

# GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

## MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING

February 12, 2025, 3:00-4:15 p.m. | Online Meeting

Number of attendees: 153 ([List of names](#))

### 1. Call to Order

- Solon Simmons called the meeting to order at 3:02 PM.

### 2. Approval of Minutes of January 29

- The minutes from the previous meeting were not posted in time for review, so approval was postponed until the next meeting.

### 3. Announcements

- Solon Simmons acknowledged that there were announcements regarding students and grants, but did not elaborate.

### 4. Rector's Remarks

- Rector Cully Stimson addressed the body, stating that he provides feedback from these meetings to the board members individually. He reported on the board's activities, including planning sessions for committee meetings.
- Stimson explained the committee process and clarified that not all topics discussed by committees will necessarily come before the full board. He noted the challenges in achieving quorum due to vacancies on the Board of Visitors but anticipated new appointments.
- Stimson discussed the importance of board members visiting different campuses and mentioned a planned visit to the Arlington campus. He addressed concerns about the impact of executive orders on the university, including potential effects on NIH grants and other areas.

### 5. Questions and Answers with Rector Stimson

- **Melissa Broeckelman-Post** asked about the Schils report on the APDAC agenda, questioning its relevance to the current faculty handbook. Cully Stimson responded that he was unaware it was on the agenda, would review both documents, and provide feedback to the committee.

- **Zachary Schrag** raised concerns about the applicability of presidential executive orders to the university, specifically regarding a proposal to address anti-Semitism. Cully Stimson acknowledged the issue and stated he would address it with the board.
- **Jessica Hurley** expressed concerns about potential liability for the university related to the anti-Semitism resolution, particularly regarding the impact on political speech. Cully Stimson affirmed his support for the First Amendment and stated that the board is aware of its fiduciary duties to avoid actions that would create legal liability.
- **Alexander Monea** suggested that board members review the faculty handbook in detail and raised concerns about the language in the APDAC anti-Semitism resolution. He also requested an update on the Calvin principles on institutional neutrality. Cully Stimson clarified that the Calvin principles apply to him and the university president, Greg Washington, and that they are intended to protect free speech.
- **Solon Simmons** raised a question about the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance document and its potential impact on university policy 1201 if the document is updated. Cully Stimson responded that the state law references that definition, and if the definition changes, the state legislature would need to revisit the law. He reiterated his support for First Amendment rights and stated that speech about Israel and related issues is generally protected.
- Rector Cully Stimson described his practice of meeting with each college dean twice a year to discuss their priorities and concerns. He asked for feedback on this practice.
  - Melissa Broeckelman-Post expressed support for the initiative but cautioned against potential perceptions of micromanagement. Rector Stimson emphasized that he remains on the "governance listening side" and shares information with the board without overstepping his role. He provided examples of information gained from these meetings, such as concerns about the Critical Vacancy Review (CVR) process and updates on theater renovations.
  - Ramin Hakami expressed support for the meetings, emphasizing the importance of open communication. He suggested exploring ways to facilitate direct communication with faculty to ensure issues are not lost in administrative layers. Rector Stimson noted that he is accessible to faculty

and that he shares their concerns with the board's executive committee. He reiterated his commitment to avoiding micromanagement.

- David Ramadan voiced his strong support for the rectors meetings with deans, stating that throughout his 20 years of involvement with the university, the deans have often felt cut off from the board. suggested that the rector take another board member with him to the deans' meetings.
- **Delton Daigle** extended an invitation to the Rector to attend a Faculty Senate Executive meeting. Rector Stimson expressed interest in attending, pending availability.
- In his concluding remarks, Rector Stimson emphasized the importance of sharing information gained from dean meetings with the entire board to enhance understanding during budget discussions. He highlighted the diversity of perspectives and the need to "socialize these ideas" to ensure everyone is "speaking off the same sheet of music." Rector Stimson noted "very serious concerns" about a resolution scheduled for the following day. He stated his intention to discuss these concerns with Vice Director Meese and Visitor Rosen.

## 6. COACHE Committee Report

- Supriya Baily and Alexandra Masterson provided an update on the COACHE Faculty Satisfaction Survey.
- The survey has been conducted at Mason since 2019, with two rounds completed.
- Faculty engagement has been high, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The data collected is valuable for understanding faculty satisfaction and addressing issues important to faculty.
- The COACHE leadership team disaggregates the data to identify specific needs and works with administrators to implement targeted support.
- Faculty were encouraged to participate in the current survey and to encourage their colleagues to do so.
- The survey period will run until the first week of April.
- Instructional faculty will receive emails from the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education.
- Past survey data is available on the Provost website.

- Alexandra Masterson emphasized the importance of faculty "owning" their university and contributing to its improvement.
- Delton Daigle asked about the timeline for receiving the survey data.
- Supriya Baily responded that the data is usually available in the summer, with an executive summary shared with leadership and then disseminated across campus in the fall.
- Solon Simmons acknowledged the importance of the COACHE survey data for evidence-based institutional development and for socializing new leaders.

### 7. 3. Standing Committee Reports

- **Academic Policies:** No report currently (Douglas Eyman).
- **Budget and Resources:**
  - Delton Daigle reported that the budget model redesign is progressing quickly.
  - Decisions regarding budget models and space charges will be announced soon.
  - The Board of Visitors will vote on room and board increases.
  - Faculty salary data has been received and will be shared soon.
  - Jamie L Clark raised a question about how the budget model accounts for potential changes in indirects.
  - Provost James Antony responded that indirects will remain part of research funding, but the amount is under debate.
  - The distribution of indirects is being discussed.
  - If the total amount of indirects decreases, there will be increased costs to cover research.
- **Faculty Matters:**
  - Mohan Venigalla reported that the committee is closely monitoring a new resolution to be taken up by the ABOD committee.
  - The Committee is examining the implications of the resolution for academic freedom and Policy 1201.

- The committee is also working on faculty evaluation of administrators, specifically regarding chair data.
- Faculty Matters aims to examine the integrity of the chair data before any release.
- **Nominations:** Lee Black stated there was no business for the meeting.

## 8. 2. Bylaws and Standing Rules Discussion and Vote

- Catherine Sausville clarified that there was business, specifically the vote on bylaws and standing rules. Catherine Sausville shared the revised bylaws and standing rules, highlighting key changes.
- Melissa Broeckelman-Post explained that changes were made to ensure compliance with university policy and state law regarding recordings.
- Catherine Sausville detailed changes to the bylaws, including election cycles, term starts for senators, agenda distribution, and the nominations committee.
- Kevin Dunayer inquired about the effective date of the bylaws changes; it was clarified that they would take effect in the next academic year.
- A voice vote was conducted, and the revised bylaws were approved.
- Melissa Broeckelman-Post made a motion to extend the meeting to 4:30. Motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.
- Catherine Sausville then detailed the changes to the standing rules, particularly regarding committee representation and the handling of meeting recordings.
- Mohan Venigalla raised the issue of verbatim recording of administrator remarks in the minutes, prompting a discussion about the balance between transparency and privacy.
  - Tim Gibson advocated for verbatim recording, especially of administrators.
  - Zachary Schrag emphasized the importance of preserving statements from administrators like the Rector.
  - Alexandra Masterson stressed the importance of detailed minutes for transparency and decision-making.
  - Caroline J Sutter inquired about the retention of meeting transcripts.
  - Melissa Broeckelman-Post clarified that the current discussion was on the standing rules and that a motion for amendment was needed. She also

raised concerns about faculty members feeling inhibited to speak freely if recordings were kept.

- John Dale expressed concerns about the distortion of context in transcripts and the storage of recordings.
  - Delton Daigle suggested separating the discussion of recordings and transcripts due to privacy concerns.
  - Alexander Monea echoed concerns about accurate minutes and suggested secure storage of recordings and transcripts.
  - Tim Gibson made a motion to send item number four of the standing rules (regarding recordings) back to the O&O committee. Motion seconded the motion and passed by voice vote.
- A motion was made to accept items two and six of the standing rules as presented. Motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.
  - Other O&O Updates
    - Melissa Broeckelman-Post provided updates on the revised charges for the Budget and Resources and Faculty Matters committees. She announced a proposal to create a new university standing Intellectual Property Committee and disband the existing one. She then asked for any other committee charge revisions that needed to be addressed. She informed the senate that senate allocation numbers had been received.

## **9. Adjournment**

- Solon Simmons made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.
- The meeting adjourned at 16:31.

**February 12, 2025**

**LIST OF ATTENDEES**

**153 Total Attendees**

**45 Senators Present:** Supriya Baily, Ioannis Bellos, Alok Berry, Lee Black, Johanna Bockman, Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Jamie Clark, Richard Craig, Timothy Curby, Delton Daigle, John Dale, Sebahattin Demirkan, Kevin Dunayer, Douglas Eyman, Daniel Garrison, Tim Gibson, Thalia Goldstein, Victoria Grady, Seth Hudson, Jessica Hurley, Aditya Johri, Eugene Kontorovich, Kerri LaCharite, Siona Listokin, Tamara Maddox, Alexandra Masterson, Alexander Monea, ThanhVu Nguyen, Valerie Olmo, Bob Osgood, Anna Pollack, 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, Jie Zhang

**7 Senators Absent:** Jehanzeb Cheema, Doris Davis, Kelly Dunne, Ed Gero, Melanie Knapp, Laurie Miller, Gregory Robinson

**3 Ex-officio Senators Present:** Ann Ardis, Rick Davis, Anne Osterman

**105 Guests Present:** Wayne Adams, Abena Aidoo Hewton, JK Aier, Susan Allen, Anu Aneja, LaShonda Anthony, Scott Anthony, Jaimie Appleton, Dominique Banville, Kayleigh Barnhart, Ernest Barreto, Sapna Batheja, Heidi Blackburn, Tom Bluestein, Jeanne Booth, Ryan Braun, Laurence Bray, Lisa Breglia, Alecia Bryan, Crystal Buckley, Xiaomei Cai, Shanti Chang, Evelyn Michelle Chapman-Campbell, Davita Colclough, Jennifer Connors, Maria Dakake, Shannon Davis, Lilian de Jonge, Kim Dight, Fatou Diouf, Cheryl Druehl, Deborah Dupree, Gesele Durham, Kim Eby, Rachel Elliott, Aketa Emptage, Kimberly Ford, Cynthia Fuchs, Charlotte Gill, Marcy Glover, Pallavi Gullo, Ramin Hakami, Cameron Harris, Tamara Harvey, Sara Heming, Anne Holton, Caitlin Horan, Tonya Howe, Ginny Hoy, Chun-Lung Huang, Emily Ihara, Kimberly Jackson Davidson, Nick Kirkvarro, Rachel Kirsch, Vin Lacovara, Andrew Lane, Susan Lawrence, Amy Lebrecht, Michelle Lim, Chris Lockhart, Christopher Lowder, Zhicong Lu, Creston Lynch, Robyn Madar, Karen Manley, Sophia Marshall, Keiana Mayfield, Jenna McGwin, Doug McKenna, Kimberly Meltzer Weisman, Allison Miner, Ilona Moore, Julia Morelli, Janette Muir, Eric Neitzke, Bobbi Nelson, Rose Pascarell, Thomas Polk, Laura Poms, David Ramadan, Hortense Rascoe, Cesar Rebellon, Shelley Reid, Keith Renshaw, Lauren Reuscher, Marguerite Rippy, Amira Roess,

Mohammad Salama, Susan Sandler, Laura Sauls, Sheena Serslev, Paul Snodgrass, Rachel Spence, Jiayang Sun, Rebecca Sutter, Susan Tomasovic, Evelyn Tomaszewski, Amanda Torres, Girum Urgessa, Eric Waithaka, Karen Witt, Elizabeth Woodley, Courtney Wooten, Andrea Zach, Christine Zanellato