GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
AGENDA FOR THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING
APRIL 28, 2021
Electronic Meeting*, 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of the Minutes of March 24, March 31 and April 7, 2021

III. Opening Remarks – Shannon Davis, Chair

IV. Special Orders – Election of Faculty Senate Chair 2021-2022

V. Committee Reports
   A. Senate Standing Committees
      Executive Committee – Shannon Davis, Chair
      • Coffee and Connect with Faculty Senate Executive Committee  Appendix A
      • Faculty Senate Calendar 2021-22 (distributed March 31, 2021)
      • Announcement of Mason Korea Representative
      Academic Policies
      Three-Year Academic Calendar - Fall 2022-Summer 2025 as presented by the administration  Appendix B
      Budget and Resources
      Link to annual report
      Faculty Matters
      Link to annual report
      Nominations
      • Slate of nominees for the GMU Foundation Board of Trustees
      • Ketih Renshaw (CHSS)
      • Scott Glaberman (COS)
      • Peter Streckfus-Green (CHSS)
      Organization and Operations
      Link to annual report

   B. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives
      Annual Reports 2020-2021
      Link to annual report
      Academic Appeals
      Link to annual report
      Academic Initiatives
      Link to annual report
      Admissions
      Link to annual report
      Adult Learning and Executive Education
      Link to annual report
      Athletic Council
      Link to annual report
      Effective Teaching
      Link to annual report
      External Academic Relations
      Link to annual report
      Faculty Equity and Inclusion
      Link to annual report
      Faculty Handbook Revision
      Link to annual report
      Grievance
      Link to annual report
      Mason Core
      Link to annual report
      Multilingual Academic Support
      Link to annual report
      Recreation Advisory
      Link to annual report
      Research Advisory
      Link to annual report
VI. New Business
Faculty Success Initiative – Revised Charge  
LMS Guidelines Report (Draft Policy 3014 Distance Education)  
George Mason University’s Statement of Expectations for Graduate Students (draft)  
Laurence Bray, Associate Provost for Graduate Education

VII. Announcements
• Provost Ginsberg  
• Sr. Vice President Carol Kissal  
• Lester Arnold, Vice President for Human Resources/Payroll – Update on Faculty Compensation work and Chief Diversity Officer search  
• Aurali Dade, Interim Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Economic Impact – Update on Short and Long Term Research Planning  
• Greg Farley and Leah Nichols, Mason Sustainability Council

VIII. Remarks for the Good of the General Faculty

IX. Adjournment
ELECTRONIC MEETING
Topic: Faculty Senate Meeting (April 28, 2021)
Time: Apr 28, 2021 03:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Primary Electronic Meeting Venue - Zoom:

For security purposes -- all attendees *MUST* login using any valid zoom account to join the meeting.

IMPORTANT: Faculty Senators must login using their GMU login/password from https://gmu.zoom.us/ to be recognized.

Join Zoom Meeting
https://gmu.zoom.us/j/98582268113?pwd=djA2b3BYY1d1bIRNQ3pUa2hEaHFYUT09

In case of problems with joining the meeting, use the following information to join –
Meeting ID: 985 8226 8113
Passcode: 660888

Having Trouble Joining the Meeting with the link above?
All attendees must sign in into zoom before joining the meeting.

- Zoom sign-in: Using your own zoom account credentials
  1. If using GMU Zoom Account (required for all Faculty Senators)
     a) Go to https://gmu.zoom.us
     b) Click on [Sign into Your Account]
     c) Use GMU login credentials to login. (May require 2FA authentication)
     d) Once logged in – click on “JOIN A MEETING”
     e) Enter the Meeting ID (see highlighted above) and click JOIN
     f) If asked for Passcode: enter the Passcode (highlighted above)

  2. Joining Senate Meeting using an account other than GMU Zoom Account
     a) Go to https://zoom.us
     b) Click on [SIGN IN]
     c) Use credentials for your existing zoom account
     d) Once logged in – click on “JOIN A MEETING”
     e) Enter the Meeting ID (see highlighted above) and click JOIN
     f) If asked for Passcode: enter the Passcode (highlighted above)
One tap mobile
+13017158592,,98582268113#,,,,,*660888# US (Washington DC)
+12678310333,,98582268113#,,,,,*660888# US (Philadelphia)

Dial by your location
+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
+1 267 831 0333 US (Philadelphia)
Meeting ID: 985 8226 8113
Passcode: 660888
Find your local number: https://gmu.zoom.us/u/aesezjGz9N

Join by SIP
98582268113@zoomcrc.com

Join by H.323
162.255.37.11 (US West)
162.255.36.11 (US East)
115.114.131.7 (India Mumbai)
115.114.115.7 (India Hyderabad)
213.19.144.110 (Amsterdam Netherlands)
213.244.140.110 (Germany)
103.122.166.55 (Australia Sydney)
103.122.167.55 (Australia Melbourne)
149.137.40.110 (Singapore)
64.211.144.160 (Brazil)
69.174.57.160 (Canada Toronto)
65.39.152.160 (Canada Vancouver)
207.226.132.110 (Japan Tokyo)
149.137.24.110 (Japan Osaka)
Meeting ID: 985 8226 8113
Passcode: 660888

Backup Electronic Meeting Venue – Blackboard Collaborate (in case of problems with Zoom)
Once activated – A Blackboard announcement will clearly indicate the venue has been moved from Zoom

Collaborate Ultra:
Faculty Senators must login into Blackboard and join meeting to be recognized

Organizations: Faculty Senate

Menu: “Collaborate Ultra”

Click on meeting link

Guests must use the following link to join:

https://us.bbcollab.com/guest/6d83e373afff4c86982579ee6a10666b

Dial-in for Collaborate: +1-571-392-7650 (PIN: 221 532 2011)
Appendix A

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Coffee Chat – April 30, 2021  9:00 – 10:00 am

Topic: Faculty Senate Executive Committee Coffee Chat

Time: Apr 30, 2021 09:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
https://gmu.zoom.us/j/99760923398?pwd=cDBPT25kcXNESGlhWSI4MzFmSDNEQT09
Meeting ID: 997 6092 3398
Passcode: 958966
One tap mobile
+12678310333,,99760923398#,,,,*958966# US (Philadelphia)
+13017158592,,99760923398#,,,,*958966# US (Washington DC)

Dial by your location
  +1 267 831 0333 US (Philadelphia)
  +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
Meeting ID: 997 6092 3398
Passcode: 958966
Find your local number: https://gmu.zoom.us/u/aevykrDpnh
Join by SIP
99760923398@zoomcrc.com
### Appendix B

**UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC THREE YEAR CALENDAR  FALL 2022 – SUMMER 2025**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FALL SEMESTER</strong></th>
<th><strong>Fall 2022</strong></th>
<th><strong>Fall 2023</strong></th>
<th><strong>Fall 2024</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Day to Add (census)</td>
<td>Tues. Sept 6</td>
<td>Tues. Sept 5</td>
<td>Tues. Sept 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day to Drop</td>
<td>Tue. Sept 20</td>
<td>Tues. Sept 19</td>
<td>Tue. Sept 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday Classes/Labs Meet (Tuesday classes do not meet this week)</td>
<td>Tue. Oct 11</td>
<td>Tue. Oct 10</td>
<td>Tue. Oct 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Day of Class</td>
<td>Sat. Dec 3</td>
<td>Sat. Dec 2</td>
<td>Sat. Nov 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Day(s)</td>
<td>Mon. Dec 5 – Tue. Dec 6</td>
<td>Mon. Dec 4 - Tue. Dec 5</td>
<td>Mon. Dec 2 – Tue. Dec 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Graduation</td>
<td>Thu. Dec 15</td>
<td>Thu. Dec 14</td>
<td>Thu. Dec 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Conferral</td>
<td>Sat. Dec 17</td>
<td>Sat. Dec 16</td>
<td>Sat. Dec 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Day to Drop</td>
<td>Fri. Sept 2</td>
<td>Fri. Sept 1</td>
<td>Fri. Aug 30</td>
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<td>Labor Day (no classes)</td>
<td>Mon. Sept 5</td>
<td>Mon. Sept 4</td>
<td>Mon. Sept 2</td>
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<td>Thu. Dec 15</td>
<td>Thu. Dec 14</td>
<td>Thu. Dec 12</td>
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<td>Sat. Dec 16</td>
<td>Sat. Dec 14</td>
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<td>Fri. Oct 18</td>
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<td>Wed. Dec 7</td>
<td>Wed. Dec 6</td>
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<td>Thu. Dec 14</td>
<td>Thu. Dec 12</td>
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<td>Sat. Dec 17</td>
<td>Sat. Dec 16</td>
<td>Sat. Dec 14</td>
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<td>SPRING SEMESTER</td>
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<td>Spring 2025</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MLK Day (university closed)</strong></td>
<td>Mon. Jan 16</td>
<td>Mon. Jan 15</td>
<td>Mon. Jan 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Day of Spring Classes</td>
<td>Tue. Jan 17</td>
<td>Tue. Jan 16</td>
<td>Tue. Jan 21</td>
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<td>Tue. Jan 28</td>
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<td>Last Day to Drop</td>
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<td>Tue. Feb 6</td>
<td>Tue. Feb 11</td>
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<td>Dissertation/Thesis Deadline</td>
<td>Fri. April 28</td>
<td>Fri. Apr 26</td>
<td>Fri. May 2</td>
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<td>Last Day of Class</td>
<td>Mon. May 1</td>
<td>Mon. April 29</td>
<td>Mon. May 8</td>
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<td>Reading Day(s)</td>
<td>Tue. May 2</td>
<td>Tue. April 30</td>
<td>Tue. May 6</td>
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<td>University Commencement</td>
<td>Fri. May 12</td>
<td>Fri. May 10</td>
<td>Fri. May 16</td>
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<td>Degree Conferral</td>
<td>Sat. May 13</td>
<td>Sat. May 11</td>
<td>Sat. May 17</td>
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</table>

## 15 Week Session

### Spring 2023

- **First Day of Classes**: Tue. Jan 17
- **Last Day to Add**: Fri. Jan 20
- **MLK Day (no classes)**: Mon. Jan 16
- **Last Day to Drop**: Tue. Jan 24
- **Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate only)**: Tues. Jan 31 – Mon. Feb 13
- **Last Day of Classes**: Wed. Mar 15
- **Examination Period**: Thu. Mar 16 – Fri. Mar 17
- **University Commencement**: Fri. May 12
- **Degree Conferral**: Sat. May 13

### Spring 2024

- **First Day of Classes**: Tue. Jan 16
- **Last Day to Add**: Fri. Jan 19
- **MLK Day (no classes)**: Mon. Jan 15
- **Last Day to Drop**: Tue. Jan 23
- **Unrestricted Withdrawal Period**: Wed. Jan 24 - Mon. Jan 29
- **Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate only)**: Tues. Jan 30 – Mon. Feb 12
- **Last Day of Classes**: Wed. Mar 13
- **Examination Period**: Thu. Mar 14 – Fri. Mar 15
- **University Commencement**: Fri. May 10
- **Degree Conferral**: Sat. May 11

### Spring 2025

- **First Day of Classes**: Tue. Jan 15
- **Last Day to Add**: Fri. Jan 24
- **MLK Day (no classes)**: Mon. Jan 20
- **Last Day to Drop**: Tue. Jan 28
- **Unrestricted Withdrawal Period**: Wed. Jan 29 - Mon. Feb 3
- **Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate only)**: Tues. Feb 4 – Mon. Feb 17
- **Last Day of Classes**: Wed. Mar 26
- **Examination Period**: Thu. Mar 27 – Fri. Mar 28
- **University Commencement**: Fri. May 16
- **Degree Conferral**: Sat. May 17

## 7.5 Week Session I

### Spring 2023

- **Spring Recess (no classes)**: Mon. Mar 6 – Sun. Mar 12
- **First Day of Classes**: Mon. Mar 13
- **Last Day to Add**: Wed. Mar 15
- **Last Day to Drop**: Fri. Mar 17
- **Unrestricted Withdrawal Period**: Sat. Mar 18 – Thu. Mar 30
- **Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate only)**: Fri. Mar 31 – Thu. Apr 13
- **Last Day of Classes**: Fri. May 5
- **Examination Period**: Mon. May 8 – Tue. May 9
- **University Commencement**: Fri. May 12
- **Degree Conferral**: Sat. May 13

### Spring 2024

- **Spring Recess (no classes)**: Mon. Mar 4 - Sun. Mar 10
- **First Day of Classes**: Mon. Mar 11
- **Last Day to Add**: Wed. Mar 13
- **Last Day to Drop**: Fri. Mar 15
- **Unrestricted Withdrawal Period**: Sat. Mar 16 – Thu. Mar 28
- **Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate only)**: Fri Mar 29 – Thu. Apr 11
- **Last Day of Classes**: Fri. May 3
- **Examination Period**: Mon. May 6 – Tue. May 7
- **University Commencement**: Fri. May 10
- **Degree Conferral**: Sat. May 11

### Spring 2025

- **Spring Recess (no classes)**: Mon. Mar 10 – Sun Mar 16
- **First Day of Classes**: Mon. Mar 17
- **Last Day to Add**: Wed. Mar 19
- **Last Day to Drop**: Fri. Mar 21
- **Unrestricted Withdrawal Period**: Sat. Mar 22 – Thurs Apr 3
- **Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate only)**: Fri Apr 4 – Thurs Apr 17
- **Last Day of Classes**: Fri. May 9
- **Examination Period**: Mon May 12 – Tue. May 13
- **University Commencement**: Fri. May 16
- **Degree Conferral**: Sat. May 17
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMER TERM</th>
<th>Summer 2023</th>
<th>Summer 2024</th>
<th>Summer 2025</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Mon. May 15</td>
<td>Mon. May 13</td>
<td>Mon. May 22</td>
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<td>Mon. May 29</td>
<td>Mon. May 27</td>
<td>Mon. May 26</td>
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<td>Tues. May 23</td>
<td>Tues. May 21</td>
<td>Tue. May 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Day to Drop (50% Refund)</td>
<td>Tues. June 6</td>
<td>Tues. Jun 4</td>
<td>Tue. Jun 10</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Sat. Aug 19</td>
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<td>Mon. May 15</td>
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<td>Mon. May 19</td>
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<td>Wed. May 15</td>
<td>Wed. May 21</td>
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<td>Last Day to Drop (50% Refund)</td>
<td>Tue. Jun 23</td>
<td>Tue. May 21</td>
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<td>Mon. May 27</td>
<td>Mon. May 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Degree Conferral</td>
<td>Sat. Aug 19</td>
<td>Sat. Aug 17</td>
<td>Sat. Aug 23</td>
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<table>
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<th>Summer 2023</th>
<th>Summer 2024</th>
<th>Summer 2025</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Day (university closed)</td>
<td>Mon. May 29</td>
<td>Mon. May 27</td>
<td>Mon. May 26</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Tue. May 28</td>
<td>Mon. Jun 2</td>
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<td>Wed. Jul 5</td>
<td>Tues. July 2</td>
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<td>Sat. Aug 19</td>
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<td>A: 5 Week</td>
<td>First day of classes</td>
<td>Mon. May 15</td>
<td>Mon. May 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Memorial Day (university closed)</td>
<td>Mon. May 29</td>
<td>Mon. May 27</td>
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<td>Fri. May 19</td>
<td>Fri. May 17</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Last Day to Drop (50% Refund)</td>
<td>Mon. May 29</td>
<td>Tues. May 28</td>
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<td>Degree Conferral</td>
<td>Sat. Aug 19</td>
<td>Sat. Aug 17</td>
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<td>A: 5 Week</td>
<td>First Day of Classes</td>
<td>Mon. May 15</td>
<td>Mon. May 13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Last Day to Drop (50% Refund)</td>
<td>Fri. May 26</td>
<td>Fri. May 24</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Memorial Day (no classes)</td>
<td>Mon. May 29</td>
<td>Mon. May 27</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Independence Day Observance (no classes)</td>
<td>Tues Jul 4</td>
<td>Thur. Jul 4</td>
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<td>Degree Conferral</td>
<td>Sat. Aug 19</td>
<td>Sat. Aug 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Last Day of Classes</td>
<td>Fri. Aug 11</td>
<td>Fri. Aug. 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Examination Period</td>
<td>Same as Last Day of Classes</td>
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</table>
Session F: 5 Week – This is an online only session.

Appendix C

Reports from Faculty Representatives to Committees

Capital Planning Steering Committee (Submitted by Samuel Frye, Faculty Senate Representative April 20, 2021)

Capital Planning Yearend Report
Prepared for Faculty Senate by Samuel L. Frye
Wednesday, April 28, 2021

Capital Planning Framework

Tobi Walsh, Assistant Vice President for Capital Strategy & Planning is piloting several process improvements for capital planning and more will be shared once those pilot studies are complete.

Master Plan

The Phase One report is in review with the Steering Committee and will be available in May. The date of the next Town Hall is still to be determined, but will likely be in May, during which updates will be provided on:

- Infrastructure
- Environmental
- Transportation and parking
- Wayfinding
- Campus development history and heritage
- SWOT analysis

If there are concerns you feel have not been addressed, please notify Sam or a member of the Steering Committee so your comments can be included in the draft report. You can also view videos of previous town hall on the master plan website.

Projects

The Life Sciences and Engineering Building was approved for $30M expansion and reprogramming in February 2021, but the project was on hold temporarily (Dec – Feb) pending alignment with the Master Plan. Reprogramming includes transitioning many of the undergrad spaces into graduate spaces. To be clear, this does not mean that all undergrads will be pulled from the building, but rather, a realignment of programs with the developing vision for the SciTech campus.

Master Plan Steering Committee (Submitted by Shannon Davis, Zachary Schrag and David Wong – Faculty Senate Representatives – April 21, 2021) - link to report
Outstanding Achievement Awards Committee (Submitted by Cristiana Stan, Faculty Senate Representative – April 15, 2021)

Report from the Outstanding Achievements Awards Committee

Spring 2021

The Outstanding Achievements Awards Committee received 42 nominations for the following awards:

- Adjunct Faculty Service Award – 3 nominees
- David W. Russell Quill Award – 5 nominees
- Exceptional Support Award – 14 nominees
- Faculty Alumni Award – 6 nominees
- Staff Alumni Award – 2 nominees
- Outstanding Achievement Award – 12 nominees

The nomination packages were reviewed by 5 committee members between March 12 – 19, 2021.

The committee met on March 19 in a virtual meeting chaired by Beth Barrody. All committee members agreed that the number of outstanding applicants was overwhelming and praised the dedication and achievements of GMU employees.

The committee discussed the efficiency of the online scoring system and scoring criteria. Some recommendations were made for a better alignment of scoring criteria and nomination package.

Respectfully submitted by Cristiana Stan, Faculty Senate Representative to the Outstanding Achievements Committee, 2020-2021.

University Naming Committee (Submitted by Karen Akerlof, Faculty Senate Representative – April 7, 2021)

University Naming Committee Report
Faculty Senate Committee member, Karen Akerlof, kakerlof@gmu.edu

During its March 2021 meeting, the University Naming Committee welcomed the Campus & Committee Engagement Committee members of the Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence (ARIE) Task Force. One of the primary action items for the Naming Committee is reviewing current university names to be able to identify which need to be retired or swapped (naming, removing and renaming) and the needed evaluation criteria and process. In order to effectively work with members of the ARIE Task Force, a subcommittee that includes representatives from both the University Naming committee and the ARIE Task Force will be established to reassess current university policies and make recommendations. The next meeting of the University Naming Committee will be May 12, 2021 at 2:00 pm.
Appendix D

Faculty Success Initiative – Revised Charge

How can we prepare faculty to be successful in the post pandemic university? The initiative will build on existing data regarding supports for and structural constraints to success (e.g., evidence from COACHE survey) as well as additional input from the Faculty Senate with the goal of shaping action plans. The initiative will determine the most pressing concerns from faculty and will create a mechanism by which the Senate holds the administration accountable to addressing its top concerns within a reasonable amount of time.

This initiative will be led by a three-member subcommittee from the Executive Committee (Shannon Davis, Solon Simmons, and Richard Craig) tasked with:

- Partnering with Office of Faculty Affairs and Development to review recent COACHE information and following up with faculty from across the university to triangulate their most pressing concerns (during Fall 2020);
- Partnering with Administration (Provost, President, Senior Vice President) to determine timeline and methods by which the administration will work to address the faculty concerns, including the accountability structure between the administration and the Senate (by April 2021);
- Creating a public-facing reporting/accountability structure for the Initiative.

Next Steps

- Develop dashboard metrics that are agreed upon by faculty and administration.
- Determine accountability processes
  - Public dashboard
  - Expectation of administration documenting change over time to General Faculty via Faculty Senate that includes an explanation of deviations (both in positive and negative directions)
    - University level and college/school level
    - Opportunity to increase President’s accountability to BOV, Provost to President, deans to Provost, and chairs to deans
The adoption of the Distance Education Policy is part of a comprehensive approach for scalability, continuity, and quality design that supports George Mason University’s mission and commitment to providing access to excellence through high-quality educational experiences. Inherent in this commitment to quality is a recognition of the responsibility to support, in a systematic way, the needs of both faculty and students relative to teaching and learning at a distance. Establishing standards and expectations provides clear guidelines as Mason’s online programs continue to grow. The policy defines distance education in accordance with the requirements articulated by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) in 34 CFR 600.2 as amended, the Commonwealth of Virginia (8VAC41-30-10) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

We invite faculty to submit written feedback on the implementation of University Policy 3014: Distance Education. Please submit feedback to ckreitze@gmu.edu by May 15th, the conclusion of the Spring 21 semester.

If you need any additional information, please feel free to contact me directly!

Sincerely,

Charles R. Kreitzer
Executive Director for Online Operations
Academic Initiatives and Services, Office of the Provost
I. Scope

This university policy provides institution-level standards for the George Mason University's distance education programs and courses, broadly outlining expectations for academic quality and student engagement. This policy applies to all for-credit undergraduate and graduate courses, both fully online and hybrid, at George Mason University.

The goal of online education at George Mason University is for all students to have the opportunity to learn from a world class, R1 institution by providing access, flexibility, and equity students need to excel.
II. Policy Statement

The University defines distance education in accordance with the requirements articulated by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) in 34 CFR 600.2 as amended, the Commonwealth of Virginia (8VAC41-30-10) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

“Distance education” is the delivery of online teaching and learning activities using University-approved technologies, including plug-ins and publisher resources, within the Learning Management System (LMS) to deliver instruction synchronously or asynchronously to students who are in different locations from faculty.

The LMS is used to,
1. Support regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty;
2. Verify student identity (University Policy 3004);
3. Provide instructional continuity; and
4. Ensure course accessibility requirements (University Policy 1308).

To be considered an online program at George Mason University, all courses required for program completion, including any required general education courses, shall be offered in the fully online delivery format outlined below. Additionally, courses must be offered frequently enough to enable online students to progress through and complete the program in a timely manner. Any on-campus requirements must provide added educational value that cannot be achieved online. Information regarding any required face-to-face, on-ground work (e.g., internships, residencies, practicums, specialized laboratory work, etc.) must be made available to students prior to enrollment.

Mason categorizes types of distance education as follows, which are based in part on guidance from SCHEV:

- Fully (100%) online course: A course in which all of the learning activities are supported using University-approved technologies, including plug-ins and publisher resources, within the Learning Management System (LMS). Therefore, face-to-face sessions such as orientation, laboratory, exam review, and/or in-person exams shall not be required as part of a student’s graded activity. Fully online courses are taught through two delivery modes:
  o Synchronous Online: Synchronous courses specify a required time in which faculty and student meet live, in-real-time. Courses have a set time in which students must participate each week. Synchronous courses allow for real-time communication, providing space for faculty and student-led discussions and interaction. Synchronous courses must include the required meeting time at the point of student registration.
  o Asynchronous Online: Asynchronous courses do not have a required time in which students and faculty must meet; though, asynchronous courses may include optional, live meetings or office hours. While there are weekly deadlines,
schedules are flexible. Information regarding proctored exams and/or the use of webcams must be outlined in the course syllabus.

- **Hybrid course.** A course in which a majority (more than 50% but less than 100%) of the planned learning activities occur using University-approved technologies, including plug-ins and publisher resources, within the Learning Management System (LMS), when the students and instructor are not in the same place. Mandatory face-to-face sessions shall occur between 2% and 50% of the planned instructional time.

Courses which meet face-to-face for more than 75% of the planned instructional time are categorized as “on-ground” or “in-seat” courses and not as distance education.

Courses offered through distance education must demonstrate “regular and substantive” interactions; faculty shall use a variety of instructional strategies and resources to facilitate an engaging learning environment. In accordance with 34 CFR 600.2 as amended, the university defines “regular and substantive interaction” as instructor-driven interaction that is “engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion,” and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Providing direct instruction;
2. Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework;
3. Responding to student questions; and
4. Providing information, content, and asynchronous activities through announcements, e-mail, media, and/or other relevant technologies.

Other interactions that may be considered “substantive” include:

1. Leading and facilitating discussion forums or group discussions; and
2. Providing and engaging in other instructional activities outlined by a program's accrediting agency.

In alignment with [The Glossary of Education Reform](#) and standard practices in higher education, the University adopts the following definition of “direct instruction”:

**Direct instruction** refers to instructional approaches that are structured, sequenced, and led by qualified instructors and/or the presentation of academic content to students by those qualified instructors. See [University Policy 3005](#) and the [Mason Faculty Credentialing Manual](#) for information regarding instructor qualifications.

Examples of direct instruction include intentionally sequenced modules using University-approved technologies, including plug-ins and publisher resources, within the Learning Management System (LMS), instructor-created or instructor selected videos, and synchronous class sessions.

“Regular interactions” between faculty and students shall provide the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a “predictable and regular basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course; and monitor the student’s academic engagement and success, ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed, on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student.”
III. Responsibilities

Faculty have primary responsibility for the content, interaction, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum, regardless of instructional modality. Faculty shall engage students on a regular and substantive basis (as defined above) per 34 CFR 600.2, as amended.

In conjunction with faculty, department chairs, school directors and college deans, the Office of the Provost is responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of distance education at the University, working with program leadership in maintaining compliance with federal, state, institutional policies, and regulations related to distance education, identifying new distance education opportunities, and coordinating with units to ensure quality and continuous improvement.

The Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning provides support for faculty members engaged in distance education courses. Support may include training and development, centrally managed learning resources, instructional design, and other support services and resources. The center also provides Online Course Quality Assurance guidelines for online courses and provides course reviews and recommendations to faculty and academic units.

As with all teaching modalities, faculty are responsible for delivering course-accessible content and must meet the qualifications for instruction established by the University for on-campus courses, as required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, University Policy 3005, University Policy 1308, and Mason’s Faculty Credentialing Manual. Faculty who teach distance education courses are selected in the same manner as those teaching on-campus courses. These faculty shall be responsible for acquiring the skills necessary to effectively teach course content and related material in an online learning environment.

IV. Compliance

College/school-level administrators will ensure compliance with this policy through existing processes, including:

- Analysis of student course evaluations;
- Annual faculty evaluations;
- Academic Program Review; and
- Alignment with George Mason University’s Quality Assurance Guidelines for Online Courses

The Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning provides Quality Assurance guidelines, professional development, and course development support to ensure high quality program design.

The Office of the Provost is responsible for ensuring availability of student services in programs that use technology to serve the University’s distance education students.
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY’S STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS FOR GRADUATE STUDENT AND FACULTY INTERACTIONS

General
George Mason University (“Mason”) strives to promote a collegial, transparent, and productive environment for our faculty and graduate students. Mason is committed to providing graduate students with a welcoming, safe, and professional environment in which to work and study that is free of exploitation, intimidation, and harassment.

Graduate students are members of a scholarly community. They should be treated in a civil, collegial, and respectful manner by faculty and staff and should likewise treat faculty and staff in the same way. This document provides guidance regarding the expectations for interactions between faculty and graduate students in order to work towards that goal.

Additionally, per Mason Policies 1201, 1202, and 1203, Mason is committed to preventing discrimination based on any of the protected classifications described in those policies. Nothing in this document shall be construed as being contrary to or inconsistent with Mason policies or procedures or applicable laws, nor does it create any legal rights. Colleges, Schools, and Departments may have additional guidelines to suit domain-specific needs.

For the purposes of this document, graduate students are defined as full-time or part-time students pursuing a Master’s degree or Doctoral degree, as well as students pursuing a postgraduate diploma or certificate.

I. Expectations of Graduate Students:
Graduate students are expected to:

- Adhere to all College and University policies and procedures.
- Treat Mason faculty, staff, and other students in a respectful and collegial manner.
- Devote an appropriate amount of time and effort, consistent with guidance from their local academic unit, toward completing the advanced degree within the allotted time.
- Uphold ethical norms in any research and scholarship undertaken and provide accurate and honest reporting of research results, research methodology, and scholarship in accordance with Mason policies on research integrity (https://oria.gmu.edu/).
- Attend new student orientations offered through a student’s program, College/School and/or Mason.
- Proactively solicit academic and/or professional guidance from faculty and staff as needed.
- Proactively participate in any assigned mentor-graduate student relationship.
II. Expectations for Faculty and Graduate Program Administrators Working with Graduate Students

a. Educational Experience and Degree

Consistent with Student Code of Conduct and DHRM policy 2.35, Civility in the workplace, civility is the responsibility of all members of the Mason community. Graduate students should be treated in a respectful and collegial manner by Mason administrators, staff, and faculty. Discussion of any student among academic colleagues should be of a professional nature, should focus on the student’s academic success and well-being, and should not be made in a discriminatory or derogatory manner.

Graduate program administrators should ensure that students are provided with the requirements of their respective academic or professional development program. Graduate students shall not be exploited or be coerced into performing tasks unrelated to the requirements of their individual academic or professional development program or those described in their assistantship/employment agreements. Graduate students may refuse to perform tasks unrelated to the requirements of their individual academic or professional development program or described in their assistantship/employment agreements without the fear of reprisal.

Graduate program administrators should inform graduate students (prospective and currently enrolled) at the outset of their program of the published time limit for degree completion and the “average time to degree” for their respective program.

Graduate program administrators should provide graduate students with information regarding available opportunities and financial support including grants, awards, scholarships, fellowships, assistantships, and their selection and eligibility criteria.

Graduate program administrators and faculty should not violate graduate students’ religious beliefs and practices in the performance of their work in the graduate program.

Faculty should recognize graduate students as co-authors and co-owners of scholarly works and intellectual property to which they have made a substantial contribution of ideas or research work regardless of other benefits or compensation that may have been provided.

Faculty should give graduate students credit and recognition for innovation(s) and intellectual and/or creative ideas developed by the student.

Faculty should give graduate students due credit and recognition for curriculum developed by the student, including but not limited to instructor on record, acknowledgement on syllabi, and other accepted academic norms.
Faculty mentors are encouraged to provide any assigned doctoral and/or thesis advisees an academic evaluation at least once per year. All faculty are encouraged to provide feedback concerning a graduate student’s academic performance and progress towards an advanced degree as appropriate. Specifically:

i. Although students are responsible for knowing Mason administrative and Academic Policies, faculty are encouraged to notify graduate students of deficiencies in their academic performance. This notification may be provided through grades or other means. When appropriate and if remedial measures are possible, faculty and program administrators are encouraged to provide recommendations and requirements needed to remedy their deficiencies.

ii. It is encouraged that evaluations of student academic performance and progress be as factual and specific as possible and be shared with the graduate student within a reasonable period of time.

Faculty and/or graduate programs are encouraged to provide doctoral students a written evaluation of performance on qualifying and comprehensive examinations, upon unsatisfactory performance or upon request, when such exams are required by the degree program. In the event of major examination failure or other unsatisfactory performance, it is encouraged to provide reasoning for such assessment in a clear, written evaluation to the graduate student.

When a local academic unit intends to terminate a student from a graduate program for academic reasons, they must proceed in accordance with guidelines and policies established by Mason (including Graduate policies, Academic Termination AP.6.6.2) and, if applicable, academic programs.

i. Local academic units should have public guidelines for the termination of a graduate student from an academic program.

ii. Local academic units should make publicly available the description of the academic exception request and appeal process by which a graduate student may challenge the academic program termination.

b. Advising, Mentorship, and Guidance

Advising, mentorship, as well as academic and professional guidance, that is offered by faculty and/or graduate program administrators to graduate students is expected to be respectful.

i. Academic advisors and mentors and those graduate students assigned to them are encouraged to coordinate to ensure that the students receive regular feedback and guidance concerning their academic performance and professional development through a mutually agreeable schedule of conferences.

ii. Graduate students should have their progress toward achieving an advanced degree evaluated through criteria that are understood by the graduate advisor and students. Guidance and feedback are encouraged to be factual and specific, and shared with the student within a reasonable period of time. For doctoral programs, as well as those master’s programs that require a thesis or capstone project, administrators and assigned mentors/advisors are encouraged to consider having annual written progress report(s) required of students with a response from the assigned mentor and advisor.
As applicable, graduate students should be provided with accurate information when selecting a committee/dissertation chair and other members of their thesis/dissertation committees. The process by which students select a chair and members of thesis/dissertation committees should be made publicly available to students.

If a graduate student wishes to change their committee/dissertation chair, then the local academic unit should work with them to find an alternative faculty member, if possible. Moreover, if a graduate student’s committee/dissertation chair leaves Mason once the student’s work is underway, the local academic unit, in consultation with the student, should provide the student with a new committee/dissertation chair.

III. If Expectations are Unmet

If a graduate student feels that another member of the university community is not meeting the above-described expectations, they should speak with their advisor, mentor, local academic unit representative(s) and/or College/School’s Dean’s Office regarding their concern(s). If a faculty member or graduate program administrator feels a graduate student is not meeting these expectations, they are encouraged to speak with their College/School’s Dean’s Office or, in the alternative, the Office of the Provost regarding their concern(s).

Students, faculty, and/or graduate program administrators may also utilize the appropriate university channels or procedures for reporting conduct that is inconsistent with University policies or this document, including:

- Program Directors or equivalent: all concerns related to program policies and degree requirements or conduct of other students
- Department Chairs or equivalent: all concerns related to course delivery, instructors, staff, and academic/research facilities
- Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics (https://diversity.gmu.edu): issues relating to protected class discrimination (Title VII) or gender/sexual misconduct (Title IX: https://diversity.gmu.edu/title-ix and https://diversity.gmu.edu/title-ix/sexual-or-interpersonal-misconduct-report-form)
- Disability Services: for reasonable accommodation due to a disability (https://ds.gmu.edu/)
- Employee Relations: treatment of a graduate teaching assistant, graduate research assistant, graduate professional assistant and graduate lecturer by faculty and staff (https://hr.gmu.edu/employee-relations/)
- Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (https://oria.gmu.edu/): issues relating to research misconduct
  - Please refer to Policy 4007 for issues related to research misconduct: https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/misconduct-in-research-and-scholarship/

Contact resolve@gmu.edu: For complaints about online course or program