

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE**  
**APRIL 1, 2015**  
**Robinson Hall B113, 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.**

**Senators present:** Mark Addleson, Changwoo Ahn, Dominique Banville, Jim Bennett, Alok Berry, Doris Bitler Davis, Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Carol Cleaveland, Rick Coffinberger, Arie Croitoru, Betsy DeMulder, Charlene Douglas, Robert Dudley, Carla Fisher, Pamela Garner, Janos Gertler, Michele Greet, Mark Houck, Dimitrios Ioannou, David Kuebrich, Timothy Leslie, Daniel Menascé, Jim Metcalf, Linda Monson, Elavie Ndura, Paula Petrik, Frank Allen Philpot, Keith Renshaw, Pierre Rodgers, Catherine Sausville, Suzanne Slayden, James Steele, Susan Trencher, Iosif Vaisman, Phil Wiest, Shelley Wong, S. David Wu, John Zenelis, Stanley Zoltek.

**Senators absent:** Peggy Agouris, Kenneth Ball, Lisa Billingham, Deborah Boehm-Davis, Ángel Cabrera, Andrew Carle, Lloyd Cohen, Kenneth De Jong, John Farina, Helen Frederick, Mark Ginsberg, Bruce Johnsen, Kumar Mehta, Sarah Nutter, Bob Pasnak, Daniel Polsby, Thomas Prohaska, William Reeder, Mark Rozell, Stephen Ruth, Dennis Sandole, June Tangney, Anand Vidyashankar, Jenice View.

**Visitors present:** Sarah Baker, English/INTO Mason/NWVP Director; Jessica Cain, Employee Relations Specialist, Human Resources/Payroll; Cameron Carter, Communications & Marketing Specialist, Office of Distance Education; Rector Tom Davis; Patricia Donini, Deputy Director- Human Resources & Payroll/Employee Relations Director; Cody Edwards, Associate Provost for Graduate Education; Herbertia Gilmore, Equal Opportunity Specialist, Compliance, Diversity and Ethics; Linda Harber, Vice President, Human Resources/ Payroll and Faculty/Staff Life; Angie Hattery, Director/Head, Women and Gender Studies, MAIS, Women and Gender Studies; Megan Kirk, Vice Chair, Staff Senate; Caitlyn Holmes, Assistant Director, Writing Across the Curriculum, English Department; Michelle Lim, Faculty Initiatives Manager, Human Resources/Payroll; Karyn Mallett, Associate Director, English Language Programs, INTO George Mason University; Michelle Marks, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs; Gerardine Mobley, EO Specialist/Trainer & Provost Liaison & Interim Ombudsman, Compliance, Diversity and Ethics; Janette Muir, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education; Rose Pascarell, Vice President, University Life; E. Shelley Reid, Associate Professor, English; Jim Sanford, Professor *emeritus*, Psychology; Nicole Sealey, INTO Mason Academic Director, INTO George Mason University; Marilyn Smith, Vice President/Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Services; Sharon Williams van Rooij, Associate Professor, Learning Technologies, College for Education and Human Development; Elizabeth Woodley, University Policy Manager and FOIA Compliance Officer, Compliance, Diversity and Ethics.

**I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

**II. Approval of the Minutes of March 4, 2015:** The minutes were approved.

**III. Announcements**

Chair Charlene Douglas welcomed [the Honorable Tom Davis](#), Rector of George Mason University. He expressed how wonderful it is to be here. He opened by discussing his teaching at Mason and how two stepdaughters attended Mason. Rector Davis very appreciative of opportunities and assets which really are faculty, including the ability for him to teach in the School of Policy, Government, and International

Affairs. In the state budget we are competing with other priorities. For the 2% (salary) raise, we pay 1.5%, the state pays .5%. Please feel free to contact him if you have questions ([tdaviso@gmu.edu](mailto:tdaviso@gmu.edu)).

**Discussion/Questions:**

*Senator:* In past year, revisions to Strategic Plan increased numbers of student graduating. Trade-offs between quality and quantity?

*Rector Davis:* We do not intend to drop our standards. The Law School could have accepted more people but did not want to lower standards. 7% of student body = international students; low compared to around 15% international students. Ranking important only because others pay attention to them, he is not a fan of *US News and World Report*.

*Senator:* Growth in the College of Science and Volgenau School of Engineering shows a lack in financial support for labs.

*Rector Davis:* Funding is a problem across higher education; looking at 2018 Campaign to be announced with a goal to raise \$500 M for school. Willing to using naming rights to grow the endowment (rooms, buildings, machinery, etc.)

*Senator:* There are different types of faculty – instructional, professional, administrative faculty. Noticeable growth in administrative faculty compared to instructional faculty, including growth in administrative faculty compensation. How many administrators do we need? The basketball coach earns \$700K salary?

*Rector Davis:* We have the Patriot Center – every time we are on TV is an ad for the university. Recalling the Final Four (2006), the basketball coach’s salary was relatively comparable. A good number of you go to basketball games, and enjoy the performance of the green machine too. As Rector, one member himself, the BOV members are very committed to the university, we are only as smart and as good as information we have. Advises use of chain-of-command. He noted Senate chair Charlene Douglas attends every Board meeting, and faculty participate on every committee we have.

*Senator:* Thinks it’s absolutely fantastic you teach here and understand what goes on in classroom.

*Rector Davis:* I see other faculty members on campus too, and get more out of it than you can imagine. I appreciate the tough job you have.

*Provost S. David Wu:* Research Symposium will take place April 27<sup>th</sup>; registration has been going on for some time. Active response, we had to change venue to larger venue – at the Global Center. Participation in first topic “Health – Broadly Defined”.

We have started process of looking at the structure of the Provost Office using four cross-functional teams. So far we have a roughly 7% reduction in operating costs, largely through the attrition process. We continue to work on our overhaul of the Graduate Admissions process.

**Faculty Enrollment in Courses:** Our Non-Degree website has been updated. Faculty who wish to take a ND course should click on "George Mason University Employees"

<http://admissions.gmu.edu/nonDegree/> . A maximum of twelve credits allowed per year.

## IV. New Business – Committee Reports

### A. Senate Standing Committees

*Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden, Chair*

Senator Slayden presented the Resolution to Modify English Proficiency Scores for Undergraduate Admission ([Attachment A](#)) for a vote. She also thanked the Admissions Committee, chaired by Senator Betsy DeMulder; they have been very helpful in working together with the Academic Policies Committee.

See also the Addendum-March 30, 2015 ([Attachment B](#)) which contains questions/concerns submitted by faculty to the Provost Office concerning language proficiency support for students, as well as the Provost Office's responses.

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### Discussion/Questions:

*Senator:* Why should we lower our scores to be comparable to peer institutions? Why not to schools we aspire to be like?

*Senator Slayden:* Almost everyone in the US had TOEFL scores of 80, with some exceptions such as University of Virginia, Boston University. Many of our transfer students from NOVA use English Composition/Proficiency courses at NOVA for admission, for undergraduate admission only.

*Senators:* (1) Are other institutions getting more or less students with TOEFL scores than we are? What is the range? (2) TOEFL is a limited assessment and does not always predict potential of international students to succeed. Why not look to our aspirational institutions? (3) English (proficiency) has nothing to do with how smart, clever – not so much language as structure of content. In math, sciences labs, the students take care of each other. (4) The faculty is the unit that will be most affected given that there is a history of students in the past, admitted to the university, who needed friends as translators to come with them to office hours, or who simply took the answers from their friends in classes because of an inability to adequately speak English.

*Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Janette Muir:* Language competency is a complex issue, and writing skill is larger than the TOEFL score. Today I'd like to separate TOEFL considerations from writing support. From standpoint of students, one thing in their admissions (application), there are still other things there. Student may be a fine high school student; goes into pathway (non-degree status). In some countries students may be supported by sponsors who will not enroll them in non-degree programs. With INTO, bring important issues to forefront – combination of ESL and CISA with corporate sponsor. (Chart displayed below)

## Supporting Evidence for Adjusting TOEFL iBT Scores to 80 with minimum subsection of 18

### Enrollment Impact

The increased volume of applications and admissible students would demonstrate increased direct admission enrollment under the adjusted scores.

Admissions Data from 2012-2014 <sup>1</sup>	Applied	Accepted	Enrolled
Actual Admissions Data with 88 TOEFL iBT	551	408	120
Projected Admissions Data with 80 iBT subsection 18 <sup>2</sup>	657	486	143

<sup>1</sup>Data only includes undergraduate international applicants who submitted TOEFL iBT scores.

<sup>2</sup>Actual number of applicants with TOEFL scores in this range; accepted and enrolled numbers assumes same acceptance rate of 74% and same yield rate of 29.4%

### Academic Performance

In an analysis of incoming language proficiency scores and academic performance of pathway students (admitted to ACCESS and BRIDGE, the former Mason pathway programs offered through the Center for International Student Access from 2010-2013), reading and listening subsection scores are most highly correlated with GPA during the freshman year; while the cumulative GPA at the junior year was most highly correlated with the students' overall incoming language score.

In an assessment of direct admits, who were admitted based on an alternative language proficiency requirement of SAT Critical Reading AND had TOEFL iBT scores below 88, only 87% passed ENGH 100 on the 1<sup>st</sup> (n=31) attempt and their average GPA at the end of the freshman year was 3.23 in comparison to the overall average GPA of the combined freshman classes of 3.27. We conclude that when both overall and subsection scores are carefully set that student success can be better assured while mitigating potential challenges.

#### Submitted by:

Jennifer Tkacz, *Director, International Admissions*

Nicole J. Sealey, *Academic Director, INTO Mason*      2/27/15

*Senator DeMulder, Chair of the Admissions Committee:* Wholeheartedly in favor of lowering score. However, we do have a moral obligation students will be successful when they come here. Contradictions in the document between one year funding and “perpetual” funding. The Admissions Committee does not agree support for students and TOEFL score should not be coupled.

*Provost Wu:* Three years of funding, with the potential to renew continually.

*Senator:* There are 1200 students on the waiting list for the Writing Center right now.

*Provost Wu:* Not an isolated issue in itself.

*Senator:* Where is funding from Mason Korea coming in? We need a substantive conversation across the institution regarding what we need to do to.

*Associate Provost Muir:* We would not disagree with that conversation/dialogue, we want students to succeed. INTO has a learning resource center, not just reading, but also writing and talking.

*Provost Wu:* I am a huge proponent of support for writing. Domestic students have as much trouble with writing as international students. I am committed to enhance support for writing, but not with the TOEFL as proxy for writing.

*Senator:* This issue has brought a problem to the surface. I favor lowering scores, but there is a need for more dialogue between Writing faculty and the Provost Office as well as funding for writing program dealing with international students.

**A motion was made** and seconded to table the motion. The Faculty Senate voted to **table** the proposal (18 votes in favor of postponement, 16 votes opposed to postponement).

*Associate Provost Muir:* We need to make some decision; impact on materials distributed internationally. We will have data in the future and ask Faculty Senators to send specific questions to her directly ([jmuir@gmu.edu](mailto:jmuir@gmu.edu)).

*Budget and Resources – Mark Houck, Chair*

Senator Houck encourages everyone to attend Budget Forums. For the entire year the budget has been in flux. The administration promises to have the salary data available next week.

*Faculty Matters – Keith Renshaw, Chair*

Please encourage your colleagues to complete the 2014-15 Faculty Evaluation of Administrators survey.

*Nominations – Jim Bennett, Chair*

The election of Faculty Representatives to BOV Committees is underway, please vote.

*Organization and Operations – Robert Dudley, Chair*

We have referred an issue to the Faculty Matters Committee.

**B. Other Committee Reports – none.**

**V. Other New Business**

*Universal Background Check Report – Linda Harber, Vice President for Human Resources/Payroll and Faculty/Staff Life:* During this reporting period (July 1, 2014 – present) 942 background checks occurred, including 270 for faculty and adjunct faculty. There were no background check discrepancies that led to termination for faculty or adjunct faculty. There were no instances of individuals refusing to complete a background check or any violation of confidentiality. Cost breakdown: \$33,600 for staff, \$6,300 for full-time faculty; \$7,200 for adjunct faculty. Costs averaged about \$50 per person.

Discussion/Questions: A Senator recalled concerns about long-term background checks - issue to be open after two years? Emeritus Professor Jim Sanford recalled when the resolution was passed (See *Report of the Faculty Matters Committee – [Faculty Senate Minutes September 5, 2012](#) and later*



*discussion [Faculty Senate Minutes March 27, 2013 pp 6-10](#)); it was somewhat controversial. Previously background checks were targeted employees working with children, finances, before universal background checks. Does not believe there have been problems.*

*VP Linda Harber:* Not on the faculty side. She noted it may naturally deter those with criminal records not to apply.

*Online Degree Completion Program/Platform for Educational Innovation – Michelle Marks, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs*

There are about 50 online programs at [Mason](#): some graduate, undergraduate, certificates, and individual courses. In a set of conversations university-wide, to make more resources available. Referencing President Cabrera’s email: (March 3, 2015: 2015 Legislative Update): Finally, the General Assembly indicated its support for a key element of our strategic plan by directing us to deliver a comprehensive report on the development of an on-line completion college. This is an initiative that can help us expand our impact and better serve our entire student community.

We are evaluating the need for it; what programs would be included? We already have BIS, programs such as B of Applied Science, and other online courses. Still determining the pricing model. The proposal is due by September 1<sup>st</sup>. We are pulling together a committee to include faculty representatives. Potentially more ambitious than what we currently have going on, with the goal of getting funding in General Assembly. The plan is not to launch a separate college for the university or what our digital strategy a la University of Maryland University College.

*Report of the Task Force on Sexual Assault and Interpersonal Violence – Rose Pascarell, Vice President for University Life, and Angie Hattery, Director, Women and Gender Studies*

The Task Force issued its final [report](#) February 28, 2015. Vice President Pascarell noted this is a notable moment in education reform. She praised the expert Task Force membership and encouraged everyone to read its recommendations. The Virginia General Assembly sponsored more than 30 bills on sexual assault during its last session. George Mason University is in compliance with federal regulations, and is not one of the institutions under federal review. We feel a strong obligation to keep our students safe, to encourage victims to come forward. The report contains short term and long term recommendations. President Cabrera has instructed the leadership team to begin short term recommendations, then to go to long term recommendations.

Obligation in Title IX is to not just one-time education programs, but on-going. 80% of freshmen participate in the fall in both ongoing and other programs. Pledge cards were distributed: “I pledge to end sexual violence in order to begin the real practice of freedom and learning at George Mason University”.

*Annual Faculty Senate Evaluation of the President and Provost by Faculty Senate and University Standing Committees 2014-15* [Attachment C](#)

**VII. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 4:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Timothy Leslie  
Secretary

## ATTACHMENT A

### Resolution to Modify English Proficiency Scores for Undergraduate Admission

#### Resolution:

Revise English Language test scores for direct admissions:

- 1) Lower the minimum TOEFL score from 88 to 80, with subsections of 18 or higher.
- 2) For IELTS scores, require students to have a minimum subsection score of 6.0.

[Note: Admissions will retain some discretion over 1-2 points per TOEFL subsection, based on a holistic review of the applicant's credentials.]

#### Background Information:

##### 1) Language Proficiency Testing

--There are several ways that student language proficiency can be demonstrated for admission to Mason. These include the following:

- TOEFL (*Test of English as a Foreign Language*),
- IELTS (*International English Language Testing System*)
- PTE (*Pearson English Language Test*)
- Successful completion of Academic English Level 6 (through INTO-Mason)
- SAT/ACT scores
- Successful completion of Composition courses (for transfer students)

--Different tests are available in different parts of the world; TOEFL scores are one of the most popular ways to test language proficiency.

--TOEFL subsections

- In calculating the TOEFL score, there are four subsections that determine student proficiency in writing, speaking, listening and reading. A perfect TOEFL score would be 120, with a score of 30 in each subsection.
- Currently, Mason's TOEFL requirement is 88 with no review of subsections. This is higher than most of our peer institutions.
- In the current system, a student with a TOEFL score below 88 would be required to join an INTO-Mason pathway program as a non-degree student.

--IELTS subsections

- Subsections of testing include writing, speaking, listening and reading. Currently, Mason does not look at IELTS subsection scores.

## 2) Market Analysis

Over the last year, an analysis of Mason's enrollment management activity was conducted by Huron Education. The Huron study is based on market data and comparisons with other similar institutions. One of the issues the study identifies is the high TOEFL score that Mason requires. The conclusion by Huron was that aligning Mason's TOEFL requirement with similar institutions will provide a more competitive option for applicants with TOEFL scores in the 80-87 range.

## 3) Academic Resources [Please see *Appendix A* for more details]

Historically, resources have existed for students who need help with learning English and several programs were in place through the English Language Institute (ELI). With the development of INTO Mason, ELI merged with the Center for International Student Access (CISA) and three areas are now featured: Pathway programs, Academic English and General English. Additional resources will be provided to ensure that students with language challenges are supported.

### Advantages to the Change:

- *Alignment with other Institutions:* Adjusting the English proficiency score requirements for direct admission brings Mason's Admission requirements more into alignment with comparable institutions in the region and the US, including INTO partner schools and Songdo Global University Campus partners. The majority of institutions require a minimum TOEFL iBT score of 79 or 80.
- *Attracting Students into Degree Programs:* Aligning the TOEFL requirement with similar institutions increases Mason's competitiveness. Applicants with scores in the 80-87 range will likely go where they can gain direct entry to their degree program rather than spend additional time and money studying English before beginning their degree program.
- *Market Analysis:* In their assessment of Mason's Enrollment Management activity, Huron Education identified changing the TOEFL requirement as a "short-term win" for impacting incoming students this year.

### ***Appendix A – Academic Resources***

INTO Mason will continue to provide language resources for the students who need support and who may not be enrolled in the INTO Mason program. Some of these resources include: workshops for multilingual students, English conversation programs, tutoring services, and SPEAK testing.



In the short term, it is anticipated that there will be a moderate increase in student demand for Writing Center tutoring, a need for more seats in English 100 - Composition for Non-native Speakers of English, and additional tutoring services. Further, we anticipate a moderate increase in faculty use of outreach made available through the Center for Teaching Excellence in partnership with INTO Mason.

To support the change in the TOEFL score and IELTS subsection scores, the Provost Office is prepared to provide \$20,000 to the Writing Center to support non-native English speakers. Additionally, in order to support the development of speaking, listening and reading skills, \$20,000 will be provided to the Learning Resource Center, located in the Global Center. The LRC supports the administration and coordination of the International Teaching Assistant program and coordinates complimentary tutoring services for non-native English speakers. These are resources offered for one year with assessment on permanent funds and utilization going forward.

## **ATTACHMENT B**

### **Addendum March 30, 2015**

Questions submitted to the Provost's office concerning language proficiency support for students. The Provost Office answers are in *italics*.

**A.** It is stated in the plan for support that \$20,000 will be provided to the Writing Center and \$20,000 will be provided to the LRC. In order to understand what the offer of \$40,000 represents, more background information is necessary.

- Do these funds represent additional funding to the WC and LRC above their current funding?
- Or are the funds the total of what will be provided to these centers?
- What is the current funding for these centers?
- Is this figure the funding (or additional funding) for 2016-2017 when the first students with lower TOEFL scores will be admitted?

*The support that Dr. Wu has agreed to is additional funding for these centers, perpetual for at least three years.*

**B.** Although it is understood that actual numbers of students who enter with lower language proficiency cannot be accurately predicted right now, the English Department wants to ensure that support for these students does not result in any change in the current course caps in English 101 and 302 (19 and 22 respectively) or funding for additional term lines to staff those positions to maintain those course caps.

The course caps are essential so that composition faculty can effectively work with students who need additional writing support. We have had consistent pressure to increase our caps over the last 4 years in English 302. We have good national data that the 22 person course is the maximum size for effective classroom teaching. With this new population the caps will be essential to maintain our learning objectives.

*There is no plan to increase course caps for English classes.*

C. In response to the current resolution to reduce the undergraduate TOEFL score requirement, Mason's writing program directors and faculty pose the following concerns to the Provost's Office and the greater community of Mason faculty.

To be clear: Our concern is not that the TOEFL score requirement will decrease. We support Mason's alignment with peer institutions and more open access for all students who would like a college degree. But given the significant underfunding of services for our current multilingual student population, we are concerned that the current proposal will exacerbate a lack of responsible and sustainable support for the many writing programs that serve as a critical foundation for Mason's institutional mission.

*There is work being done in other areas to shore up support for writing on campus. We know this is a larger issue that needs to be decoupled from the current TOEFL conversation.*

The following questions seek to clarify the role that INTO will play in our writing programs, the means by which support has been determined and will be allocated across all facets of writing education at Mason, and the process for assessing the results of the proposed changes.

### **Questions about support for INTO**

**Background:** The proposal provides \$20,000 to a unit of INTO Mason (the Learning Resource Center). INTO Corporation Joint Venture generally is a profit-sharing bridge program that does not serve fully matriculated Mason students; the LRC does not currently provide services to matriculated Mason students ("complimentary tutoring" is only offered to INTO students); and the International TA education program mentioned in the proposal does not seem to be affected by the TOEFL proposal.

Therefore, we ask the following questions:

1. What is the rationale for providing money to the INTO Corporation JV rather than to our current university-wide support services, such as the Writing Center and the Speech Center?

*The joint venture, INTO-Mason combined the English Language Institute (ELI) with the Center for International Student Access (CISA) to create a robust center for non-native speaking students to develop their English proficiency. ELI, in the past, provided several services to the University community, which we desire to continue.*

2. If the INTO Corporation JV is planning to expand toward services for fully matriculated students, how does that reflect its initial charter, and why does it need additional funding?

*There are regular conversations with our INTO partners and this is in line with general practices at other North American Centers. Additional funding goes to support the Learning Resource Center that is currently managed by one staff person.*

3. Why is money for graduate ITA education a part of a proposal concerning undergraduate multilingual students?

*What was provided is a description of some things the LRC focuses on. No funds are allocated specifically to that program; funds go to the Center to be managed accordingly.*

### **Questions about support for the Writing Center**

**Background:** The proposal provides \$20,000 for the Writing Center. However, current levels of Writing Center support for multilingual students already at Mason are insecure and incomplete, and likely predicted future growth has as yet been unplanned-for. For example:

- Three ESL specialist graduate TA tutors previously funded annually by the ELI (\$15,000-\$17,000 per year each in salary and benefits) are staffed ad-hoc for AY 2014-2015 with no provision yet for funding in AY 2015-2016 or beyond. They provide tutoring and outreach to multilingual writers as well as training and professional development for the tutoring staff.
- Given the Center's recent annual average waitlist of 1200 students not able to make appointments, with an annual average percentage of 60% multilingual users, 720 tutoring sessions requested by non-native speakers of English are currently going unscheduled. Providing a mix of graduate and undergraduate tutors to staff these sessions would cost an additional \$24,000, as well as resources for extended operating hours or space.
- Data from the first five years of the INTO Joint Venture at Oregon State U show that visits to their writing center increased from 6700 to 11,000 appointments over the first 5 years of the joint venture. A 65% increase within 5 years at Mason would call for additional administration, tutoring, and space, which have not yet been budgeted for.

Therefore, we ask the following questions:

4. What is \$20,000 supposed to pay for in terms of Writing Center resources, and how was that figure arrived at?

*The funding is for support of the Writing Center, the Director can determine its allocation. The figure was derived based on available funds within the Provost Office budget.*

5. What specifically constitutes the "moderate impact" and "moderate increases" predicted by this proposal, in support service use and supporting curriculum?

*While we are lowering the TOEFL score, we are also including subsection scores, which will mitigate the new lower score. It is fair to say that an estimated third of the students admitted this way will need some sort of*

support. So if 50 students were admitted under this model, 15 may need support. The current system can support these additional numbers, and careful data analysis will be conducted by the INTO Mason Academic Director to monitor future growth.

6. Given limited funding, which of the needs identified above—tutors with specialized knowledge and ability to guide other tutors, capacity to serve current students, or capacity to serve new incoming students—should the Writing Center be prepared to cut back on in order to balance its budget?

*The Writing Center Director, in consultation with the CHSS Budget Office can determine where the greatest needs will be for student support.*

### **Questions about support for writing curriculum and faculty development**

**Background:** The proposal makes no provision for English 100 and 101, Mason Core courses that will be impacted by an increase in international students.

- ENGH 100 will need to be redesigned to align with current best pedagogical practices in the field of TESOL and Writing Studies, and to effectively support students with lower TOEFL scores.
- Currently ENGH 100 is taken by students who self-select into the course. Appropriate placement testing and advising will need to be arranged for students who will not be served well by mainstream courses.
- Funding for an Assistant Director of 100-level English who specializes in multilingual writing instruction is currently an ad hoc arrangement. This funding will need to be secured on an ongoing basis and expanded to include the curricular redevelopment of the courses and support for faculty teaching both ENGH 100 and ENGH 101 (since new international students will also take that course).

Therefore, we ask the following questions:

7. Will support for the current infrastructure of English 100-level and the AD be established on an on-going basis?
8. There is a clear need for professional development for ENGH 100, ENGH 101 and 302, as well as WI instructors; who will provide this professional development and how will it be funded?

### **Questions about holistic planning and assessment**

**Background:** This proposal offers one-mode, one-year, one-time resources with only the possibility of continued funding in the future. However, we know from other successful programs at Mason (WAC, OSCAR) that one-facet vision can be problematic:

- We have a celebrated campus-wide language education culture that includes faculty development, curriculum and program development, writing and speaking education, and assessment across disciplines and levels —and this change will certainly require additional faculty and curriculum support, not just increases for tutorial services.
- The TOEFL change is intended as permanent, not a pilot program, and a goal for all students admitted will be that they progress to graduation across multiple years of study including all of their Mason Core requirements.

- It is barely possible to assess usage, and not possible to assess learning outcomes, of any program designed to prepare students to succeed in future courses before they have engaged in those courses.
- Assessing growth in student language learning is a specialized and time-intensive process.

Therefore, we ask the following questions:

9. Why is support only being offered for writing tutorial services rather than also for speaking tutorial services?
10. Why is support only being offered for tutorial services rather than for faculty and curriculum development in writing and language courses throughout the Core?
11. Why is support only being offered for a single year, rather than at least a three-year period that would allow for reasonable assessment of student learning as they progress through the Core?
12. Why, if assessment is so crucial to determining if additional funding will be granted, is no funding support granted for creating a rich assessment process?

We hope that the Provost's office will invest its money in programs that are consistent with the goals of increasing multilingual undergraduate access and success, that one program isn't funded just as other crucial ones fall by the wayside, and that support programs can be funded to fully accomplish their first round of work.

*Since questions 7-12 address larger institutional issues, will address altogether:*

*The issues raised through these questions are important ones and speak to larger questions regarding support for our international students and the faculty and staff who work with them. We should stay focused, at this point, on the specific issue brought forward by lowering the TOEFL scores rather than trying to solve all of the issues at once. The Provost Office is committed to supporting our non-native speaking students, balancing our other priorities, and these issues will require long-term, persistent solutions.*

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## ATTACHMENT C

### **Evaluation of the President and Provost by Faculty Senate Standing Committees, University Standing Committees, and Ad Hoc Committees AY 2014-15**

responses compiled February - March, 2015

Note that some committees did not provide responses to each question.

**1. During the past calendar year has the President or Provost announced initiatives or goals or acted upon issues that fall under the charge of your Committee? If so, was your Committee consulted by the President or Provost in a timely manner before the announcement or action? If not, do you believe your Committee should have been consulted? Would it have been helpful to have had the input of your Committee from the outset?**

**Responses from Faculty Senate Standing Committees:**

Academic Policies: Through the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, the committee was made aware that the central administration was considering lowering the TOEFL score. The proposal was sent in early March.

Budget and Resources: There have been many times during the past year that issues germane to the Budget and Resources Committee have arisen. I believe the BRC should be consulted as a regular part of business as the administration addresses budgetary concerns. And that consultation has occurred regularly and appropriately. The Chair of the BRC attends the Senate's Executive Committee meetings which are also attended by the SVP and Provost. In addition, the Chair of the BRC is a member of the Budget Planning Team that met every other week until recently when it changed to monthly meetings. The BPT is chaired by the SVP and Provost and the rest of the membership is VPs for the major parts of the university. All budget and resource issues are discussed here. This level of interaction is needed and appreciated.

Faculty Matters: I am unaware of any specific initiatives or goals that were announced or acted upon during the past year that fall under the charge of the Faculty Matters Committee. There are ongoing issues (e.g., summer teaching, hiring of adjuncts) that have come up, but none that have involved new initiatives or goals.

Nominations: No.

#### **Responses from University Standing Committees:**

Academic Appeals: To my knowledge, neither the President nor the Provost announced any initiatives or goals, or acted upon issues that fall under the charge of the university's Academic Appeals Committee. I am unaware of any issues about which I believe that our Committee should have been consulted.

Admissions: The Provost's Office (Janette Muir) requested information over email about the process of getting Faculty Senate approval to lower the TOEFL score required for undergraduates admitted into Mason. Dr. Muir indicated that there was an interest in getting the proposal approved "as soon as possible so that Admissions can reach out to pending students." I was included on this email dated February 16<sup>th</sup> as the Chair of the Admission Committee of the Faculty Senate, as was Charlene Douglas (Chair of the Faculty Senate) and Suzanne Slayden (Chair of the Academic Policies Committee of the Faculty Senate). Although the February 16<sup>th</sup> email was the first I heard about this issue, according to Dr. Slayden, the issue was first raised by the Provost's office earlier in the fall but the action needed to move the issue along (sending the request to the O & O committee) didn't happen until the end of February. It would have been helpful for the Admissions Committee to have the opportunity to research and discuss this issue more thoroughly, particularly since it seemed there was some urgency to have the proposal approved.

Adult Learning and Executive Education: The Adult Learning & Executive Education Committee has not had business that would've required initiative from either the President or Provost at this point in time. Therefore I would not have any applicable responses to the evaluation questions on behalf of this committee.

Athletic Council: No, no initiatives or specific goals for the Athletic Council were initiated by the President or the Provost. The President reported current discussions statewide about student fee monies supporting Intercollegiate activities at our February Council Meeting. We did not have any issues under my charge with either the President or the Provost.

Faculty Handbook: No initiatives or goals fell under the charge of the committee.

Mason Core: Nothing directly germane to this committee.

Salary Equity Study Committee: The issues of faculty salary equity are related to the general budgetary situation of the university. I think our committee will be better able to respond to this survey next year. One point that is important is that a committee have strong continuity from year to year.

Technology Policy: This academic year our committee has almost all of its business related to activities involving ITS. Marilyn Smith has attended all of our meetings and brought her senior staff with her to answer questions as they arose. She has been very responsive to our committee's requests for information and has frequently sought our input. When she has not agreed with our suggested course of action, she has taken great efforts to convince us that her actions will be more appropriate. For the most part, she has convinced us that her approach is the correct one.

**2. Did your Committee seek information or input from the President or Provost or members of their staffs? If so, did they respond adequately and in a timely manner?**

**Responses from Faculty Senate Standing Committees:**

Academic Policies: The committee asked for quite a bit of information in connection with the resolution. The Associate Provost always answered promptly, but too often information that was sent did not directly answer the questions that were asked. The Associate Provost could not answer some questions definitively and asked other staff to answer. Some responses were to the point and others were not.

Budget and Resources: The BRC did seek information from the administration, in addition to the issues addressed above. The BRC requested the salary data that are posted on the Senate's website from the SVP and VP for Human Resources. Due to a change in personnel, the response to the request for these data has taken longer than expected but the process is continuing with an expectation that final delivery of the data will be forthcoming soon.



Faculty Matters: The Faculty Matters Committee did seek input from the Provost's staff regarding the annual Faculty Evaluation of Administrators. These individuals responded promptly and were enormously helpful.

Nominations: Yes.... We asked the Provost for appointees to various committee posts, and he responded promptly.

**Responses from University Standing Committees:**

Academic Appeals: The Academic Appeals Committee did contact the office of the Associate Provost, Dr. Janette Muir. At our initial meeting of the fall 2014 semester the committee decided that it wanted clarification of what its charge was, and whether it should change. There is language in the university catalog, as well as on the Faculty Senate website, about the Committee's charge. I met with Dr. Muir to discuss possible changes to what the charge should include, as well as to find out the procedure that was in place for forwarding cases to the committee from the Provost's office. The only additional charge that was discussed, and which the Committee requested of the Faculty Senate to be added, was graduation appeals (which the Committee does not currently consider). Dr. Muir responded very quickly to my request for a meeting, and the meeting was arranged and held within a very short period of time, as well.

Admissions: As the Chair of the Academic Policies Committee and on behalf of the Admissions Committee, Dr. Slayden made several requests to the Provost's Office for information regarding the TOEFL issue. Responses were prompt but did not always include complete and satisfactory answers to all our questions.

Athletic Council: No, the committee did not seek specific information from the President. I meet with the President annually to provide information on the external oversight of the Intercollegiate Athletic Programs, submit a report on my work as the Faculty Athletic Representative, and discuss any issues or goals for the coming year. I meet regularly with the Chief of Staff who is charged by the President to oversee athletics.

Faculty Handbook: The committee did not seek any information or input.

Mason Core: Provost visited with Mason Core committee shortly after his arrival to understand the charge of the committee and to express some of his specific interests regarding general education. Provost Office staff has been very helpful in supplying data or background course information.

Salary Equity Study Committee: We did work with the Chair of the Faculty Senate and have appreciated very much the support of the Faculty Senate Clerk.

**3. Please suggest how you believe the President, Provost and/or their staffs might more effectively interact with your Committee in the future, if necessary.**

**Responses from Faculty Senate Standing Committees:**

Academic Policies: It would have been better for our committee if there were coordination of responses from the central administration even if that caused a delay. It would have been preferable to wait to get correct and accurate information.

Budget and Resources: I recommend that the inclusion of a member of the BRC in the BPT be continued. This interface is an important opportunity for faculty input throughout the financial decision processes.

The production of salary data in the form that has historically been posted on the Senate's website should be regularized. The administration should routinely in early Spring produce these data in the format that has been used in past years.

Faculty Matters: It does seem that it might be useful for each committee's charge to be reviewed to increase the awareness of the President, Provost, and their staffs, so that they may more proactively seek input from committees as relevant. For instance, ideas related to an online college would likely fall under the purview of Academic Policies, ideas related to adjunct faculty would fall under the purview of Faculty Matters or Academic Policies, etc.

Nominations: Give the Nominations Committee as much lead time as possible when new task forces or committees needing a Faculty representative is needed.

**Responses from University Standing Committees:**

Academic Appeals: I believe that the Academic Appeals Committee has a very good working relationship with the office of the Associate Provost, Dr. Muir, and it is not in need of any specific improvement that comes to mind at the moment. Right now I see no particular need for direct interaction of the Committee with the President's office. That could change given different circumstances, but that is how I see it at the current time.

Admissions: It would be helpful to have communication early enough for the committee to ensure due diligence on the issues raised.

Athletic Council: We have established effective interaction and communication. Senior administrators who report to the President, and senior administrators who report to the Provost serve as members of the Athletic Council. They attend regularly and serve on the council's sub-committees. The President and Chief of Staff also attend full council meetings at least once a year.

Faculty Handbook: Not applicable.

Mason Core: As the committee looks more carefully at global issues, would be useful to have some input from President and/or Provost regarding long term goals and perspectives regarding global understanding/significant global experiences/and campus strategic planning.

Salary Equity Study Committee: No suggestions yet.

**4. Please relate any additional information you may have regarding interactions between your Committee and the President or Provost or their staff.**

**Responses from Faculty Senate Standing Committees:**

Academic Policies: No additional information.

Faculty Matters: I find the President and Provost to be open to Committee input and involvement, but not necessarily to be proactive in seeking such input. It might be useful to try to increase the level of communication and interaction with faculty committees by routinely evaluating whether issues and ideas would fall under the purview of the various committees.

Nominations: No additional information is appropriate.

**Responses from University Standing Committees:**

Academic Appeals: I have nothing else to add at this time.

Admissions: N/A.

Athletic Council: I am comfortable taking any issue or situation to the President or Provost with regard to student-athlete well-being or academic performance. I continue to receive the support necessary to continue in my role as Faculty Athletic Representative and Chair of the Athletic Council from the Athletic Director, Senior Women's Administrator, and intercollegiate athletics staff.

Faculty Handbook: There is no additional information.

Mason Core: n/a.

Salary Equity Study Committee: None at this time.