GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OCTOBER 25, 2021
ELECTRONIC MEETING 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Present: Melissa Broeckelman-Post (chair), Lisa Billingham, Richard Craig, Charlotte Gill, Mark Ginsberg (Provost), Carol Kissal (Senior VP), Kumar Mehta, Keith Renshaw, Solon Simmons, Suzanne Slayden, Matt Theeke

I. Approval of Minutes: October 6, 2021 deferred to our next meeting.

II. Announcements

- Provost Ginsberg made announcements
    - Thanked Solon and everyone for work on Provost Extension Review, enjoyed the talk and dialogue with faculty members
    - Investiture of President Washington went well
    - Some specific accreditation activities to highlight: (1) SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) portfolio was submitted (Matt Smith, Director of Accreditation, did an excellent job) – onsite visit coming in Spring; (2) ABET (engineering accreditation group) reviewed computer science programs – first time in memory that group had no critical comments; (3) COARPT (Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism, and related professions) had similar about review of that program; (4) review of School of Music also went well
    - ARIE (Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence) academic review plans are continuing to be refined, but basically complete. Administrative review plans are due to be completed later this week.
    - Laurence Bray (and members of the Task Force for Reimaging Graduate Education) presented at the last Senate meeting proposal to create Graduate Division. Curious about people's reactions. A series of Town Hall meetings beginning this week. Discussions also taking place within Deans Council and Executive Council
        - Senator asked if this is already decided – what will happen after town halls, etc. Provost responded that it seems promising, but no decisions made – need lots of input now
        - Senator asked for clarification between "graduate division" vs "graduate school." Provost responded that he sees this as a meaningful distinction. Graduate division is way to bind together some resources and ideas about graduate education, without taking too much independence and autonomy from individual units and creating too much centralization.

- Senator asked how many administrative positions would be added to support this. Provost responded that head of division might remain the Associate Provost for Graduate Education, rather than a dean, but not sure. Feedback needed, and report needs more work before finalizing those implications. Funding could go to central staff or support for academic programs at the college/school level
- Senator noted this will be 3rd attempt at graduate school/division.
- Senator voiced concern that small units tend to get "washed out" in the big pool when centralization occurs. Provost noted that he thought the proposal as written helps to prevent that. He also noted that President Washington commented recently that we are, at times, burdened by our history. We are not the same university we were when some of these prior decisions were made. Things that didn't work 20 years ago might be different today – need to learn from history, but not assume prior results generalize to current environment.
- Senator noted this might help address some of the disparities across colleges/schools
- Senator noted the many competing priorities – plans to hire hundreds of new faculty and staff, raise salaries, increase support for graduate students, increase support for mental health needs, etc. Where will the funds come from? Provost noted "great organizations can do anything but the best organizations understand they can't do everything." Ongoing strategic planning process will help guide decisions. As a comprehensive research university, support for graduate education has to be high on priority list.
- Senator asked about the level of approval needed to create a "division" vs. a "school." Could a "division" be more easily ***undone*** later, if another administration decides it's not needed? Provost noted he was unsure, but suspects that a "school" would require BOV and then SCHEV approval, whereas a "division" would not. But that is not a major factor in the decision.
- Senator asked what major problems are trying to be "solved" with this. Provost noted his impression was that Mason has not yet invested sufficiently in doctoral programs to be highly competitive as an R1 institution in an international context. Also, might be an attempt to create more interconnectedness among programs.

- The three major dean searches nearly ready to launch, a bit further ahead of the searches for divisional deans for engineering and computing. Member of Faculty Senate serving on each search committee
- Campus Strategic Plan Group will begin work, now that Master Planning work with consultants is done. Had retreat this past Friday among deans, directors of

development, central advancement office, to begin planning what eventually will become the next campaign for the university

- Sr. VP Carol Kissal made announcements
    - Noted she presented to Faculty Senate, will be meeting with Budget & Resources representatives soon
    - University is working with legislature to keep pushing for additional base funding
    - Human Resources and Payroll is on track with faculty compensation work related to market equity. Nov 1 is deadline for assessments with deans, and 2% merit raises to be deployed in January.
        - Senator asked about whether full 2% was from Central, or a 1:1 match with Colleges. SVP Kissal indicated she believed it was a 1:1 match.
        - Senator noted Salary Equity Committee was unaware of this effort. SVP Kissal suggested connecting committee with VP Human Resources.
        - Senator asked how faculty will learn about this. SVP Kissal indicated Colleges/Schools are responsible – deans and department chairs. Some concern expressed that some deans/chairs are not strong on communication – SVP Kissal said she would consult with VP Human Resources on communication plans.
    - Senator asked how upcoming election might affect Mason. SVP Kissal noted if House changes parties, there might be an impact – probably not much difference in governor race, as both have higher education in platforms.
- Chair Broeckelman-Post reminded EXC of upcoming meeting with President Washington (11/10 3:00pm – 4:15pm).

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

A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden, Chair

- Chair Slayden noted that a member of committee was working on resolution (possibly for the Nov. meeting) related to ensuring that Faculty Senate should somehow be involved in decision about Graduate Education Reimagine Task Force
    - Senator raised concern about possible negative impact on smaller units
    - Senator noted that Cristiana Stan is good contact, as she is: (1) Faculty Senator and member of the Academic Policies Committee, (2) FS rep to the Graduate Council, and (3) member of Graduate Education Reimagine Task Force.

B. Budget and Resources – Kumar Mehta and Matt Theeke, Co-Chairs

- Co-Chair Theeke indicated committee will make annual request for salary data in November. Committee is planning to include a crosstab pivot table report to allow faculty to consume data in more meaningful way. Co-Chair Mehta provided examples: analysis of salary data by rank, by college, tenure-track status, etc. Open to suggestions on what metrics should be available. Will bring that to Executive Committee for additional input and ideas before publishing.

- Senators indicated desire to have stipends *removed* from salary displayed (or at least make it clear if stipends are included – currently unclear)
- Chair Brockelman-Post also noted desire to receive aggregate data for Salary Equity Committee to explore discrepancies across demographics (race, gender, etc.). Senator Renshaw indicated this was attempted a few years ago, but was unable to occur.
- Co-Chairs Theeke and Mehta also discussed possibility of receiving data on workload (e.g., administrative course releases), but wasn't clear this was feasible.

- Co-Chair Mehta also noted that they had met with Chief of Staff Ken Walsh recently. In that meeting, he noted that President Washington had routinely provided budget data, when he was Dean at UC-Irvine, to all faculty 3 times/year. B&R is discussing how data might be presented, and whether it could done at least 2 times/year to start.
  - Senator noted that CHSS provides college overview and department-level data to each department chair/program director.
  - Co-Chair Mehta indicated desire to begin developing processes for this to happen routinely, so it continues in future years. Chair Broeckelman-Post asked if O&O Committee had thoughts about this, from perspective of B&R committee charge. O&O Chair Billingham indicated need to do more research. Senator indicated there could be (1) regular process that administration agrees to engage in, or (2) some process by which B&R routinely does this (similar to obtaining salary data each year). Co-Chair Mehta indicated they would begin the work this year, and see how things go.
  - Overall, there is a lot of common ground on increasing transparency and visibility of issues like the budget at the levels of colleges/schools.

C. Faculty Matters – Solon Simmons, Chair

- Committee is diving up Faculty Evaluation of Administrators qualitative responses for thematic analysis. Dean Ann Ardis wrote to express concerns that performance statements were not included at the beginning of FEA last time – we will arrange to do that for the next time. Quantitative analysis should be done by end of fall semester. Provost analysis will be done sooner for Provost Extension Review.
- Chair Simmons was asked to speak at College of Science faculty meeting about use of the Faculty Evaluation under COVID. Dean and HR representative were not present. Group seemed to not know about the document from last year's Faculty Matters Committee, and appeared excited to learn about it.
- Mason Korea faculty are still not on the standard mailing list. Need to try to address that.

- There are two term faculty on the Committee, and this year's committee has a sense of urgency in addressing workload issues. I suspect the Committee is going to be more directly assertive on workload questions.
    - Senator noted that workload and salary are definitely important issues for term faculty – but issues are not *limited* to term faculty. They affect all faculty (term and tenure-line), as well as staff.
    - Chair Broeckelman-Post noted that this came up a bit in first meeting of Task Force on Reimagining Faculty Roles and Rewards (TFRFRR). Need to clarify task force is not solely focused on term faculty. In contrast, the university's Term Faculty Committee is doing some really important work, including addressing workload. Need to think of ways to clarify and correct misinformation, and avoid having multiple committees taking on the same work.
    - Chair Simmons suggested some sort of formal contact between Faculty Matters and TFRFRR, and invited Chair Broeckelman Post to attend committee meeting to briefly share the panoptic view
- Some brief discussion of just how vast the charge of the FM Committee is.

D. Nominations – Richard Craig and Charlotte Gill, Co-Chairs

- Working to get Grading Process Task Force together. Will send request to all members of Academic Policies committee to have one member serve.

E. Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham, Chair

- Many committee charges being filtered to us. Maybe we need to look also at the Faculty Matters Committee charge.
- No updates yet on Ombuds hiring.

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives

A. Provost Extension Review Committee – Solon Simmons, Chair

- Time blocks for senior administrators will be set up using half hour blocks.
- Schedule has been established; email with automated sign-ups sent to invitees. Invitees included Senior VP direct reports.

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion – none noted

VI. Agenda for FS Meeting – November 17, 2021

- **Call to order**
- **Approval of FS Minutes – October 20, 2021**
- **Opening Remarks –** Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Chair
- **Committee Reports:**

A. Faculty Senate Standing Committees

Executive Committee

- Senate Coffee Chat (on Zoom) Friday, November 12, 9:30am (early meeting) https://gmu.zoom.us/j/93344872940?pwd=U21WTTl3VXdmY3BKZmdZSG8zdkNTZz09

Academic Policies
Budget and Resources
Faculty Matters
Nominations
Organization and Operations

B. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives

- **New Business**
- **Announcements**
  - Provost Ginsberg
  - SVP Kissal
- **Remarks for the Good of the Faculty**
- **Adjournment**

VII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Keith Renshaw
Secretary