The following motion was approved at the May 4, 2018 Special Session meeting of the George Mason University Faculty Senate.

MOTION FOR REVIEW OF GIFT AGREEMENTS AND GIFT ACCEPTANCE PRACTICES AND POLICIES

Whereas recently released Gift Agreements raise strong concerns about whether other university Gift Agreements violate academic independence and academic integrity,

Therefore, be it resolved that:

The Faculty Senate calls on the University to undertake a comprehensive review of:

1. All existing Gift Agreements that support faculty positions, student scholarships, or academic programs or curriculum; and

2. Current gift acceptance practices and policies at the University.

This review will be conducted by a Task Force with representatives from the Board of Visitors, the Administration, the student body, and faculty. Faculty representatives shall be elected by the Faculty and be at least equal in number to the representatives of any other group.

One or more people from an external 3rd party entity that is independent of the University will participate in the review. They will be chosen by the Task Force and their selection must be approved by the faculty representatives.

The task force will review:

1. Gift Agreements supporting any of the following:
   a. Current or future faculty positions
   b. Current or future faculty fellowships or student scholarships
   c. Current or future academic programs or curricula

2. Gift acceptance policies and practices at the university, with the object of recommending changes that guard against infringements of both academic independence and academic integrity.

Among other considerations, this comprehensive review should address: (i) the long-term costs and other implications of using gifts with short-term funding to create enduring faculty positions and (ii) the potential implications for academic freedom and integrity of gifts funded in installments, where continued funding is contingent upon satisfying donors that their gifts are serving the donors’ interests.