

# GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

## MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING

November 20, 2024, 3:00-4:15 p.m. | Online Meeting

Number of attendees: 175 ([List of Names](#))

### 1. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 3:02 PM with a quorum present.

### 2. Approval of the Minutes of October 25, 2024

- No corrections to the minutes from the last meeting.
- Minutes stand as submitted.

### 3. Introduction of Visitor Armand Alacbay, Faculty Senate liaison of the Board of Visitors (BOV)

- Called by the Senate President Solon Simmons
- Visitor Armand Alacbay is a Fairfax County native, he graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in 1997 and also a Mason alumnus.
- He is a first-generation college graduate, with parents from the Philippines.
- Armand expressed his eagerness to engage with faculty and learn about their research and teaching.

### 4. Senate President Solon Simmons' Opening Remarks

- Welcomed Visitor Armand and emphasized the importance of his presence.
- Noted that the agenda includes updates from President Washington, Provost Antony and substantial committee reports and possible motions to extend meeting time.
- Discussed his recent use of mass email for communication, aiming to ensure messages are meaningful and relevant. He emphasized the distinction between presiding over the meeting and leading it, referencing Robert's Rules of Order.
- Encouraged members to view themselves as representatives of their respective colleges and to engage with their delegations.
- Highlighted the importance of addressing the needs of term faculty and eliminating any perceptions of second-class citizenship.
- Clarified his previous comments regarding the AAUP letter, stating it has "no standing" in a legal sense, not a social one. He expressed respect for the AAUP and its role, comparing it to other significant organizations like the ACLU.
- Reiterated his commitment to fostering an inclusive environment for all faculty members.

### 5. Solon Simmons welcomed **President Washington** to the Senate. Key points from President Washington's presentation:

- Washington highlighted that higher education is facing unprecedented challenges, including an enrollment cliff, economic issues, and a mental health crisis among students. He noted that across the country colleges are closing at an alarming rate, approximately one per week.
- **Funding issues:** Washington emphasized that George Mason University (GMU) remains underfunded, operating in a high-cost region. He mentioned that while some units are now compensated at or above market rates, many still lag behind. The university faces additional costs related to athletics and the law school.

- **Competition:** The president discussed the competitive landscape among institutions and the importance of state funding. He noted that GMU is approximately \$230-\$240 million below the average funding level for in-state support, a gap that has developed over the past 20-30 years.
- **Enrollments:** GMU has surpassed 40,000 students, with a steady growth rate of 1.5% to 2% per year. The quality of incoming students has also improved.
- **Fundraising:** Washington reported that GMU has experienced three of its highest fundraising years in the past four years, with research expenditures also on the rise. He expressed optimism about future fundraising efforts.
- **Rankings and Value:** George Mason University (GMU) is recognized as a top value institution in Virginia, ranking 13th nationally for “bang for the buck” by Washington Monthly and 52nd in U.S. News rankings. Washington emphasizes the difficulty of improving rankings and highlights GMU’s significant progress.
- **Student Performance:** Since 2020, the number of incoming students with a GPA of 4.0 or higher has increased from 921 to over 1,300. The percentage of students entering with a GPA of 3.5 or above is now 70%, the highest ever.
- **Graduation Rates:** GMU boasts a graduation rate of around 70%, which is impressive given its 90% admission rate. The institution is attracting more high-achieving students, leading to a higher overall performance.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Washington notes GMU’s strong representation of African American and Latino students, surpassing many other institutions in Virginia. The graduation rates for these groups are significantly higher than national averages.
- **Post-Graduation Success:** Graduates from GMU earn competitive salaries, with an average of \$64,000 for bachelor’s degree holders and \$79,000 for master’s degree holders, ranking among the highest in the state.
- **Enrollment Trends:** There is a noticeable trend of fewer applications from students with GPAs below 3.25, indicating that GMU is becoming a more selective institution.
- **Challenges and Future Directions:** Washington acknowledges challenges related to staffing and enrollment management, particularly in the context of the pandemic’s impact on university operations.
- **Hiring and Separations:** Over the years, the institution has seen significant hiring alongside separations. In 2021, for example, 374 new hires were offset by 425 separations. However, as salaries increased due to state raises, separations decreased, leading to a lower turnover rate by fiscal year 2024.
- **Budget Management:** The institution faced a substantial deficit in its engineering budget, peaking at around \$69 million. Unlike many peer institutions that made drastic cuts, the approach taken was to slow growth rather than halt hiring, successfully reducing the deficit to about \$13 million.
- **Institutional Growth:** Despite challenges like the pandemic and inflation, the institution has improved its rankings, increased research funding, and established over 100 industry partnerships. State support has also risen significantly.
- **Performance Metrics:** Since 2020, the institution’s rankings have improved dramatically, with notable increases in research expenditures and state appropriations. The growth in state funding over the past four years has surpassed the cumulative growth of the previous two decades.
- **Future Goals:** Washington emphasized the need to continue improving faculty recognition and program positioning, aiming for further advancements and possibly achieving membership in the Association of American Universities (AAU).

Overall, Washington expressed pride in the institution's progress and encouraged continued collaboration for future growth.

Solon Simmons opened the session, thanking President Washington for his presentation and inviting questions from attendees. Summary of **Q/A with President Washington**:

- **Alexander Monea** inquired about a recent incident involving two students from the Students for Justice in Palestine organization, whose homes were reportedly raided by police due to suspected graffiti on campus. He expressed concerns about the students' suspension for four years and questioned the due process involved, emphasizing the need for clarity on their educational status. **Washington** acknowledged the situation but refrained from discussing specific details due to privacy concerns. He assured that due process is being followed and indicated that the university's actions were justified based on the information available.
- **Tim Gibson** asked about the suspension of the Students for Justice in Palestine organization and whether the faculty advisor was informed of any allegations before the suspension. He questioned if due process was followed for all members of the organization. **Washington** reiterated that he could not provide specifics but confirmed that the university would not have acted without valid reasons. He mentioned that the faculty advisor had been offered a chance to discuss the situation with university officials.
- **Garv Jain** (Student Government Representative) raised an issue regarding a painted board outside Horizon Hall that stated "GMU stands with Israel," which many students found concerning. He sought Washington's thoughts on the representation of student beliefs in such statements. **Washington** emphasized that George Mason University is a free speech campus. He stated that the board's message did not violate free speech codes and that students are allowed to express their views, even if they do not represent the entire student body.
- **Delton Daigle** asked about turning challenges into opportunities, specifically regarding competition in the geographic marketplace. **Washington** responded by highlighting two key opportunities for George Mason University:
  - **Talent Acquisition from Government Downsizing**: With anticipated government reductions, particularly at NIH, many skilled scientists and social scientists will be seeking new positions. Washington emphasizes the importance of leveraging existing faculty relationships to attract these individuals, particularly in fields like health sciences and education.
  - **Development in Manassas**: Washington discusses a significant housing development near the Manassas campus, which will provide more affordable living options for faculty and staff. This development aims to improve the quality of life for employees, potentially reducing long commutes and enhancing retention.

Solon Simmons expressed gratitude for Washington's insights and the potential for further discussions on related topics, such as enrollment growth and faculty needs.

## 6. Committee Reports:

The meeting transitioned to committee reports, starting with **academic policies**, which had no updates.

### A. Budget and Resources Update:

- **Delton Daigle** provided updates on the budget and resources. He mentioned a recent meeting with Senior VP Deb Dickenson, noting that the meeting book for the upcoming Board of Visitors

meeting on December 5th has not yet been released, but will be available before their meeting on the 4th.

- He discussed the ongoing budget redesign process, highlighting resources available on the Faculty Senate website, including an overview of the process, governance, and timelines.
- Faculty members were encouraged to engage with the budget redesign process and provide feedback, either through their deans or directly via the designated website.
- Delton emphasized the importance of faculty participation in the budget redesign, as groundwork for a new budget model is expected to be laid in the coming months.

## B. Faculty Matters.

- **Mohan Venigalla** made a presentation (FMC Presentation) focusing on 12FMC findings and recommendation on AAUP concerns on the August 2024 revisions to University Policy on Non-Discrimination (UP 1201).
  - He emphasized the importance of academic freedom and the FMC's role in formulating university-wide standards.
  - He highlighted the **FMC Charge**: The FMC is tasked with addressing faculty governance issues, including evaluations and policy suggestions, but not personal grievances. The FMC aims to surface issues from the broader faculty rather than from within the committee itself.
  - The committee's current focus is on the implications of UP 1201 on academic freedom and whether the administration adhered to university policy 1101 during revisions. He clarified that the FMC decided not to delve into how UP 1101 was changed in 2017 or the IHRA definition of antisemitism or any other definitions in State or Federal laws.
  - He presented the **Timeline of Events**: The committee's 1<sup>st</sup> meeting for AY25 was on September 23 – which coincided with an AAUP letter submission related to revisions to UP 1201. The investigation into academic freedom issues began on Sept 25 when Senate President personally informed Mohan about the need for FMC to get involved in this matter. Simmons informed the full senate about FMC involvement later the same day. The Committee submitted its report on Nov 13. In the interim various meetings were held with the officials in the Office of University Counsel, GMU Policy office and the DEI office. Additionally, Mohan also spoke with Garv Jain of Student Government.
  - The FMC inquiries included discussions on the nuances of free speech versus academic freedom, seeking clarifications on the process by which UP 1201 was revised, on various versions of UP 1101 posted on GMU web page(s) and how the DEI office is currently implementing UP 1201. Mohan clarified that the University Counsel's office did not assert any 'privilege' to the conversations. Mohan also assured that none of the discussions on university matters between the counsel and the Senate representatives are privileged.
  - Mohan mentioned that in the discussing UP 1201 there is one element of his conversation with the Counsel, which was personal in nature (for Mohan) and the reference to 'privilege' in the FMC report was in that context. However, he would not mind sharing with the Senate his personal story he discussed with the counsel.
  - The presentation listed various documents the FMC reviewed, which include university policies and memos. It identified the confusion caused by two versions of Policy 1101 linked on one web page due to a clerical error.
  - On November 11, the FMC discussed the revision of University Policy 1201 with **Tom Bluestein** (DEI office). The discussion focused on the implication of the latest revision of UP 1201 on academic freedom. Bluestein noted that while academic freedom serves as an affirmative defense for faculty, investigations into policy violations can create distrust

among faculty members. The FMC discussion with Bluestein included a proposal to revise Policy 1201 to clarify protections for academic freedom, which the university's administration is open to.

- In its recommendation, the FMC emphasized the urgency of addressing academic freedom and proposed a Senate resolution to seek the administration to codify academic freedom as an exception in Policy 1201. The resolution presented is as follows:
  - “The Faculty Senate requests the administration to ~~explicitly~~ codify exercising academic freedom as one of the possible exceptions into UP 1201, just like the exception to the right to free speech has been codified currently.”
- The word explicitly was featured in the FMC memo dated Nov 13. However, the FMC at a meeting on Nov 19 opted to strike out that word.
- Mohan read a prepared statement that reiterated the FMC members dedication and commitment to the issue at hand, all faculty matters, and rejected any attempts to undermine the integrity of FMC members. Mohan invited other FMC members to speak on this matter to add if he missed anything or if they have a statement to make. FMC members **Ellen Rowe** and **Caroline Sutter** mentioned that Mohan's presentation was comprehensive, and they have nothing further to add.
- **Mohan** introduced **Tom Bluestein**, who oversees the implementation of **Policy 1201** related to civil rights compliance at GMU. Bluestein emphasized the importance of academic freedom and expressed a willingness to collaborate with faculty to refine policy language that acknowledges this concept. He notes the complexity of defining academic freedom, for which there are multiple definitions, and the potential implications of codifying it into policy.
- Mohan proposed a motion to pass a resolution seeking amendments to the language of Policy 1201. **Tim Gibson** raised a point of order to table the motion for further discussion at a later meeting, citing the importance of the topic. The group agrees to vote on tabling the motion, indicating a desire for a more thorough examination in the future. Motion to table passed. The discussion on UP 1201 will continue at the next Senate meeting currently scheduled for Dec 4, 2024. Tom Bluestein will be present.

#### C. Nominations Committee

- No report

#### D. **Organization and Operations (O&O) Report.** Melissa Broeckelman-Post introduced three voting items, starting with a motion to update the charge of the Academic Policies Committee.

- **Doug Eyman** explained the proposed revisions aimed at clarifying the committee's role in academic policies, including admissions and academic integrity. After a brief discussion, the motion to approve the revised charge was put to a voice vote and passed without opposition.
- Melissa Broeckelman-Post discussed the review of committee functions within the organization and operations. The goal is to assess whether certain committees are still relevant or need changes.
- **Motions to Disband Committees:**
  - **Academic Initiatives Committee:** This committee, which focused on academic initiatives relevant to past administrative contexts, has not met for some time and is deemed no longer necessary. The motion to disband it is presented and passed without opposition.

- **Salary Equity Study Committee:** This committee was tasked with analyzing salary data but has not been active recently, as similar work is being done in other areas (HR and local units). The committee has requested to be disbanded. Melissa emphasizes the importance of continuing salary analysis and plans to involve faculty in future discussions about budget and resources. During discussion, questions arose regarding faculty involvement in salary analysis, which Melissa addressed, assuring that faculty will remain involved in future updates. The motion to disband the Salary Equity Committee is also passed.

A motion to extend the meeting time was made and passed.

- E. **Faculty Handbook Committee. Melissa Broeckelman-Post** initiated the discussion, noting there were no voting items but wanted to update on the Faculty Handbook Committee's activities.
  - The committee has met twice and is responsible for reviewing policy language based on input from faculty and administrators.
  - They encourage faculty to bring any issues or updates needed for the handbook.
  - The committee is working on reconciling conflicting sections regarding initial contract lengths for term faculty and clarifying procedures for appointment renewals for department chairs and LAU heads.
  - Concerns were raised about the transparency of committee reports and potential retaliation against faculty who voice concerns.
- F. **Technology Policy Update: Delton Daigle** clarified that the virtual desktop systems will run in parallel until the end of the semester, despite a consolidation to the Patriot Virtual Computing Lab starting December 2nd.
- G. **Canvas Transition: Solon Simmons** announced that faculty must opt-in to use Canvas instead of Blackboard for spring 2025 courses, with all courses transitioning to Canvas after that semester.

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:36 PM.

## The FMC Report on UP 1201

- About FMC
- UP 1201
  - Background
  - The FMC Process
  - Findings
- FMC members
- Bluestein (Office of DEI)
- Set up for Q/A
  - FMC responses to AAUP scathing reply to FMC Memo

Faculty Senate, GMU: 11/20/2024

## The FMC Charge

The Faculty Matters committee champions the general welfare, professional growth, pecuniary interests, equitable workload distribution, and fair performance evaluations for all faculty. The Committee shall be responsible for **formulating, and** with other University committees as appropriate—in interpreting, **recommending University-wide standards and policies on faculty matters**, including but not limited to the following:

- A. Initial appointments, rank, renewals, reappointment, tenure and promotion;
- B. Salaries, stipends, and contract length;
- C. Study and professional development leaves;
- D. Benefits, broadly defined, including health and retirement;
- E. Workload policies, including teaching and service loads;
- F. Evaluation of faculty performance;
- G. **Academic freedom**; and
- H. Initiating revisions to Faculty Handbook on existing or new policies related to faculty.

## On the FMC's plate:

- Routine:
  - FEA
  - Faculty governance
- Specific policy issues – not personal grievances
  - Vary from year to year
  - Organic from faculty (individual or a group)
    - Examples: suggestions on FEA; misapplication of policy
  - Issues referred to FMC by
    - senate, administration or other U committees (Ex. Up 1201)
  - Raised through the experiences of FMC members (last preference)

## The FMC scope on UP 1201 revision

- **Our narrow focus is on**
  - Implications of UP 1201 on academic freedom
  - Did the administration follow UP 1101 in revising UP 1201
- **NOT on:**
  - How UP 1101 was changed in 2017 (the FMC has an overlapping scope on this w Faculty and Staff Senates, and the Student Government)
  - Definitions of any kind (e.g., IHRA definition on anti-Semitism) in any federal or state law (because it beyond the FMC scope).
- We agree that we need to have a conversation about UP 1101. That is a broader topic.



## Timeline

- 9/23: 1<sup>st</sup> FMC Meeting
- 9/23: AAUP Letter to President Washington
- 9/25: Solon talks to Mohan about the FMC charge; Senate meeting,
  - email exchanges among FMC members followed
- **10/16: Mohan, Solon, and Eli meeting**
- 10/21: 2<sup>nd</sup> FMC meeting –
  - 1<sup>st</sup> detailed discussion on UP 1201. More questions to be answered.
  - Seeking input from Tom Bluestein
- **11/08: Janette Muir, Marcy Glover w Mohan**
- **11/11: 3<sup>rd</sup> FMC meeting: Tom Bluestein**
- 11/13: Garv Jain (student rep) and Mohan
- 11/13: FMC Memo finalized

## Documents we reviewed

- AAUP memo
- UP 1101
- UP 1201
- Presidential EO, VA Code, Ch. 471
- Emails with GMU Policy office
- Email exchanges shared with us

## Highlights

- FMC Findings
  - Two versions of UP 1101 (2013 and 2017) – on the same webpage.
  - The discovery led to searching and cleaning up outdated policies on various Mason web pages
  - We are convinced that academic freedom is still an affirmative defense against alleged UP 1201 violations
    - DEI office walked through with examples
  - DEI office is open to making revisions to UP 1201
- FMC Recommendation
  - A senate resolution to revise UP 1201 to codify academic defense

## Proposed Resolution

- “The Faculty Senate requests the administration to ~~explicitly~~ codify exercising academic freedom as one of the possible exceptions into UP 1201, just like the exception to the right to free speech has been codified currently.”

## In Conclusion

- The concern about academic freedom is justified,
- The FMC agrees that the matter is urgent
- Why limit our scope to just two issues stated earlier?
  - We also have limitations on our time.
- We stand by our approach, findings and recommendation.
- To follow:
  - FMC member statements (if they would like to say something)
  - Tom Bluestein
  - Q/A

## FMC chair (Mohan Venigalla) Statement

- The FMC consists of regular (and volunteer) faculty.
- We are not practicing attorneys.
- We are passionate about Faculty Matters and dedicated
- We signed up, we show up and we work hard
- With respect to our work, with all due respect:
  - I, as the committee chair, **strongly reject** any efforts to belittle, or to impugn the character of, question the ethics of, or attribute motives to my fellow members of FMC.



Date: 11/13/2024

To: Solon Simmons, President  
The Faculty Senate

From: Benoit Van Aken, Sebahattin Demirkan, Ellen Rowe, Caroline Sutter, and  
Mohan Venigalla (Chair);  
The Faculty Matters Committee (FMC)

Subj.: The FMC findings and recommendation on AAUP concerns on the August 2024  
revisions to University Policy on Non-Discrimination (UP 1201)

Dear Professor Simmons,

This letter presents the findings and recommendation of the Faculty Matters Committee (FMC) on the implications of August 2024 revision of George Mason University (GMU)'s Non-Discrimination Policy (University Policy 1201, or UP 1201) on academic freedom at Mason. The FMC was charged with this task by you, and the FMC accepted it at the Faculty Senate meeting dated September 25, 2024. This undertaking is in reference to a memo (dated September 23, 2024) to President Washington by the GMU Chapter of American Association of University Professors (AAUP.) The AAUP memo is attached to this letter.

Of specific importance to FMC charge is the AAUP concern noted in its memo, *"We are concerned about 1) the insular processes used to revise university policy substantively and 2) the implications of these changes with regard to First Amendment protections of free speech rights and academic freedom at Mason."*

The narrow scope of the FMC charge involves whether the revisions to UP 1201 or the very process by which UP 1201 was revised infringe on academic freedom at GMU.

The FMC investigated and deliberated both the revision process and the revision itself with respect to their implications to academic freedom. The FMC investigation includes document scrutiny, conversations with administration officials and privileged conversations with the University Counsel's office. The following are FMC findings.

1. The FMC finds that in revising UP 1201, the Policy Management Group (PMG) of GMU adhered to the procedures outlined in the 2017 version of UP 1101. It should be noted here that UP 1101 is the policy that governs all policymaking at GMU. However, the AAUP memo to the President quoted passages from the 2013 version of UP 1101, which calls for the involvement of the Faculty Senate and its leadership in policymaking, while

the 2017 version does not. It was evident from our investigation that the now-defunct 2013 version and the current 2017 version of UP 1101 were mistakenly linked on the university webpages, in one case both on the same page in two places. In FMC's judgment, this clerical error may have led to the belief that UP 1101 was not followed in revising UP 1201. As we understand, the AAUP memo led the policy makers at GMU to search for, find and clean up any and all outdated policies from several GMU webpages.

2. There is no evidence that the revised UP 1201 infringes on academic freedom at GMU. In revising UP 1201, the university administration has codified what has already been the practice at GMU. That is, strict adherence to the Federal (a 2017 Presidential EO) and State (a 2023 VA Code, Chapter ~~271~~ 471) policies. We learned, and are convinced, that the policy revision does not in any way affect the availability of exercising academic freedom as an affirmative defense for the university community against any accusations of violation of UP 1201 that may lead to adverse investigations.

**Commented [MV1]:** A typo in the original memo has been corrected in this version.

Notwithstanding these findings, even though academic freedom is available as an affirmative defense, the FMC believes that there will be situations where faculty, staff and students may not be aware of their rights – especially with regards to academic freedom. Therefore, the FMC recommends to the Full Senate to vote on the following resolution and forward it to the administration should it pass:

“The Faculty Senate requests the administration to explicitly codify exercising academic freedom as one of the possible exceptions into UP 1201, just like the exception to the right to free speech has been codified currently.”

The FMC believes that codifying ‘academic freedom’ into the language in UP 1201 may not alleviate the potential distress caused to any subject due to any investigation resulting from an accusation of policy violation. However, it will certainly raise awareness that academic freedom is available as an affirmative defense.

We are happy to answer any questions you and the other Senators may have.

The Faculty Matters Committee

encl. AAUP Memo to President Washington, dated September 23, 2024

## Organization and Operations (O&O) Report

### **Motion 1: Approve the proposed revisions to the Faculty Senate Academic Policies Committee Charge.**

#### Current Charge

Charge: This Committee of the Senate shall concern itself with the applicability, appropriateness and reasonableness of academic policies that are University-wide in their scope and have implications for the standards and procedures of the various schools and colleges. Senate reviews of new or existing programs shall take into account the purpose and nature of the particular college or school as well as the goals of the University. It is recognized that while it is desirable for some academic policies to be University-wide, it is not the function of the Senate to enforce uniformity. Within these guidelines this Committee's responsibility shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Existing degree programs;
- B. Standards and policies concerning admissions, retention and suspension, graduation requirements, examinations and grading system, student academic records, and University courses;
- C. The academic calendar;
- D. Studying the need for new schools, colleges, centers, institutes, and degree programs; and
- E. Coordinating inter-college matters of an academic nature.

#### Proposed Revised Charge

Charge: This Committee of the Senate shall concern itself with the applicability, appropriateness and reasonableness of academic policies that are University-wide in their scope, including those outlined in the catalog, and have implications for the standards and procedures of the various schools and colleges. This committee's reviews of academic policies of new or existing programs shall take into account the purpose and nature of the particular college or school as well as the goals of the University. It is recognized that while it is desirable for some academic policies to be University-wide, it is not the function of the Senate to enforce uniformity. Within these guidelines this Committee's responsibility shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Existing degree programs;
- B. Standards and policies at both undergraduate and graduate levels concerning admissions, retention and suspension, graduation requirements, examinations and grading system, academic integrity, academic standards, student academic records, University courses, and any other academic policy that is published in the catalog;
- C. The academic calendar;
- D. Participation in the development of academic policies relating to new schools, colleges, centers, institutes, and degree programs; and
- E. Coordinating inter-college matters of an academic nature.

In furtherance of the responsibilities listed above, this committee will provide a Faculty Senate representative to the Undergraduate Council, the Graduate Council, and a representative to the Policy Management Group.

Proposed Revised Charge with Track Changes

Charge: This Committee of the Senate shall concern itself with the applicability, appropriateness and reasonableness of academic policies that are University-wide in their scopescope, including those outlined in the catalog, and have implications for the standards and procedures of the various schools and colleges. ~~Senate-~~This committee's reviews of academic policies of new or existing programs shall take into account the purpose and nature of the particular college or school as well as the goals of the University. It is recognized that while it is desirable for some academic policies to be University-wide, it is not the function of the Senate to enforce uniformity. Within these guidelines this Committee's responsibility shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Existing degree programs;
- B. Standards and policies concerning at both undergraduate and graduate levels concerning admissions, retention and suspension, graduation requirements, examinations and grading system, academic integrity, academic standards, student academic records, ~~and~~ University courses, and any other academic policy that is published in the catalog;
- C. The academic calendar;
- D. Participation in the development of academic policies relating to Studying the need for new schools, colleges, centers, institutes, and degree programs; and
- E. Coordinating inter-college matters of an academic nature.

In furtherance of the responsibilities listed above, this committee will provide a Faculty Senate representative to the Undergraduate Council, the Graduate Council, and a representative to the Policy Management Group.

**Motion 2: Disband the Academic Initiatives Committee**

*Rationale:* This committee was formed in response to concerns with an earlier administration and is less relevant now that faculty are routinely being included in committees, task forces, and other working groups. Some of the groups identified in this charge no longer exist and some of the responsibilities are handled by other committees. This committee has not met for some time and requested this change.

*Current Charge:*

**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.

**Motion 3: Disband the Salary Equity Study Committee**

*Rationale:* Colleges, local academic units, and HR have been doing systematic salary analyses and have been making salary adjustments, including a major set of adjustments after a CIP market analysis a couple of years ago, so this committee is now charged with doing work that duplicates that which is already happening elsewhere. Additionally, the Budget & Resources committee requests and posts the salary data for all faculty each year, but that data does not always include the variables needed to do the analysis here. We also intend to work with the Budget and Resources committee to discuss an update to their charge that would include doing some salary analysis with the data that they are already obtaining and posting so that the Faculty senate can ensure that the needed data is being collected and that some analysis is continuing to be done each year.

*Current Charge:*

**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.

**November 20, 2024**

**LIST OF ATTENDEES**

**175 Total Attendees (Senators and Visitors)**

**46 Senators Present:** Supriya Baily, Ioannis Bellos, Alok Berry, Lee Black, Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Jamie Clark, Richard Craig, Tim Curby, Delton Daigle, John Dale, Doris Davis, Sebahattin Demirkan, Kevin Dunayer, Kelly Dunne, Douglas Eyman, Daniel Garrison, Tim Gibson, Victoria Grady, Seth Hudson, Jessica Hurley, Melanie Knapp, Eugene Kontorovich, Kerri LaCharite, Siona Listokin, Tamara Maddox, Alexandra Masterson, Laurie Miller, Alexander Monea, ThanhVu Nguyen, Valerie Olmo, Robert Osgood, Anna Pollack, Greg Robinson, Pierre Rodgers, Ellen Rowe, Catherine Sausville, Zachary Schrag, Solon Simmons, Cristiana Stan, Debra Stroiney, Caroline Sutter, Anthony Terrell, Benoit Van Aken, Mohan Venigalla, David Wong, Abbas Zaidi

**5 Senators Absent:** Jehanzeb Cheema, Ed Gero, Thalia Goldstein, Aditya Johri, Jie Zhang

**6 Ex-officio Senators Present:** Ann Ardis, James Antony, Ingrid Guerra-Lopez, Anne Osterman, Ken Walsh, Gregory Washington

**123 Guests Present:** Wayne Adams, Armand Alacbay, Paul Allvin, Elizabeth Alman, Jamilah Anderson, Anu Aneja, LaShonda Anthony, Jaimie Appleton, Sharnnia Artis, Dominique Banville, Jennifer Beck-Wilson, Heidi Blackburn, Tom Bluestein, Ryan Braun, Lisa Breglia, Jacqueline Burek, Marissa Burkland, Derek Butler, Tom Butler, Xiaomei Cai, Carlos Chism, Jacqueline Connor, Raeshelle Cooke, Pooja Das, Shannon Davis, Deb Dickenson, Kim Dight, Michelle Dromgold-Sermen, Gesele Durham, Kim Eby, Aketa Emptage, Craig Esherick, James Finkelstein, Kimberly Ford, Cynthia Fuchs, Marcy Glover, Renate Guilford, Pallavi Gullo, Janet Ha Poirot, Zayd Hamid, Sandy Harris, Tamara Harvey, David Heilbrun, Sharon Heinle, Jessica Holtzman, Caitlin Horan, Ginny Hoy, Garv Jain, Toshia Johnson, Matt Kelly, Jason Kinser, Laura Kosoglu, Vin Lacovara, Andrea Landis, Andrew Lane, Clare Laskofski, Minh Le, Paul Liberty, Michelle Lim, Christopher Lowder, Loretta Lynn, Robyn Madar, Charmaine Madison, Chris Magee, Karen Manley, Joel Martin, Keiana Mayfield, Jenna McGwin, Doug McKenna, Meg Meiman, Jenny Meslener, Lynn Miller, Katherine Miscavige, Thema Monroe-White, Thema Monroe-White, J. Moore, Shá Norman, Melanie O'Brien, Nikki Ouellette, Whitney Owen, Sarah Parnell, Janet Poirot, Thomas Polk, Laura Poms, Andrea Reeves, Keith Renshaw, Lauren Reuscher, Suzanne Rigdon, Marguerite Rippey, Jessica Rosera, Mohammad Salama, Susan Sandler, Michele Schwietz, Jacquelyn Sims, Antonio Stewart, Frank Strike, Michael Summers, Rebecca Sutter, Justin Sutters, Burak Tanyu, Amanda Torres, Jacelyn Tyson, Girum Urgessa, Lauren Wagner, Eric Waithaka, Anna Walsh, Sarah Ward, Bob Weiler, Eleanor Weis, Liz White, Michelle Williams, Preston Williams, Tricia Wilson, Elizabeth Woodley, Susan Woodruff, Courtney Wooten, Andrea Zach, Christine Aunon Zanellato, Aberry, Alecia, Dan, Eric, Paige