

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Monday, April 9, 2018, 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.**  
**Johnson Center Meeting Room C (rm. 327)**

**Senators present:** Alan Abramson, Mark Addleson, Lisa Billingham, Shannon Davis, Timothy Leslie, Keith Renshaw, Suzanne Slayden, Provost David Wu, Sr. VP J.J. Davis.

**I. Approval of Minutes of March 19, 2018** – The minutes will be presented at our next meeting for approval.

**II. Announcements**

- Provost Wu has no announcements today.
- Rector Davis will attend FS Meeting April 25, 2018

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

- **Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden**

There is still no calendar for 2020-21, meeting with Janette Muir on Friday.

- **Budget and Resources – Tim Leslie**

We had a great meeting with J.J., discussing continuing outreach and education; for their college-wide brief.

- **Faculty Matters – Alan Abramson and Girum Urgessa**

Faculty Evaluation of Administrators for distribution in the fall. We had a meeting with deans, got an earful from some of them. Sources of angst: relatively low response 30-35% rate (note, though, that this quite typical for a survey via email blast); seemingly biased toward negative responses. Provost Wu is looking for something more constructive, something they can work with. Want to design questions so deans can better respond to feedback. Ideally want to go to more open-ended format. There are qualitative researchers who could help with this. Main idea may be to keep some short answers and some open-ended questions. At the end of the day, it is a vehicle for faculty input, to register their concerns. We do want to consult with deans to make it count – but also need to ensure we are using questions regarding information *faculty* want to know more about. Provost Wu noted the formal review process for deans includes sharing survey. Outcomes notably deficient with Provost survey compared to the Faculty Evaluation of Administrators; outcomes and questions are significantly different. Typically, reappointment committees can tweak questions, response rate over 40%.

Discussion: Do we get too many surveys? Maybe we should use focus groups (qualitative research) instead. If we want to do something triennially as a focus group process at college level, we might get better data, less negative bias. Deans are appointed for 4 or 5 years, sometimes shorter time frame. Chair Renshaw agrees with some of these points, but feels faculty evaluation of administrators essential.

Annual Evaluation of Chairs/Directors: with hopes of making this a useful process, will talk with some of them.

- **Nominations – Mark Addleson**

We need four nominees for Faculty Representatives to BOV Committee and have received three so far.

- **Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham**

Faculty Support Liaison: A third draft proposal was distributed for review and suggestions. Highlights include description of liaisons would do and be responsible for, role as sounding board. Training will take place in August because waiting until September/October would be too late if someone has issues at the beginning of the academic year. Faculty will need to sign waivers. It is a pilot, to bring back to O&O next year to make sure there is a waiver of check-in; must be anonymous. Cannot report X # of people. Legal says it's OK to go.

Discussion: There is nothing that addresses how we select liaisons. Sr. VP J.J. Davis: We went round and round on this, did not come to a conclusion. It would be nice to have a pool of 10-15 people trained. To see in a year, based on how it goes the first year. At the beginning, we need to make sure faculty have a broad familiarity with the university. There are people around who do this work very well. The challenge is to find them. Should we direct outreach to a few? Or send out a broader call?

Appreciate pilot program – okay to put in things that are less than ideal in the service of getting things moving for a pilot year. Not to take away from term faculty, but hard to see their involvement in situations where ultimate sanction may be termination – need tenured faculty. Research faculty are term faculty on soft money, in and out. Also not to take away from what HR already does in helping to work things out, but there are some things that are more faculty-specific.

The Faculty Handbook is not mentioned.

How is coaching someone not “advice”? Advice here means legal advice. The language around not providing advice sounds like it comes from legal – remember that university counsel acts on behalf of the state of Virginia, not faculty.

Grievance not mentioned initially. Title IX is a grievance process, as are some other processes. We might need a redo of whole policy; we need to get university policies changed forthwith. If we get a cadre of champions, we need to imbed this resource into general policies, so that anyone involved in any type of grievance process is provided with a liaison.

What is the demand on HR resources? HR has an agency interest here. HR are proponents of this and see a need to put this in place.

Faculty cannot grieve against support people

Several wordsmithing changes suggested. Liaisons good at talking things through, providing opinions, appellant makes the decision. Crucial to let faculty know about this at orientation. Are the institutional elements in this process able to advertise it? Perhaps Kim Eby (Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs) can help. To have options to choose from list –may not want someone from your college.

#### SUMMARY of DISCUSSION – CHAIR RENSHAW

1. Let's specify precisely who to work in pilot – tenured faculty, direct outreach.
2. To get back with legal on “provide advice” piece.

3. To find some way to specify that the faculty member will be provided with a liaison for any grievance process – faculty doesn't have to use the liaison (but will be "opt-out" rather than "opt-in").

#### **IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives**

- ICOIC: 3 separate short motions (transparency; faculty governance; guidelines for restricted, restricted anonymous and unrestricted gifts) were distributed for discussion.

"Transparent GMU" is a student organization suing to make GMU Foundation records FOIAble. ICOIC wants to skip lawsuit.

Discussion: Conflict of two important values: transparent governance vs. importance of donor confidentiality/anonymity. As there is an active lawsuit, the administration is not going to say anything about this one way or the other. The lawsuit has national implications. We are not likely to know outcome by April 25.

From the start, meaning of "COI" has not been well understood. What does the committee see as part of COI? An example: not to solicit funding from alcohol brewers to fund alcohol research. The committee's goal is to do something with overall COI, they feel passionately about it. Dave Kuebrich was primary advisor to the student group filing the lawsuit, though he stepped off. Is there support for extending their charge? Releasing gift agreements with confidential information redacted seems a reasonable request – good to ask administration to respond to this, whether it can or cannot be done, and why? Likely need to ask for response after the lawsuit. This is high profile litigation on the nature of 501 c3 organizations in relation to institutions of higher education – are they separate? Not taken lightly, and could have a significant impact if litigation moves on relations between separate 501c3s.

#### **V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion**

- Salary Equity: context from Provost/SVP?

Provost Wu noted what has been presented is incomplete. It is necessary to provide some context. J.J. will prepare 3-5 slides, where we are today and working on it. SCHEV peer institutions list updated, taking into account COLA factor. Our friends in Richmond cite our salary comparison to other universities in VA, especially we compare better to our rural cousins. A top priority when we go to Richmond, a battle to fight there.

##### Discussion:

Progression of salaries and wildly low pay for term faculty. What to do about people not being paid what they deserve? Merit vs. across-the-board increases, issue of salary compression.

Provost Wu noted part of merit of budget model is to provide some degree of freedom. Lower end of term faculty salary – systems being put into place.

Some feel depending on colleges is the wrong thing to do – it's an institution-wide problem.

Provost Wu – institution-wide problem is part of a legislative question. Richmond decides whether can apply merit/across-the-board. College has freedom regarding retention,

compression, etc. Within a limit, things like retention as most cited cause, as well as adjustments can make.

What should be focused on? Likely to be questions about this. Is there enough time to get the data we need?

JJ: We can set the groundwork with data. It is surprising to see how handcuffed we are given a billion-dollar organization. There was no money for raises in the governor's, house, or senate budgets. What can colleges do without violating code provision #22?

- The survey instrument for the Provost Renewal Committee will be sent out on Friday. President Cabrera has asked us for data as one of the many feedbacks the committee is gathering.
- Brad Edwards – unavailable 4/25, available 5/2: If Dominique and Brad wish to submit a written report in lieu of oral presentation (consensus), not a burning issue right now. Efforts underway to simplify fees throughout the university. Brad's appearance before the Faculty Senate has been on the calendar for about a year. Keith will talk with him regarding possibility of May 2<sup>nd</sup> continuation meeting, just in case.

**VI. Agenda Items for April 25, 2018 FS Meeting**

- Draft FS Minutes March 28 and April 4, 2018
- Announcements
  - Rector Davis
  - Provost Wu
- Election of Faculty Senate Chair 2018-19 (Special Orders)
- FSSC Reports
  - AP: AY 20-21 Calendar?
  - FM: Dept. Chair Evaluation?
  - O&O: Faculty Liaison
- Other Committee Reports
  - ICOIC (report with 3 motions)
  - Annual Reports 2017-18 from the Faculty Senate Standing Committees, University Standing Committees, and Ad Hoc Committees
  - Annual Faculty Senate Evaluation of the President and Provost 2017-18
- New Business

**VII. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned approximately 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Meg Caniano  
Faculty Senate clerk