

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2020
ELECTRONIC MEETING – 2:00 – 3:30 pm

Present: Lisa Billingham, Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Shannon Davis, Interim Provost Mark Ginsberg, Sr. VP Carol Kissal, Timothy Leslie, Bethany Letiecq, Kumar Mehta, Suzanne Slayden.

I. Approval of Minutes of April 20, 2020 – deferred to next meeting

II. Announcements

- Sr. Vice President Kissal
 - Spending time talking with a number of different stakeholders to draw up the framework for budgeting.
 - Guiding principle of shared sacrifice will form the basis for developing guidelines for amending the budget and operations.
 - Primary objective would be trying to keep everyone safe and healthy.
 - Trying to continue to deploy strategic investments in staying true to core mission.
 - Modest tuition increase approved by BOC was a difficult decision but will provide much needed investment for Fall.
 - University is setting aside funds for faculty retention and compensation, and compression issues where we have some of those inequities.
 - A large group of over 200 people are serving on 18 working groups to put together plan for safe return to campus.
 - The plan will include detailed instructions on what to do as people begin returning to campus. The plan will account for social distancing, wearing protective gear, reporting illness, etc. The plan will evolve and be updated with additional information as it becomes available.
 - Local units will be putting together their plans for return to campus.

Discussion:

- Chair Davis noted that in Executive Committee's conversation with René last week, the committee discussed possibility of including more faculty in planning and budgeting. The Executive Committee would like to the faculty to be meaningfully engaged in the four or five sub-groups involved with planning and budgeting.

Sr. VP Kissal welcomed more involvement of faculty and requested that the interested faculty names be emailed to her and Julie Zobel (Assistant Vice President, Safety, Emergency and Enterprise Risk Management).

- Will the Safe Return to Campus announcement include process to define classroom capacities to assist with planning of course offerings for Fall and the modalities?

Sr. VP Kissal informed that the group is still working through the space models of all three campuses, as well as looking at non-traditional spaces. She expects in another week or so before those plans are in place.

Chair Davis added that Janette Muir (Associate Provost for Academic Initiatives and Services) is leading the academic space group. That group is aiming to complete the work as quickly as possible (within June). She also informed that some of the colleges are already proceeding with reconfiguring their academic offerings. While the group is looking at non-traditional spaces, they are coordinating with student activity groups to ensure that students have spaces available to gather (should their organizations need).

Senator Lisa Billingham added that the group is also evaluating suitability of using off-campus spaces, trailers, etc. to draw up a complete inventory of possibilities.

Interim Provost Ginsberg requested patience and emphasized the importance of getting it done right the first time to avoid having to make changes later and causing disruptions to other related decisions.

- With regard to the budget guidelines, is there any consideration of debt service deferrals as an alternative to other possible methods like salary reductions or furloughs?

Sr. VP Kissal noted that such action would risk credit downgrade and would be an action of last resort. For the debt issued by the Commonwealth, university is exploring possibility of renegotiating the terms. Considering the negative impact of COVID-19 on Commonwealth's fiscal position, it may be difficult to accomplish.

- Regarding the Strategic Initiatives in Arlington – would it be advisable to put a hold on it until the budget situation clears? For instance, there are a couple of high-level recruiting propositions that are underway for IDIA. Without available resources, the hired individuals are not going to be able to execute much.

Sr. VP Kissal: University is not at all considering postponement of work on the IDIA headquarters, because it already has a capital allocation from the state.

State is still committed to continuing even with the budget crisis. As a result, Mason will keep pursuing the initiative.

Interim Provost Ginsberg: The Commonwealth has made not only a current commitment, but a very clear commitment, that even if there are reductions to the state budget allocation, the funds for Technology Initiative are remaining. They have communicated to the university this is an important part of the recovery for the region. Agreements have been made with the state about the contingencies on that money. So, stopping or pausing those initiatives are simply not an option, if we are going to continue to receive the support from the state that we expect.

- Chair Davis inquired about potential timeline for more clarity on budget numbers

Sr. VP Kissal informed that by first week of July, her office would have better idea of the revenue projections (based on enrollment data) by end of June. She also expressed concern about expenses related to classroom modifications, technology improvements/investments, and other related expenditures. Current estimates are less than \$50 million, but better estimate would be available once the mitigation plan is finalized.

Summer enrollments were record high, and the resulting revenue is also going to provide some cushion for Fall.

Freshman enrollment begins Monday, and the projections for that would be inaccurate till much later.

A big effort is ongoing to plan out all of the operations for Fall including how to bring people to campus in stages, ensuring the health and safety, hygiene of classrooms, etc. For example: University Life is identifying how to best do all the things remotely.

- Chair Davis noted that a lot of new science that is being brought to bear on this report and on the recommendations that acknowledges more of what we know. She expressed her appreciation of the contributions of the public health experts who are part of the team. She stressed the need to focus on how we can be a part of this process, thinking through from the faculty perspective, where there are new questions to be asked that may not have been asked.
- Sr. VP Kissal informed that deadline for submission of the plans for reopening has been changed from June 30th, and now they need to be submitted to SCHEV by July 6th.

- Interim Provost Ginsberg

- Reemphasized that a very intensive, comprehensive, and well-informed enterprise underway to help and guide the Safe Return to Campus this Fall.
- Fall enrollment:
 - A little bit below compared to last year.
 - Virginia residents: initial deposit deadline was last week. He noted that there's always individuals who come in after initial deadline, but also remarked that some spillover effect is to be expected resulting from other Virginia institutions dipping deeper into their waiting list.
 - Currently:
 - 2% lower than same time last year (about 80 students)
 - 11% lower for out-of-state students compared to same time last year.
 - While these numbers are of some concern, they were projected and so they are not entirely a surprise.
 - Transfers are similar to last year.
 - He shared his perspective that these numbers were somewhat encouraging and Mason is better positioned than some of our peer institutions across the country that are experiencing 20 to 30% declines.
 - Summer enrollment is 30% higher than last year, and provides some security for Fall.
- On incoming president Dr. Greg Washington
 - Two weeks away from Dr. Greg Washington becoming president of our university.
 - "We are in the midst of a monumental transition at a time in our nation where we are at a transcendent moment. We are at the cusp of a transition when we also are on the verge of other transitions in our society generally, which I hope will be good. I want to say to my colleagues around the table that it is my hope that we use this moment as a time for transformation, that we use this moment as a time for reflection, that we use this moment as a time when we have a new president coming in, whose life and agenda is very much related to the very issues that as a society we are trying to move forward on; that we use this as an opportunity."
 - Expressed confidence in the leadership of Dr. Washington and hope that we provide Dr. Washington with time and space to get acquainted and acclimatized to his new role.
 - On Friday night, some of our students and others have arranged an event on campus to honor George Floyd: to honor both his memory and the meaning of what these tragedies have been about and opportunities that will hopefully come with them. He indicated his plan to join the students and shared that others will be as well.

- Chair Davis shared takeaways of her conversation with Rose Pascarell (VP, University Life) focusing on starting a conversation on how to better engage with our students, staff, and to demonstrate what lifelong learning is.
- Senator: Shared governance is very important to our faculty. They really want to be heard and they do not always feel that they are being heard and valued. There is an ongoing concern about privatization, in bringing in private partners to do public functions. Some have raised concerns about partnership between the Stearns Center with Wiley taking on a lot of online education. Could you share the thinking behind this arrangement, and if there is contract information in terms of what Wiley gets from the arrangement. Is this a permanent or is it time-limited relationship?

Interim Provost Ginsberg indicated that he did not have the contract details. He also shared the context of the arrangement – University need additional resources to help faculty effectively deploy course content online. These additional resources were made available through Wiley. The arrangement is time-limited with Wiley providing adjunctive resources to augment resources we have available internally. The goal is to help more faculty participate in opportunities to think about how to augment and strengthen their courses for Fall 2020. It is a summer-based project, probably leading into the fall with some additional opportunities for some assistance mentoring and coaching, some instructional design and delivery assistance, and things of that nature. It is really designed to assist in delivering the most effective online learning to our students in the Fall.

Follow-up: Was there any effort to ask faculty if we had the resources already existing on campus that could have been leveraged?

Interim Provost Ginsberg shared that the university is using every resource it has been able to identify on campus, including resources at the CEHD.

- Senator: Recent meeting within COS included discussions on salary reductions, furlough, in addition to teaching load increases that were previously discussed. Can you share with us what the communications with the Deans have been and what might be at the source of these conversations?

Interim Provost Ginsberg reassured that no decisions have been made and should there be a need to think about salary reductions and furloughs – Executive Committee and Faculty Senate will be involved the conversations. He reiterated that at the current moment, the university does not have a complete idea of what the budget will look like, and that no decisions or directives have been given about furloughs and

salary reductions. He also expressed his reservations about adopting teaching load increases because of all the ramifications including university's R1 status. He again reassured that if severe budgetary restrictions manifest – it would be a collective conversation with the faculty.

Follow-up: No decisions have been made, but you are not then discouraging them from talking about it? Are you discouraging them from taking unilateral action on this point?

Interim Provost Ginsberg reassured that colleges cannot take unilateral action. He also emphasized that no units have been asked to take any actions or been provided any direction to take actions. He indicated he had no knowledge of what the source or intent of such conversations may have been, and reiterated that no decisions about changes to workload, furloughs or salary reductions have been made. He expressed his hope that the budgetary problems can be solved without having to take measures that are going to be disruptive for people.

Chair Davis summarized the timelines provided by Sr. VP Kissal that around first week of July, better budgetary information will be available to have a more nuanced and informed conversation. She also shared her opinion that in absence of information, everyone is tempted to speculate in ways that are stressful. She suggested if the information shared with the Executive Committee (no decisions have been made and that budget decisions will be forthcoming in July) can be communicated to the university community by the Provost's office. She urged Provost's office to also remind the Deans' offices of the same.

Interim Provost Ginsberg indicated that though no decisions have been made, some level of examination of alternatives in the conversation is part of prudent planning. But there have been no decisions made and indicated that nobody would like to “go there”. He expressed his commitment to the Executive Committee, as a former dean, and as interim provost and as a faculty member, is to continue that conversation. As decisions that need to be made, the faculty will be part of the process of helping to inform those decisions. “I will absolutely guarantee it.”

Follow-up: The deans have not been asked to explore alternatives, although they may be doing it on their own?

Interim Provost Ginsberg: There will be a need to plan and mitigate what ultimately is going to be increased expense or a loss in revenue or combination. He believes that every dean is engaged in such planning. He suggested that as a dean, he too would be engaged in similar planning and examining the alternatives to mitigate potential

budgetary challenges. He stressed that any current examination of alternatives are not being done with a set of guidelines or principles. That is what should be done before a decision has been made or any directive is issued. He offered some examples: “We are going to furlough x number of days, or reduce salaries x number of dollars, or take away other kinds of benefits, or have a reduction in force.”

He again emphasized that no decisions have been made about any of those things, and he believes that as an institution we are far from needing to make those decisions.

That said, he added “These are going to be complicated times. We are all going to have to be in this together. I do not want to set a situation up where there are two sides fighting each other. I think we have to be one university working together. And the only way to do that is if we are communicative with each other.”

- Senator: Ongoing conversation about CHSS the new building and office space, and all the shared space – pre COVID, post COVID, it’s really a mess. Do you have any updates about what the plans are? Faculty are really concerned.

Interim Provost Ginsberg said he has not been too involved, and acknowledged that he is aware that the level of concern is pretty intense.

- Chair Davis: Lester Arnold (VP of Human Resources) was on our agenda for today. He was not able to attend our meeting today to provide HR update, he apologized and hopes to attend another Faculty Senate meeting to talk about COVID. See [Faculty Conduct Working Group](#) for additional information..

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

- A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden** – no report
- B. Budget and Resources – Tim Leslie** – We have already discussed many issues during this meeting.
- C. Faculty Matters – Bethany Letiecq** - I’ve asked a lot of questions on the minds of Faculty Matters with regard to concerns about the return to campus and the conditions for that return and issues around these budget guidelines, all around the same issues.
- D. Nominations – Melissa Broeckelman-Post** – We sent out the first call for nominations in May, additional emails to go out in July and August. Work ongoing and guessing we will be adding a few things.
- E. Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham** – Informed that with efforts from the Provost Office and Chair Davis, she is now an investigative member of the IOA. As soon as she know parameters Lester Arnold needs for structure to provide information to President Washington, she will make sure to meet to have discussions.

IV. IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives

- **Building stronger relationships between faculty and administrative offices – Shannon Davis:** In Fall 2019, she had ideas about how we might build stronger relationships between faculty and administrative offices as Keith Renshaw (outgoing Senate Chair) and Brian Platt ([2018-19 Presidential Fellow](#)) had been doing. This was disrupted first by the presidential search and then in Spring by the pandemic. In last few weeks, it has become more obvious to her, the way in which our notion of shared governance has an unequal set of expectations for the two sides of the relationship. As faculty when we are in spaces with administrators and with the administration, we expect to be there, we expect to be heard, and we insist on being part of the conversation and offer our input. It also stands to reason we are expected to tell our faculty (whom we are accountable to) what is the work is that we are doing. She cited examples of explicitly asking standing committees for reports every month, but only tacitly asking other committees for reports (most do not have one). Though some committees such as COI and the Effective Teaching Committee have been active, we have not been systemic in our expectation from all of our Faculty Representatives who represent us in various conversations with administrators, faculty, staff and the students. We do not ask of them to come back and report to the Faculty Senate and get our feedback to take back into the conversation. She hopes that over the next academic year, that we begin to make progress on this issue. With all Senate meetings in the fall being electronic, we can begin asking the representatives to provide their reports electronically, and with time permitting or need we can discuss and provide feedback.
- **Update on discussion with administration regarding Horizon Hall – Shannon Davis**

Her request to meet with the dean of CHSS, Sr. VP Kissal and the Provost to talk with members of Faculty Matters and Budget and Resources to talk about Horizon Hall. The meeting was held after last BOV meeting (May 20). It was a robust conversation, in part trying to articulate what the reality of the past was, and also received some assurances for the future. Thinking about how it is that faculty shared governance in these conversations could and should work, an articulation on what those conversations could and should look like. It was also a recognition that the past is a moving target, but yet that past was being presented as if it were fact, that it led to a great deal of uncertainty and distress. So, we had a very candid conversation, with some additional follow-up conversations that did occur. Two members of the ad hoc building committee in CHSS and there are also two Faculty Senators elected to the Master Plan Steering Committee. There is a representative from every unit that was to move into Horizon on the building committee. Two faculty Senators serve on the master plan steering committee. There was a follow-up to that interaction between the Senate and the administration, and there continues to be a set of conversations.
- **Update on faculty participation in safe return to campus working groups – Shannon Davis**

Chair Shannon Davis serves on the EMEC (Steering Committee) for the Working Groups, and also serves on the Instructional Continuity Group (IC). Inviting all the Executive Committee members to share, she would like to begin documenting the kind of work the members have been able to do as a faculty member on the committee(s). She hopes to be able to document to the Senate and to the General Faculty, the ways in which faculty are participating in conversation, from the beginning of the crisis back in March until the Safe Return to Campus in the Fall. We will be able to document the ways in which decisions have been made through consultation and authentic listening and dialogue with faculty, and to be able to remind ourselves that part of our responsibility is to be held accountable to our faculty colleagues while we are representing them in the spaces.

Instructional Continuity Committee (IC) – Lisa Billingham

The IC Committee came up online quickly. One of the things for me that has been the most refreshing actually has been the addition of now being on the NCCT, Bethany is on it as well. To really see that all corners of the university have everyone's best interests at heart. I am one of the two people that is simply a faculty member rather than a dean sitting on this (IC) committee. I have had absolutely no problem in any of my situations of not getting what I needed for my college, so it dismays me to hear what is going on in College of Science that there are discussions that are happening that are trickling down to the faculty, or things that are escalating. I am not finding that in my college, so I feel that I can say that, at least from my corner of the space. Mark and Carol are giving us fantastic information, if we can stay open to listening to it. I really believe what Mark said earlier, that it is going to take the team to get this done. In IC, we are really seeing people listening, more than I actually expected.

High Risk Return Group – Bethany Letiecq

We are discussing about building definitions of what is high risk. Speaks to who is going to qualify, what are the accommodations that will be made, can we include family members who are high risk? And those accommodations? It is not an easy path -student accommodations, staff accommodations, faculty accommodations, and requiring different approaches for each different group. It is very challenging and disconcerting: For example – can people be exempt from mask wearing or face covering? If they have a laboratory issue, or some other issue that they cannot wear a mask/ face covering, who will be exempt from face coverings? What do you have to provide – medical evidence? There are enforcement issues – are faculty expected to enforce it? Will students who cannot wear them face harassment or shaming? How will we visibly distinguish those who are exempted and should we? How to enforce? How much medical information will people be expected to provide in order to prove they are in a high-risk category? That was just one minor discussion. We are talking about potential loss of life for those who get disease who are at high risk. What are we going to do with people who want to work even though they are high

risk and they want to be on campus? Are we going to have them sign some kind of a waiver? It is very complex.

Faculty Conduct Working Group: - Shannon Davis

Lester Arnold sent a message last week that they pause – tying together between faculty conduct issues and the Compliance, Diversity, Ethics (CDE) issues that we were working on the two. With the new Title IX regulations, and the fact that we have a change in leader for CDE, that working on the CDE part was not going to happen at this particular moment. She suggested putting a pause on CDE but continuing to move forward with the faculty conduct issues. We as faculty presented the report to our colleagues, we got feedback from them, we brought it back to the working group, and now they want to continue proceeding.

Another Senator observed there are lots of issues that can be discussed and progress made excluding any of the Title IX recommendations.

Shannon will communicate our discussion to Lester that we are asking for that group to continue to move forward and to ensure that Suzanne Slayden and Girum Urgessa (members of the Faculty Conduct Working Group) are copied on it.

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion

Welcoming event for Dr. Washington – Fall 2020

Chair Davis shared her belief that it was unlikely we would be able to hold a welcome event for Dr. Washington at the Mason Club in the Fall. To think about how we as a faculty in the general faculty sense as well as a Faculty Senate, have an opportunity to welcome him. She is meeting with Paul Allvin (the new VP for Strategic Communications) tomorrow at 8:45 am. He has requested to meet and discuss possibility of a town hall with Dr. Washington with Faculty Senate in attendance. She will keep the committee updated.

GMU AAUP Chapter – Bethany Letiecq

We have been discussing having some form of an engagement event with President Washington (if it can be managed). We also would like to do a meet and greet with BOV members, to hear faulty perspective. She suggested Faculty Senate partner with GMU AAUP to have a deeper conversation on issues of shared governance and academic freedom. She believes it would provide a learning opportunity for all.

Chair Davis: Thank you. If more than two BOV members attend, it has to be a public meeting and has to be advertised. In discussion with Rector, she has exploring ideas for enabling conversations with BOV members in small groups. She shared that Rector Davis is very cognizant of the need to be more transparent. She invited any suggestions/ideas members may have.

- University Committee Charges and Faculty Representation: Concerns from Naming and Admissions Committees as a start – see [Attachment A](#)
- FSVA Bylaws Change and impacts upon CEAR committee charge, membership, and timing changes. [Attachment B](#)

Chair Davis: The Faculty Senate of Virginia meeting in May, the possibility of 5 faculty representatives to the FSVA: one Faculty Senate chair, one Faculty Senator elected to a three-year term, three representatives elected to a one-year term. In this space we have worked largely with our External Academic Relations Committee and their having a relationship with the FSVA, to think again about how we want to proceed, soliciting these people, recognizing that now we have a greater opportunity for more faculty to participate. The three representatives who served historically were from the External Academic Relations Committee. One Senator would be the additional three -year term representative, to be elected this fall, the goal there is to have some institutional memory from each institution and participation in FSVA. Given that Faculty Senate chairs can be replaced every year, elected representatives can be replaced every year,

Will this have an impact on the Nominations Committee's work to solicit folks for different terms. This also has implications for the charge of the External Academic Relations Committee. This is something in particular that we may want to review and prepare to address by our next EXC meeting, so that we can give Melissa a clear set of guidelines for which set of representatives are being elected from which body, that is to say, have a relationship with External Academic Relations, so that can be built into the ballot.

Discussion:

- Historically the Faculty Senate may not have participated very much in FSVA . Perhaps if they start holding meetings online, will get more attendance, because it takes 2-3 hours to attend these meetings and get back.
 - Linking together External Academic Relations and FSVA representatives will add a lot of load, suggests electing representatives outside the Faculty Senate.
 - Chair Davis also noted last year she worked with Sarah Huang Spota (Associate Director, State Government Relations) they provided a robust training. She suggested following up on this conversation at our next meeting on how we might address the representatives and our relationship with the Faculty Senate of Virginia.
- FSVA Resolution approved 5-16-20 Recommendation for Implementation of in-State Tuition Extension to All Students, regardless of Immigration Status [Attachment C](#)

Chair Davis: FSVA asked each FS to support this resolution. As the Senate is not in session, the Executive Committee as a body may vote to support the resolution and move it forward to resolution.

A motion was made and seconded by the Executive Committee to support this resolution and moves forwarding it to the administration.

The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kumar Mehta

Secretary

Attachment A

Naming Committee SD/H GELLER 5-15-20 to EXC

Shannon N Davis

Fri 5/15/2020 3:30 PM

Colleagues:

I am interested in this being on our next Exec comm agenda, not so much as this specific example (though we have an opportunity to think about how to shape the relationship with the comm in the future) but how to have our representatives be true representatives and be heard. We don't make all decisions but our elected reps need to at least have their voices heard.

A follow up with Harold was that this was his experience with the Cabrera administration and those hired by him. He shared optimism for change in the future.

Have a good weekend.

Shannon

From: Harold Geller <hgeller@gmu.edu>

Sent: Friday, May 15, 2020 1:54 PM

To: Shannon N Davis <sdaviso@gmu.edu>

Subject: Naming Committe

Shannon,

I know you are tied up with other matters, especially about the fall, so I will be very brief. I wanted you to know that we had a Naming Committee meeting (using WebEx) on Wednesday and we were told that the new core building will be named "Horizon Hall."

I know we had talked about my addressing the faculty senate about my past year on the Naming Committee; so, I thought I'd tell you personally how I feel about the Naming Committee. Frankly, the administration does what it pleases and could care less about the opinion of either the faculty, staff, students or alumni. In fact, when I brought up the fact that the naming of the Cabrera Building never came up before the Naming Committee, I was told that the administration could do whatever it wanted.

Anyhow, I have turned in my papers to retire in June. The faculty senate will have to name some other person to represent the faculty senate on the Naming Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent the faculty senate on the Naming Committee.

Stay safe; be well.

Regards,

Harold

Attachment B

FSVA Update - Email Chain #1

Shannon N Davis

Sat 5/16/2020 10:52 AM to EXC

Colleagues:

Bethany and I participated in the Faculty Senate of Virginia meeting today. The body passed an amendment to the FSVA bylaws as noted below. We now are authorized to have a total of 5 representatives to the FSVA: the chair, 3 representatives (for one year terms with no term limits) and one Senator (with a 3 year term starting this fall). Lisa, our external academic relations committee typically has a relationship with this group so we will want to look at their charge/membership, and Melissa, we will need to revise our elections for the fall to address this new opportunity for representation.

In addition, we will need to ensure that we ask either the elected Senator and representatives to report at each meeting in the section of the agenda for "other representatives" at each scheduled meeting, largely to allow information to flow both directions. Meg, can you make sure this gets included on the agenda and please reach out to those folks when we are setting up the agendas to ensure they are prepared to speak?

Happy for us to talk through this more at our next Exec Comm meeting.

Happy Saturday.

Shannon

Each institution shall be represented by at least one Representative and by a Senator. The Representative should be a current member of the Faculty Senate or Council, typically the President, Chair, or a similar elected faculty leader or designee. The Senator should be appointed by the Faculty Senate or Council but need not be a member of that body. Senators serve for a term of three years. There are no limits on the number of terms Representatives or Senators may serve.

The number of additional Senate representatives shall be based on the number of full time faculty in each college or university. In addition to its Representative and Senator, institutions may send additional representatives as designated below:

Under 250 faculty - no additional representative

251-500 faculty - 1 additional representative

501-1000 faculty - 2 additional representatives

Over 1000 faculty - 3 additional representatives.

Attachment C

Faculty Senate of Virginia
Resolution passed May 16, 2020

Recommendations for Implementation of In-State Tuition Expansion to All Students, regardless of immigration status

The passage of [HB 1547](#) and [SB 935](#) during the 2020 Virginia legislative session requires implementation of in-state tuition expansion to all students, regardless of immigration status, across VA campuses for July 1 uptake.

The purpose of this resolution is to provide recommendations about how Virginia institutions of higher education should approach implementation of this new law in order to make in-state tuition broadly accessible. Each public institution of higher education in Virginia has its own forms and appeals process as it relates to applications for in-state tuition rates.

Implementation of this in-state tuition expansion will require thoughtful planning about staff training. When the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program was established in 2012 and in 2014, Virginia allowed for in-state tuition for DACA holders. Those students frequently encountered barriers to accessing in-state tuition, despite Attorney General guidance on the matter. Students had to advocate for themselves, often educating the front-line staff at the registrar, financial aid, and/or admissions offices.

To promote successful implementation of this new law:

1. We recommend that each college and university designate a point of contact within registrar, financial aid, and/or admissions offices specifically to work with undocumented students. Furthermore, we recommend schools hire and/or appoint undocumented/DACA documented student program coordinators to provide support and guidance.
2. We recommend that colleges and universities not collect information about immigration status or Social Security number (beyond whether an individual holds one of the excluded visa statuses) since it is unnecessary to comply with the new law;
3. We recommend refraining from creating separate in-state tuition application protocols and paperwork for undocumented students (aside from the exclusion of individuals with certain visa categories, the new option for in-state tuition is not contingent upon immigration status).
4. We recommend that colleges and universities proactively reach out to students who have graduated from Virginia high schools or received a GED (after having attended for two years) and are currently paying out-of-state tuition rates to inform them of the new law. Colleges already have this information about their currently matriculated students in their files. Further, colleges and universities should add information prominently on their websites about the new in-state tuition law, eligibility criteria, a point of contact, and the effective implementation date of July 1, 2020.