

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 17, 2015
Johnson Center Meeting Room A (325), 3:00-4:15 p.m.

Present: Jim Bennett, Charlene Douglas, Mark Houck, Tim Leslie, Keith Renshaw, Joe Scimecca, Suzanne Slayden, Susan Trencher, J.J. Davis, Kris Smith, S. David Wu.

I. Approval of Minutes of October 20, 2015: The minutes were approved.

II. Announcements

Online Evaluation of Instruction: Chair Douglas thanked Dr. Kris Smith, Associate Provost, Institutional Research and Reporting. Kris is transitioning out of GMU (into retirement). Present equipment aging, soon unable to get maintenance contract. When we last did an in-depth review, one of the things committee wanted was different formats for different types of courses, such as labs, seminars, etc. We did not have the resources to do this. Flexibility for faculty, departments, deans to customize surveys, have to have second set of question to use now. Process to date: review options, shared with Effective Teaching Committee. The Architectural Standards Board (ASB) decides whether (software/product) is secure and viable (for Mason). After ASB evaluation, then bring to Faculty Senate for review. Kris noted no decision would be made without input from faculty.

Some features evaluated include the cost, effectiveness of products. Apps for smart devices to use right in classroom, cannot do this now. Advantages of electronic version include results received more quickly, no more lost packets. Faculty wanted to receive electronic copies of open-ended responses, unable to do this before; as well as view with responses in context, cannot do in current online survey.

Discussion/Questions:

Are not open-ended responses supposed to be confidential to professor? Who has access to them? Instances where chairs may have received open-ended responses also. Only those authorized may access them – concerns expressed whether can be limited to those authorized. Provost Wu observed to some extent electronic version easier to control.

Back to process: Reviewing products – Effective Teaching Committee, Architectural Standards Board – initially turned down parallel paper/software proposal. Architectural Standards Board refused to support it because of software compatibility, security risks, whether software can be linked to university.

There is a lot of front work put in before faculty consultation. For some reason we need a final answer before we come to faculty?

Provost Wu met with the Effective Teaching Committee. Committee charge asks for review Course Evaluation process every three years, they did a study. Method of assessment in education to content does matter – look at bias, etc. They did a fairly thorough evaluation of literature. Scantron technology is essentially going out of date.

Kris Smith noted that to purchase new software and equipment and then put on scantron servers is ten times more expensive to maintain process. Scanning is cost prohibitive given volume we have. An Executive Committee member warned “sometimes saving money ... costs more in the long run.” Provost Wu: Cut \$6.5 M in Provost budget includes part in Kris’s and other areas, implications when you save costs, have to find more efficiencies.

The charge of the Effective Teaching Committee is not to evaluate technology but the pedagogy piece. Several committee members strongly objected to making decision about such an important issue, central to core mission of faculty, based on cash. We really care about faculty governance – if we are not getting enough online responses now, then pedagogy says it is not useful. Also research saying evaluation impact on raises – carrot is gone, just left with the stick. The Committee requested data on the numbers, maintenance contracts, what everything costs.

Kris Smith: If we improve technology, we can respond more rapidly to faculty requests for changes. If this is not the structure you see for moving it forward, then the Faculty Senate can review: it is not a “done deal”.

Provost Wu reiterated it is not a done deal; Kris has to do administrative due diligence. He invited the Effective Teaching Committee to come to Academic Council.

Executive Committee members also observed:

- Price to maintain paper evaluations not just going up but evaluations will keep costing (more) each year.
- VSE: requirement for Promotion and Tenure Committees to include data, but not comments. This would change process at my school.
- COS also requires Promotion and Tenure committee to include data, but not comments.
- Teaching evaluations are a factor, but not the only one – work with graduate students, peer observations, service also used.
- Do evaluation results differ if administered during class time or outside classroom?

- How narrowly to focus this discussion? Is the change from paper/pencil to electronic so integral? Or is content of survey a separate issue? Can process and content be separated?
- Cost equipment issue – because of that we have to fundamentally change how to do course evaluations. Or perhaps rethink this entirely as a way to measure teaching effectiveness?

Provost Wu: This requires a thoughtful discussion before we move forward.

SPSS Software Download: Please see [Attachment A](#) for inclusion under Announcements.

III. Progress reports, business, and agenda items from Senate Standing Committees

A. Academic Policies –no report.

B. Budget and Resources – Susan Trencher: We will make yearly request for faculty salary data.

C. Faculty Matters – Keith Renshaw and Joe Scimecca

We are dealing with two issues from O&O – (1) to pull together information on trigger warning, discussion of sensitive information in class for development of policy. (2) Do tenured faculty still have to bring in 50% of salary (in research funding)?

Discussion: Possibly a Faculty Senate issue as different schools have different practices. Is there a new university policy or not? Provost Wu: A variant on research faculty arrangement; COS is one of few colleges to have arrangement of 50 E&G funding; 50 research funding. Some faculty brought in on this. He believes this was a longstanding practice for recent faculty they would not otherwise be able to recruit.

D. Nominations – no report.

E. Organization and Operations - no report.

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion

Larisa Prinz – Retail Unit Coordinator, Mason Dining

A long serving member of the Dining Committee noted discussion about a separate “Faculty Dining Place” for twelve years. Sr. VP Davis noted two issues: better for entire community to go to venues and be together and be seen together as a way to incentivize faculty and staff to take advantage of (Byte card)? Does not make financial sense to bring lunches in dining halls. Is there a place such as Bistro or to find a temporary space for faculty and staff to come in and bring their lunch? Larger big dream option to have a Faculty Club with memberships. Byte card a lower-cost option.

Jim Bennett and Susan Trencher serve on the University Dining Committee. Byte card advertized in Mason News, problem there is no decent place to sit. Charlene asked the Dining Committee to report what choices are. Not for inclusion on December 2nd Faculty Senate meeting agenda.

FERPA and the release of student information:

At graduation time, the names of graduates and other information are released to Richmond (see list below). At Freshmen Orientation, if a student chooses to opt out, the information cannot be released to Richmond.

FERPA information releasable:

1. Student Name
2. Major/Field of Study
 1. Class: Fr, So, Jun, Sen
3. Enrollment Status
 1. UG or GR; FT or PT
4. Dates of Attendance
5. Degrees Conferred
 1. Including Dates
6. Awards and Honors
7. Address
8. Date of Birth
9. Place of Birth
10. Telephone Number(s)
11. Email Address
12. Previous Institutions
13. Photographs
14. Participation in Officially Recognized Sports and Activities
15. Physical Characteristics of Athletes

Discussion: What do other Virginia universities do? Provost Wu suggested contacting the Student Data Access Committee – Eve Dauer and Kris Smith serve on the committee. (Post meeting Chair Douglas contacted Linda Harber (VP- Human Resources): FERPA covers students, FOIA covers faculty; she has no connection with FERPA). Charlene will invite Eve Dauer to attend an Executive Committee meeting in the spring.

University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee – Tim Leslie

Impetus: University Undergraduate Activity:

- There is very little oversight at the University level. More specifically, there exists no formal approval stage (pre-BOV) where concerns about curriculum in other colleges can be discussed. Curriculum changes that pass college curriculum committees are approved internally.

- The new budget model will increase pressure on many units to broaden their offerings. Many risk growing into existing programs, often in other colleges.
- A clearinghouse of curriculum to enable a level of consistency of undergraduate offerings.

Existing Structures

- Cross-College Curriculum Committee Mission: The Cross-College Curriculum Committee provides university-level oversight for those **courses and programs that involve multiple colleges and schools** or that have a particularly broad impact. The Cross-College Committee is advisory to the Provost and Executive Vice President and is chaired by the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education; committee approval thus represents both university-level faculty and administrative approval. Since 2012, the CCCC has seen 3 degree programs, 6 minors, 40 course proposals (almost all UNIV, PROV, AE, or EAP – no college level path. (Source: Provost Website, Blackboard)
- Undergraduate Curriculum – a lot of Data in the Stream (See [Attachment B](#))
- Graduate Council “Duties and Responsibilities”: The Graduate Council, through the Graduate Council Chairperson (Council Chair), shall advise the Provost regarding
 - a. academic policies governing graduate education (advisory capacity for UG only)
 - b. approval of new and revised graduate courses, programs, and degrees;**
 - c. review and assessment of graduate programs;**
 - d. planning and attainment of graduate education strategic goals;
 - e. policies and resources for graduate student support. (Source: Provost Website)

Comparison with Program Applications (See [Attachment C](#))

Proposal: Charge the Provost’s Office to rename the Cross-College Curriculum Committee as well as formalize its membership and bylaws:

- Such that it acts in an approval and review function for all undergraduate programs and courses at the University
- To include consistent Faculty (Senate) involvement. Current membership of the CCCC is almost completely Associate Deans

Discussion and Questions:

- What is relationship of this to Graduate Council? Recalled changes which caused problems with the Faculty Senate. To keep Academic Policies with the Faculty Senate, to make sure stays at university-level.
- Committee members should be on the ground with programs, not associate deans.
- Is there any way to delete “advisory capacity” to write in with limits?
- You want proof of concept, then to come up with by-laws to deal with details. Needs to go to the Faculty Senate – the present “C4” committee very limited.
- Members of each college’s curriculum committees need to be members of this committee.

- To establish as a new university standing committee.
- Deans have raised to Provost the need for a group to arbitrate this.

Multilingual Learner Task Force Report will be presented for discussion at the December 2nd Faculty Senate meeting, confirmed with Janette Muir, Task Force Chair.

VI. Agenda Items for December 2, 2015 FS Meeting

- Draft FS Minutes November 4, 2015
- Announcements
- SPSS Software Downloads (*Announcements*)
- Report from the Effective Teaching Committee (*Other Committees*)
- Multilingual Learner Task Force Report (*New Business, Updates and Discussion*)

VII: Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Caniano

Faculty Senate clerk

ATTACHMENT A

SPSS software can be downloaded to GMU owned laptops and desktops. Requestors can contact the Support Center and ask to have SPSS loaded on their PC.

Phone: 703-993-8870

Fax: 703-993-3347

E-mail: support@gmu.edu

Online: [Submit a Request](#)

Hours of Operation: Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Desktop Support will contact the requestor and set up an appointment with the requestor

When Desktop Support arrives at the requestors location, they will contact the ITS Logistics group to confirm the requestors eligibility to have the software downloaded based on the SPSS software license terms. The terms are based on the person's role (example – for research or learning) and device (university owned). If the requestor meets the software license eligibility requirements Desktop Support will load the software.

Attachment B

Undergraduate Curriculum – A lot of Data in the Stream

Program Proposals
15-16 to Date

Inactivation	Programs	2
	Concentrations	3
Requirement Modifications	Degree Req.	100
	Minor Req.	33
	Concentration Req.	35
	Title	6
New	Degree	2
	Concentration	4
	Certificate	2
	Minor	10

Undergraduate Course Proposals, by Type and Year

AY	New Courses	Changes in Title, Credits, or Repeat Status	Grade Mode Changes	Pre-Req Changes
2011	284	559	48	1041
2012	100	513	36	679
2013	213	294	87	696
2014	118	277	48	753

Source: Registrar

Attachment C

Comparison with Program Applications

2015-16 To Date		UG	GR
Inactivations	Programs	2	15 (mostly cert)
	Concentrations	3	17
Modifications	Degree Req	100	107
	Minor Req	33	
	Admissions Req		2
	Concentration Req	35	42
	Title	6	14
New	Degree	2	2
	Concentration	4	13
	Certificate	2	24
	Minor	10	
	Accelerated Masters		10