

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
AGENDA FOR THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING  
FEBRUARY 7, 2018  
Robinson Hall B113, 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.**

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Approval of the Minutes of December 6, 2017**
- III. **Announcements**
  - Provost Wu
  - Additional Faculty Senate Meeting: March 28 3:00 – 4:15
- IV. **Committee Reports**
  - A. **Senate Standing Committees**
    - Executive Committee*
      - Proposed Standing Rule – General Faculty elections [Attachment A](#)
      - Academic Policies*
        - University Course Repeat Policy [Attachment B](#)
      - Budget and Resources*
      - Faculty Matters*
      - Nominations*
        - Effective Teaching Committee nominee: Thomas Wood, Associate Professor, School of Integrative Studies
        - Organizations and Operations nominee: Open
      - Organization and Operations*
        - Motion to Amend the ByLaws of the Faculty Senate – 2<sup>nd</sup> view and vote [Attachment C](#)
    - B. **Other Committees/Faculty Representatives**
      - Mason Core Committee – Melissa Broeckelman-Post
      - Preview of Proposed Changes to IT/Ethics [Attachment D](#)
- V. **New Business**
- VI. **Remarks for the Good of the General Faculty**
- VII. **Adjournment**

## Attachment A

As stated in the Faculty Handbook (Section 1.2.5), the “Faculty Senate will assist in conducting elections by the General Faculty.” The most frequent example of this is in the election of faculty representatives to the Board of Visitors. To date, these elections have been conducted by mail, whereby the Faculty Senate distributes a pdf of a ballot by email, and faculty are required to print it, mark their votes, sign and mark the envelope, and deliver in person or by campus mail to the Faculty Senate office. The Senate Clerk then checks each envelope to ensure that the individual is eligible to vote and has not voted already, and then removes the ballot to be counted. After this process, the Clerk hand counts the ballots to tally the results.

The Executive Committee has discussed the possibility of using electronic voting *for these types of elections by the entire General Faculty only* (not for votes of the Faculty Senate). To allow for this, the committee **makes the following motion:**

To add the following new rule (as rule #11, with the current #11 and #12 moving to #12 and #13, respectively) to the Standing Rules of the Faculty Senate:

When conducting elections by the General Faculty, the Faculty Senate may use electronic voting, provided that the method for voting (a) allows votes to be cast anonymously and (b) provides a means for ensuring that only members of the General Faculty are able to vote.

## Attachment B

### Academic Policies Committee

Agenda Item for Feb. 7, 2018

The Academic Policies Committee **moves** that academic policy **AP.1.3.4 Repeating a Course** be changed as shown in the revisions on the next page.

### University Course Repeat Policy Proposal

Limit to three the number of times a student (degree-seeking or non-degree) may take an 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.

- The limit of N=3 attempts would be the university-wide maximum. 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.

### Justification

The purpose for changing the course repeat policy is to provide a systematic way for academic advisors to intervene and counsel students who have not successfully completed a course after three graded attempts. The academic advisors from the student's major and the program offering the course should work together to develop guidelines for the student before granting permission to override the limit. This university-wide policy is not intended to lead to termination from the major.

**Statistics** for Fall 2010-Spring 2016, including summers (this data is very rough and includes 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. In 341 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 a 4th time (either by choice or because of program restrictions).  $341/568 = 60\%$

Of the remaining 227 courses, students stopped after a 4th attempt in 116 courses.  $116/227 = 51\%$

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

### Proposed Revisions

The 2017-18 University Catalog **AP.1.3.4 Repeating a Course** was revised by the Faculty Senate on Oct. 4, 2017. That is the text on which the currently proposed revisions on the next page are based. The first page shows the proposed revisions; the second page shows the proposed final policy.

### AP.1.3.4 Repeating a Course

*[The 1st paragraph regarding Federal Regulations was moved to the end of the section.]*

Some courses are annotated in the catalog as "repeatable for credit." These are courses which students may repeat and receive additional credit for each time the course is taken. The maximum number of credits is specified in each course's description. Special topics and independent study courses are examples. ~~As long as students do not exceed the maximum allowable credits for repeatable courses, all takings of the course count for credit and in calculation of the student's GPA.~~ All grades and credits earned are included in the calculation of the student's GPA up to the maximum allowable credits. In cases where the student has exceeded allowable credits in a repeatable class, ~~the transcript will exclude~~ the grade and credits of the earliest ~~taking~~ registration of the class for which credit was earned will not be included in the calculation of the GPA.

*[The paragraph regarding the policy for Graduate students, originally here, was moved to near the end of the section.]*

~~For undergraduate classes not repeatable for credit, undergraduate degree students may repeat courses for which they seek a higher grade.~~ Undergraduate students (degree-seeking or non-degree) may repeat undergraduate courses that are not repeatable for credit. There is a limit of three graded attempts for all courses. Academic programs may have more restrictive limits. A W does not count as a graded attempt. This policy applies only to repeating the same course, or courses that are designated in the catalog as equivalent. Academic programs may ~~disallow students from repeating certain high-demand courses simply for the purpose of improving a satisfactory grade.~~ Academic programs may restrict repeats of certain courses by all students. However, a student who is not a major in the program may be given permission to repeat a course after consultation between the academic program and the student's major program. ~~restrict all students from repeating certain courses or restrict students from repeating high-demand courses for the purpose of improving a satisfactory grade.~~ Academic programs may restrict repeats of certain courses by students in their major. Excessive repeats may result in termination from the major. (See AP 5.2.4 Termination from the Major.) Appeals to this policy begin with the student's academic advisor.

The grade received in a repeated course will replace the earlier grade in the calculation of the cumulative GPA, even if the more recent grade is lower. ~~No adjustment to the cumulative GPA will be made when the grade in the repeated course is W.~~ A grade in a Mason course will not be excluded from the cumulative GPA based on a subsequent taking of an equivalent course via study elsewhere. Duplicate credit is not earned. All ~~instances of~~ courses taken and their grades remain part of the student's transcript. The exclusion of earlier grades ~~and credits of repeated courses from the calculation of the GPA~~ will not change the academic standing or dean's list notations for the earlier semester. A grade in a Mason course will not be excluded from the GPA based on taking an equivalent course at another university.

*[The paragraph regarding the policy for Graduate students, below, was moved from near the beginning of the section.]*

Graduate students who have earned a satisfactory grade in a course that is not repeatable for credit are not permitted to repeat the course for replacement credit. Grades of B- and higher are considered satisfactory unless the academic program specifies a higher minimum satisfactory grade. Students must obtain permission from their academic program to repeat a course in which they have earned an unsatisfactory grade. Each unit establishes procedures for granting such permission. Duplicate credit is not earned. When a course is repeated, all credits attempted are used to determine warning, termination, or dismissal; the transcript shows grades for all courses attempted; and only one grade per course may be presented on the degree application.

*[Note: The paragraph regarding Federal Regulations, below, was moved here from the beginning of the section.]*

Effective July 1, 2011 Federal Regulations no longer allow federal student aid funds to apply to courses that a student has already taken twice with a passing grade. This limitation does not include courses that are "repeatable for credit" as described ~~below~~ above. Students should contact the Office of Student Financial Aid to determine how repeated course work would affect their financial aid eligibility.

### **AP.1.3.4 Repeating a Course**

Some courses are annotated in the catalog as "repeatable for credit." These are courses which students may repeat and receive additional credit for each time the course is taken. The maximum number of credits is specified in each course's description. Special topics and independent study courses are examples. All grades and credits earned are included in the calculation of the student's GPA up to the maximum allowable credits. In cases where the student has exceeded allowable credits in a repeatable class, the grade and credits of the earliest registration of the class for which credit was earned will not be included in the calculation of the GPA.

Undergraduate students (degree-seeking or non-degree) may repeat undergraduate courses that are not repeatable for credit. There is a limit of three graded attempts for all courses. Academic programs may have more restrictive limits. A W does not count as a graded attempt. This policy applies only to repeating the same course, or courses that are designated in the catalog as equivalent. Academic programs may restrict all students from repeating certain courses or restrict students from repeating high-demand courses for the purpose of improving a satisfactory grade. Academic programs may restrict repeats of certain courses by students in their major. Excessive repeats may result in termination from the major. (See AP 5.2.4 Termination from the Major.) Appeals to this policy begin with the student's academic advisor.

The grade received in a repeated course will replace the earlier grade in the calculation of the GPA, even if the more recent grade is lower. Duplicate credit is not earned. All courses taken and their grades remain part of the student's transcript. The exclusion of earlier grades and credits from the calculation of the GPA will not change the academic standing or dean's list notations for the earlier semester. A grade in a Mason course will not be excluded from the GPA based on taking an equivalent course at another university.

Graduate students who have earned a satisfactory grade in a course that is not repeatable for credit are not permitted to repeat the course for replacement credit. Grades of B- and higher are considered satisfactory unless the academic program specifies a higher minimum satisfactory grade. Students must obtain permission from their academic program to repeat a course in which they have earned an unsatisfactory grade. Each unit establishes procedures for granting such permission. Duplicate credit is not earned. When a course is repeated, all credits attempted are used to determine warning, termination, or dismissal; the transcript shows grades for all courses attempted; and only one grade per course may be presented on the degree application.

Effective July 1, 2011 Federal Regulations no longer allow federal student aid funds to apply to courses that a student has already taken twice with a passing grade. This limitation does not include courses that are "repeatable for credit" as described above. Students should contact the Office of Student Financial Aid to determine how repeated course work would affect their financial aid eligibility.

## Attachment C

# BYLAWS OF THE FACULTY SENATE

*(as revised ~~on~~ 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.

### 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 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 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 after the conclusion of the meeting at which he or she is elected~~ the day after Spring Commencement. 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 the day after Spring Commencement.
- c. The Senate shall elect from 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 ~~after their appointment~~ of the academic year.

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)" 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 may participate in Faculty Senate meetings electronically, provided the technology used allows all members to hear each other simultaneously. Members of Faculty Senate

Committees and University 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. 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.

## **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. 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 publicly available via the Faculty Senate website ~~distributed to the members of the Senate, 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 ~~preserved as part of~~ archived in the permanent University archives of the University. These documents shall also be archived on the Faculty Senate website shall be kept in custody of the University Library and shall be available for inspection viewing by any member of the University community.

## **ARTICLE V Committees of The Senate**

### **Section I.**

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 during 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~~ 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, 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 majority plurality 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 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, Revised 2/7/18***

## Attachment D

### Proposed IT Outcomes

Approved by Mason Core Committee on 1/29/2018

Information technology and computing can significantly augment humans' ability to produce, consume, process, and communicate information. Thus, students need to understand ways to use such technology to enhance their lives, careers, and society, while being mindful of challenges such as security, source reliability, automation, and ethical implications. These factors have made it essential for students to understand how to effectively navigate the evolving technological landscape. IT courses offered in the majors may focus on disciplinary applications and concerns of information technology.

IT courses meet the following learning outcomes:

- Students will understand the principles of information storage, exchange, security, and privacy and be aware of related ethical issues.
- Students will become critical consumers of digital information; they will be capable of selecting and evaluating appropriate, relevant, and trustworthy sources of information.
- Students can use appropriate information technologies to organize and analyze information and use it to guide decision-making.
- Students will be able to choose and apply appropriate algorithmic methods to solve a problem.

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***For reference: Current IT/Ethics Outcomes, which will be deleted***

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

Almost no area of academic, professional, or personal life is untouched by the information technology revolution. Success in college and beyond requires computer and information literacies that are flexible enough to change with a changing IT environment and adaptable to new problems and tasks.

The purpose of the information technology requirement is to ensure that students achieve an essential understanding of information technology infrastructure encompassing systems and devices; learn to make the most of the Web and other network resources; protect their digital data and devices; take advantage of latest technologies; and become more sophisticated technology users and consumers.

Courses meeting the "IT only" requirement must address learning outcomes 1 and 2, and one additional outcome. Courses meeting "IT with Ethics component" must address outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 5. Courses meeting the only IT Ethics component must address outcomes 3 and 5.

1. Students will be able to use technology to locate, access, evaluate, and use information, and appropriately cite resources from digital/electronic media.
2. Students will understand the core IT concepts in a range of current and emerging technologies and learn to apply appropriate technologies to a range of tasks.
3. Students will understand many of the key ethical, legal and social issues related to information technology and how to interpret and comply with ethical principles, laws, regulations, and institutional policies.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate, create, and collaborate effectively using state-of-the-art information technologies in multiple modalities.
5. Students will understand the essential issues related to information security, how to take precautions and use techniques and tools to defend against computer crimes.

**Required:** One approved 3-credit course that meets all IT requirements, or completion of an appropriate combination of courses.