

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 1, 2017**  
**Robinson Hall B113, 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.**

**Senators present:** Alan Abramson, Mark Addleson, Dominique Banville, Jim Bennett, Alok Berry, Lisa Billingham, Virginia Blair, Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Carol Cleaveland, James Conant, Richard Craig, Shannon Davis, Betsy DeMulder, Charlene Douglas, Pamina Firchow, Pamela Garner, Michele Greet, Dimitrios Ioannou, Bijan Jabbari, Diana Karczmarczyk, Chris Kennedy, Larry Kerschberg, David Kravitz, David Kuebrich, Timothy Leslie, Daniel Menascé, Linda Monson, Elavie Ndura, Robert Pasnak, Daniel Polsby, Jeremy Rabkin, Keith Renshaw, Pierre Rodgers, Catherine Sausville, Joe Scimecca, Suzanne Slayden, June Tangney, Susan Trencher, Girum Urgessa, Iosif Vaisman, S. David Wu, John Zenelis, Stanley Zoltek.

**Senators absent:** Peggy Agouris, Kevin Avruch, Kenneth Ball, Doris Bitler Davis, Deborah Boehm-Davis, Henry Butler, Ángel Cabrera, Rick Davis, John Farina, David Gallay, Mark Ginsberg, Jesse Guessford, Rebecca Jones, Bethany Letiecq, Kevin McCrohan, Kumar Mehta, Sarah Nutter, Thomas Prohaska, Mark Rozell, Jenice View.

**Visitors present:** Patricia Coray, HRIS and Benefits Director, Human Resources/Payroll; Laura D’Antonio, Foundations, School of Business; J.J. Davis, Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance; Pat Donini, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources, Human Resources/Payroll; Esther Elstun, Professor *emerita*, Modern and Classical Languages; Kim Ford, Personnel Project Manager, Academic Administration, Provost Office; Harold Geller, Associate Professor, Physics and Astronomy; Linda Harber, Vice President, Human Resources/Payroll & Faculty/Staff Life; Claudia Holland, Head, Scholarly Communication and Copyright Office, University Libraries; Michelle Lim, Human Resources Faculty Initiatives Manager, Human Resources/Payroll; Janette K. Muir, Associate Provost, Academic Initiatives and Services; Mary Oberlies, Chair, Librarians’ Council, University Libraries; Bethany Usher, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education;. Preston Williams, Presidential Communications Manager, Strategic Communications; Elizabeth Woodley, University Policy Manager and FOIA Compliance Officer, Compliance, Diversity and Ethics.

**I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m.

**II. Approval of the Minutes of December 7, 2016:** The minutes were approved.

**III. Announcements**

Senior Vice President J.J. Davis noted the Commonwealth budget is still uncertain; will be known by the end of February – early March. We are launching the next phase of the Budget Model. The [Mason Club](#) is open for breakfast and lunch – please come!

Provost Wu thanked Senator Joe Scimecca and his colleagues for putting the Mason Club together. Provost Wu has moved all of his breakfast meetings there. One of our own, University Professor Danny Menascé was selected as recipient of the [Outstanding Faculty Award](#) from SCHEV (State Council of Higher Education for Virginia). He will receive the honor in Richmond from Governor McAuliffe. We congratulate him on his distinguished service of 25 years at Mason!

[The message from President Cabrera](#) on the executive order signed by President Trump and [Provost Wu's subsequent email to Mason faculty](#): to be clear our university has a clear and strong commitment to our faculty and staff affected by this order. The Virginia Attorney General has filed a lawsuit against this law as unconstitutional. This is relevant because we are a state agency and will follow the Attorney General's interpretation. President Cabrera appeared on PBS last night. We all speak out in support of our community and have reached out to all the students from the seven countries. We do have a fairly large number of international faculty, staff and students. We will do all we can to support those directly affected. The Office of International Student Programs and Services will have a meeting on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, see their website for details: <http://oips.gmu.edu/>. An immigration attorney will be present to answer any questions. There is a lot of uncertainty still in what this means. We are bracing for what will come next re DACA – we still don't know what may happen – we will keep you apprised. He encouraged faculty members to share information with colleagues.

#### Questions and Discussion:

A Senator congratulated the leadership of the University President Cabrera's Letter and the frequently asked and answered questions (in Provost Wu's letter). Can this information be shared with people outside the university?

Provost Wu: Yes.

Are there any students detained or unable to come back?

Provost Wu: There was one Syrian student stopped at Istanbul. His coursework will be deferred.

Have the President and Provost's letters also been distributed to the students?

Sr. VP Davis: They were distributed to everyone.

A Senator noted students, faculty and staff were impacted from all corners of the globe. There is a lot of fear, trauma, and uncertainty. Important to support students when they are in fear....cannot learn; she encouraged faculty to think of ways to lead this conversation in classrooms.

In response to a question about PhD robing at Convocation versus Commencement, Provost Wu confirmed it will take place at Commencement beginning this May. This is to promote university-wide commencement and faculty recognition awards will also (take place) at Commencement.

Follow up: Will this take place one-by-one at University Commencement?

Provost Wu: Yes, as was done at Winter Commencement.

## **IV. Committee Reports**

### **A. Senate Standing Committees**

*Executive Committee – Keith Renshaw, Chair*

We are working on finalizing recommendations on a Task Force to address Term Faculty. Our next meeting takes place February 13<sup>th</sup>.

*Academic Policies – no report.*

*Budget and Resources – Tim Leslie, Chair*

We thank Linda Harber and her staff for their work in providing salary data and stipends. As soon as it is posted, a notice will be distributed.

*Faculty Matters – Alan Abramson, Chair*

We are putting final touches on the annual Faculty Evaluation of Administrators Report from last year and getting ready to produce this year's survey.

*Nominations – Mark Addleson, Chair*

**Multilingual Academic Support Committee**

We had a good response to our call for nominations. The nominees are:

**Kathleen Ann Ramos, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor of Education  
College of Education & Human Development

**Statement:** I teach in the Teaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Exceptional Learners (TCLDEL) graduate program.

I would enjoy serving on this committee as my life's work has focused on supporting culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students' academic success as well as supporting educators in understanding and meeting these learners' academic needs.

As a former secondary ESOL teacher, I primarily worked with 18 to 21-year-old English learners who had recently arrived in the U.S. and aimed to graduate from high school and prepare for college. In my current work as a teacher educator, I prepare future and practicing teachers for effective teaching and learning with CLD students. From my work in both contexts, I have a deep understanding of the academic challenges that CLD students may face as well as strategies and supports that can be employed to foster their academic success.

As a new Mason faculty member, I would like to serve the University in a meaningful way, and the Committee for Multilingual Academic Support seems to be a good match for me!

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**Ellen Johnson Serafini, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor, Spanish Applied Linguistics  
Department of Modern & Classical Languages  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences

**Statement:** As an assistant professor of Spanish applied linguistics in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages (CHSS), I am dedicated to meeting multilingual students' needs in an academic setting and creating administrative and pedagogical resources to achieve that objective.

As a scholar, I specialize in second language, heritage language, and bilingual pedagogy, including curriculum design and development. In terms of teaching, I have taught several relevant undergraduate courses that would bring much insight to bear in my committee work, including Spanish for Heritage Speakers, Spanish for the Professions, Introduction to Spanish Linguistics, and Spanish in the Schools, the latter being a recent service learning course that

was designed to raise advanced undergraduate students' awareness of the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students in primary and secondary public education. Relevant graduate courses include Second Language Teaching Methods and Bilingualism and Bilingual Education in the Spanish-Speaking World.

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**Susan Trencher,**

Associate Professor, Sociology and Anthropology  
CHSS (Faculty Senator)

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One additional nomination was made and seconded from the floor:

**Jhumka Gupta**

Assistant Professor  
Department of Global and Community Health  
College of Health and Human Services

**Statement:** I am a social epidemiologist whose teaching and research focuses on the social determinants of health, including the structural factors impacting the health of immigrant populations (including refugees) at home and abroad. My global health research collaborations have afforded me the opportunities to promote research and writing capacity among researchers and university students in low- and middle-income countries. I have also worked with English language adult learners in a variety of civic capacities, including volunteering as a social navigator for newly arrived refugees and serving on the boards of directors for two immigrant-focused advocacy organizations. The Multilingual Academic Support Committee will serve an important role in making sure that all Mason students have access to the tools they need to succeed as well as providing support for Mason professors who have growing numbers of English language learners in their classes. I would be honored to help promote quality education and support my colleagues through membership on this committee.

No other nominations were made from the floor and nominations were closed. Ballots were distributed. If you wish to vote for Jhumka Gupta, you need to write her name on the ballot. Kathleen Ramos, Ellen Serafini and Susan Trencher all received a majority of votes and were elected to serve on the Multilingual Academic Support Committee.

**Nominees to fill vacancies on the Effective Teaching Committee**

Robert Pasnak (CHSS) was nominated to fill a vacancy. No further nominations were made from the floor and he was elected to serve. The Nominations Committee will distribute an email seeking a nominee to fill the other vacancy on the Effective Teaching Committee.

*Organization and Operations* – no report this month.

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

*Faculty Handbook Revision Committee - Suzanne Slayden, Chair*

### **Faculty Handbook Revision Committee Proposed Revisions to the Faculty Handbook Faculty Senate meeting Feb. 1, 2017**

#### ***Part I***

The proposed revisions to Section 2.8 (Appeal of Negative Decisions in Renewal, Tenure and Promotion Cases) were presented to the Faculty Senate on Dec. 5, 2016. After discussion during the meeting, the committee made two additional revisions. The revisions text is linked to <http://www.gmu.edu/resources/facstaff/senate/FacultyHandbook/fac-hndbk-rev-2016F.htm>.

On behalf of the Committee, it is moved

**That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook with no further revisions at this time other than those necessary to correct typographical and grammatical errors.**

[Note: A motion to "refer to the Faculty Handbook Committee with instructions" is in order.]

If the changes are approved by the Faculty Senate, they will be submitted to the Board of Visitors for final approval.

#### Questions and Discussion included:

[By the time you see these revisions; they have been vetted by Human Resources, the Provost Office and University Counsel.]

*2.8.1 Grounds for Appeal: 3. Violation of federal or state law, or violation of university policy related to non-discrimination:*

Is there any other university policy relevant to this one?

Senator Slayden: All parts in ODCE policy. We looked at other university policies to see if they were relevant.

Why doesn't the right to appeal pertain to term faculty?

Senator Slayden: In the 2009 revision, term faculty became an important part of the university. Term contracts are for one year. Provost Wu is putting together a review for term faculty; will take this under consideration for the future. Need for new mechanisms for term faculty, an evolving process, not in this revision.

**The Senate approved the proposed revisions to Section 2.8.**

## **Part II**

At this meeting of the Faculty Senate, the Committee will present some revisions to Chapters 1-3, and ask for brief discussion. Afterwards, the Committee will amend the revisions if necessary. At the Mar. 1, 2017 Faculty Senate meeting, the Committee will ask that the proposed revisions be voted on without further change. If they are approved by the Faculty Senate, they will be submitted to the Board of Visitors for final approval. The revisions text is linked to <http://www.gmu.edu/resources/facstaff/senate/FacultyHandbook/fac-hndbk-rev-2016F.htm>.

The Committee welcomes comments and suggestions before and after the Faculty Senate meeting.

Committee members: Alan Abramson (SSPG), Cynthia Lum (CHSS), Suzanne Slayden (COS)

The 2014 Faculty Handbook can be found at <http://www.gmu.edu/resources/facstaff/handbook/>.

The proposed revisions to Chapters 1-3 are posted on the [Faculty Senate website](#) .

### Discussion and Questions

1.3.1 The General Faculty: Paragraph 3, deletion of first sentence. ~~“The General Faculty is required to meet at least once each semester.”~~ It was also noted we have town halls and other ways of getting together with administrators now.

What is the power of the General Faculty?

It can change the charter of the Faculty Senate and vote to overthrow decisions of the Faculty Senate.

1.3.1 The General Faculty: Paragraph 1, “All members of the General Faculty have voting rights.” Each school and college needs to define their own voting membership, even in individual departments.

1.3.3 Colleges and Schools: ~~“b.c.adopt~~ written bylaws or standing rules...” Need to add that written bylaws or standing rules must be published, as they could be hearsay. Standing rules are easier to change. Also noted the proposed revisions “include procedures and define eligibility for faculty participation in the activities specified in this Handbook.”

### 2.7. Procedures for Renewal, Promotion and Tenure: 2.7.1 General Procedures

Much of this is a reorganization and clarification of Section in Chapter 2.

Chair Renshaw commended the hard work of the Faculty Handbook Committee. Please provide feedback to the committee if you have an interest in this, they meet next week and revisions must be completed for presentation for approval by the BOV at its March meeting.

*Mason Core Committee* – Ethics Across the Curriculum proposal was brought forth for review and discussion with the Executive Committee. They will come back to us at a future time.

*External Academic Relations Committee:* David Kravitz and Keith Renshaw went to Richmond for Virginia Higher Education Advocacy Day. We met with a series of northern Virginia legislators, pretty positive about things. We will forward an email from our State Government Office; they ask if we could compile our suggestions. This is a potentially difficult legislative session.

**V. New Business** - none.

**VI. Remarks for the Good of the General Faculty**

Please email Stanley Zoltek ([szoltek@gmu.edu](mailto:szoltek@gmu.edu)) with any issues about Technology Policy by the end of this week.

A Senator suggested we create a kind of opportunity for research offered to faculty in Research I universities: to include a sabbatical every 6 years. We don't have this. Chair Renshaw suggested the Senator contact fellow Senator Bijan Jabbari ([bjabbari@gmu.edu](mailto:bjabbari@gmu.edu)); he serves on the Research Advisory Committee; the committee meets on Monday.

Chair Renshaw congratulated Senator Danny Menascé for his Outstanding Faculty award; the Mason Club is now open, and reminded faculty about a new Presidential award of \$10K to be awarded for the first time at Commencement.

**VII. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 4:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charlene Douglas  
Secretary