

# University Standing Committees Charges

(Revised March 1, 2017)

## Academic Appeals Committee

*Motion to establish a University Academic Appeals Committee as a University Standing Committee approved by the Faculty Senate April 9, 1997.*

**Charge:** To serve as a final locus for appeal of decisions regarding late withdrawal, late add, suspension and dismissal for academic reasons. At its discretion, the Committee may choose to review other individual cases that are relevant to the application of University-wide policies. Does not hear grade appeals or appeals of Honor Committee decisions.

**Membership:** Five faculty members, including at least one member of the Faculty Senate, and the Provost or his/her designee who will serve in an ex-officio, non-voting capacity.

## Academic Initiatives Committee

*Motion for a University Standing Committee to Review Curriculum and Faculty Matters in Current and Future Campuses, Academic Programs and Activities of George Mason University approved by the Faculty Senate - April 1, 2009. Charge was amended and approved by the Faculty Senate – October 7, 2009 and March 2, 2011.*

### Charge:

A. To fulfill faculty responsibilities for curriculum oversight within the University:

- 1) Gather accurate information from the Provost's Office to review
  - a) Initial, current and projected course and program enrollment;
  - b) Any Memorandum of Understanding or similar governing document or contract specifying arrangements between George Mason University and the host government, state, or responsible organization;
  - c) Reports presented to any created governance structure such as a Board of Governors between George Mason University and any host government, state, or responsible organization;
  - d) Vetting and approval processes for faculty hiring and course offerings e) Information about resources, pay scales and other financial information relevant to faculty support, faculty and staff hiring, and curriculum development.
- 2) Provide a regular report to the Faculty Senate every semester.

B. Function as a faculty liaison from initial planning through implementation and continuing operations on major global education projects (involving multiple academic units or emanating from the central administration) and participate in discussions of major additional projects.

C. Create sub-committees as necessary within the Committee to ensure adequate attention is paid to the variety of satellite campus locations and opportunities.

D. Committee representation of faculty from no less than five different academic units to serve staggered two-year terms. The Vice President for Global and International Strategies (or the functional equivalent in the Provost's Office) will serve on this Committee as a non-voting member and will provide regular reports and updates on ongoing and new initiatives.

## **Admissions Committee**

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

## **Adult Learning and Executive Education Committee**

*(formerly the Non-Traditional, Interdisciplinary, and Adult Learning Committee, charge revised and approved by the Faculty Senate April 23, 2014)*

**Charge:** To actively consult with the Provost's Office and the Office of Continuing Professional Education to support, evaluate and refine programs in the areas of adult learning and executive education, including program development, admission policies, awareness programs, online resources, program evaluation, and degree completion initiatives.

## **Athletic Council**

**Charge:** To act in an advisory capacity to the Vice President for Student Affairs in all matters pertaining to intercollegiate and intramural athletics.

## **Effective Teaching Committee**

*(Charge revised and approved by the Faculty Senate April 23, 2014)*

**Charge:** To develop and help implement procedures which encourage and reward effective teaching, and to enable faculty to improve their teaching effectiveness independent of any evaluation procedures, and to implement procedures or evaluation of effective teaching. Also, to recommend policy to the Senate and to monitor the use of such policy for the evaluation of teachers and courses, including the following:

- A. Review, improve, and provide guidance for Institutional Research and Reporting on the course evaluation form and related procedures at least once every three years;
- B. Review existing policies relating to the faculty evaluation process, identify alternatives to these policies and recommend changes to the Faculty Senate;
- C. Work closely with the Center for Teaching Excellence to support the use of formative and self-assessment techniques and materials for promoting faculty professional growth and teaching effectiveness, including strategies for robust student feedback.

## **Committee on External Academic Relations**

*(Charge as revised and approved by the Faculty Senate - November 18, 2009)*

**Composition:** Six members who are elected for two-year terms. Three members of the Committee should be senators, two others are elected from the faculty at-large, and one ex-officio member is the Provost's designee.

At the beginning of each academic year the Committee must meet to select the representatives to the Virginia Faculty Senate from among its members, excluding the ex-officio member. At least one of these representatives must be a senator. In case of vacancies, the Nominations Committee nominates the new members, and the Committee internally evaluates and possibly reallocates the assigned responsibilities.

**Charge:**

- A. Represent GMU faculty at Virginia higher education faculty governance organizations, including the Faculty Senate of Virginia. The seats allocated to GMU at the Faculty Senate of Virginia are to be filled by members of CEAR.
- B. Report to the GMU faculty senate on the proceedings of the Virginia Faculty Senate and voice back to this organization issues of relevance to GMU.
- C. Gather information on key matters about higher education in state legislation, state committees, and local venues, and report back to the GMU Senate.
- D. Provide forums and avenues for the exchange of ideas with representatives of SCHEV, state legislators representing Northern Virginia, and community groups related to higher education in Northern Virginia.

### Faculty Handbook Revision Committee

*(Approved by the Faculty Senate April 28, 2010)*

The Organization and Operations Committee moves that the Faculty Senate establish a Faculty Handbook Revision Committee consisting of three tenured members of the instructional faculty, at least one of whom must be a Senator, to consider changes to the *Faculty Handbook* and make recommendations to the Faculty Senate.

Proposed changes may be brought to the Committee by any member of the faculty, administration, or Visitor. The Committee is charged to confer with appropriate members of the administration during consideration of any change.

In order to maintain continuity, members of this Committee shall have staggered terms of one, two, and three years.

### Grievance Committee

*(Charge as revised and approved by the Faculty Senate – November 18, 2009)*

In March 1998, the Faculty Senate approved the creation of the Grievance Committee, replacing the *ad hoc* University Grievance Committee, effective September 1998. The Charge was amended by a Faculty Senate vote on February 12, 2003 to enable the Committee to hear grievances from research faculty on matters of infringements of academic freedom, unfair or inappropriate conditions of employment, and any other due process issue. The charge was further elaborated in the Faculty Handbook adopted in 2009 concerning termination for cause and grievances against administrators.

**Composition:** Five members. Non-tenured faculty, chairs, and others serving in administrative capacities are ineligible to serve on this Committee. Members serve staggered two-year terms.

**Charge:** To investigate grievances of tenured, tenure-track, and term faculty:

- A. which involve faculty matters from more than one local academic unit. Issues of investigation include alleged infringements of academic freedom, alleged unfair or inappropriate conditions of employment, alleged unfair or inappropriate termination for cause, and any other due process issue with the exclusion of retention, promotion and tenure appeals; (See also Faculty Handbook Section 2.93 Termination of Appointment for Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Term Faculty Members for Cause (pp. 47-49)).

- B. which are not addressed by, or do not fall within the purview of the grievance committee of the pertinent local academic unit; (See also Faculty Handbook Section 2.10.1 University Policies (p. 48)) and
- C. for local academic units that do not have grievance committees established, or when a grievance committee does not conform to the written procedures of the local academic unit. Other faculty appeals from local academic unit grievance committees are excluded. (See also Faculty Handbook Section 2.10.3 Faculty Work Assignments (p. 49) in case where Grievance is against a dean or director).
- D. which involve administrators at or above the level of Dean or Director. (See also Faculty Handbook Sections 2.11.2 Grievances, 2.11.2.1 Policies Concerning Grievances, 2.11.2.2 Grievance Procedures (pp. 53-54)).

## **Mason Core Committee**

*(Charge as revised and approved by the Faculty Senate – April 1, 2009, composition of membership amended September 7, 2011. Revisions including new name: Mason Core Committee approved by the Faculty Senate Dec. 4, 2013)*

**Composition:** The membership of the Committee comprises 14 voting members:

- A. Eight elected from the Faculty Senate for staggered three year terms ensuring that most academic units are represented, one at least should be a senator;
- B. Four faculty appointed by the Provost;
- C. The Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education; and
- D. A representative from the Center for Teaching and Faculty Excellence (ex-officio);
- E. A representative from the Office of Institutional Assessment (ex-officio); and
- F. One student elected by the Student Senate.

### **Charge:**

- A. The Committee will work in cooperation with the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education on all matters concerning the Mason Core (formerly general education).
- B. For all foundation, core, and –synthesis and/or capstone experience Mason Core requirements, the Committee will approve courses to fulfill these requirements. The Committee will develop procedures for the measurement of "satisfactory skills in oral and written presentations" for the synthesis and/or capstone experience requirement, and work with the Office of the Provost to develop procedures for the demonstration of these skills.
- C. The Committee will approve and monitor, through periodic review, the proficiency examinations related to the Mason Core requirements, the competency tests, and any other alternatives proposed to fulfill the requirements.
- D. The Committee will maintain a file of all proficiency examinations and will approve policies related to their administration.
- E. The Committee will confer with the Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Policies when changes to Mason Core requirements impact the entire university and/or would be a change to the university catalog.
- F. The Committee will provide an annual report to the Faculty Senate. The report shall include:
  - a) The number of students taking and passing proficiency examinations; and
  - b) Changes in the criteria for the Mason Core;
 More frequent reports to the Faculty Senate might take place as adjustments to the Mason Core program may warrant.

## **Minority and Diversity Issues Committee**

*The Minority and Diversity Issues Committee (approved by the Faculty Senate on March 18, 1998) incorporated and revised duties previously addressed by the ad hoc Minority Affairs Committee and the ad hoc Diversity Issues Committee; effective September 1998. Revision to the charge to include term faculty was approved by the Faculty Senate November 1, 2010; subsequent revision approved March 1, 2017.*

**Composition:** Five members. Term, tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to serve on this Committee. Members serve staggered two-year terms.

**Charge:** To work in concert with the Office of Compliance, Diversity and Ethics and the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Multicultural Education (ODIME), other pertinent administrators, and campus organizations in developing and implementing means to ensure nondiscrimination, inclusion, and protection of the rights of all persons affiliated with the University; and to facilitate dialogue among those connected with the University and those in the broader community on matters concerning marginalized populations and diversity issues.

## **Multilingual Academic Support Committee**

*Approved by the Faculty Senate - December 7, 2016*

*In response to the 2015 Multilingual Student Task Force Report, the Faculty Senate established a new University Standing Committee, entitled Multilingual Academic Support, with the following charge and composition:*

### **Charge:**

The committee will be responsible for assisting in the implementation of efforts to support multilingual students. This will include offering input on the types of direct student resources (e.g., classes and tutoring services) needed for students with varying language (writing, speaking, listening, and reading) abilities, the types of faculty development support: needed to enhance the teaching of linguistically diverse students across the curriculum, and the types of administrative support needed to enable key programs to lead specialized curriculum and faculty development efforts.

### **Composition:**

The Committee will include one representative from each of the following areas: Writing Center, Center for Teaching and Faculty Excellence, Writing Across the Curriculum Committee, Libraries, Composition/English Courses Faculty, Basic Communication Courses, INTO Mason, Academic Advising and Transitions Center, and University Life. In addition, there will be three elected faculty representatives (including one faculty senator), from at least two separate colleges/schools, each serving staggered 2-year terms. Finally, the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education will be a non-voting, ex-officio member.

## **Recreation Advisory Committee**

*(Approved by the Faculty Senate – February 9, 2011)*

**Charge:** To act in an advisory capacity in all matters pertaining to faculty and staff use of recreational facilities.

**Membership:** Three faculty members, three staff members, and three members chosen by Human Resources and Payroll.

## Research Advisory Committee

*(Motion approved by the Faculty Senate to create a new University Standing Committee entitled “Research Advisory Committee” – November 2, 2016)*

**Composition:** The composition of the committee will include seven tenure-line faculty members (at least one of whom is a Faculty Senator) elected by the Faculty Senate. These faculty members should represent a minimum of five different colleges/schools, with **at least two faculty** members at the level of Professor and at least two faculty members at the level of Associate Professor. These seven elected members will serve staggered 3-year terms. Finally, the committee will include one ex-officio member, who is one of the two faculty representatives to the BOV Research committee.

**Charge:** To work in concert with the Office of Research and its subsidiary offices (e.g., Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, Office of Sponsored Programs), as well as the Associate Vice President for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, in shaping the research initiatives and policies of the university. The committee will serve in an advisory capacity to the Vice President of Research, the Associate Vice President for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and associated offices. In this role, the committee will meet at least twice per semester with the Vice President of Research, and as needed with other individuals and offices. The committee will provide a report on its activities to the Faculty Senate at least annually.

## Salary Equity Study Committee

*Motion proposed by the Faculty Matters Committee to establish a Standing Committee on December 4, 1996. The motion was amended and approved by the Faculty Senate on December 11, 1996. The charge was further amended on April 7, 2004, and April 23, 2014).*

**Composition:** Five members. The composition of the committee must include members with a knowledge of statistical measures and with a knowledge of university compensation policies. The Faculty Senate shall elect 3 members one of which must be a Senator; the provost and equity Offices will appoint one member each.

**Charge:** To systematically study annually the distribution of faculty salaries at all ranks as identified in Sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the Faculty Handbook; to systematically study salaries by gender, by race/ethnic divisions, by local academic unit, and other variables as may be relevant; to examine frequencies of men/women and of members of different race/ethnic categories within LAUs; and additionally to investigate the potential for individual equity measures. Working with the support of Institutional Research and Reporting and Human Resources, the committee shall monitor the establishment and maintenance of a database of faculty compensation including all categories and ranks of faculty, and shall report its aggregate findings on salary and on the status of the database annually to the Faculty Senate and provide specific data to the Equity Office, the Provost, Deans and Directors, and to other LAU administrators.

## **Technology Policy Committee**

**Composition:** Seven members, at least two of whom must be senators and one an ex-officio faculty member designated by the Provost. The composition should be such that most academic units are represented.

**Charge:** The Committee will actively advise the Vice-President of Information Technology and other administrators in investments and in implementation of computer-based technologies that impact the educational techniques in the University. The Committee also advises on the development of new computer-based educational techniques and research capacities within the University. The Committee will work cooperatively with the central administration to formulate the technology budget of the University. These actions will ensure that the recommendations issued by the Committee reflect the position of the faculty concerning allocations to programs and/or individuals. The Committee will work with the administration to review and maintain a clear and equitable policy pertaining to intellectual property rights of the faculty.

## **University Promotion, Tenure and Renewal Appeal Committee**

*(Approved by the Faculty Senate February 13, 2013 and by the Board of Visitors March 20, 2013; inclusion in the Faculty Handbook effective July 1, 2013)*

The University Promotion, Tenure and Renewal Appeal Committee (UPTRAC) shall be composed of three tenured faculty members, and two alternate tenured faculty members, elected by the Faculty Senate to staggered terms; and two tenured administrators, and one alternate tenured administrator, selected by the Provost to staggered terms. Committee terms are for two years. No two committee members may be from the same Local Academic Unit or administrative unit. A member can serve a maximum of two consecutive 2-year terms, although subsequent non-consecutive service is permitted. Elected alternate members' terms formally begin during the first year that they participate in an appeal. For the purpose of service on the UPTRAC, a local academic unit administrator is considered an administrator.

The appellant will choose a tenured administrator to serve as the sixth member of the committee for the duration of the appellant's appeal: the administrator must be someone who does not have a conflict of interest, who did not participate at an earlier stage of the process, and who does not come from the same administrative unit as one of the Provost's appointees.

If any member of the UPTRAC has a conflict of interest, participated at an earlier stage of the process, or is otherwise unable to serve, such member shall not participate in the appeal, and an alternate will serve instead. In the event more than two faculty members of the UPTRAC cannot serve, the Faculty Senate shall elect additional alternate members to replace such faculty members on the UPTRAC for the appeal. In the event two administrator members of the UPTRAC cannot serve, the Provost shall select two alternate members to replace such administrators on the UPTRAC for the appeal.

***[Rationale: A standing committee that replaces the current 3-member ad hoc appeal committee will ensure a more consistently fair and uniform appeal process. The***

*increased committee size will ensure a broader viewpoint and experience among the members]*

*Currently, local academic administrators (such as department chairs or school directors) are considered administrators. In order to maintain a pool of faculty willing to serve on this committee, if alternates do not participate in an appeal during their elected service, they will not be limited to two terms.]*

### **Writing Across the Curriculum Committee**

**Composition:** One elected representative from each of the academic units offering undergraduate degrees, the Director of the WAC Program who is an ex-officio member with no vote or possibility to chair the Committee.

**Charge:** To advise and work closely with the University Coordinator on Writing Across the Curriculum on current and projected activities and events and to assist departments in the identification and definition of writing-intensive courses in their curricula. To:

- A. Articulate and refine the requirements for the WI designated course designated to fulfill the WI requirement in every undergraduate degree across the university with the purpose of establishing homogeneous WI criteria;
- B. Assist colleges, schools and institutes in the identification of existing or new courses that degree programs propose to meet the WI requirement in their curricula;
- C. Review regularly the courses WI-syllabi to determine compliance with the WI requirement;
- D. Suggest ways to meet the WI requirement to faculty teaching the WI designated courses; and
- E. Assist with activities and events related to writing across the curriculum.