

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE**  
**FEBRUARY 3, 2016**  
**Robinson Hall B113, 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.**

**Senators present:** Alan Abramson, Changwoo Ahn, Jim Bennett, Lisa Billingham, Doris Bitler Davis, Carol Cleaveland, Richard Craig, Betsy DeMulder, Charlene Douglas, Pamela Garner, Mark Houck, Dimitrios Ioannou, Bijan Jabbari, Chris Kennedy, Larry Kerschberg, Karina Korostelina, David Kravitz, David Kuberich, Timothy Leslie, Daniel Menascé, Jim Metcalf, Linda Monson, Paula Petrik, Keith Renshaw, Pierre Rodgers, Catherine Sausville, Joe Scimecca, Suzanne Slayden, James Steele, Susan Trencher, Jenice View, Phil Wiest, Shelley Wong, S. David Wu, John Zenelis, Stanley Zoltek \* (by phone).

**Senators absent:** Mark Addleson, Peggy Agouris, Kenneth Ball, Dominique Banville, Alok Berry, Deborah Boehm-Davis, Henry Butler, Ángel Cabrera, Andrew Carle, Lloyd Cohen, James Conant, Rick Davis, John Farina, Mark Ginsberg, Michele Greet, Jesse Guessford, Bruce Johnsen, Kevin McCrohan, Kumar Mehta, Elavie Ndura, Sarah Nutter, Bob Pasnak, Thomas Prohaska, Mark Rozell, June Tangney, Iosif Vaisman.

**Visitors Present:** Kathy Butler, Science and Psychology Liaison Librarian, University Libraries; Eve Dauer, University Registrar; Cody Edwards, Associate Provost for Graduate Education; Mark Fournier, Assistant Vice President of Business Services, Auxiliary Enterprises; Linda Harber, Vice President, Human Resources and Payroll; Megan Kirk, Vice Chair, Staff Senate; Michelle Lim, Faculty Initiatives Partner, Human Resources/Payroll; Gerri Mobley, EEO Specialist, Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics; Janette Muir, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education; Elizabeth Woodley, University Policy Manager and FOIA Compliance Officer, Compliance, Diversity and Ethics.

**I. Call to Order:** Chair Charlene Douglas called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**II. Approval of Minutes of December 2, 2015:** The minutes were approved.

**III. Announcements**

Chair Douglas: A number of faculty have requested a Faculty Club be instituted here at George Mason. The formal proposal arrived too late to be included in the agenda, but it will be added in the announcements (see [Attachment B](#)) and this email will be attached as the University's first response to that request ([Attachment A](#)).

Rector Davis will address the Faculty Senate at April 6<sup>th</sup> meeting (previously scheduled March 2<sup>nd</sup>). President Cabrera will address the Faculty Senate at March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting (previously scheduled April 6<sup>th</sup>)

#### **IV. Progress reports, business, and agenda items from Senate Standing Committees**

##### **A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden, Chair**

We completed our review of the Academic Policies section of the University Catalog 2016-17 and will make suggestions for some minor changes.

##### **B. Budget and Resources – Susan Trencher, Chair**

We are rescheduling meeting with Sr. VP J.J. Davis due to snow. Faculty salary information is anticipated to be available in mid-April.

##### **C. Faculty Matters – Keith Renshaw and Joe Scimecca, Co-Chairs**

The Faculty Evaluation of Administrators for the previous year is posted. We meet tomorrow to begin work on this year's evaluation. We will also meet next week to work on a policy on trigger warnings.

##### **D. Nominations - Jim Bennett, Chair**

Lori Bland (CEHD) is nominated to fill a vacancy on the Effective Teaching Committee. No further nominations were made from the floor and the nomination was accepted.

##### **E. Organization and Operations – Mark Houck, Chair**

We will work expeditiously on developing a committee charge for the Multilingual Student Task Force.

#### **V. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives**

The University Dining Committee meets regularly with Sodexo. We support the idea of a Faculty Dining Room, different from a Faculty Club/Lounge. There are separate committees working on them, and the committees have not yet talked with each other.

The Technology Policy Committee met yesterday, working with the Classroom Technology Committee. How to better push out important information to faculty? Chair Douglas suggested they send out all-faculty announcements.

#### **VI. New Business, Updates, and Discussion – none.**

#### **VII. Remarks for the Good of the General Faculty**

A Senator expressed concern that the Faculty Evaluation of Administrators showed relatively low satisfaction levels.

A Senator from the Arlington campus noted that faculty there feel disconnected from each other and would also appreciate having a faculty lounge there. Chair Douglas promised to relay this information, which may not have been brought up before.

A Senator announced that a new person is in charge of the Export Compliance Policy. A policy rewrite is currently being vetted by a faculty committee as well as by ORIA (Office of Research Integrity and Assurance). The goal is to have a product that more readable and palatable.

A Senator expressed concern that the GMU website was not accessible to certain countries, leading fewer students to apply to their program.

Provost Wu asked Faculty Senators for feedback about the recent delays and cancellations due to bad weather.

*Senator:* We lost three of four of the first class meetings of the semester. What is the reason for the change (or lack of change) in drop deadlines? Are there implications for disbursement of financial aid? Where can students go to address individual situations?

*Eve Dauer, University Registrar:* Until we have a census date, we cannot distribute funds. We are willing to look at students on a case-by-case basis. There is a liability when funds are distributed followed by students then dropping the course. We cannot keep moving more deadlines. There are also concerns with compressed courses. A group including Michelle Marks (Vice Provost) will look at closure policies, re on-line meetings

*Senator:* In past when we missed a day of classes, there was the expectation of faculty that we would reconfigure syllabi. Because they have rescheduled classes, some faculty had already reconfigured syllabi – with announcement of make-up days Monday and Tuesday.

*Eve Dauer:* We have not seen this kind of shift before. We are asking faculty to either compress syllabi or come up with additional time to meet with class. If there is more snow, we may have to use Saturday, Sunday, or even use Spring break.

*Provost Wu:* With a full day cancellation, typically we identify a make-up date. However, it is ultimately under faculty discretion on how to use the designated day – if you don't need to use it, you don't have to use it.

*Senator:* Who is talking to faculty about these changes? Faculty should have been consulted. Instead of just getting everybody together, we should involve Faculty Senate Committees in decisions.

After some discussion, it was determined Faculty Matters (Committee) was the best place to provide advice. Chair Douglas will send the co-chairs' information to the Registrar.

A Senator celebrated that the University in the Carnegie Classification was upgraded to the “Highest Research Activity” tier.

*Provost Wu:* Carnegie has moved the entire classification system to Indiana University. This included revamping the classification methodology. 75 universities are now in the top category as a Research I institution, including Mason.

*Senator:* If we are Research I, did it involve a change of how we report research money? Are we going to put more resources into the VP Research office?

*Provost Wu:* With the restructuring of the VP of Research organization, we did not add any new positions. The University will continue to add resources for research as needed. Just because we are now in the top category does not mean it will continue. This is good for the reputation of the university and our top-notch students.

A senator expressed concern about the distribution of Faculty Study Leave, which previously was administered centrally, but is now done through the college.

*Provost Wu:* We made the change with the hope of expanding the number of study leaves in the university. Sabbatical leaves can be supported in a number of different ways: faculty can also cover for each other, a combination of one semester off, a full year away. The intention is to make the number larger. The outcome of the trial year showed that a larger number of faculty took advantage of it. Some colleges came up with their own resources; if your department wants to have a policy of faculty covering for each others’ leaves, for example. Another reason was that central decisions tended to favor some disciplines over others, particularly those more likely to have external funding. We hope that allowing unit handling can take away unintentional biases. We added more resources to overall program so that each college’s level was in proportion to tenure-track size.

*Senator:* I’m not sure this message was distributed to the deans of his intention to expand study leaves. In my school, the number of study leaves dropped.

*Provost Wu:* I will restate my goal to the Deans.

Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day: Two Senators support changing calendar from Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day. A Senator serving on the Minority and Diversity Issues Committee noted the committee has this issue on their agenda. Students should contact them directly.

**VIII. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Timothy Leslie  
Secretary

## ATTACHMENT A

**From:** Marc Fourier  
Assistant Vice President of Business Services  
Auxiliary Enterprises  
**Subject:** Faculty/Staff Lounge  
**Date:** January 29, 2016

As you are aware, we have been making modifications to the old “Bistro” location so it can be used as a Faculty and Staff Lounge. While we are not providing food service to the location, it is a place dedicated to the faculty and staff from 7am – 3pm Monday-Friday. It is our hope and expectation that our Faculty and Staff will use the location to meet, bring their morning coffee or afternoon lunch and enjoy a respite from the rigors of university life.

Here are a few items of note regarding the lounge:

- The Lounge will be officially open on **Wednesday Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>** from 7am – 3pm (just in time for the Faculty Senate meeting). The official “dedication” will take place on **Friday Feb 12**. Our HR team is going to provide cake and coffee from 12 noon – 1:30 pm as a small gesture of our appreciation.
- As mentioned, the open hours for the lounge will be M-F from 7am – 3pm. Closed Saturday/Sunday. Major University Events may need to use this space for occasional programming. When this occurs, we will use room #117 at the JC as a temporary space. We anticipate this occurring infrequently and expect it will be contained to graduation and orientation programming only.
- The TV in the front lounge area will be turned on, sound muted, to CNN (or similar news channel) with close captioning turned on each day.
- Soft, relaxing music will be played in the space during operating hours.
- The “Bistro”, now the Faculty/Staff lounge will be taken offline for a portion of the summer for renovations. When it returns, it will have a wall that will separate the old kitchen area and will have a small retail outlet (similar to Starbucks across the hall). The existing footprint of the “lounge” area and programmable space (stage/dance floor) will remain intact. We will add some additional decorative items to make the space more renewing.

Please feel free to visit the area. You will notice that we removed the “Bistro” decals from the windows and frosted the glass so there is some level of privacy. We will place a tasteful and professional banner that states that it is the Faculty and Staff Lounge at the entrance.

Charlene, thank you for everything you, your fellow faculty and staff do to make George Mason University such an exceptional place. Please let me know if I can answer any questions. I look forward to seeing you in our new lounge.

## ATTACHMENT B

February 3, 2016

Professor Charlene Douglas, Chair  
Faculty Senate  
George Mason University

Dear Charlene:

Unfortunately, you received the GMU Faculty Club Proposal too late to place on the February agenda, however, we're pleased that it will be presented at the March meeting. The proposal you have was written by a small committee of GMU faculty who've been concerned with what one faculty member termed "faculty alienation at GMU," which has resulted in a noticeable absence of a "faculty community" on campus. The proposal therefore represents a small step towards addressing a problem which many view as both multi-faceted and multi-dimensional. The term "small step" is important here, because the proposal you have is merely a "work in progress," and must be seen as the first step in the creation of a dialogue which will hopefully lead to the acceptance of the idea of the faculty club and to the machination necessary in making the idea a reality.

The creation of the GMU Faculty Club will not only create a sense of community among faculty and staff. It will also enhance the quality of life, and in doing so, increase the intellectual, social, and academic climate for students, for we believe that increased interaction which results in a greater sense and spirit of community will spill over into the classroom and help professors become better teachers and more involved in interdisciplinary teaching, research, and other service-connected activities.

As we begin to discuss the merits of a faculty club, we, and those who support the idea, will seek the advice and counsel of every segment of the university community. We will be very attentive to the suggestions, ideas, and recommendations from faculty and staff. This listening process will continue as we seek to enroll Charter Members, select a Board of Directors, and solicit regular members. We believe this is a very important idea, and if accepted and if it becomes a reality, GMU and its faculty, staff, and students, will be the winners.

Sincerely,

Rutledge M. Dennis      Steve Pearlstein      Joseph Scimecca

## **A Proposal for a George Mason Faculty Club**

Faculty members at many colleges and universities have created faculty clubs to provide faculty, administrators and staff with a place to meet and get to know each other over coffee, lunch or an afternoon drink. At Mason, many of us have wondered why we didn't have such a place. As the university has grown in size and stature, and as the faculty has become more diverse, the need for such a common "watering hole" has become apparent. And given the current emphasis on interdisciplinary teaching and research, there is now an even greater need for a place where professors from different departments and disciplines can get to know each other and exchange ideas.

A faculty club on the Fairfax campus would provide opportunities to break down the intellectual and social walls that now separate various schools and departments. It would provide a space for the kind of informal social interaction and intellectual discourse that inevitably lead to greater cooperation, innovation and inspiration. It would create a greater sense of collegiality and common purpose among the faculty and between faculty and administration. For many of us, it would enhance our work and campus life by making both more stimulating and satisfying.

Neither the old "George's" in the Johnson Center nor the bar and restaurant at the Mason Inn was successful in satisfying this need for a convenient and intellectually nourishing meeting place. With the support of the university and a sufficient number of our colleagues, we propose to try again, this time with an independent faculty club run by and for its members—a place we can truly call our own.

### **Structure and Membership**

We propose to establish a non-profit association or corporation to be called the George Mason Faculty Club, a membership organization that would be open to all faculty members, full-time, part-time, adjunct and retired. Membership would also be offered to current and retired administrators and past and present members of the Board of Visitors.

### **Governance**

The Club would be governed by a Board of Directors elected by the members. The Board would be authorized to maintain its own accounts and have the authority to enter into contracts and hire auxiliary personnel to perform services under the direction of a club manager, to be chosen jointly by the Board and the food service provider.

## **Membership Fees**

The Club would charge a membership fee of \$25 per semester. It would also offer charter membership to faculty members, administrators and to the University on behalf of its senior administrators, for \$250. Charter members would be exempt from regular membership fees. All membership fees would be deposited into a Reserve Account, and be used to cover unanticipated operating losses and pay for capital expenditures. Membership fees would be waived for professors and administrators in their first year at the University, and for retired professors and administrators.

## **Space and Place**

The Club would lease the necessary space, kitchen equipment, bar and dining room furniture from the University for a dining area, bar and lounge at a guaranteed annual rental rate sufficient to compensate the University for its incremental out-of-pocket costs associated with providing such space and equipment. The Club would also make annual contingent lease payments equal to a negotiated percentage of any operating profit the Club might realize. In negotiating a contract, our aim would be to insure that the university will not “subsidize” the Club and that the Club will not be a source of “profit” for the University.

The University would reserve the right to use the space when it is not in use by the Club, at nights, on weekends, during the summer and during semester breaks.

After discussion with University officials, we recommend the Club occupy the location on the third floor of the Johnson Center once occupied by George’s. This would include the kitchen, the open dining area and the space currently used as a Faculty Lounge.

## **Operating Hours**

The Club would be open Monday through Thursday during the fall and spring semesters, offering continental breakfast, lunch and late afternoon bar service. Limited service might also be available on Fridays. The Club lounge would offer complimentary morning and afternoon coffee and tea to all faculty and administrators, members and non-members, with voluntary contributions requested of non-members.

## **Food and Beverage Service**

The Club would contract with an outside vendor to provide the food and beverage service. After conversations with officials from the university and Sodexo, we anticipate that the contract would be with Sodexo under terms of the master contract already in place with the University. We anticipate that as part of the contractual agreement, Sodexo would assign one of its chefs to work directly with the Club’s Board of Directors and serve as full-time chef-manager of the food and beverage operation.



For a Club to be financially viable, we believe there would need to be 400 active members who, on average, eat one lunch a week at the Club during the fall and spring semesters, plus the occasional breakfast and late-afternoon drink at the bar. Our initial pro forma assumes that continental breakfast would cost \$7 and the cost of lunch would range from \$10 to \$15, excluding wine and beer. For billing purposes, members may be required to keep a credit card on file with the club for payment of charges. There would be no tipping or cash transactions. To assure financial viability, the Board may decide it is necessary to require members to spend a minimum on food and beverage each semester.

Members would be allowed to bring guests to the club for meals or drinks, but no one guest will more than three times per semester.

The Club would be authorized to provide breakfast, lunch or cocktail service to groups of up to 25 people at the request of any member, who shall be present and responsible for payment. Such special events shall not be allowed to disrupt the regular food and beverage service.

The Club would be responsible for any operating losses from the food and beverage service, with any losses covered by Reserve Account.

Rutledge Dennis

Steven Pearlstein

Joseph Scimecca