

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, September 17, 2018, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm
Johnson Center Meeting Room E (rm. 334)

Present: Lisa Billingham, Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Shannon Davis, Tim Leslie, Keith Renshaw, Suzanne Slayden.

I. Approval of Minutes of August 17, 2018: The minutes were approved as written.

II. Announcements

- Budget Town Hall Meeting – Monday Sept 24, 1:00 – 2:30 pm, Merten Hall 1201.
- Reminders: FS Reception at Mathy House: Thursday October 4, 2018, 5:30 p.m.
- EC meeting with President Cabrera: Friday, November 2, 2018, 9:00-10:30 a.m.

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

A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden

Chair Slayden provided a summary of the drop deadline issue, its impacts upon financial aid (perhaps an issue for the Budget and Resources Committee to review), and “W” withdrawal dates, which require approval by the Faculty Senate. We are having a meeting in late September and will present a report for the October 3rd Faculty Senate meeting.

B. Budget and Resources – Tim Leslie

We are looking at the amount of time and costs involved in hiring/transitions, and tracking the Budget Model, awaiting information from Human Resources. A general discussion about recruitment, targets to increase the number of minority and women faculty, retention and retirement costs among units impacted by the new budget model ensued.

C. Faculty Matters

The committee is finalizing the new Faculty Evaluation of Administrators survey, trying to get final approval from the deans, hope to distribute it in October. They will present to dept. chairs meeting held by Provost, proposals for evaluation of dept. chairs, hopefully to close the loop.

D. Nominations – Melissa Broeckelman-Post

We will have a few nominations to replace committee members who retired or left the university, and a nominee to serve on the Research Advisory Council.

We received 33 nominations to serve on the Effective Teaching Committee. Some volunteers were upset they were not selected to serve. We included some new members and are now asking if anyone wants to trade places. Nominations can always be made from the floor. Other suggestions included adding extra volunteers as the committee is close to finalizing its work. Sometimes replacements are elected to fill vacancies while a committee member goes on leave, there will be a vacancy on the Budget and Resources Committee this spring as one of its members will be on leave.

E. Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham

Pilot Faculty Liaison Program Update: Should we send out a call to the deans mid-semester to work with HR to get training with for course releases during the spring term? Is this something the deans should decide?

Discussion: Are volunteers the best people to have as liaisons? Concern that wider call to college – do they mandate course release? Financial transfer would still have to go through the dean's office; need for replacement, college must be involved. Should we identify individuals as best choices – spread among (colleges/schools) experienced in navigating all this stuff? Consensus should be tenured faculty, with at least five years at Mason – HR can help identify them. There is also a big range of salaries, should not be a consideration. Five years' service not enough to gain tenure here, or to specify five years post tenure service? Process to identify 5-10 individuals to participate in pilot, not for the long term.

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives

Term Faculty Task Force (forum, FH proposals): - Keith Renshaw

The Task Force is finalizing its recommendations. There will be a faculty forum September 27th. Recommendations include changes in Provost Office procedures and the Faculty Handbook, such as changes to multiyear contracts and promotion guidelines for term faculty. Girum Urgessa serves both on the Task Force and the Faculty Handbook Committee. The Faculty Handbook Committee will propose some revisions. Not to tackle everything at once, begin with a few and continue over several years, complexity of issues.

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion

- Handling internal grievances within FS
- Bylaw/Standing Rule change to allow for electronic voting on ballots: process to handle slates, nominations from the floor needs to be included in bylaws. Other suggestions included increasing the number of Faculty Senators. Probably under purview of O&O.
- Foundational course on diversity, inclusion, well-being: See [Appendix A](#)
Discussion: Some oppose this as an additional requirement, better for students to select courses from catalog. A lot of these courses already approved for Mason Core, students' time is already over committed. Suggestion for new course has been going on for a while, incident occurred last year in School of Nursing may have pushed it over the edge. Some support new course to become part of Mason Core. There will be a redo of the entire Mason Core. Impact of new course on department requirements also noted.
- Proposed Paid Parental Leave Policy - for comment/input see - [Appendix B](#). For inclusion on FS October 3rd meeting agenda. Proposal in place for 9-month faculty, VA legislature has yet to approve policy for administrative and 12-month faculty. No additional input at this time.
- Effective Teaching Committee wants to present in Nov or Dec. If Gift Acceptance Committee report accepted by the BOV at its October meeting, to include on November 7th FS Meeting agenda. Will also request Effective Teaching Committee to send specific proposal in advance of next EXC meeting. Suggested O&O revise ETC committee charge for the future.

VI. Agenda Items for October 3, 2018 FS Meeting

- Draft FS Minutes September 5, 2018
 - President Cabrera
 - Provost Wu
 - Announcements
 - Committee Reports
 - Faculty Matters: Proposed Paid Parental Leave Policy
 - Special Orders – additional elections of committee members
 - New Business
 - Online Education, Michelle Marks, VP for Academic Innovation and New Ventures
- Chair Renshaw: The Purdue proposal (Kaplan) was turned down by Mason, continue to talk about this in Academic Innovation and New Ventures. President Cabrera wrote about this. There is no formal plan in place, no contract, letter of intent signed. Important for Faculty Senate to have in depth discussion with administration on issues, implications for Faculty Handbook etc. Keith to get back to us with additional information.

VII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Caniano
Faculty Senate clerk

Appendix A

Foundational Course on Diversity, Inclusion, Well-Being

I received email updates from Bethany Usher (AP for Undergraduate Studies), Kim Eby (AP for Faculty Affairs & Development), Julian Williams (VP for Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics), and Rose Pascarell (VP for University Life) summarizing thoughts and initial work on this issue. A summary of that information is below.

Primary Reasons for Course

- At the Diversity, Inclusion, Well Being Summit held last April (attended by over 450 faculty, staff, students, and community members), one of the strongest recommendations by participants was the creation of a required course focused on diversity, inclusion, and well-being.
- National dialogue on Freedom of Speech, Mason's stated commitment to free expression and the open exchange of ideas, and Mason's equally important commitment to engage the community members most impacted by controversial speakers and topics, has strengthened over the last three years.
- Various student groups, organizations have continually advocated for a course requirement in their lists of requests/demands over the last four years.
- Mason continues to be recognized for the diversity of its student body. We are the most diverse Virginia public and one of the most diverse institutions in the country. We continue to see no disparity in graduation rates among White, Black, and Hispanic students, which is (unfortunately) highly unusual in the US. We are in a position to lead other institutions in the Commonwealth with this initiative.
- The institution's current strategic goals include a focus on the university's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and well-being. A 'signature' course would strengthen that commitment.
- This type of course has been discussed many times over the past several years at Mason by students and faculty alike. It is not at all unusual – in fact, several universities have a 'diversity/inclusion' course requirement, including local universities Georgetown and American, as well as several publics and privates including USC, UCLA, Bentley, Xavier, U Colorado, Boulder, U Illinois, U Wisconsin-Madison, U Mass Amherst, to name a few. We are in a position to shape a course that is most relevant to Mason students, speaks to the diversity of students and ideas that Mason is known for, and incorporates a focus on overall well being.

Preliminary Plan

- Bring together a faculty committee to address this issue
- Proposed charge:
 - Produce learning outcomes
 - Recommend at least three models for teaching and implementation

- Develop a sample syllabus in the fall semester
- Potentially pilot a course in the spring semester (perhaps as one section of a special topics course)
- Collect more feedback and input
- Proposed composition:
 - Melissa Broekelman Post (Faculty Senate appointee as Mason Core chair)
 - Angie Hattery (content expertise & Pres award winner)
 - Nance Lucas (content expertise - well-being)
 - Creston Lynch (content expertise)
 - Wendi Manuel-Scott (content expertise & Pres award winner)
 - Christy Pichichero (Faculty Fellow for D, I, & W-B for Kim and Julian)
 - Others as elected by Faculty Senate
- Proposed composition is not meant to represent the full committee, but it does represent faculty whose disciplinary expertise would lend itself to course development (this somewhat inherently leads to it being “CHSS-heavy”). We have additional suggestions, but we are also trying to keep the size manageable. It would be great to have your feedback on process, membership, etc. particularly as it relates to Faculty Senate participation.

Appendix B

Parental Leave for Administrative & Professional, Research & 12-month Instructional Faculty

Related Policies

[The Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#)

[University Policy 2215: Family Medical Leave](#)

[University Policy 2232: Sick Leave Policy for Faculty under the Traditional Sick Leave Plan](#)

[Department of Human Resource Management \(DHRM\)](#)

Policy 4.57 – Virginia Sickness and Disability Program

Scope

This policy is intended to assist Administrative & Professional, Research and 12-month Instructional faculty in managing work and family obligations in the first year surrounding the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care.

Parental time away from work assists eligible George Mason University faculty members during the first six (6) months of becoming a parent to meet both their professional and parental obligations. It is the goal of this policy to 1) help faculty balance the responsibilities of family and career development, 2) encourage and enable equal parenting opportunity across all departments, and 3) recognize the benefits to faculty members and their families of meaningful bonding time upon the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care.

This paid leave enhances the family-friendly practices already in place and provides an additional tool for talent acquisition and retention that supports a diverse, capable, and engaged workforce.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of George Mason University to provide paid parental leave to Administrative & Professional, Research and 12-month Instructional faculty to enable the faculty member to care for and bond with a newborn or child under the age of eighteen (18) newly-placed for adoption or for foster or custodial care. This paid leave may be used in combination with other benefits.

The purpose of this policy is to provide eligible faculty members with up to eight (8) weeks (320 hours) of paid parental leave to be used within six (6) months of the birth of an infant or adoptive, foster, or custodial placement of a child under the age of eighteen (18).

Eligibility

Administrative & Professional, Research and 12-month Instructional faculty who become parents via birth, adoption, or foster or custodial care and meet the following criteria:

- Faculty member is in a full-time or part-time greater than 20 hours per week (or .50 FTE and greater) upon the birth or placement of the child.
- Faculty member must be eligible for Family and Medical Leave (FMLA):
 - Must have been employed by Mason for a minimum of twelve months in the past year
AND
 - Must have worked for at least 1,250 hours in the previous 12-month period.

Eligibility determinations are made as of the date that the child is born or placed via adoption or foster or custodial care.

A faculty member who is not eligible for parental leave on the date of birth or placement may become eligible during the following six (6) months and access parental leave once he/she meets the eligibility requirements.

If both parents work for Mason and meet the eligibility criteria, each is entitled to up to 320 hours of parental leave.

Leave Amount

Eligible full-time faculty members will receive up to eight (8) weeks (320 hours) of paid parental leave to be used within six (6) months of the birth/placement of a child for any one or more of the following reasons:

- To give birth to, care for, and bond with a newborn child.
- To care for and bond with a child placed with the employee through adoption or foster care or a legal custodial arrangement.
- To supplement reduced income replacement disability benefits following the birth of an infant.

Eligible part-time faculty members may take up to eight (8) weeks of parental leave for the reasons listed above. Hours taken will be counted on a pro-rated basis corresponding to the percentage of hours they normally are scheduled to work.

Leave Usage

- Parental leave must be used within six months of the birth of an infant or placement of a child.
 - Eligible faculty members may charge parental leave in
 - one continuous period of time, or
 - in two leave periods of at least one week. E.g. take 2 weeks off when the child is born then come back to work for 1 month and then take the additional 6 weeks off.
- The 320 hours of parental leave may be used only once per child and only once within a 12 month period.
- Unused parental leave is forfeited six (6) months from the date of the birth/placement.

- Unused parental leave is not compensable if a faculty member separates from Mason employment or moves to a non-covered position.
- Parental leave terminates at the conclusion of the foster or custodial care placement or within six (6) months of the placement, whichever comes first.
- FMLA Job Protection: FMLA will run concurrently with paid parental leave. Faculty members using paid parental leave are afforded the remaining job protection under FMLA for an absence up to a total of twelve (12) weeks (480 hours). They may charge personal leave or take leave without pay to cover the additional absence.
- Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP) Participants: Parental leave may be used to supplement reduced income replacement disability benefits following the birth of a child and/or may be accessed after the VSDP benefits related to the birth cease.
- Traditional Sick Leave Program Participants: Parental leave may be used for FMLA events related to bonding by faculty members participating in the traditional sick leave program.

Faculty Members Responsibility

Faculty members should submit a written request to his/her department and Benefits in HR & Payroll for parental leave at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the anticipated leave begin date or as soon as practicable.

Certification of Eligibility for Parental Leave

Mason will require documentation of the birth or placement in order to approve parental leave. Official documents that will be considered, but may not be limited to, are: a report of birth, a birth certificate, an order of parentage, an adoption order, certified DNA test results, a custody order, and a foster care placement agreement. Documents provided should show date of birth and date of placement if placement was other than the date of birth.