

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
AGENDA FOR THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING
DECEMBER 6, 2017
Robinson Hall B113, 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.**

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Approval of the Minutes of November 1, 2017**
- III. **Announcements**
Provost Wu
- IV. **Committee Reports**
 - A. **Senate Standing Committees**
 - Executive Committee*
 - Academic Policies* [Attachment A](#)
 - Summer 2018 Calendar
 - Academic Year 2020-21 Calendar
 - Course Repeat Limit
 - Budget and Resources*
 - Faculty Matters*
 - Nominations*
 - June Tangney (CHSS - Psychology) is nominated to fill a vacancy on the Research Advisory Committee
 - Nominations for two Senate representatives to New Ventures Advisory Council
 - Organization and Operations*
 - Motion to Amend the ByLaws of the Faculty Senate – First View* [Attachment B](#)
 - B. **Other Committees/Faculty Representatives**
- V. **New Business**
 - Course Repeat Limits – Jeannie Brown Leonard, Dean, Student Academic Affairs – Advising, Retention, and Transition [Attachment C](#)
- VI. **Remarks for the Good of the General Faculty**
- VII. **Adjournment**

Attachment A

Academic Policies Committee

Agenda Items for December 6, 2017

1) Summer 2018 calendar

The summer terms are the same as they have been in past years: Sessions 1, A, B, C and D, with various meeting schedules in each term. This year, the Add, Drop, and Selective Withdrawal dates have been adjusted so they are roughly proportional to the dates as found in the Academic Policies section of the University Catalog.* The dates would vary within a given term because of the different meeting schedules**, which does not occur during the standard academic year semester. Because administering several Add, Drop, and Withdrawal dates within a term would be burdensome, the latest date for each deadline among multiple schedules was chosen.

The AP committee has not received a finalized calendar.

* **AP.1.3.2 Changing Registration**

The last day for adding a 14-week course is eight calendar days after and including the first day of classes. The last day for dropping a 14-week course is five calendar weeks after the first day of classes (including the first day).

AP.1.5.1 Selective Withdrawal for Undergraduates

The academic calendar for each semester will include an open withdrawal period beginning the day after the last day to drop the class and extending through the ninth week.

** For the most extreme example, in Session B, there are three meeting schedules: MW, 2hr. 40 min.; TR, 2hr. 40 min.; and MWF, 2hr. The Add deadline for each of these (corresponding to 1-week of meetings in the standard academic year semester) would be after the first meeting for MW and TR and after the second meeting for MWF. The Add deadline is chosen to be on Thursday, which is generous for the MW and TR classes, and correct for the MWF class.

2) Academic Year 2020-2021 calendar

At the last Faculty Senate meeting, the AP Committee presented a graphic of the university's proposed calendar for the 2020-2021 academic year. The committee has not yet received the publishable text copy of the calendar.

3) Course repeat limit

The Academic Procedures Advisory Committee (APAC), which consists of a group of Assistant/Associate Deans and administrators who regularly interact with students and is chaired by the Registrar, will present their proposal to limit to three the number of times an undergraduate student may attempt any course without approval.

This presentation under New Business is intended to inform Senators of various options and to solicit responses. The recommendation follows the discussion last month in the Faculty Senate regarding academic units that wish to impose repeat restrictions on some or all of their courses, to both majors and non-majors. The Academic Policies Committee will further consider the proposal before making a recommendation to the Faculty Senate in the Spring.

Background information appears under [New Business](#). These are some highlights:

The limit (N = 3) would be university-wide. Units may have lower limits. Units may give permission to exceed the university limit according to their own criteria.

The limit is for **graded attempts**. The limit does not include the W notation.

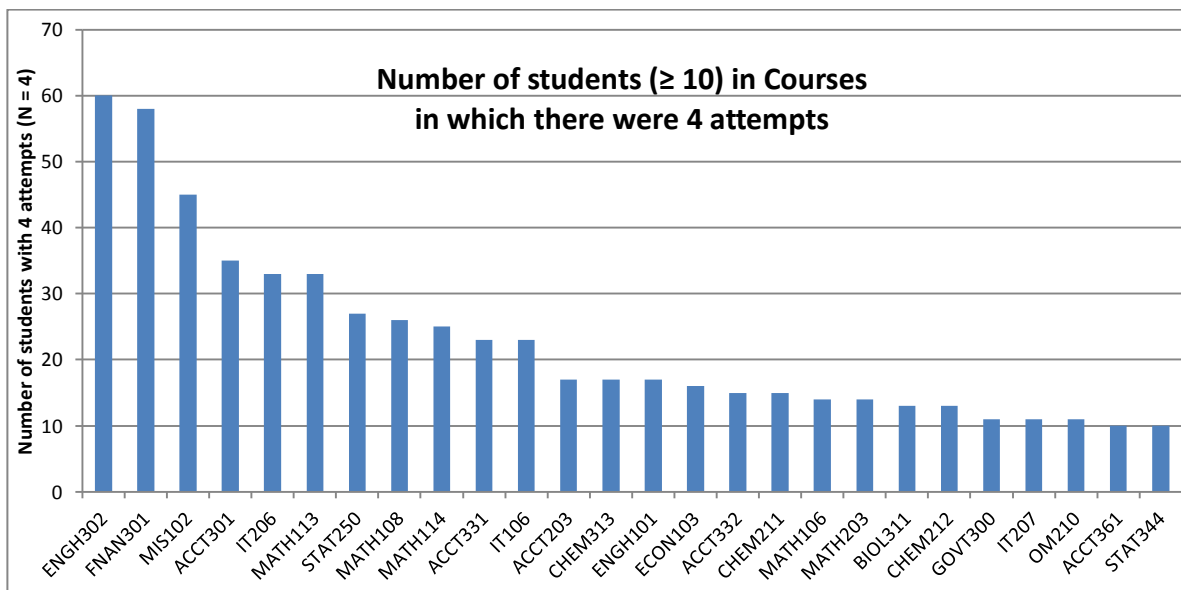
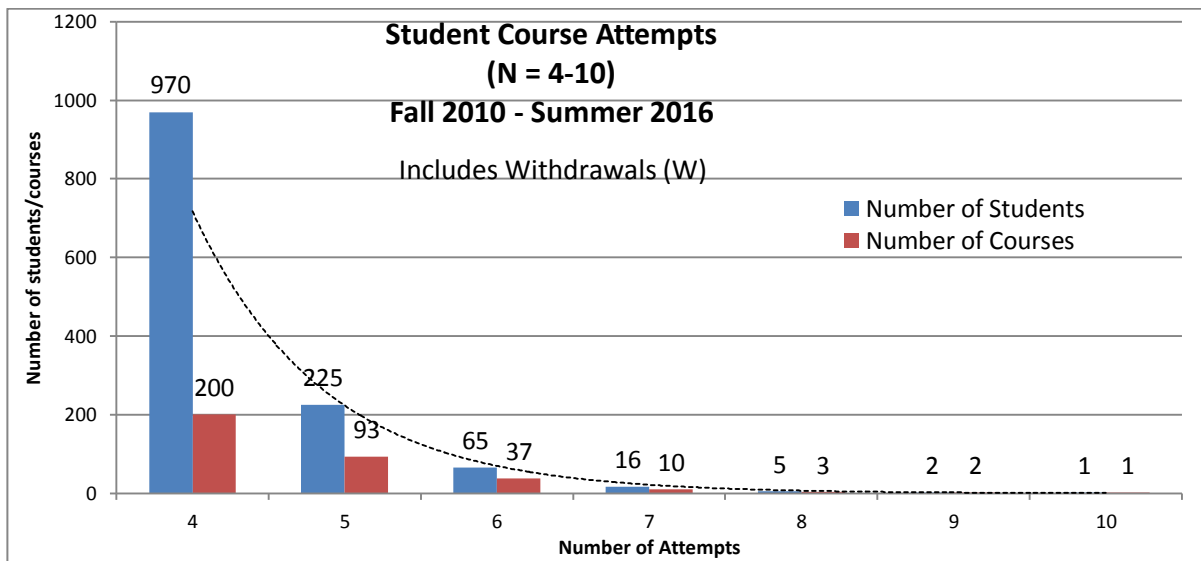
The intent is to counsel students before they are able to register for the 4th attempt.

Statistics for Fall 2010-Spring 2016, including summers (these data are very rough and include both graded attempts and W's and so the actual numbers of courses and student attempts are probably smaller):

There were 568 courses where at least one student attempted the course (graded or W) at least 3 times (~7000 student-attempts). In 368 of those courses, there were no attempts by any student beyond 3. So students were presumably satisfied with their 3rd attempt or decided not to attempt for a 4th time (either by choice or not). $368/568 = 65\%$

Of the remaining 200 courses (970 students), students stopped after a 4th attempt in 116 courses. $116/200 = 58\%$

86% of repeated courses ($N \geq 3$) come from 17 departments/academic units



Attachment B

First View of Proposed Changes to Bylaws of the Faculty Senate

Note: Proposed additions shown in underlined font. Proposed deletions shown in ~~strikethrough font~~.

BYLAWS OF THE FACULTY SENATE

~~(as revised October 6, 2010)~~

Article I Membership

Section 1.

The membership of the George Mason Faculty Senate shall be as prescribed by the Charter adopted ~~April 3, 1974~~ by the General Faculty of George Mason University, ~~clarified by the General Faculty May 21, 1975 and amended March 22, 1976, December 15, 1987, April 12, 1989, and March 30, 1994.~~

Eligibility to vote on matters before the Faculty Senate shall be limited to duly elected faculty members of the Faculty Senate. [Note: In the previous sentence, change italics to regular font.]

Section 2.

- a. The manner by which academic units entitled to representation in the Faculty Senate elect their senators shall be determined by the faculty of those units.
- b. The presiding officer of each collegiate unit shall certify ~~by May 15~~ to the Chair of the Faculty Senate names of the Senators chosen. Terms of Senators shall begin at the opening of the first Senate meeting of the academic year.
- c. Current records of the membership of the Senate shall be maintained by the Secretary for use by the Chair of the Senate and the Parliamentarian.

ARTICLE II Officers

Section 1.

a. The Chair of the Faculty Senate shall be elected from among the elected membership of the Senate at the May final 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 Chair 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 chair shall commence at the conclusion of the meeting at which he or she is elected. In the event the Chair cannot serve for the remainder of his or her term, an election of a new Chair will be held at the next regularly scheduled meeting following the procedures in Article II Sec. 1a. The term of office commences upon election and ends when a Chair is elected at the final regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year.

c. The Senate shall elect from ~~among its own number members~~ a Secretary at the first meeting of the academic year in September. Nominations for this position shall be presented by the Committee on Nominations; 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 Chair shall appoint a member of the Senate to serve when needed as Chair pro tem 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 after their appointment~~.

e. No elected officer shall serve in the same office for more than three consecutive terms.

Section 2.

a. The Chair of the Senate shall be the presiding officer. The Chair pro tempore shall be the presiding officer in the absence of the Chair.

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. In consultation with the Chair of the Senate, the Secretary shall prepare at least annually an appendix to the bylaws, which shall include lists of officers and standing committees of the Faculty Senate and of University Faculty Standing Committees, which report to the Senate, a summary of actions of the Faculty Senate pertaining to the organization and operation of the Faculty Senate, and summaries of the role of standing committees of the Senate. The appendix may include other information of continuing importance in the discretion of the Secretary and the Chair of the Senate.

c. The Sergeant(s)-at-Arms shall supervise balloting and assist the Chair in expediting the meetings of the Senate.

d. The Parliamentarian shall assist the Chair 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" ~~(revised)~~ except as the rules and procedures prescribed therein have been or shall be modified by adoption of these or of future bylaws or standing rules.

b. The presiding officer of all meetings of the Senate shall be the Chair of the Senate or the Chair pro tem.

c. The quorum for Senate meetings shall consist of a majority of the elected membership. ~~However, the quorum for authorizing conferral of degrees and for considering other matters related thereto shall be a minimum 20 percent of the whole Senate membership.~~

d. Members of the Faculty Senate or its committees may meet electronically, provided the technology used allows all members to hear each other simultaneously. 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. 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 voice vote.

Section 3.

Any person recognized by the Chair may participate in the discussion of any item of business brought forth upon the floor, but only members of the Senate may make and second motions, and vote.

Section 4.

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 may be **present during a closed session.** [Note: For the final five words of the previous sentence, change bold to regular font.]

Section 5.

- a. The Chair 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.
- 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 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.

Section 6.

Meetings of the Senate shall be convened on at least four Wednesday afternoons during each semester of the academic year, ~~beginning in September.~~

Section 7.

- a. On his or her own initiative the Chair may call a special meeting of the Senate. In response to any petition signed by 20 percent of the elected members of the Senate, the Chair must call a special meeting to be convened within six instructional days.
- b. 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.
- c. Only that business stipulated in the call to the special meeting may be transacted.

Section 8.

- a. Voting shall be by voice vote upon a call by the presiding officer for the "ayes" and "nays," or by division of the house upon a call from the floor, except that any member may request that a secret ballot be taken. When such a ballot is requested, the Secretary of the Senate shall be responsible for preparing, distributing, and counting the ballots with the assistance of the Sergeant(s)-at-Arms.
- b. Absentee and proxy ballots shall not be allowed.
- c. 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.
- d. 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 9.

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, but disposition of any item introduced without prior notice and information may be carried over to the next regular meeting of the Senate if five 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 10.

- a. The Secretary of the Senate shall prepare the minutes of all meetings of the Senate. The minutes shall be made available via the Faculty Senate web site for viewing by ~~distributed to the members of the Senate and all other interested parties, appropriate officers of the University, the general faculty of the University, one copy to the Board of Visitors of the University, and one copy to the Student Government.~~
- b. ~~One~~ A copy of the agenda and ~~one copy of the~~ minutes of every meeting shall be archived ~~preserved~~ as part of the permanent archives of the University. These documents shall be archived on the Faculty Senate web site and, thus, shall be kept in custody of the University Library and shall be available for inspection by any member of the University community.

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. Except as may be otherwise specified, the usual term of election to any standing committee shall be for two years.
- c. "Ad Hoc Committees" shall be those established by the Senate for consideration of special or transient 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 the month prior to the end of the academic year.

Section 2.

- a. Nominations for elected Senate positions to all standing committees except to the Committee on Nominations shall be prepared by the Committee on Nominations. The Committee on Nominations shall nominate one person for each available position. It shall take into account factors such as willingness to serve, previous Senate and committee experience, and the need to develop future Senate leadership. ~~Its nominations shall be circulated by t~~The Committee on Nominations shall circulate its nominations to the Senate in written form with the agenda for the first meeting of the academic year in September. Members of the Senate with the permission of prospective nominees may make further nominations from the floor at the ~~scheduled September meeting at which time when~~ the elections ~~will be 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 Committee on Nominations 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 of a tie vote that~~ no candidate for an office or for the last positions on an elected committee receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off vote will be held ~~among those between the two~~ candidates who receive the ~~tie-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 Committee on Nominations shall prepare a slate for distribution with the agenda of the next meeting of the Senate. 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 ~~plurality~~ 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 as stipulated in Article IV, Section 10, paragraph b.

Section 5.

Any Senate committee may be required by majority vote of the Senate to report to it at a specified later meeting any matter referred by action of the Senate to the charge of that committee. Upon receipt of its 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.

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, 11.28.17

Attachment C

New Business

Presentation from APAC, represented by Jeannie Brown Leonard

University Course Repeat Policy Proposal

Limit to three the number of times a student (degree-seeking or non-degree) may take any undergraduate course that is not repeatable for credit. Attempts beyond three require approval of the student's major academic advisor with oversight from the Student Academic Affairs unit in the respective schools/colleges. Only graded attempts are counted; if students withdraw from a course (W on the transcript), it is not counted as a graded attempt. Students who exhaust unit-level appeal processes may appeal to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.

Justification

The motivation behind the course repeat policy is to find a systematic way for academic advisors to engage with students to help them be successful in their chosen path or to help them discover an alternative path to their goals, perhaps one better suited to their strengths. Because students can earn multiple Fs in a course without affecting their GPA, this limit on course repeats would offer such a point of intervention. A second goal is consistency. We have different rules and processes based on school/college. Advisors would welcome the chance to intervene with students before a fourth attempt of a course and would work together to develop guidelines for granting permission to override the limit. This policy is not intended to lead to termination from the major.

Peer Institutions

The range of approaches is broad from no limits on course repeats at James Madison University to repeats being allowed only with Dean's permission at UVA.

NOTES

N=3 attempts would be the maximum university-wide. Units that currently have or wish to have a lower N may do so (N=2, for example). Units are free to determine the criteria for allowing students to exceed the attempt limit. This policy would have no effect on units' Termination from the Major policy.

Implementation and communication details will be carefully planned to address:

Request forms

Override criteria

Communication during second and third attempt

Communication and plan for students enrolled in attempt 3, 4 or more in fall 2018

Removal of restriction when permission for fourth or subsequent attempt is granted

This policy proposal has support from the academic advising community, schools/colleges Dean's Offices, Undergraduate Council, and the Collaborative for Undergraduate Education membership.