

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MTG
SEPTEMBER 9, 2021
ELECTRONIC MEETING 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Present: Lisa Billingham, Melissa Broeckelman-Post (chair), Charlotte Gill, Mark Ginsberg, Carol Kissal, Kumar Mehta, Keith Renshaw, Solon Simmons, Suzanne Slayden, Matt Theeke, President Greg Washington

I. Approval of Minutes: July 7, 2021 and August 9, 2021: deferred to our next meeting.

II. Announcements

- Chair Broeckelman-Post welcomed new and returning Executive Committee members
- Provost Ginsberg gave general welcoming comments.
 - Provided an update on COVID measures, noting we are ramping up to a capacity of 13,000 tests/week, vaccination rates are now above 90%, and our rates of detection are holding steady at less than 0.5%.
 - Also noted we are engaged in 5 dean searches (two divisional deans – CEC; Dean SBUS, Dean CEHD, Dean CHHS). Each search committee will have faculty members elected by relevant faculty, Provost-appointed faculty, and Provost-appointed non-faculty. In each case, Provost is ensuring that Faculty Senator from respective college/school is included. Chairs of Dean search committees are: Ken Randall (for SBUS), Zofia Burr (for CEHD), Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm (for CHHS). All candidates will come to campus for public presentations and interviews.
 - Subsequent discussion raised concerns about handling of notifications when student in class tests positive for COVID – SVP Kissal asked for write-up of problems to be sent to Julie Zobel and herself, to ensure follow-up and correction.
 - Additional discussion surrounded possibility of Chairs/Directors encouraging faculty to participate in FEA – Provost Ginsberg encouraged contact with PJ Maddox, Chair of the Council of Chairs.
- SVP Kissal noted we are coming up to final town hall for campus master plan, after which, the consultant will transfer responsibility over to Mason for moving forward on plans.
 - In response to question, she noted our enrollment is flat, whereas our budget was built on assumption of 3% growth – also, credit hours per student are a bit low. Thus, there is around a \$14M deficit in budget (seems big, but small percentage of \$1B+ budget). Her team will be bringing revised budget to BOV in late Sep. Provost Ginsberg noted that our overall student head count is up – including out-of-state students – but credit hours are down.

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

- A. Academic Policies** – nothing to report
- B. Budget and Resources**

- Required inclusion of a representative from Budget and Resources Committee on the Admissions Committee. Wondering whether this is still needed – and if so, can we just rotate one member into each meeting, to avoid diverting a committee member’s attention from other, more pressing issues. Issue referred to O&O.
- Question was raised about engagement of FS (and BR specifically) in relation to tuition/fee plans – is there any need/opportunity for engagement prior to town halls? SVP Kissal noted that tuition/fees are actually set in the 6-year plan, so the general plan is public and available well in advance of each year. SVP Kissal further noted GMU likely needs to restructure fees. She asked co-chairs of BR to reach out to talk through how to best engage in fee discussion in particular.

C. Faculty Matters – no report

D. Nominations – no report

E. Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham

- Ombudsperson candidate visits (Sept. 20, 21, 22)
- Send proposed revisions to committee charges to O&O to avoid spring “rush”

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives – none

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion

A. Provost Term Extension

- President Washington joined meeting; Provost Ginsberg and SVP Kissal left meeting
- President Washington summarized that Provost Ginsberg was initially appointed to a 2-year term. However, there have been extreme challenges in the past year-plus (COVID, etc.), there is extensive turnover (5 dean searches) this year, and his perception is that Provost Ginsberg has performed extremely well in the position. Thus, he would like to extend the appointment to be the typical 5-year term (i.e., extend the current appointment from a 2-year term by 3 years, so that the full term is a 5-year term).
 - Faculty Handbook doesn’t have guidance on extension like this, but does have guidance on reappointment. University Counsel had reviewed all relevant policies and concluded that President Washington could simply decide to extend the appointment – but he was not comfortable doing so without discussing, so came to Faculty Senate Executive Committee for input on how to best proceed.
 - Discussion ensued about how to best proceed – all agreed on treating the extension as a reappointment, but President Washington also noted the importance of proceeding quickly, to provide for enough time to digest findings and make a decision. He also noted the large number of initiatives already underway, and concern about further taxing faculty and others.
 - Based on most recent reappointment, it was concluded that, if things moved quickly, the review could be done well and still finalized by early November. To facilitate the process, President Washington asked if the Executive

Committee would be willing to serve on the committee and coordinate the process. Executive Committee members agreed, and suggested Chair of Faculty Matters could chair the review committee.

- General timeline was proposed as follows: send a call for faculty nominees (from general faculty) this week, election the following week, committee begins work in late September/early October. It was noted that Executive Committee includes 9 faculty, representing CHSS, COS, CVPA, SBUS, Carter. Seek two additional faculty elected by general faculty, ideally from other colleges/schools. Also consider inclusion of staff (Chair of Staff Senate?), maybe Dean.
- It was noted that most recent Provost Review included a survey to full community, a community forum with Provost, and four “focus group” style meetings with (1) deans/directors, (2) senior reports to Provost, (3) senior staff in SVP office, (4) department chairs/program directors.

VI. Agenda for FS Meeting – September 22, 2021

- **Call to order**
- **Approval of Minutes:** September 8, 2021 continuation meeting August 25, 2021
- **Opening Remarks** – Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Chair
 - Reminder: Reception for Faculty Senators at Mathy House today, 5:30-7:30 pm
- **Rector Jimmy Hazel**
- **Committee Reports:**
 - A. Faculty Senate Standing Committees**
 - Executive Committee
 - Senate Coffee Chat: Friday, September 24, 9:30am
<https://gmu.zoom.us/j/91891864102?pwd=SHpOQ3kzb3FOVDZxRmhTRGxDMk1zdz09>
 - Academic Policies
 - Budget and Resources
 - Faculty Matters
 - Nominations
 - Organization and Operations
 - B. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives**
(deadline to submit September 14)
- **New Business**
- **Announcements**
 - Provost Ginsberg
 - SVP Kissal
 - (deadline to submit September 14)
- **Remarks for the Good of the Faculty**
- **Adjournment**

VII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Keith Renshaw
Secretary