

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
AGENDA FOR THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING
February 12, 2025
3:00-4:15 p.m.
<https://gmu.zoom.us/j/91213504533>*

- I. Call to order
- II. Approval of the Minutes: January 29, 2025
- III. Opening Remarks & Announcements from the Senate President
 - A. Announcements: Federal action on student status and grants
 - B. Special Visitor: Rector Cully Stimson
 - C. Special Presentation: Supriya Baily for the COACHE survey
- IV. Committee Reports
 - A. Academic Policies
 - B. Budget and Resources
 - C. Faculty Matters
 - D. Nominations
 - E. Organization and Operations
 - Revised Standing Rules (vote)
 - Revised Bylaws (vote)
 - F. Faculty Handbook
 - §2.1.3 (second read)
 - §2.12.3 (second read)
 - §3.6 (second read)
- V. New Business
- VI. Remarks for the Good of the General Faculty
- VII. Adjournment

* Note: For security purposes, all attendees must login using any valid Zoom account to join the meeting. Having trouble joining the meeting with the link above?

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

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)

Appendix 1 Proposed Changes to Standing Rules of the Faculty Senate

STANDING RULES OF THE FACULTY SENATE

1. ~~At the beginning of the academic year, i~~It shall be the responsibility of the chairs of the Senate standing committees and the chairs of university faculty standing committees to verify the continuing presence on the George Mason University faculty of all members of each committee. Committee (co)chairs shall be responsible for notifying the Chair of the Senate Committee on Nominations of any vacancies.
2. Each elected Senate standing committee and University faculty standing committee shall include members from ~~more than~~ at least three-one colleges or schools. Membership in University faculty standing committees are determined by the Organization and Operations Committee and should contain at least one senator.
3. Committee chairs may submit business items and reports for inclusion in the Senate agenda on behalf of their committees before the meeting agenda is posted. Senate committee chairs may also bring new business to the floor during their committee reports on behalf of their committees. Any member of the General Faculty may submit items of business for inclusion in the agenda prior to the agenda being posted. Items that are clearly aligned with the responsibilities of a specific Senate or University Standing Committee shall be referred to that committee. All other items shall be referred to the Organization and Operations Committee, which shall refer items to the committee it deems most appropriate; the Organization and Operations Committee shall report its referrals at the next regular meeting of the Senate.
- ~~3.4.~~ When practical, Senate meetings shall be recorded for the convenience of the clerk and secretary in preparing minutes. These recordings, however, are to be considered temporary records that shall be deleted after the minutes of the meeting have been approved. The approved minutes—along with agendas and attachments—shall be preserved in the University Archives.
- ~~4.5.~~ The Executive Committee of the Senate is composed of the Senate President, the Senate Secretary, the chairs of Faculty Senate Standing committees, and the chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee. The responsibilities of the Executive Committee are to meet regularly with the Provost, Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration, and the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Development, and other members of the central administration as needed for discussion and resolution of matters raised by Senate Standing Committees and the broader faculty. The Executive Committee shall act for the Senate during the summer months, when the full Senate does not normally meet.

~~5.6.~~ Each standing committee of the Senate shall produce an annual report at the end of the academic year that identifies accomplishments and completed tasks, a record of participation of committee members, and a list of items of business remaining unfinished. These reports should be sent to the Senate Clerk and will be published on the Faculty Senate website.

Appendix 2 Proposed Changes to Bylaws of the Faculty Senate



BYLAWS OF THE FACULTY SENATE (as revised – March 22, 2023)

ARTICLE I Membership

Section 1.

The membership of the George Mason Faculty Senate shall be as prescribed by the Charter. Eligibility to vote on matters before the Faculty Senate shall be limited to duly elected faculty members of the Faculty Senate.

Section 2.

- a. The manner by which collegiate and independent academic units entitled to representation in the Faculty Senate elect their senators shall be determined by the faculty of those units. **Elections shall take place early in the spring semester.**
- b. The presiding officer of each collegiate or independent academic unit shall certify to the Secretary of the Faculty Senate and the Chair of the Organization and Operations Committee the names of the Senators **elected no later than March 1**. Terms of Senators shall begin **at the opening of the first Senate meeting of the academic year on the day after Spring Commencement.**
- c. Current records of the membership of the Senate shall be maintained by the Clerk for use by the President of the Senate and the Parliamentarian.

ARTICLE II Officers

Section 1.

- a. The President of the Faculty Senate shall be elected from among the elected membership of the Senate at the final regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year. Nominations shall be made from the floor. Except when a motion to cast a unanimous ballot is passed,

voting for the President shall be by secret ballot. In the event that no candidate for this office receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off vote will be held between the two candidates who received the most votes.

- b. The term of the President of the Faculty Senate shall commence the day after Spring Commencement. In the event the Chair cannot serve for the remainder of their term, an election of a new Faculty Senate President will be held at the next regularly scheduled meeting, following the procedures in Article II Sec. 1a.
- c. The Senate shall elect from its own members a Secretary at the first regular meeting of the academic year. Nominations for this position shall be presented by the Nominations Committee; however, additional nominations may be made from the floor. Except when a motion to cast a unanimous ballot is passed, voting for this office shall be by secret ballot. In the event that no candidate for this office receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off vote will be held between the two candidates who received the most votes.
- d. The President shall appoint a member of the Senate to serve when needed as President pro tempore and other members to be Parliamentarian and Sergeant(s)-at-Arms, to serve for terms of one year commencing with the first meeting of the academic year.
- e. Neither the Senate President nor Secretary of the Senate shall serve in the same office for more than three consecutive terms.

Section 2.

- a. The President of the Senate shall be the presiding officer. The President pro tempore shall be the presiding officer in the absence of the President.
- b. The Secretary of the Senate shall maintain the records of the Senate and shall give appropriate notification to officers of the University, Committee Chairs, and other individuals concerning Senate actions.
- c. The Sergeant(s)-at-Arms shall supervise balloting and assist the President in expediting the meetings of the Senate.
- d. The Parliamentarian shall assist the President in the interpretation of the rules of order.

ARTICLE III Responsibilities of the Senate

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

ARTICLE IV Meetings of the Senate

Section 1.

- a. Meetings of the Senate shall be conducted according to the current edition of “Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised” except in instances when Robert’s Rules are in contradiction with Senate Bylaws or Standing Rules. In this case, the Bylaws followed by the Standing Rules will take precedence.
- b. The quorum for Senate meetings shall consist of a majority of the elected membership.
- c. Members of the Faculty Senate may participate in Faculty Senate meetings electronically, provided the technology used allows all members to hear each other simultaneously. Members of Faculty Senate Standing Committees and University Standing Committees may likewise participate electronically in meetings of the committees. Each entity may develop its own rules for how members meeting electronically may seek recognition, vote, and exercise other rights.

Section 2.

- a. Meetings shall be open to all members of the University community.
- b. For in-person meetings, all persons in attendance in a non-voting capacity shall be seated in a clearly delineated area so that they may not inadvertently influence a vote. For online meetings, the President and Sergeant(s)-at-Arms will determine the means of ensuring that only Senators participate in a vote.
- c. Any person recognized by the President may participate in the discussion of any item of business brought forth upon the floor, but only members of the Senate may make motions, second motions and vote.

Section 3.

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

Section 4.

- a. The President and the Secretary of the Senate shall jointly prepare the agenda for each meeting and distribute it seven days before the meeting to all members of the Senate. The agenda will also be made available to the general university community.
- b. Any member of the General Faculty may submit items of business for inclusion on the agenda. All items submitted which are consistent with the responsibilities of the Senate as defined in Article III are to be placed on the agenda. Members of the General Faculty who are not Senators may submit items for discussion only, but motions on those subjects may be made only by Senators.

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

Section 5.

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

Section 6.

- a. The President may call a special meeting of the Senate.
- b. In response to any petition signed by 20 percent of the elected members of the Senate, the President must call a special meeting to be convened within six instructional days.
- c. The written call to the special meeting shall include a statement of the purpose of the meeting and shall be distributed at least four instructional days before the meeting to all members of the Senate.
- d. Only business stipulated in the call to the special meeting may be transacted.

Section 7.

- a. Voting shall commence upon a call by the presiding officer for the “ayes” and “nays” and will be public in nature (e.g., voice vote, show of hands, digital representation of “aye” and “nay”). Any Senator who believes the public vote is inconclusive may call for voting by a method that allows for precise counting of votes (e.g., an electronic vote).
- b. Any Senator may request that a secret ballot be taken for any vote. When such a ballot is requested, the Secretary of the Senate and/or the Sergeant(s)-at-Arms shall be responsible for preparing, distributing, and counting the ballots.
- c. Absentee and proxy ballots shall not be allowed during in-meeting voting.
- d. All motions to recommend alterations to existing University-wide graduation requirements shall be read and debated at two successive regular meetings of the Senate held in the same academic year. A meeting of the Senate called solely to complete the agenda of a previous meeting shall not count as a "successive" meeting within the meaning of this bylaw.

Section 8.

Items of new business not appearing on the agenda may be introduced from the floor by any member of the Senate after consideration of all agenda items has been completed. The disposition of any item introduced without prior notice may be carried over to the next regular

meeting of the Senate if ten percent of members support a motion to carry it over. A motion carried over under this provision shall appear on the agenda of the next regular meeting as an item of old business and shall be supported by background information as provided in Section 5 of this Article.

Section 9.

- a. The Secretary of the Senate shall prepare the minutes of all meetings of the Senate. The minutes shall be made available to the general university community.
- b. A copy of the agenda and the minutes of every meeting shall be archived in the permanent University archives. These documents will also be made available to the general university community via the Faculty Senate website.

ARTICLE V Committees of The Senate

Section 1.

- a. "Standing Committees" shall be those permanent committees whose respective charges shall be established by the Senate and whose members, except for designated ex-officio members, are elected by the Senate.
- b. Election to standing committees shall be for two years unless otherwise specified in the committee charge.
- c. "Ad Hoc Committees" shall be those established by the Senate for consideration of special or time-limited issues. If no time limit is specified, the committee is deemed to serve until it issues a final report or until the Senate acts to dissolve it.
- d. Unless otherwise authorized by a majority vote of the Senate, standing or ad hoc committees shall issue formal reports only to the Senate.
- e. It shall be a duty of the Secretary of the Senate to prepare and maintain an accurate list of all committees of the Senate together with their charges and composition, which shall be open for inspection to all members of the University community. Annual reports will be filed with the Secretary of the Senate during the month prior to the end of the academic year. These will be made available to the general university community.

Section 2.

- a. Nominations for elected Senate positions to all standing committees except to the Nominations Committee shall be prepared by the Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee shall nominate one person for each available position. Nominations shall consider factors such as willingness to serve, previous senate and committee experience, the need to develop future senate leadership, and the specifications of the committee charge. The Nominations Committee shall circulate its nominations to the Senate in written form with the agenda **for the meeting during which**

~~elections will take place for the first meeting of the academic year.~~ Members of the Senate with the permission of prospective nominees may make further nominations from the floor at the meeting when the elections are held.

- b. Committee vacancies with unexpired terms shall be filled for the remainder of the term by special elections at the first scheduled meeting of the Senate after such vacancies occur. The Nominations Committee shall make one nomination for each available position except for vacancies in its own membership, but in all instances, nominations may be made from the floor.
- c. All elections shall be by a majority of those Senators present and voting. In the event that no candidate for an office or for the last positions on an elected committee receives a majority of the votes, a run-off vote will be held between the two candidates who receive the most votes.

Section 3.

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

Section 4.

Except as otherwise specifically provided, each Senate Committee shall elect its Chair according to the committee charge from among its own membership. Each committee shall have a majority of members present for a quorum. Each committee shall maintain written records of its activities. At the conclusion of each academic year these records shall become part of the permanent archives of the University and the Faculty Senate website as stipulated in Article IV, Section 9, paragraph b.

Section 5.

The Senate may require, by majority vote, any Senate committee to provide a report at a specified later meeting on any matter referred by action of the Senate that falls within the charge of that committee. Upon receipt of such a report, the committee may be discharged of further responsibility for the matter by majority vote of the Senate.

ARTICLE VI Effective Date and Amendment

Section 1.

All motions to amend these bylaws shall be read and debated at two successive regular meetings of the George Mason Faculty Senate held in the same academic year. Following the second debate, a vote on the motion to amend shall be taken. A two thirds majority of the voting members of the Senate present and voting shall be required for passage of such an amendment. A meeting of the Senate called solely to complete the agenda of a previous meeting shall not count as "successive" meeting within the meaning of this bylaw. Submission of changes to motions must be proposed no later than two meetings prior to the end of the semester.

Section 2.

Amendments to these bylaws shall take effect on the date contained therein, if such a date is provided; otherwise, they shall take effect immediately upon their passage.

Revised 10/6/10, Revised 2/7/18, Revised 12/8/22, Revised 3/22/23

Proposed Language With Track Changes

2.1.3 Term Appointments

Full-time faculty on fixed-term, non-tenure-track appointments are known as Term Faculty. Term faculty whose assignments focus primarily on teaching are appointed as instructional faculty. Term faculty whose assignments focus primarily on research are appointed as research faculty. Term faculty whose assignments focus primarily on clinical practice are appointed as clinical faculty. While term faculty may identify with a primary focus, their assignments may include a blend of teaching, research, service, clinical practice, administrative, or leadership responsibilities that go beyond the boundaries of their primary focus. The faculty member's specific responsibilities will be stipulated in the appointment contract or assignment letter.

Instructional term faculty with a terminal degree may hold one of the following ranks: Instructional Assistant Professor, Instructional Associate Professor, or Instructional Professor. Research term faculty with a terminal degree may hold one of the following ranks: Research Assistant Professor, Research Associate Professor, or Research Professor. Clinical term faculty with a terminal degree may hold one of the following ranks: Clinical Assistant Professor, Clinical Associate Professor, or Clinical Professor.

Instructional term faculty without a terminal degree may hold one of the following ranks: Instructor, Senior Instructor, Master Instructor; or Professor of Practice. Clinical term faculty without a terminal degree may hold the rank of Clinical Instructor, Clinical Senior Instructor, or Clinical Master Instructor. Research term faculty without a terminal degree are Research Staff ([Section 2.1.6](#)).

Term faculty on single-year appointments whose permanent employment is with another organization hold title with the prefix "Visiting."

Term faculty appointment contracts are issued for a single-year or for multiple years, up to a maximum of 5 years. For initial appointments [for faculty with terminal degrees](#), the maximum contract length for assistant professors is three years and for associate and full professors it is five years. [For initial appointments for faculty without terminal degrees, the initial contract length is one year.](#) If a multi-year appointment is offered to a faculty member whose position relies entirely or partially on non-state appropriated funding, then a multi-year contract may be established subject to the continuing availability of funding throughout the contract period. ~~Faculty on multi-year contracts normally hold a terminal degree, as defined by standards in the discipline.~~ Exceptions to either contract length or terminal degree requirements must be approved by the Provost.

Contracts automatically expire at the end of the contract period, and although a faculty member may be reappointed ([Section 2.7.1](#)), there is no guarantee or right to reappointment from one contract to the next, whether single-year or multi-year. With the prior approval of the Provost, term faculty with the terminal degree may be considered for a tenure-track or tenured

appointment as a result of a search ([Section 2.3.2.1](#)) or, rarely, by a direct appointment ([Section 2.3.2.2](#)). Service on a term appointment, whether or not externally-funded, may be applied to tenure consideration only if specified in the initial tenure-track letter of appointment.

Term faculty are eligible to be considered for promotion in rank, normally after five years of service.

Proposed Language with track changes:

2.12.3 Procedures for Appointment and Renewal

2.12.3.1 Search Procedures

Search procedures are initiated after the incumbent chair has declined to seek reappointment, or after the Provost has notified the incumbent chair of the decision not to reappoint, or when the position is vacant. A search committee is constituted no later than December 10th. This committee consists of five faculty, all of whom have held a full-time instructional appointment for at least one year: (i) a chair, appointed by the Dean, from among the faculty of the college/school but not of the department; (ii) two faculty appointed by the Dean from among the faculty of the department; and (iii) two faculty elected from among and by the faculty of the department. The department elects its members of the committee after the appointments by the Dean have been made known. The four department faculty members must include at least one representative from each of the faculty groups (tenured, tenure-track, instructional term) who have appointments in the department. If the qualifications for faculty membership cannot be met, the Dean will consult with the department faculty before appointing another faculty member.

The search committee:

1. consults with the faculty of the department and other persons it deems appropriate about the qualities to be sought in a new chair;
2. seeks qualified candidates from inside or, if the Dean has given notice that external candidates can be considered, from outside the department;
3. requests dossiers, including references, from candidates outside the University, when appropriate;
4. consults regarding fair employment practices with the Office of Diversity, Ethics, and Inclusion;
5. evaluates qualifications and dossiers of candidates;
6. supervises departmental discussion of candidates and balloting to determine the wishes of the department faculty; and
7. submits to the Dean reports including a general assessment of the several candidates, a summary of departmental discussions, the results of departmental balloting, and its own recommendations.

The Dean makes a recommendation with an accompanying justification in writing to the Provost and the departmental faculty, including in that recommendation the full report of the committee. If the committee and the departmental faculty are not in agreement or if the Dean does not endorse the recommendation of a majority of the committee and/or the department faculty, the Dean meets with the committee and/or the faculty to seek ~~an identity of views~~committee and faculty perspectives and try to reach consensus before submitting the Dean's recommendation to the Provost.

If the committee and/or the departmental faculty and the Dean have remained in disagreement, or if the Provost does not endorse the joint recommendation of the committee and the Dean, the Provost meets with the committee and the Dean to seek an identity of view each party's perspectives and to try to reach consensus. The final decision rests with the Provost.

The Provost apprises the Dean, the search committee, and the faculty of the decision. Upon notification of the Provost's decision, the Dean extends a formal invitation to the person chosen.

If the vacancy is not filled nor an offer extended by May 1st, the Provost, after consultation with the Dean and the faculty of the department, appoints an acting chair and so notifies members of the department by July 1st.

2.12.3.2 Renewal Procedures

The Dean of the appropriate college/school writes to the incumbent chair before the last day of classes of the spring term of the academic year preceding the chair's final year of appointment. In this letter, the Dean states that the chair will be considered a candidate for reappointment unless the chair withdraws from consideration in writing before September 1st.

If the incumbent chair wishes to be a candidate for reappointment, the Dean constitutes by September 15th a committee to elicit and formulate the views of the faculty of the department. The committee is constituted according to the specifications governing the composition of the search committee described in [Section 2.12.3.1](#).

To begin the process for chair renewals, the committee consults with the department faculty and other persons it deems appropriate concerning the past performance of the chair and the desirability of the chair's renewal. The committee ascertains the will of the department faculty through an anonymous ballot and makes recommendations in writing to the Dean no later than October 15th. LAU bylaws should specify who has voting rights. The report includes the division of departmental and committee balloting by numbers only.

The Dean makes a recommendation to the Provost by November 1st. The Provost decides whether or not to reappoint the incumbent chair by December 1st and promptly communicates this decision and supporting reasons in writing to the Dean, the committee, the departmental faculty, and the chair.

Proposed Language with Track Changes

3.6.2 Leave Program for Instructional Faculty

The purpose of this leave program is to support professional development initiatives designed to advance scholarly research, teaching, and/or creative activity, including the development of innovative teaching approaches and methods. Leaves are for one semester at full pay and full benefits or an academic year at half pay with full benefits (based on 50% of base salary).

Faculty must be tenured or on a term multi-year contract, with six years of service at Mason, and have completed six years of such service since a previous study leave (not including tenure-track study leaves). This six-year period includes time spent on leave of absence, unless such leave includes time worked at another agency or institution, in which case an exception must be approved and granted by the Vice President for Research.

Colleges and schools establish and publish the procedures, criteria and deadlines for submission and review of leave proposals. The timing of a leave may be delayed if in the judgment of the LAU administrator, the faculty member's services are needed for a particular semester. Colleges and schools will notify the Provost of those faculty who have been approved for a study leave.

A faculty member who receives a study leave must agree to remain a full-time employee of the University for at least one academic year after the conclusion of the leave.

A faculty member who accepts a study leave must agree to serve as a reviewer of future applications at least once.