

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, March 20, 2017, 3:00 –4:30 p.m.
Johnson Center room 325 (Meeting Room A)

Present: Alan Abramson, Mark Addleson, Lisa Billingham, David Burge, J.J.Davis, Charlene Douglas, Renate Guilford, Tim Leslie, Michelle Marks, Keith Renshaw, Suzanne Slayden, S. David Wu

I. Approval of Minutes of January 23, 2017 and February 13, 2017: The minutes were approved.

II. Announcements

Provost Wu: Wiley will be a big undertaking and a good example of Michelle's new position. Takes a tremendous amount of effort to pull it off. And there are three projects she is working on – the other two are (1) FAST LANE – extending our collaboration with NOVA; ambition to become national model for union/collaboration. (2) Fenwick – old Library wing is now being renovated into a mixed exchange space, where students can do group projects. Starting with OSCAR students and a few entrepreneurship teams of students – delegated to them for a few years. Minor renovations to be done around June 6th. Other news: In the US News and World Report rankings, some of our programs ranked quite well: History – now 44th in US, Public Affairs 41st, Antonin Scalia Law School 41st, Nursing, 54th.

SVP Davis reported good news – conference report with House and Senate better, we are working how to balance our budget. BOV Orientation Session will take place on April 20th; a two hour session to get them ready. We hope they will vote for a tuition increase in May. We will try to do a fairly aggressive tuition increase (3% discounted for out-of-state). Nits and bits – governor can still line-item veto. Right now classified slated 3%, faculty 2% - to go into effect in July. We are authorized to go up to 3% raise for faculty, but all extra has to be funded entirely by Mason – currently working to find \$ in GMU budget to support that. Also working on issue of salary minimums for faculty. Trying to make compensation a priority, but with continued state disinvestment, we really need to be able to move on tuition increase. We are spending a lot of time with the student body. Students not happy about it, but care a lot about the condition of their education; have to be thoughtful and measured. Faculty have been asking about health insurance increase – no clarity yet on premiums, etc. for next year.

President Cabrera will attend April 5, 2017 FS Meeting.

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

A. Academic Policies – no report.

B. Budget and Resources – no report.

C. Faculty Matters – Alan Abramson

Last year's Faculty Evaluation of Administrators was released. The new survey is going out soon, please encourage faculty to participate. We will have a discussion about timeliness on our part. Is the evaluation being used at all? He asked Provost Wu for his suggestions.

Discussion: Historically we (the Faculty Senate) said we would do it, and so we have. However, the meaningfulness of it isn't clear. Provost Wu stated that he has put together a reappointment/review process for all his senior staff including the deans. Typically, an evaluation committee appointed to conduct this process, and it usually involves a survey of faculty in the entire school. Provost's Office gives committee series of questions. Committee can change questions as they see fit. Provost doesn't know how strongly correlated the outcomes are. It serves as one but not the only input. Technically the committee designs questions do. We are aware of the Faculty Evaluation of Administrators; we have a separate annual review on file. Some discussion of how to coordinate these processes to make the FEA more meaningful. Alan to follow up with Amber Hannush in the Provost's Office.

D. Nominations – Mark Addleson

We seek a nominee to serve on the Academic Integrity Advisory Committee. There will also be a call for nominations to serve on an Advisory Council to Redesign the Student Experience for AY 17-18 as requested by David Burge. We just distributed a call for nominations to fill four slots on the BOV Committees.

E. Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham

We are working to send out letters to Deans for allocation of Senate seats for AY 17-18.

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion

Explanation of Wiley contract – Michelle Marks

A 16 page "Mason/Wiley Partnership Fact Sheet/FAQs" was distributed to Executive Committee members in advance of the meeting. After offering a brief overview, Vice President Marks asked for faculty input and questions:

1. [University Policy on Copyright Works \(3302\)](#) uses three examples: directed works, sponsored programs and significant use of university resources. Are these part of the Wiley contract in context of faculty who create the course, faculty who teach the course?

Vice President Marks: The Wiley contract is silent; it is a Mason policy issue. Under directed works, institution pays the instructor additionally for a particular product (in this case, development of online course); thus, our Intellectual Property Policy (applies) because the university owns the course. The institution pays for substantial use/development of resources.

This should be made clear in the written document that is distributed.

2. Can you provide a sample Wiley contract including school materials contracted and remunerated by the institution? To see this as a separate item of inclusion in addition to the regular contract.

Vice President Marks agreed to do so, Renate Guilford is working on a sample now.

Vice President Marks noted deans have relative discretion - can pay \$8K for faculty to stand up a course. We have modeled out in budget \$8K minimum. University historically paid about \$4K, in absence of Wiley partnership ... talking with deans, chairs, programs directors on one's own. When into partnership with Wiley, wanted to increase faculty support – this is one way of doing so.

3. Is this ad hoc in the financial mode?

Response: Whether or not contract piece with faculty developing that – we would do this internally, not through Wiley.

Senator: We will need to get this out with the Faculty Senate Meeting agenda (to be distributed in nine days).

Vice President Marks: appreciates any feedback you can provide.

4. There is a lot of creative thought and there are several new initiatives across in the institution. Is there a way to build a set process to deal with these kinds of questions?

Vice President Marks: You (Tim Leslie, who also serves as Chair of Academic Initiatives Committee) and I have discussed this, would like to invite your help and advice re better ways to communicate, so people can go and learn on their time to learn about things, to increase transparency. We want to have a repository, a level of outreach, push.

Chair Renshaw noted the Human Resources group is following up at university level trying to communicate new website, which appeals to 18 year old who do not know what yet to do with their life.... He offers to collect suggestions.

5. A question from many faculty will be, as someone in the university not benefitting from this, what is it about?

Vice President Marks: Masters' programs decide if they wish to opt in at all; some programs were faced with viability in going forward as just ground-based, and those are programs who are likely to want to engage in this partnership. As of now, these programs all plan to continue ground-based programs. There is a desire to grow other online programs in Education and Public Policy (for example) for the future – but only if those programs want to do so.

(Leslie) So that's different from a pure profit-based model – that's more about "can we continue to exist?"

(Renshaw) From my unit's perspective, Psychology is looking at this, and considering how it might help us evolve in two separate ways – reaching new audience we could not reach before, and support academic mission of GMU doctoral program with revenues (that can be funneled specifically toward graduate student support).

(Leslie) But your MA programs won't "die" if you don't.

Vice President Marks: We had a desire to go slow enough to do this right. We want to eventually grow to about 15 MA programs at GMU over the next few years. We're staggering them, we decided to do it in a methodical way and do it right. And in the end, units make decisions.

(Douglas) Online need to have targeted courses with sufficient students to sign on to them. Must have critical mass of growing programs. Some of our MA programs died on the vine. We run BSN online program – in the past five years, for-profit institutions are eating up the market share. If we leave it on the table, others will do it.

Vice President Marks cited the example of huge demand for social work online programs (which still require internships), but the GMU faculty in Social Work are not ready; they are also going through an accreditation process. So we are not moving on that, because the faculty are not interested.

(Renshaw) So if they're not interested, not pushing it.

(Addleson) So are the faculty doing this prodded into this as a do or die thing? Or is it a genuine enthusiasm? What are the internal dynamics?

To better address that, can we reach out to programs that are going online, to invite a few faculty members running those programs to attend the FS meeting?

(Renshaw) That's a great idea – I think there are a lot of misconceptions about this. For instance, when we looked into it for Psychology, they talked about class sizes of 20 to 25 per section, not

a thousand people per class. This helps us to reach people who want to study but cannot attend.

6. Why the 8 week model? Is it a full semester? What about sequential courses?

Vice President Marks: At graduate level, standard desired by students to take one or two classes per 8 week course throughout the year. We need to conform to that calendar. In one month we go live with new programs, separate from traditional calendar. Not new for university, compressed format also used in summer, executive education programs, an intense number of credit hours.

Vice President Marks added that the revenue stream = 57% for Mason, 43% for Wiley for the first few years, then to 45/55 split thereafter. Of that 55% that comes to Mason, 10% to central support offices such as IT; 45% to college. Colleges figure out how to distribute revenue.

Sr. VP JJ Davis noted negotiations often 50:50 or more to business that does the marketing etc. Feels 57% 43% to Wiley a very adept deal at macro level. We tried to constrain central costs as much as we could. Provost Wu added the spirit is that most of the money goes to unit. Faculty has to decide, then negotiate with their respective deans.

The Provost Office has had whole departments in the room to see how they build courses etc. that will allow in long term bringing in more faculty. Each school does things very differently. Perhaps it is better not to highlight a specific program.

7. No add on to Blackboard contract?

Vice President Marks: Correct, we'll stick with Blackboard.

Okay, thanks for coming – we'll gather feedback and additional questions and send to you for further editing of document. Ideally, we'll have it ready for distribution with FS agenda in 9 days. Happy to look at the next revision again, if you'd like.

Vice President Marks: That would be great. Thank you all.

Student Experience Survey & NOVA "Fastlanes" Project – David Burge

David Burge, Vice President for Enrollment Management, distributed the first of two documents:

Mason and NOVA2.0 : fastlanes ...to a bachelor's degree (an 8 page power-point presentation)

He noted we receive the lion's share of NOVA transfer students in VA. It is a special relationship. About half of our undergraduates at graduation come through as transfer students. We are way ahead of VCU (61%) and ODU (50%) in terms of our graduation rate of transfer students (69%). Basically due to who

we are and focus on instruction and student experience. More and more students attend quality K-12 programs in Northern Virginia and are better prepared when they get to us. Obstacles: nationally 80% of community college students begin with the goal to earn a four-year degree; only 14% achieve a bachelor's degree after six years. At NOVA, 80% students begin with goal to earn a four-year degree; 20% students achieve a bachelor's degree after six years. We tend to do better with younger transfer students with higher socio-economic students. Concept of reverse transfer – student leaves community college without enough credits and may come to us at any point from NOVA with less than a degree.

Questions/Discussion: Regarding those students who earn CORE credits at NOVA: Are we encouraging a system to take courses at NOVA inferior to ours? These concerns are very crucial to continued success. If we encourage foundation courses to be elsewhere, how are we tweaking our educational outcomes?

Provost Wu: A philosophical debate. Do we erode our own base, or are we expanding our base? About ten years ago, about 10% high school students go to community college, now about 25% high school students do. We are blessed with a really excellent secondary school system. Higher education is not accessible to a large part of population; reality different, not arguing better off with us or community college, but they want to get a four-year degree. A lot of them waste time at community college. So we can help them to use their time there better?

If our costs are keeping lower level students away, why not discount lower level courses?

Provost Wu: Their courses cost about half of ours.

Sr. VP JJ Davis framed the question this way: Should we cut to discount and compete with NOVA? No, not a winning strategy. 1 in 5 northern Virginia high school students choose NOVA today.

David Burge: Both on ground and online opportunities co-existing both places at the same time
Slides 7 and 8 outlined 2 Institutions Collaborating to Offer 1 Student Support System:

- Guided pathways in high-demand disciplines
- Reduced tuition – 2 years at NOVA can save 25%
- Dedicated advising and student support from NOVA admission to Mason graduation.
- One system for enrollment and financial aid support.
- Co-located student services – physically and virtually.
- Transcripts show credit earned towards bachelor's – from either institution
- Course transferability goes both ways.
- Early access to Mason activities and services
- Stronger linkages with regional workforce.

Provost Wu referred to some of the Obstacles Transferring to a 4 year institution (Slide 6). Idea to extend advisors early. Mechanical Engineering degree program set up this way – begins at NOVA, so they are up to standards when transfer into Mason.

What is the graduation rate of students transferring in?

What you suggest administratively sounds fine, but how does this impact faculty?

From competitive high school, a student may have 25, 30, 40 AP Credits. Some schools set up tests to verify level of skill acquired. Faculty need to be involved as a national issue.

Isn't what you're doing what we are doing in Nursing, applied across the university? When NOVA students transfer to us, process is seamless because pieces are already in place. Used example of a NOVA class NOT accepted here, does not work. We just said "Class A" would not transfer anymore, must take "Class B". We did not get any pushback from NOVA.

Other observations included change in demographics, issues of grade inflation, contacts between advisors at NOVA and Mason need for heavy lifting on collaborative piece. Courses in Organic Chemistry and Calculus at NOVA do not equip students to do well enough here. Courses need to be exactly articulated equivalent. Describes experiences in classes where students cannot write. Virtual labs used. They are thinking about changing General Chemistry class to open stacks, as a glorified powerpoint. Where students come in – need rigor, not open stacks. What is the rigor at community college level? There will be different streams, not a new system. A lot depends on which NOVA they attend. So there is not an equivalency. Some teaching at NOVA now are our doctoral students. It would behoove us to be part of this. Where does it go? To whom? Dean? Director? IF there are sticking points come to different programs, a data problem, to correlate them and work on them in a consistent way.

D Burge: To decide who is in and who is not – not everything will be available, would like to have first student in a program Fall 2018.

Provost Wu added: Not to do wholesale, to do no more than 5 year programs/year. Not for all programs, some may build pathway successfully. Mechanical engineering not approved by SCHEV until two years ago.

These are the types of issues we need faculty input on – if it's at the program level, then individual programs will take that on if they opt into this initiative.

The second report "Building the Ideal Student Experience" containing sections on Student Access, Student Care, Student Voice, and Smarter Campus, prefaced by an Overview. About 250 people in attendance at recent Student Experience Redesign Program, including 20 faculty. There are 30 additional faculty engaged in this. Great to have the energy around it, welcome further involvement in the future.

Consideration of FIU Faculty Senate resolution on immigration: After some discussion the Executive Committee decided there was no interest in pursuing this.

Student Senate Resolution in Support of Open Textbooks will be presented for discussion at the April 5th Faculty Senate meeting, time permitting. Renshaw will contact the students. See [Attachment A](#).

Janet Bingham - to present to FS? Per recent email discussion, agenda is too full, and no clear message or issue for Janet to address. So will hold off, with possibility of fall presentation.

VI. Agenda Items for April 5, 2017 FS Meeting

- Draft FS Minutes March 1 and Draft FS Minutes February 1st as amended
- Announcements
 - President Cabrera
 - Provost Wu
 - SVP Davis
- Committee Reports
- Michelle Marks, Vice President for Academic Innovation and New Ventures – Wiley contract
- Annual Faculty Senate Evaluation of the President and Provost
- Student Senate Resolution in Support of Open Textbooks.

VII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Caniano
Faculty Senate clerk

Attachment A

A Resolution to Support Open Textbooks

R. #14

37th STUDENT SENATE

^{1st} Session

R. #14

A Resolution to Support Open Textbooks

IN THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT OF

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

September 22nd, 2016

Submitted by Senator Edwards

Resolution #14

Be it resolved by the Student Senate of George Mason University –

Whereas, the Student Government of George Mason University has recognized and opposed rising tuition costs, as illustrated by a Florida Virtual Campus survey of over 22,000 students, 65% of whom at one time did not purchase a textbook or dropped or withdrew from a course due to the cost of a textbook, and;

Whereas, the Student Government of George Mason University understands the financial constraints faced by our students to pursue higher education, and;

Whereas, the Student Government of George Mason University recognizes that the University Libraries has a program in place called “TextSelect” that offers the student body a means of managing these rising costs, and;

Therefore be it finally resolved, that the 37th Student Government of George Mason University supports an additional initiative proposed by George Mason University Libraries to encourage instructional faculty to adopt Open Textbooks and other open educational resources for the purpose of lowering the cost of higher education for all students.

Passed the Student Senate: _____

Attest:

Speaker Caleb Kitchen

Clerk Ryan Powers