.

Two big things: #1 Refreshing of the Strategic Plan, #2 Academic Calendar.

Strategic Plan Refresh: The Annual Planning Conference with the Board of Visitors took place July 26, 2017. The Chair of the Faculty Senate is a member of the President’s Council. Keith attended the meeting. For this year we have a big agenda item: basically to refresh our strategic plan as President Cabrera begins his second 5-year term. A good time to relook at goals, also resource alignments. We hope to submit to the BOV a refreshed version that will reflect that in some areas we are ahead, in some behind. The Faculty Senate can choose to be as involved as you wish to be through participation in town halls, etc. The Strategic Plan was initially developed with significant input across campus – this process is not intended to redo it, but as a midpoint check. For example, we have achieved our goal of becoming a Research I (R1) university within a decade – achieved! – now to consider how we remain in R1 status as a new goal.
**Academic Calendar:** Some good work occurred over the summer, Renate and Janette held meetings with many different groups, including Suzanne Slayden as Chair of Academic Policies. Not to go into too much detail now, but we believe we have developed a new configuration that is much better aligned with current calendar. It includes building into the regular schedule two 7-week modules (instead of 8-week modules) that will allow students to switch in and out of courses in the modules or in the regular semester. This will result in little change to the existing calendar, and the current summer calendar will stay the same. It still requires a lot of engagement with the entire university, including operations side as well.

**Faculty Engagement:** President Cabrera and I decided to do a faculty session on Friday, August 25th right after the new student convocation as a new tradition. To get as many faculty together as possible, kick off the year, ongoing dialogue.

Discussion: Why not run it as an all-faculty meeting?

Provost Wu: We did try to do all-faculty town halls a few times, turnout was not great. He is not familiar with the meetings which took place before 2005.

Follow up: There is great need for amendment of the Faculty Senate charter. Amending the charter requires the President to call a meeting of the General Faculty.

Provost Wu is open to suggestions. Usually a decent number of faculty show up for convocation; there is food. Other suggestions included mentioning the role of the Faculty Senate as the faculty's voice; Keith will attend the session.

**Additional announcements:**
- New Senator Orientation – Monday, August. 28, 2017, 11:00 am – 12:00 noon, Johnson Center Meeting Room C (327)
- Rector Davis will address the Faculty Senate on Nov. 1, 2017 and April. 25, 2018
- President Cabrera will address the Faculty Senate on Oct. 4, 2017 and March 7, 2018
- FS Reception at Mathy House: Thu Oct. 5 5:30 pm
- EC meeting with President Cabrera: Fri Nov. 3 11:00 am
- Appointment of Officers 17-18
  - Chair pro tem: Charlene Douglas
  - Parliamentarian: Suzanne Slayden
  - Sergeants at Arms: Catherine Sausville & Melissa Broeckelman-Post

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

**A. Academic Policies** – no report

**B. Budget and Resources** – Tim Leslie
We did not receive numbers to work on the budget model. With the Foundation, communication articles that we thought were going to go out in The George appear to be delayed, and we will follow up. Lisa met with (Senior VP) J.J. Davis in July to discuss how to start looking at summer salary, involves also revisions to the Faculty Handbook.

C. Faculty Matters – Alan Abramson

We have a bunch of carryover issues, some of which are noted in your list of likely topics of importance this year. Some discussion of whether it was possible to get an RA to help with some of this. Other members suggested this is the work of the committee, needs to be done by faculty. Chair Renshaw noted that the Term Faculty Task Force conducted individual interviews with each department chair over summer – 59 total interviews. At the same time, there is a lot on the Faculty Matters Committee’s agenda, maybe we should consider expanding its membership from 5 to 6 or 7 members willing to do work.

We plan to get the Faculty Evaluation of Administrators out in the fall rather than the spring and will push to get the old one out this fall. Questions raised whether current process makes sense. Should the questions be revised?

Faculty evaluation of department chairs is uneven. Some departments do this, some do not. Minimum qualifications for department chairs: examples of term faculty serving as department chairs. In some departments there are no lists of preferences in this area. There is a section in the Faculty Handbook on department chairs (2.12 Department Chairs, pp. 51-55), but extremely little on this question, procedures vary across the university.

Faculty Study Leaves: Now that we are an R1 university, to ensure availability of Faculty Study Leaves to eligible and interested faculty. We are beginning to gather data on current practices, process is decentralized. The Provost makes an allocation available to colleges/schools.

Discussion: Provost Wu noted aim to give local units more flexibility to leverage to expand study leaves by supporting more people. Accommodations made to cover teaching. Previous tradition: applications reviewed by a committee under the Vice President for Research, with a narrow scope. By decentralizing process, Provost hopes department chairs and deans can leverage more resources.
Faculty Matters not so much concerned about decentralization aspects; the question is: How many faculty receive them? In comparison with other R1 universities? There is no central place to get data.

Provost Wu: Renate Guilford, Associate Provost for Academic Administration, coordinates (study leaves) with Human Resources/Payroll. They maintain central records in any given academic year.

Faculty Matters also wonders how many people are interested in taking study leaves? We do not know. Might need to interview individual deans etc. to get an idea.

Example cited of faculty member announcing two weeks before term begins that would not be available to teach due to receiving a research grant – whole issue of accountability, and a wider issue of faculty responsibility. In some departments faculty announce they are applying for study leave. There are variations across schools and programs.

Provost Wu noted benchmarking with the other R1 universities; most have sabbatical leave, often one year with half-pay or one semester with full pay. The one year option is more common and also more productive. There are current restrictions on the term “sabbatical” in the Code of Virginia.

Other individuals to consult with on this issue include Kim Eby (job has been reconfigured as Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and Development – she is a faculty member who came up from the academic unit and has more expanded responsibility) and Renate Guilford (more on the administrative side, more procedural).

Are there restrictions on R1 status, between percentages colleges/schools requirement of faculty to be doing research? Provost Wu: Indirectly. Accreditation by SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools). SACS changed the group evaluating us as we now are being compared to R1 universities for accreditation. They did this in a very subtle way. SACS guidelines do not say if you are an R1, then x,y,z. Instead key evaluators changed from before to now. We do (have) variety in terms of full-time/part-time faculty, etc. critical to SACS perspective.

Provost Wu recently attended the first half of SACS evaluator training. Program by program evaluation looks at faculty in each program, extended experience in field, whether hold terminal degrees, etc. We have to keep a close eye for two reasons: (1) different set of peer evaluators and (2) to look at faculty composition more carefully. When tenure-track faculty are on leave, adjunct faculty are used to replace
them. SACS takes a one-time snapshot. You have to put in adjuncts you can defend. Departments decide who to hire as adjuncts.

Chair Renshaw suggested should this become a larger focus, we could create a separate Task Force.

Faculty Engagement: How to increase? Keith has been spending time with (Faculty Senator) Bethany Letiecq (Member, AAUP Chapter, GMU). She wants to publicize AAUP and how the Faculty Senate fits in using a five minute blurb in conjunction with the Faculty Senate in a streamlined format. Some colleges and schools, such as CEHD and Schar, meet as larger units. To underline that faculty know the Faculty Senate (and AAUP) are out there.

D. Nominations – Mark Addleson
Nominees to the Faculty Senate Standing Committees, University Standing Committees, and Faculty Representatives to Committees: We still have a few gaps to fill generally OK. We need one more Senator for Faculty Matters, and will call for nominations from the floor for three more Senators on the Nominations Committee. He suggested reducing the size of the Nominations Committee from 5 to 3 members. We also need a Senator to serve on the Admissions Committee and two more to serve on the External Academic Relations Committee. We have someone in mind to serve on the Salary Equity Study Committee and a vacancy on UPTRAC. There was a general discussion of how to get (tenured) faculty to volunteer to serve on UPTRAC as they must be available in late May and early June.

E. Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham
We met with Suzanne Slayden regarding bylaws and charter changes. Chair Renshaw added we need to fix what needs to be fixed and encouraged EXC to look them over (Appendices A, B, and C). Electronic voting may be considered. Faculty Senators 2017-18 SCHAR election results pending (early) fall.

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives
V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion
• Background Check Report AY16-17: Requested from HR/Payroll, will be included as attachment on September 6th FS Agenda.
• Likely topics of importance this year
  o Bylaw/Charter/Standing Rules changes: please see Appendix A (Charter), Appendix B (Bylaws), Appendix C (Standing Rules)
  o Academic calendar (potential alignment of ground-based and online sessions – discussed earlier)
Summer School: In each college, deans are required to provide workload guidelines as requested by Provost Wu. How to capture teaching/teaching loads/compensation? A big task, the Faculty Senate to be involved in leading and working with the Provost Office. What makes sense to work on: modules/flexibility requirements to teach in summer of part of their load. For example, faculty in SBUS are “strongly encouraged to teach”. Some faculty who want to teach are not allowed to, as stated in the Faculty Handbook (Section 3.3. Summer Salary, pp. 56-57). New technologies change responsibilities and nature of faculty contracts. Do we need to revisit faculty contracts? As we talk about it, need to head off idea to require teaching in summer, but to allow faculty to teach as a way to add flexibility, not to remove it. Perhaps also to allow faculty to teach an extra course in summer and one less in fall or spring to meet their total “2:2” load. To systemize loads/payload, sense of having equally positive result and not throw more money at it. Most schools scale summer salary at 10% for teaching, but on the flip side, faculty members pay more (15% if tenure-line; 12.5% if term) to buyout of teaching a course. A real issue, not necessarily a straightforward win-win, scaled at different percentages. Need to figure out the right format.

Provost Wu: Now that every college/school has written workload guidelines, structured in the same way, everything is in writing; not perfect, but a starting point. The Provost Office to share these with deans, initially not just about teaching, also research, service at different times in careers. Different equivalencies for workloads spread over time. He noted the deans were supposed to share this with the faculty; he asked the deans to maximize faculty engagement.

Faculty Engagement work: To continue agenda announcements, meeting summaries, more face to face interactions by attending meetings where faculty gather, along with Bethany Letiecq, representing AAUP at school-wide or department-wide level. CVPA has school-wide meetings and include the Faculty Senate as an agenda item for three minutes. They will send their meeting dates to facilitate scheduling. Chair Renshaw indicated he had developed a brief way to convey information about shared governance, how it evolved, how it works here, also in terms of university committees and what they do. Slogan was suggested: “Less gridlock than the U.S. Senate”. Renshaw also welcomed Faculty Senators from different units to participate if/when he visits their meetings.

We will also hold a social hour at the Mason Club after the September 6th FS meeting, beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Term Faculty TF: The Task Force has worked over the summer. Keith Renshaw and (Senator) Girum Urgessa (VSE) both serve on the Task Force. The Task
Force met with every department and program head asking for information about their procedures. There is disparity among units, even within colleges. Our next meeting takes place on September 11th to review summer inputs, to strategize, how to do a survey, not just for distribution to term faculty, but also for tenure-line faculty to see what they think to do. Not deans, but at local level.

- Expected reports/actions
  - COI Task Force (final report due end Fall semester): They are working on this; it is complicated. The AAUP at the national level also handling this, along with other universities.
  - Salary Equity Committee: Extremely persistent in asking for data, HR cannot legally give them, found a way to get most of the data requested.
  - UPTRAC Procedures: The new Faculty Handbook requires published procedures. The procedures as written are not very detailed – might need more work.
  - Grievance Procedures: have been forwarded to University Counsel and Renate Guilford for input.
  - Effective Teaching Committee: They sent a timeline at the end of semester, Chair Renshaw told them to come back with specific recommendations.
  - TF on Private Donors: Dave Kuebrich has invested a lot of time on it. Unclear if/when a final report will be filed.

- Brad Edwards left over from Spring 17, to reschedule Fall 17? Agreed to ask him re his availability.

- VA Political Scene: To contact Paul Liberty, VP, Government and Community Relations, to ask if there is anything at legislative level to be anxious about? Re upcoming state election results?

- Faculty Morale: Workforce includes Keith Renshaw, Kim Eby, Jaime Lester, and HR (Kate Astor & Linda Harber). We surveyed all faculty late last year. One of the big issues involves communications.

- For inclusion on next EXC Agenda: What if any report out do we need re the Capital Campaign?
  - Lots of organizations look at FS as venue for communicating news and information to faculty – but FS isn’t really a good venue for that
  - B&R had been working with Advancement last year on a broader communication strategy – but then nothing materialized

VI. Agenda Items for September 6, 2017 FS Meeting
- Draft FS Minutes April 24, 2017
- Announcements
- Committee Reports
• Nominees to the Faculty Senate Standing Committees and University Standing Committees; Faculty Representatives to Committees
  o Note – should be Special Orders, which would come after Committee Reports
• New business
  o Background Check Report for AY 16-17 – Linda Harber (as attachment)
• Post Meeting Election of Chairs of Faculty Senate Standing Committees

VII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Caniano
Faculty Senate clerk
Appendix A
Faculty Senate Charter

Elements that may need to be amended are highlighted

I. Membership of the Faculty Senate

A. Members

- President of the University
- Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- The Deans of the Colleges and Independent Schools
- One Independent Institute Director designated by the Directors of the Independent Institutes
- Director of the University Libraries
- Fifty Faculty Members Elected from the Collegiate Units

B. Apportionment of Elected Senators

The number of Senators representing each collegiate unit (College, Independent Unit or Unit Pool) shall be determined according to the principle of proportionality, based on the full-time equivalent size of the Instructional Faculty of each Collegiate Unit or Institute Pool on February 1st of each year, with the following restrictions:

1. The threshold size for any collegiate unit to receive its own individual allocation of Senate seats is set at the total University Instructional FTE divided by 50. In the instance that this ratio is not an integer it will be rounded up to obtain the threshold size. Instructional faculty refers to full time and part time faculty with support from appropriated funds. All independent Collegiate Units, Institutes, or Academic Units which do not individually equal or exceed the threshold size will be pooled into a single collegiate unit for the purposes of allocating Senate seats.

2. No collegiate unit will have more than 25 Senate seats. In the event that one collegiate unit exceeds 50% of the total FTE, then the threshold size will be calculated on the total FTE of the remaining collegiate units divided by 25.

By March 1st of each academic year, the Senate Committee on Organization and Operations shall establish the representation from each unit on the basis of the figures provided by the Administration. Elections shall follow by May 1st.

The Directors of the Independent Institutes shall designate one of their number annually to serve on the Senate.

C. Qualifications of Elected Senators
Elected Senators shall be members of the constituent Faculties they represent. A faculty member is eligible to serve on the Faculty Senate if the faculty member holds

1. A full-time tenured or probationary appointment in the rank of Instructor or above with at least one year's full-time service at George Mason University; or

2. A restricted-term full-time instructional appointment in the rank of Instructor or above with at least one academic year of continuous full-time service at George Mason University; or

3. A part-time instructional appointment in the rank of Adjunct Instructor or above, with at least one academic year of continuous service, and if the faculty member has completed at least two (2.0) Full Time Equivalents in appointments at George Mason University.

The minimal service qualifications may be waived for emerging collegiate units so that the full Faculty Senate membership quota may be met. Faculty members studying for a degree at the University are ineligible to serve on the Faculty Senate.

D. Election of Senators

Each collegiate unit shall decide upon the method of electing its representatives, with the stipulation that they be elected for staggered terms, the maximum to be three years.

II. Responsibilities of the Faculty Senate

A. As Representative of the General Faculty

1. The Senate shall have the fundamental general responsibility to speak and act for the General Faculty on matters affecting the University as a whole.

2. The Senate, on behalf of the general faculty, shall have the particular responsibility to formulate proposals on those matters affecting the welfare of the university as a whole. In the best traditions of American Universities, these recommendations constitute the primary advice to the administration.

3. In extraordinary circumstances, the General Faculty may, by the following procedure, reverse specific decisions of the Senate:

   a. The President shall call a meeting of the General Faculty to consider reversal of a specific decision of the Senate within ten working days of receiving a petition to do so signed by at least 10% of the voting members of the faculty. To be valid, a petition to reverse a specific decision must be submitted no later than two weeks after the distribution of minutes reporting Senate action.
b. No vote on the issue shall occur at the meeting. Rather, the meeting shall determine whether or not a mail ballot of all voting members of the General Faculty should be conducted on the issue. The meeting shall be subject to ordinary regulations governing a quorum at meetings of the General Faculty.

c. If the meeting approves a mail ballot, it shall be distributed within five working days of the meeting.

d. The ballots shall be counted five working days after their distribution. To pass, the motion to reverse a decision of the Senate must be approved by a majority of those eligible to vote.

4. The General Faculty may amend the Senate Charter by the following procedure:

a. The President shall call a meeting of the General Faculty to consider such action within ten working days of receiving a petition to do so signed by at least 10% of the voting members of the faculty or after receiving proposals approved by the Senate or the Provost. Notice of the meeting shall be accompanied by copy of the proposed changes. Both should be received at least 5 working days before the called meeting.

b. A quorum for the called meeting shall be 10% of the voting faculty. Debate at the meeting shall be on the proposed changes. To pass, the proposed changes must be approved by a majority of the voting faculty who are present and voting.

c. Amendments which have been passed by the General Faculty must be presented by the President to the Board of Visitors for their approval.

5. The authority of the Senate shall not extend over the internal affairs of any single collegiate unit except as they affect the interest of the University as a whole or the interest of other units.

a. If a disagreement arises between the Senate, acting for the General Faculty, and the governing bodies of one or more single collegiate units over the question of which body properly exercises authority on a specific issue, the President shall decide by assigning the contested issue to one or another body.

b. If the Senate, acting for the General Faculty, takes an action which a Senator believes violates the legitimate interests of the collegiate unit he represents, that Senator shall have the right to demand a second vote on the issue at the same meeting. The vote shall be taken immediately by secret ballot, except that means shall be used to discriminate among
ballots cast by representatives of the various units. If two thirds of the total number of Senators elected to represent any collegiate unit oppose the action, it shall be reversed.

B. As Advisor to the President

On matters affecting the entire faculty and transcending collegiate unit boundaries, the Senate shall be the primary faculty representative in consultation with the central administration and the President. The Senate and the administration recognize that consultation in such matters implies an obligation on the part of each to engage in regular communication. After due consideration of the Senate's advice, the President will reach a final decision and communicate it to the Senate. If the decision differs from the Senate recommendation an explanation will be included in this communication.

III. Implementation

A. This Charter shall take effect and replace the previous charter on its approval by the General Faculty in a regular or special meeting following the guidelines in section II. A. 4.

B. Section I

1. This Charter shall be implemented according to the normal procedure described in Section I. B., using appropriate figures as of April 1, 1989.

2. Within ten working days after the Committee on Organization and Operations reports the representations from the several colleges, the colleges shall conduct elections in accordance with Sections I. C. and I. D.

3. When these elections have been completed, the newly elected Senators shall take office.

C. Section II

Section II shall take effect on the approval of this report by the General Faculty.
Appendix B
Faculty Senate Bylaws

Elements that may need to be amended are highlighted

Article I Membership

Section 1.

The membership of the George Mason Faculty Senate shall be as prescribed by the Charter adopted April 3, 1974 by the General Faculty of George Mason University, clarified by the General Faculty May 21, 1975 and amended March 22, 1976, December 15, 1987, April 12, 1989, and March 30, 1994. Eligibility to vote on matters before the Faculty Senate shall be limited to duly elected faculty members of the Faculty Senate.

Section 2.

a. The manner by which academic units entitled to representation in the Faculty Senate elect their senators shall be determined by the faculty of those units.

b. The presiding officer of each collegiate unit shall certify by May 15 to the Chair of the Faculty Senate names of the Senators chosen. Terms of Senators shall begin at the opening of the first Senate meeting of the academic year.

c. Current records of the membership of the Senate shall be maintained by the Secretary for use by the Chair of the Senate and the Parliamentarian.

ARTICLE II Officers

Section 1.

a. The Chair of the Faculty Senate shall be elected from among the elected membership of the Senate at the May meeting. Nominations shall be made from the floor. Except when a motion to cast a unanimous ballot is passed, voting for the Chair shall be by secret ballot. In the event that no candidate for this office receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off vote will be held between the two candidates who received the most votes.

b. The term of the chair shall commence at the conclusion of the meeting at which he or she is elected.

c. The Senate shall elect from its own number a Secretary at the meeting in September. Nominations for this position shall be presented by the Committee on Nominations; however, additional nominations may be made from the floor. Except when a motion to cast a unanimous ballot is passed, voting for this office shall be by secret ballot. In the event that no candidate for
this office receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off vote will be held between the two candidates who received the most votes.

d. The Chair shall appoint a member of the Senate to serve when needed as Chair pro tem and other members to be Parliamentarian and Sergeant at Arms, to serve for terms of one year commencing with the first meeting after their appointment.

e. No elected officer shall serve in the same office for more than three consecutive terms.

Section 2.

a. The Chair of the Senate shall be the presiding officer. The Chair pro tempore shall be the presiding officer in the absence of the Chair.

b. The Secretary of the Senate shall maintain the records of the Senate, and shall give appropriate notification to officers of the University, Committee Chairs, and other individuals concerning Senate actions. In consultation with the Chair of the Senate, the Secretary shall prepare at least annually an appendix to the bylaws, which shall include lists of officers and standing committees of the Faculty Senate and of University Faculty Standing Committees, which report to the Senate, a summary of actions of the Faculty Senate pertaining to the organization and operation of the Faculty Senate, and summaries of the role of standing committees of the Senate. The appendix may include other information of continuing importance in the discretion of the Secretary and the Chair of the Senate.

c. The Sergeant-at Arms shall supervise balloting and assist the Chair in expediting the meetings of the Senate.

d. The Parliamentarian shall assist the Chair in the interpretation of the rules of order.

ARTICLE III Responsibilities of the Senate

The responsibilities of the George Mason Faculty Senate shall be as prescribed by the Charter adopted by the General Faculty.

ARTICLE IV Meetings of the Senate

Section 1.

a. Meetings of the Senate shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (revised) except as the rules and procedures prescribed therein have been or shall be modified by adoption of these or of future bylaws or standing rules.

b. The presiding officer of all meetings of the Senate shall be the Chair of the Senate or the Chair pro tem.
c. The quorum for Senate meetings shall consist of a majority of the elected membership. However, the quorum for authorizing conferral of degrees and for considering other matters related thereto shall be a minimum 20 percent of the whole Senate membership.

Section 2.

a. Meetings shall be open to all members of the University community.

b. All persons in attendance in a non-voting capacity shall be seated in a clearly delineated area so that they may not inadvertently influence a voice vote.

Section 3.

Any person recognized by the Chair may participate in the discussion of any item of business brought forth upon the floor, but only members of the Senate may make and second motions, and vote.

Section 4. To the extent permitted by law, the Senate may go into closed session by majority vote of those present and eligible to vote. Only members of the Senate may be present during a closed session.

Section 5.

a. The Chair and the Secretary of the Senate shall jointly prepare the agenda for each meeting and distribute it seven days before the meeting to all members of the Senate.

b. Any member of the General Faculty may submit items of business for inclusion on the agenda. All items submitted which are consistent with the responsibilities of the Senate as defined in Article III are to be placed on the agenda. Members of the General Faculty who are not Senators may submit items for discussion only, but motions on those subjects may be made by Senators.

c. Explanatory or background information on all agenda items shall be prepared by the sponsor of the item and shall be attached to the agenda.

Section 6.

Meetings of the Senate shall be convened on at least four Wednesday afternoons during each semester of the academic year, beginning in September.

Section 7.

a. On his or her own initiative the Chair may call a special meeting of the Senate. In response to any petition signed by 20 percent of the elected members of the Senate, the Chair must call a special meeting to be convened within six instructional days.
b. The written call to the special meeting shall include a statement of the purpose of the meeting and shall be distributed at least four instructional days before the meeting to all members of the Senate.

c. Only that business stipulated in the call to the special meeting may be transacted.

Section 8.

a. Voting shall be by voice vote upon a call by the presiding officer for the "ayes" and "nays," or by division of the house upon a call from the floor, except that any member may request that a secret ballot be taken. When such a ballot is requested, the Secretary of the Senate shall be responsible for preparing, distributing, and counting the ballots with the assistance of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

b. Absentee and proxy ballots shall not be allowed.

c. All motions to recommend alterations to existing University-wide graduation requirements shall be read and debated at two successive regular meetings of the Senate held in the same academic year. A meeting of the Senate called solely to complete the agenda of a previous meeting shall not count as a "successive" meeting within the meaning of this bylaw.

Section 9.

Items of new business not appearing on the agenda may be introduced from the floor by any member of the Senate after consideration of all agenda items has been completed, but disposition of any item introduced without prior notice and information may be carried over to the next regular meeting of the Senate if five members support a motion to carry it over. A motion carried over under this provision shall appear on the agenda of the next regular meeting as an item of old business and shall be supported by background information as provided in Section 5 of this Article.

Section 10.

a. The Secretary of the Senate shall prepare the minutes of all meetings of the Senate. The minutes shall be distributed to the members of the Senate, appropriate officers of the University, the general faculty of the University, one copy to the Board of Visitors of the University, and one copy to the Student Government.

b. One copy of the agenda and one copy of the minutes of every meeting shall be preserved as part of the permanent archives of the University. These shall be kept in custody of the University Library and shall be available for inspection by any member of the University community.

ARTICLE V Committees of The Senate

Section 1.
a. "Standing Committees" shall be those permanent committees whose respective charges shall be established by the Senate and whose members, except for designated ex-officio members, are elected by the Senate.

b. Except as may be otherwise specified, the usual term of election to any standing committee shall be for two years.

c. "Ad Hoc Committees" shall be those established by the Senate for consideration of special or transient issues. If no time limit is specified, the committee is deemed to serve until it issues a final report or until the Senate acts to dissolve it.

d. Unless otherwise authorized by a majority vote of the Senate, standing or ad hoc committees shall issue formal reports only to the Senate.

e. It shall be a duty of the Secretary of the Senate to prepare and maintain an accurate list of all committees of the Senate together with their charges and composition, which shall be open for inspection to all members of the University community.

Section 2.

a. Nominations for elected Senate positions to all standing committees except to the Committee on Nominations shall be prepared by the Committee on Nominations. The Committee on Nominations shall nominate one person for each available position. It shall take into account factors such as willingness to serve, previous senate and committee experience, and the need to develop future senate leadership. Its nominations shall be circulated by the Committee on Nominations to the Senate in written form with the agenda for the first meeting in September. Members of the Senate with the permission of prospective nominees may make further nominations from the floor at the scheduled September meeting at which time the elections will be held.

b. Committee vacancies with unexpired terms shall be filled for the remainder of the term by special elections at the first scheduled meeting of the Senate after such vacancies occur. The Committee on Nominations shall make one nomination for each available position except for vacancies in its own membership, but in all instances nominations may be made from the floor.

c. All elections shall be by a majority of those Senators present and voting. In the event of a tie vote for an office or for the last positions on an elected committee, a run-off vote will be held among those candidates who receive the tie vote.

Section 3.

a. Whenever the Senate shall determine by its vote that the creation of an ad hoc committee or of a new standing committee is a matter of urgent necessity, nominations shall be made from the floor following that determination. Election procedures shall be as in Section 2c of this Article.
b. In the absence of an urgent necessity determined under Paragraph (a) of this section, the Committee on Nominations shall prepare a slate for distribution with the agenda of the next meeting of the Senate. At that meeting nominations may be made from the floor and the election shall be held according to the procedures prescribed in Section 2c of this Article.

Section 4.

Except as otherwise specifically provided, each Senate Committee shall elect its Chair from among its own membership. Each committee shall have a plurality of members present for a quorum. Each committee shall maintain written records of its activities. At the conclusion of each academic year these records shall become part of the permanent archives of the University as stipulated in Article IV, Section 10, paragraph b.

Section 5.

Any Senate committee may be required by majority vote of the Senate to report to it at a specified later meeting any matter referred by action of the Senate to the charge of that committee. Upon receipt of its report, the committee may be discharged of further responsibility for the matter by majority vote of the Senate.

ARTICLE VI Effective Date and Amendment

Section 1.

All motions to amend these bylaws shall be read and debated at two successive regular meetings of the George Mason Faculty Senate held in the same academic year. Following the second debate, a vote on the motion to amend shall be taken. A two thirds majority of the voting members of the Senate present and voting shall be required for passage of such an amendment. A meeting of the Senate called solely to complete the agenda of a previous meeting shall not count as "successive" meeting within the meaning of this bylaw.

Section 2.

Amendments to these bylaws shall take effect on the date contained therein, if such a date is provided; Otherwise they shall take effect immediately upon their passage.
Appendix C
Faculty Senate Standing Rules

Elements that may need to be amended are highlighted

1. The Senate encourages all committees of this body to hold open hearings in the conduct of their business whenever appropriate, and directs that following committee elections each year the Chair of the Senate shall remind newly elected committees of the policy this resolution reflects. (3/19/75)

2. The Secretary of the Senate shall distribute to the General Faculty as an attachment to the minutes of the first Senate meeting of the academic year a list of all Senate standing committees and their membership, with an accompanying invitation to all members of the faculty to communicate to any such committee or member their views on any item of business which a committee may consider. (3/19/75)

3. At the beginning of the academic year it shall be the responsibility of the chairs of the Senate standing committees and the chairs of university faculty standing committees to verify the continuing presence on the George Mason University faculty of all members of each committee. In event of a vacancy, the chair shall bring the need to fill it to the attention of the Chair of Senate Committee on Nominations not later than the end of the first week of classes of the fall semester. Similarly, committee chairs shall be responsible for notifying the Chair of the Senate Committee on Nominations of any vacancies that occur during the course of the academic year. (12/10/75)

4. It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary of the Senate to supply Bylaws, committee charges, the Senate Charter, and other critical prior actions to new senators before the first meeting of the Senate each academic year. (12/10/75)

5. The Chair of each standing committee of the Senate is to report items of business remaining unfinished at the end of an academic year to the Chair of the Senate, who will refer them to the Committee on Organization & Operations for disposition. (10/20/76)

6. Each elected Senate standing committee shall include members from more than one college. Membership in University faculty standing committees should contain at least five and at most seven voting members of the General Faculty; membership shall include one senator, representatives from more than one college, at most one non-voting ex officio member. (5/11/77)

7. The Senate requires that "at least once during the second semester, each University faculty standing committee shall report in person to the Faculty Senate." (9/26/79)

8. The rules of the Senate are to be interpreted rigorously: that all committees have members from two or more schools or colleges, and that the library not be considered for this purpose as a school or college. (10/28/81)

9. All business to come before the Senate should first be submitted to the Organization & Operations Committee, which shall refer items requiring study and action to the approximate
committee(s) or collegial faculties. The Organization & Operations Committee shall report its referrals to the next regular meeting of the Senate. (10/6/82)

10. An Executive Committee of the Senate is established, composed of the chair of the Senate and the chairs of its standing committees [Academic Policies, Facilities & Support Services, Faculty Matters, Nominations, and Organization & Operations]. (4/18/90) The secretary of the Senate is added to the membership of the Executive Committee. (10/27/93) The responsibilities of the Executive Committee are to act for the Senate during the summer months, when the full Senate does not normally meet; to meet regularly with the Provost and with other members of the central administration as needed for discussion and resolution of the types of matters specified in Section 1 of the Faculty Handbook; and to provide definitive interpretations of the Faculty Handbook in conferral with the Provost.

11. File copies of the minutes of Senate committees are to be available in the Senate office. (10/27/93)

12. The meetings of Senate committees should be scheduled and announced far enough in advance that committee members and other interested senators can adjust their schedules and arrange to attend. Beginning with the academic year 1994-95 the committees of the Senate are asked to include in their annual [May] reports a record of the participation of committee members. (4/6/94)