

---

## 1.3.1 The General Faculty and 2.1.4 Part-Time Appointments

### What problems were we trying to solve?

- Clarify who is eligible to serve in the Faculty Senate.
- Remove the word "term" from part-time faculty, as there are part-time faculty who are tenure-line faculty.
- Gives part-time faculty voting rights as members of the General Faculty.

### Feedback after first read

- Concern about removing reference to any George Mason University will exclude Mason Korea faculty.

### Changes since first read

- Returned the language to “at any George Mason University campus” so that we can have further clarifying conversations.

---

## **Motion 7**

- Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate approve the changes to 1.3.1 The General Faculty and 2.1.4 Part-Time Appointments.

### 1.3.1 The General Faculty AND 2.1.4 Part-Time Appointments

#### Background/Context:

- The Faculty Senate Charter defines the General Faculty and eligibility for election to the Senate, and our Handbook is currently out of alignment with those definitions. Full-time and part-time faculty are eligible to serve in the Senate, but adjunct faculty are not.
- There are some part-time faculty who are tenured and some who are term instructional faculty. We are removing the language that limits this to instructional term faculty to align with current practice. Since the Senate Charter allows part-time faculty to be elected to the Faculty Senate, and because part-time faculty are part of the General Faculty, we recommend that they also be able to vote.
- It is important to note that adjunct faculty are not part-time faculty. Part-time faculty are sometimes full-time faculty who have (often temporarily) moved to a reduced load to accommodate personal situations or because part of their time is being bought out by another agency. Other part-time faculty are hired into part-time faculty roles from the beginning of their contract because they have employment elsewhere (e.g., judges) but are being hired with a portfolio of responsibilities similar to the responsibilities of full-time faculty. There are currently 61 part-time faculty and 1680 full-time faculty at GMU. Adjunct faculty are hired to teach courses on a course-by-course basis.

#### Redlined language

### 1.3.1 The General Faculty

The General Faculty consists of all faculty who have full-time instructional, research, or clinical appointments ~~and all faculty who have part-time instructional appointments~~ at any George Mason University campus. The General Faculty participates in governance at the university level.

Meetings of the General Faculty are scheduled by the President of the University, who serves as presiding officer. If at least 10% of the voting membership petitions for a called meeting of the General Faculty, the President is obliged to schedule it within thirty days, or within ten days if the purpose of the call is to consider modification of the authority the General Faculty has granted the Faculty Senate; or reversal of specific decisions of the Senate; or amending the Senate charter. All members of the General Faculty have voting rights on matters that pertain to the General Faculty. All members of the University community may attend meetings of the General Faculty and participate in the debate of matters that come before it. The General Faculty may meet electronically, provided the technology used allows all members to hear each other simultaneously, seek recognition, vote, and exercise other rights.

Without relinquishing the generality of its powers, The General Faculty delegates by Charter to the Faculty Senate the responsibility for shared academic governance at the university level. Only those faculty who have instructional appointments – tenured, tenure-track, term, or ~~adjunct part-time~~ – may be elected to the Faculty Senate.

#### 2.1.4 Part-Time Appointment

~~Term~~ Faculty who are appointed to less than full-time positions are called part-time faculty. Their assignments may include research, service, clinical practice, administrative program development, or instructional responsibilities that go beyond the boundaries of specific courses. Part-time ~~term~~ faculty positions are governed by the same appointment, rank, and title requirements as full-time ~~term~~ faculty positions. The Provost is the final approval level for part-time faculty appointments. Part-time faculty are ~~not~~ voting members of the General Faculty.

#### Related Passages:

##### Faculty Senate Charter, I.C.

C. Qualifications of Elected Senators Elected Senators shall be members of the constituent Faculties they represent. A faculty member is eligible to serve on the Faculty Senate if the faculty member holds

1. A full-time instructional tenured, tenure-track, or term appointment with at least one year's full-time service at George Mason University; or

2. A part-time instructional appointment with at least one academic year of continuous service, and completion of at least two Full Time Equivalents in appointments at George Mason University.

#### 2.1.5 Adjunct Appointment

Adjunct Faculty are employees appointed to fulfill the teaching and advising responsibilities associated with a specific course (or a set of specified courses) in a specific semester.

Adjunct Faculty are not voting members of the General Faculty and are not covered by the provisions of this Handbook.

#### 2.1.6 Postdoctoral Research Fellows and Research Staff

Postdoctoral Research Fellows are employees governed by the Postdoctoral Research Fellows Policy. Postdoctoral Research Fellows are not covered by the provisions of the Faculty Handbook.

Research Staff are employees governed by the Research Staff Policy. Research Staff are not covered by the provisions of the Faculty Handbook.

# Section 1.3.2 The Faculty Senate

## What problem were we trying to solve?

- Solve conflict Faculty Handbook, Bylaws, and Roberts Rules about who can speak in the Faculty Senate
- Adds “to the extent permitted by the Senate bylaws” to allow the Senate President to call on anyone to speak"

## Feedback after first read

- None

## Changes since first read

- No additional changes made

---

## **Motion 8**

- Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate approve the changes to 1.3.2 The Faculty Senate.

**Proposed revision to Faculty Handbook § 1.3.2 concerning Faculty Senate participation by non-senators**

George Mason University Faculty Handbook - July 1, 2025, § 1.3.2 The Faculty Senate	Proposed revision
<p>The Senate meets at least monthly during the fall and spring semesters. Meetings of the Senate are open to all members of the university community, who may speak to any item of business on the agenda. Only members of the Senate, however, may introduce motions and vote. The Faculty Senate deliberates in a respectful and open manner, consistent with existing principles of university discourse.</p>	<p>The Senate meets at least monthly during the fall and spring semesters. <b>To the extent permitted by the Senate bylaws,</b> meetings of the Senate are open to all members of the university community, who may speak to any item of business on the agenda. Only members of the Senate, however, may introduce motions and vote. The Faculty Senate deliberates in a respectful and open manner, consistent with existing principles of university discourse.</p>

**Explanation**

The current language of the Faculty Handbook is inconsistent with the current Faculty Senate bylaws, which restrict speaking privileges to “any person recognized by the President” and which provide for the possibility of closed sessions. Changing the language would make the handbook consistent not only with current bylaws but also with any future changes concerning non-member participation.

# Section 2.10.5 Faculty Responsibility Under the Honor Code

## What problem were we trying to solve?

- Updates language to reflect that the Honor Code has been replaced with Academic Standards
- Update the title of the section to "Faculty Responsibility Under the Academic Standards Code"

## Feedback after first read

- Uncertainty about what it means for faculty to "adhere" to the Academic Standards policy when it is primarily focused on student behaviors
  - **Contextual information:** There is a section in the Academic Standards policy that specifically outlines the responsibilities of faculty.

## Changes since first read

- Changed “adhere” to “uphold” for clarification

---

## **Motion 9**

- Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate approve the changes to 2.10.5 Faculty Responsibility Under the Honor Code.

**Rationale for revisions:** We have replaced the Honor Code with the Academic Standards Code, so this updated language brings the handbook in alignment with current policy.

### 2.10.5 Faculty Responsibility Under the ~~Honor~~ Academic Standards Code

~~Since the founding of the University, the Honor Code has been and remains a part of the educational process at George Mason. Although the students are primarily responsible for preserving and enforcing the code, the faculty share common interests with the students in matters of academic integrity.~~

The Academic Standards Code affirms our collective commitment to foster an environment of trust, respect, and scholarly excellence at George Mason University. Faculty are expected to uphold the Academic Standards Code and to apply the highest ethical standards in teaching, research, and scholarship.

~~Faculty are expected to have a strong commitment to the Honor Code, and to support and to encourage students in their pursuit of its goals.~~

# Section 2.1.3 Term Appointments

## What problem were we trying to solve?

- The Term Faculty Committee has unanimously recommended that we replace the title “Master Instructor” with “Principal Instructor” to eliminate historical connotations of the word “master,” especially in southern states. This same shift is also happening in other industries, such as real estate and software development, for similar reasons.
- The title "Master Instructor" was replaced with "Principal Instructor" in 2.1.3, 2.2, and 2.7.

## Feedback after first read

- None

## Changes since first read

- No additional changes made

---

## **Motion 10**

- Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate approve the replacement of "Master Instructor" with "Principal Instructor" in 2.1.3, 2.2, and 2.7.

### 2.1.3 Term Appointments

#### Background/Context for new changes

The Term Faculty Committee has unanimously recommended that we replace the title “Master Instructor” with “Principal Instructor” to eliminate historical connotations of the word “master,” especially in southern states. This same shift is also happening in other industries, such as real estate and software development, for similar reasons.

#### Background/Context for first set of changes (already approved on November 12 by Faculty Senate- final paragraph):

- It has sometimes been unclear whether faculty who began at GMU as term faculty who then were hired into tenure-track positions were able to include their full body of scholarly and teaching accomplishments in their dossier for tenure consideration.
- It has also been unclear whether term faculty who were hired into tenure-track roles needed to wait the full six-year period to go up for tenure.
- Section 2.1.2 grants all faculty with prior service or unusually strong performance the opportunity to be considered for tenure and promotion early, and section 2.7 specifies that RRPT recommendations should be based on an evaluation of performance over the total period of service at Mason as well as consideration of all scholarly achievements. This revision simply clarifies that those policies also apply for faculty who began their careers as term faculty at Mason, just as they do for faculty who began their careers elsewhere, to remove the ambiguity that was at times being read into 2.1.3.

#### Redlined Language

### 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, ~~MasterPrincipal~~ Instructor; or Professor of Practice. Clinical term faculty without a terminal degree may hold the rank of Clinical Instructor, Clinical Senior Instructor, or Clinical ~~MasterPrincipal~~ 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 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. 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 who are hired into tenure-track faculty positions will have the same timeline for renewal, promotion, and tenure as all other newly hired tenure-track faculty (Section 2.1.2), but time as a term faculty member does not count as part of the time to renewal and tenure. However, term faculty hired into tenure-track positions have the same opportunity for early tenure consideration, as defined in Section 2.1.2. Scholarly achievements and performance as a term faculty member will be evaluated for tenure consideration consistent with Section 2.7.~~ Term faculty are eligible to be considered for promotion in rank, normally after five years of service.

Commented [LB1]: Faculty Senate has approved this red language