

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING
DECEMBER 6, 2017
Robinson Hall B113, 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.

Senators present: Alan Abramson, Dominique Banville, Alok Berry, Lisa Billingham, Virginia Blair, Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Carol Cleaveland, James Conant, Shannon Davis, Betsy DeMulder, Charlene Douglas, Christy Esposito-Smythers, David Gallay, Jesse Guessford, Tamara Harvey, Dimitrios Ioannou, Rebecca Jones, Diana Karczmarczyk, Larry Kershberg, David Kravitz, Timothy Leslie, Bethany Letiecq, Kumar Mehta, Daniel Polsby, Jeremy Rabkin, Keith Renshaw, Esperanza Roman-Mendoza, Catherine Sausville, Joe Scimecca, Solon Simmons, Suzanne Slayden, June Tangney, Susan Trencher, Girus Urgessa, Iosif Vaisman, Emily Vraga, S. David Wu.

Senators absent: Mark Addleson, Peggy Agouris, Kevin Avruch, Kenneth Ball, Henry Butler, Ángel Cabrera, Julie Christensen, Rick Davis, Michael Gilmore, Mark Ginsberg, Bijan Jabbari, Aditya Johri, Chris Kennedy, David Kuebrich, Germaine Louis, Robert Matz, Daniel Menascé, Maury Peiperl, Karen Reedy, Pierre Rodgers, Mark Rozell, Jenice View, Shelley Wong, Masoud Yasai, John Zenelis, Stanley Zoltek.

Visitors present: Jeannie Brown Leonard, Dean, Student Academic Affairs – Advising, Retention and Transitions; Theresa Calcagno, Vice Chair, Librarians Council; Eve Dauer, University Registrar; Pat Donini, Assistant Vice President, Human Resources, Director, Employee Relations; Kim Ford, Personnel Project Manager, Provost Office; Linda Harber, Vice President, Human Resources/Payroll and Faculty/Staff Life; Gillian Lancaster, Associate Director/Chief Investigator, Compliance, Diversity and Ethics; Michelle Lim, Human Resources Faculty Initiatives Manager; Neda Masoudian, Equal Opportunity Specialist, Compliance, Diversity and Ethics; Linda A. Monson, Director, School of Music; Janette Muir, Associate Provost, Academic Initiatives and Services; Marilyn Smith, Vice President and CIO, Information Technology Services; Bethany Usher, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education; Vita Vock, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs, CHSS; Julian R. Williams, Vice President, Compliance Diversity, and Ethics; Preston Williams, Presidential Communications Manager, Strategic Communications.

- I. Call to Order:** Chair Keith Renshaw called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.
- II. Approval of the Minutes of November 1, 2017:** The minutes were amended slightly to correct the date of Virginia Higher Education Advocacy Day from January 12 to January 11, 2018. The minutes were approved as amended.

III. Announcements

Provost Wu began by discussing the process by which the University undergoes accreditation review by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) every ten years. Our last accreditation was in 2012. SACS also conducts a mid-cycle accreditation. We were asked to submit a fairly extensive report (over 1,000 pages). They came back with no specific recommendations. SACS has accepted our midcycle accreditation report. Therefore, we have been completely accredited through 2022. The announcement will go out, with thank you owed to many people.

Strategic Plan Update: Provost Wu thanked the Faculty Senate representatives on various committees, especially Keith Renshaw, Faculty Senate chair, who was very involved in many ways. A lot of feedback was received. The process is being managed by Frank Neville. They are working

hard to accommodate all the feedback which has come in. He noted this is not a redo of the Strategic Plan, but an update; a progress report to redefine our “to do” list. In terms of finalizing initiatives, a continuing process, not a set date. We will report to the BOV our progress to date. The process will continue into the spring. Again, thanks to all directly involved in process or who have provided feedback.

The Budget Model Redesign is in place. Currently his office is working on two additional aspects:

- 1- Multidisciplinary financial model re new curriculum, courses. The committee made a lot of progress in the fall, anticipate rolling model out in the spring for everyone to comment, provide feedback, in order to implement in the next budget cycle.
- 2- Research Indirects and Facilities Administration. There are committees also working on these issues; they are expected to have reports and recommendations in the spring. It is essential to make sure research indirects are reinvested into research instead of using on buildings or other things.

Seed Grants for Curriculum Development. Asked Bethany Usher to report on this.

Bethany Usher: 23 submissions for Curricular Impact Grants, 16 partially or fully funded, all were strong. There will be another workshop in April to begin the next round of proposal solicitations.

Discussion/Questions

Senator: Is the Strategic Plan (update) to be presented to the BOV next week for input a draft?

Provost Wu: The document on the website reports on the progress to date on internal goals and proposed (possible) next steps, suggestion, not finalized.

Senator (following up): All these comments will be taken into consideration? Will the Faculty Senate have an opportunity to review them?

Chair Renshaw: The document is for the BOV update for next Wednesday. While the 31 pages of comments, with clear themes, are being examined, there is no official mechanism for review before BOV. He (Chair Renshaw) will work for the updated responses, including how the committee addressed the comments, to be presented and will invite the committee to come to Faculty Senate for dialogue. This round focused on clarifying metrics, though there was some difference of opinion on what they should be.

Senator: When was the official publication of the Strategic Plan update sent out? The time for comments was not ideal given when it was sent out in the academic year. What is the process moving forward? Is the BOV going to vote and then ask the administration and faculty to implement without any additional input?

Provost Wu: President Cabrera gave a town hall on November 16th. The document was released for public comment at that time.

Senator (following up): One Town Hall for the university? Some among the faculty perceive that these town halls are to say “we made this public”. I admit I did not go to this one for that reason. How is there true shared governance?

Provost Wu: The Strategic Plan was developed in 2012-13 time frame with substantial involvement from the university community, including faculty. Many of the metrics were part of the original document, others were added or modified later. This is a living document in many ways. We want community feedback on how we measure the Strategic Plan; it is the same but we want to get continuing community feedback on metrics.

Chair Renshaw: The frustration with process/timing was shared by many. He (Chair Renshaw) will work to find ways for continued engagement with the campus community around the metrics and will keep Faculty Senate updated on progress.

Senator: Can you clarify the use of the indirect funds you mentioned? Where do they come from? The units? A general pot? Re use of indirect funding – funds we get from Provost Office go into a pot.

Provost Wu: No, the money is from my budget, not collected to a unit. There are two different seed grants put out – one directed to VP Research that is now the curriculum seed grant. Selection process to be done through peer review teams, a completely transparent process. Funds are not taken from units to fund these grants. There is a totally different committee that is working on defining policy on distributing indirects that arrive from grants. Senator June Tangney serves on that committee.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Senate Standing Committees

Executive Committee – Keith Renshaw, Chair

Met with the ICOIC (Ad Hoc Institutional Conflict of Interest Policy Committee); they will present to Executive Committee in the spring. Also noted that Faculty Senate representatives serve on many different groups, such as the committee examining the Research Indirects in the budget model, and four Faculty Senators serve on the Strategic Plan Workgroups.

Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden, Chair

See [Attachment A](#)

Budget and Resources – Tim Leslie, Chair

We continue to work on understanding the budget model.

Faculty Matters – Alan Abramson, Chair

The Faculty Evaluation of Administrators 2016-17 is in production and will be available in the next few days. The committee is working on the next evaluation (to be distributed) in the spring term.

Nominations – Charlene Douglas

June Tangney (CHSS - Psychology) is nominated to fill a vacancy on the Research Advisory Committee. Due to the departure of one of its members, June's nomination fits into the matrix to serve on the committee. Last year she served in an ex-officio capacity as Faculty Representative to the BOV Research Committee. No further nominations were made from the floor and the nomination was approved.

The Nominations Committee proposes the following Faculty Senators to serve as Faculty Senate representatives to the New Ventures Advisory Council: **Timothy Leslie and Rebecca Jones**.

Their statements of interest follow.

Timothy Leslie
Associate Professor
Geography and Geoinformation Science
College of Science

I'd like to express my interest in serving on the New Ventures Advisory Council. I am an Associate Professor in Geography and Geoinformation Science, joining Mason as an Assistant Professor in 2007. I have been chair of the Academic Initiatives committee for the past three years, where we are tasked with oversight of the existing global and academic projects currently underway at Mason. I have experience in departmental administration as an Associate Chair, and have spent five years as a Faculty Senator. Before coming to Mason, I have previously worked in the Office of the President at Arizona State University in an equivalent Special Projects office.

Rebecca Jones

**Term Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry
STEM Accelerator, College of Science**

In my daily work, I am committed to excellence in the classroom and advancing STEM education through my work in the STEM Accelerator. My experience and scholarly record related to undergraduate research on an institutional and department level provide me with valuable perspective regarding new initiatives and student learning. This semester, I appreciated the opportunity to represent the faculty on the student success working group for Mason's Strategic Plan refresh. In these Advisory Council meetings, I will use my strategic and futuristic strengths to be an active contributor, while effectively representing faculty interests and needs.

Additional Information about the structure of the New Ventures Advisory Council:

The New Ventures Advisory Council will be chaired by the Vice President of Academic Innovation and New Ventures, and will be composed of a cross-section of Mason faculty, staff and student representatives. The Council will convene at least three times per year. Council members will serve one or two year terms.

The New Ventures Advisory Council will consist of the following members of the Mason community:

- Four dean-nominated faculty representatives
- Three deans
- Three representatives from Faculty Senate (Faculty Senate Chair and two Faculty Senate nominated committee members)
- Two representatives from Staff Senate (Staff Senate Chair and one Staff Senate-nominated committee member)
- Two Student Government representatives (graduate and undergraduate)

No further nominations were made from the floor and the nominees were approved.

Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham, Chair
Motion to Amend the ByLaws of the Faculty Senate – First View
(Listed in the Agenda as Attachment B)

First View of Proposed Changes to Bylaws of the Faculty Senate

Note: Proposed additions shown in underlined font. Proposed deletions shown in ~~strikethrough font~~.

BYLAWS OF THE FACULTY SENATE

(as revised ~~on~~ October 6, 2010)

Article I Membership

Section 1.

The membership of the George Mason Faculty Senate shall be as prescribed by the Charter adopted ~~April 3, 1974~~ by the General Faculty of George Mason University, ~~clarified by the General Faculty May 21, 1975 and amended March 22, 1976, December 15, 1987, April 12, 1989, and March 30, 1994.~~

Eligibility to vote on matters before the Faculty Senate shall be limited to duly elected faculty members of the Faculty Senate. [Note: In the previous sentence, change italics to regular font.]

Section 2.

- a. The manner by which academic units entitled to representation in the Faculty Senate elect their senators shall be determined by the faculty of those units.
- b. The presiding officer of each collegiate unit shall certify ~~by May 15~~ to the Chair of the Faculty Senate names of the Senators chosen. Terms of Senators shall begin at the opening of the first Senate meeting of the academic year.
- c. Current records of the membership of the Senate shall be maintained by the Secretary for use by the Chair of the Senate and the Parliamentarian.

ARTICLE II Officers

Section 1.

a. The Chair of the Faculty Senate shall be elected from among the elected membership of the Senate at the May final scheduled meeting of the academic year. Nominations shall be made from the floor. Except when a motion to cast a unanimous ballot is passed, voting for the Chair shall be by secret ballot. In the event that no candidate for this office receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off vote will be held between the two candidates who received the most votes.

b. The term of the chair shall commence at the conclusion of the meeting at which he or she is elected. In the event the Chair cannot serve for the remainder of his or her term, an election of a new Chair will be held at the next regularly scheduled meeting following the procedures in Article II Sec. 1a. The term of office commences upon election and ends when a Chair is elected at the final regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year.

c. The Senate shall elect from ~~among its own number members~~ a Secretary at the first meeting of the academic year in September. Nominations for this position shall be presented by the Committee on Nominations; however, additional nominations may be made from the floor. Except when a motion to cast a unanimous ballot is passed, voting for this office shall be by secret ballot. In the event that no candidate for this office receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off vote will be held between the two candidates who received the most votes.

d. The Chair shall appoint a member of the Senate to serve when needed as Chair pro tem and other members to be Parliamentarian and Sergeant(s)-at-Arms, to serve for terms of one year commencing with the first meeting ~~of the academic year after their appointment~~.

e. No elected officer shall serve in the same office for more than three consecutive terms.

Section 2.

a. The Chair of the Senate shall be the presiding officer. The Chair pro tempore shall be the presiding officer in the absence of the Chair.

b. The Secretary of the Senate shall maintain the records of the Senate, and shall give appropriate notification to officers of the University, Committee Chairs, and other individuals concerning Senate actions. In consultation with the Chair of the Senate, the Secretary shall prepare at least annually an appendix to the bylaws, which shall include lists of officers and standing committees of the Faculty Senate and of University Faculty Standing Committees, which report to the Senate, a summary of actions of the Faculty Senate pertaining to the organization and operation of the Faculty Senate, and summaries of the role of standing committees of the Senate. The appendix may include other information of continuing importance in the discretion of the Secretary and the Chair of the Senate.

c. The Sergeant(s)-at-Arms shall supervise balloting and assist the Chair in expediting the meetings of the Senate.

d. The Parliamentarian shall assist the Chair in the interpretation of the rules of order.

ARTICLE III Responsibilities of the Senate

The responsibilities of the George Mason Faculty Senate shall be as prescribed by the Charter adopted by the General Faculty.

ARTICLE IV Meetings of the Senate

Section 1.

a. Meetings of the Senate shall be conducted according to the current edition of "Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised" ~~(revised)~~ except as the rules and procedures prescribed therein have been or shall be modified by adoption of these or of future bylaws or standing rules.

b. The presiding officer of all meetings of the Senate shall be the Chair of the Senate or the Chair pro tem.

c. The quorum for Senate meetings shall consist of a majority of the elected membership. ~~However, the quorum for authorizing conferral of degrees and for considering other matters related thereto shall be a minimum 20 percent of the whole Senate membership.~~

d. Members of the Faculty Senate or its committees may meet electronically, provided the technology used allows all members to hear each other simultaneously. Each entity may develop its own rules for how members meeting electronically may seek recognition, vote, and exercise other rights.

Section 2.

a. Meetings shall be open to all members of the University community.

b. All persons in attendance in a non-voting capacity shall be seated in a clearly delineated area so that they may not inadvertently influence a voice vote.

Section 3.

Any person recognized by the Chair may participate in the discussion of any item of business brought forth upon the floor, but only members of the Senate may make and second motions, and vote.

Section 4.

To the extent permitted by law, the Senate may go into closed session by majority vote of those present and eligible to vote. Only members of the Senate may be **present during a closed session**. [Note: For the final five words of the previous sentence, change bold to regular font.]

Section 5.

a. The Chair and the Secretary of the Senate shall jointly prepare the agenda for each meeting and distribute it seven days before the meeting to all members of the Senate.

b. Any member of the General Faculty may submit items of business for inclusion on the agenda. All items submitted which are consistent with the responsibilities of the Senate as defined in Article III are to be placed on the agenda. Members of the General Faculty who are not Senators may submit items for discussion only, but motions on those subjects may be made by Senators.

c. Explanatory or background information on all agenda items shall be prepared by the sponsor of the item and shall be attached to the agenda.

Section 6.

Meetings of the Senate shall be convened on at least four Wednesday afternoons during each semester of the academic year, ~~beginning in September~~.

Section 7.

- a. On his or her own initiative the Chair may call a special meeting of the Senate. In response to any petition signed by 20 percent of the elected members of the Senate, the Chair must call a special meeting to be convened within six instructional days.
- b. The written call to the special meeting shall include a statement of the purpose of the meeting and shall be distributed at least four instructional days before the meeting to all members of the Senate.
- c. Only that business stipulated in the call to the special meeting may be transacted.

Section 8.

- a. Voting shall be by voice vote upon a call by the presiding officer for the "ayes" and "nays," or by division of the house upon a call from the floor, except that any member may request that a secret ballot be taken. When such a ballot is requested, the Secretary of the Senate shall be responsible for preparing, distributing, and counting the ballots with the assistance of the Sergeant(s)-at-Arms.
- b. Absentee and proxy ballots shall not be allowed.
- c. All motions to recommend alterations to existing University-wide graduation requirements shall be read and debated at two successive regular meetings of the Senate held in the same academic year.
- d. A meeting of the Senate called solely to complete the agenda of a previous meeting shall not count as a "successive" meeting within the meaning of this bylaw.

Section 9.

Items of new business not appearing on the agenda may be introduced from the floor by any member of the Senate after consideration of all agenda items has been completed, but disposition of any item introduced without prior notice and information may be carried over to the next regular meeting of the Senate if five members support a motion to carry it over. A motion carried over under this provision shall appear on the agenda of the next regular meeting as an item of old business and shall be supported by background information as provided in Section 5 of this Article.

Section 10.

- a. The Secretary of the Senate shall prepare the minutes of all meetings of the Senate. The minutes shall be made available via the Faculty Senate web site for viewing by distributed to the members of the Senate and all other interested parties, appropriate officers of the University, the general faculty of the University, one copy to the Board of Visitors of the University, and one copy to the Student Government.
- b. ~~One~~ A copy of the agenda and ~~one copy of the~~ minutes of every meeting shall be archived ~~preserved~~ as part of the permanent archives of the University. These documents shall be archived on the Faculty Senate web site and, thus, shall be kept in custody of the University Library and shall be available for inspection by any member of the University community.

ARTICLE V Committees of The Senate

Section I.

- a. "Standing Committees" shall be those permanent committees whose respective charges shall be established by the Senate and whose members, except for designated ex-officio members, are elected by the Senate.
- b. Except as may be otherwise specified, the usual term of election to any standing committee shall be for two years.
- c. "Ad Hoc Committees" shall be those established by the Senate for consideration of special or transient issues. If no time limit is specified, the committee is deemed to serve until it issues a final report or until the Senate acts to dissolve it.
- d. Unless otherwise authorized by a majority vote of the Senate, standing or ad hoc committees shall issue formal reports only to the Senate.
- e. It shall be a duty of the Secretary of the Senate to prepare and maintain an accurate list of all committees of the Senate together with their charges and composition, which shall be open for inspection to all members of the University community. Annual reports will be filed with the Secretary of the Senate the month prior to the end of the academic year.

Section 2.

- a. Nominations for elected Senate positions to all standing committees except to the Committee on Nominations shall be prepared by the Committee on Nominations. The Committee on Nominations shall nominate one person for each available position. It shall take into account factors such as willingness to serve, previous Senate and committee experience, and the need to develop future Senate leadership. ~~Its nominations shall be circulated by~~ The Committee on Nominations shall circulate its nominations to the Senate in written form with the agenda for the first meeting ~~of the academic year in September~~. Members of the Senate with the permission of prospective nominees may make further nominations from the floor at the ~~scheduled September meeting at which time~~ when the elections ~~will be~~ are held.
- b. Committee vacancies with unexpired terms shall be filled for the remainder of the term by special elections at the first scheduled meeting of the Senate after such vacancies occur. The Committee on Nominations shall make one nomination for each available position except for vacancies in its own membership, but in all instances nominations may be made from the floor.
- c. All elections shall be by a majority of those Senators present and voting. ~~In the event of a tie vote that no candidate~~ for an office or for the last positions on an elected committee receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off vote will be held among those between the two candidates who receive the tie-most votes.

Section 3.

- a. Whenever the Senate shall determine by its vote that the creation of an ad hoc committee or of a new standing committee is a matter of urgent necessity, nominations shall be made from the floor following that determination. Election procedures shall be as in Section 2c of this Article.
- b. In the absence of an urgent necessity determined under Paragraph (a) of this section, the Committee on Nominations shall prepare a slate for distribution with the agenda of the next meeting of the Senate. At that meeting nominations may be made from the floor and the election shall be held according to the procedures prescribed in Section 2c of this Article.

Section 4.

Except as otherwise specifically provided, each Senate Committee shall elect its Chair according to the committee charge from among its own membership. Each committee shall have a ~~plurality~~ majority of members present for a quorum. Each committee shall maintain written records of its activities. At the conclusion of each academic year these records shall become part of the permanent archives of the University as stipulated in Article IV, Section 10, paragraph b.

Section 5.

Any Senate committee may be required by majority vote of the Senate to report to it at a specified later meeting any matter referred by action of the Senate to the charge of that committee. Upon receipt of its report, the committee may be discharged of further responsibility for the matter by majority vote of the Senate.

ARTICLE VI Effective Date and Amendment

Section 1.

All motions to amend these bylaws shall be read and debated at two successive regular meetings of the George Mason Faculty Senate held in the same academic year. Following the second debate, a vote on the motion to amend shall be taken. A two thirds majority of the voting members of the Senate present and voting shall be required for passage of such an amendment. A meeting of the Senate called solely to complete the agenda of a previous meeting shall not count as "successive" meeting within the meaning of this bylaw.

Section 2.

Amendments to these bylaws shall take effect on the date contained therein, if such a date is provided; Otherwise they shall take effect immediately upon their passage.

Revised 10/6/10

(End of Attachment B)

Discussion/suggested edits:

Article IV: Section 1 b

Suggestion made to strike "b" as repetitive.

Article IV: Section 1d

Suggestion made to change "Members of the Faculty Senate" to "The Faculty Senate" so as not to limit ourselves; to have everyone vote by secret ballots, also reflects wording from Robert's Rules of Order.

A Senator from the Arlington campus highlighted the value of faculty senators coming to meetings regardless of where their offices are. As Arlington and SciTech are not satellite campuses we should figure out how to facilitate our processes to allow those faculty senators to attend meetings.

Some expressed skepticism that while electronic meetings may work for committees they may not for the Senate. There is the additional issue of calling into meetings without authorization in by-laws. Roberts's Rules state that members need to be able to simultaneously hear each other. It is easier to make changes in Standing Rules than in the by-laws if we want to make modifications.

Could the Faculty Senate meet electronically in its entirety? Marilyn Smith responded we have the technology, can do this.

We could use the electronic process to address faculty presence in Arlington and SciTech because otherwise we are actually excluding units from faculty governance. How can we be more inclusive?

A Senator from the Science and Technology campus comes here just for this meeting and would appreciate the option to videoconference. The Senator asked questions about how to vote remotely as voting happens very quickly. How could we account for individual videoconferencing? Does that individual videoconferencing allow for secret ballot?

A Senator from the School of Business: The Office 365 license allows Skype for gmu accounts to log in. Will have to check on whether it allows for secret ballot. It does allow for polling. Chair Renshaw suggests you send suggestions and additional feedback to Lisa Billingham (lbillin1@gmu.edu) by mid-January as we prepare for the next Faculty Senate Meeting (February 7, 2018). We look forward to receiving your feedback.

The Organization and Operations Committee also met with Linda Harber and Sr. VP J.J. Davis to begin talks on (faculty) ombudsman proposal. They are putting together a small team from Faculty Senate and their Harber and Davis's offices to identify a small group of faculty who will be trained to know where to refer. This is in the beginning stages, please let Lisa Billingham know if you have any feedback or suggestions.

B. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives - none

V. New Business

Course Repeat Limits – Jeannie Brown Leonard, Dean, Student Academic Affairs – Advising, Retention, and Transition

How can we support student success in their completion goals? Appreciate your input for a campus-wide policy. Repeating a course 4, 5 times can be persistence, but does not help students move forward. Noting one "F" calculated into GPA if repeat in, to try point of intervention, in a decentralized advisory structure. Many schools and colleges have resources to intervene in second attempt, others may wait until 3rd attend. English 302 is an unusual case – as everyone must complete course successfully to graduate. Liberal guidance in taking course. Dean Brown-Leonard asks to hear from you, your collective wisdom, and thoughts about it. (See also [Attachment A 3. Course Repeat Limit](#) for additional information and statistics.)

University Course Repeat Policy Proposal

Limit to three the number of times a student (degree-seeking or non-degree) may take any undergraduate course that is not repeatable for credit. Attempts beyond three require approval of the student's major academic advisor with oversight from the Student Academic Affairs unit in the respective schools/colleges. Only graded attempts are counted; if students withdraw from a course

("W "on the transcript), it is not counted as a graded attempt. Students who exhaust unit-level appeal processes may appeal to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.

Justification

The motivation behind the course repeat policy is to find a systematic way for academic advisors to engage with students to help them be successful in their chosen path or to help them discover an alternative path to their goals, perhaps one better suited to their strengths. Because students can earn multiple Fs in a course without affecting their GPA, this limit on course repeats would offer such a point of intervention. A second goal is consistency. We have different rules and processes based on school/college. Advisors would welcome the chance to intervene with students before a fourth attempt of a course and would work together to develop guidelines for granting permission to override the limit. This policy is not intended to lead to termination from the major.

Peer Institutions

The range of approaches is broad from no limits on course repeats at James Madison University to repeats being allowed only with Dean's permission at UVA.

Notes:

N=3 attempts would be the maximum university-wide. Units that currently have or wish to have a lower N may do so (N=2, for example). Units are free to determine the criteria for allowing students to exceed the attempt limit. This policy would have no effect on units' Termination from the Major policy.

Implementation and communication details will be carefully planned to address:

Request forms

Override criteria

Communication during second and third attempt

Communication and plan for students enrolled in attempt 3, 4 or more in Fall 2018

Removal of restriction when permission for fourth or subsequent attempt is granted

This policy proposal has support from the academic advising community, schools/colleges Dean's Offices, Undergraduate Council, and the Collaborative for Undergraduate Education membership.

Discussion:

Senator: There is a practice in math to have a pre-requisite class for success. Are there bridge courses we need for a small number of students to customize intervention? In addition, sometimes students take a course several times with the same faculty member teaching them. Is there a way to address student concern of failing already with same person? To give them a little relief as well?

Dean Brown Leonard: This is a very important consideration. Advisors are the first point-of-contact. We are not advocating for standards to be changed, but to look at it in another way.

Senator: What about students with a learning disability, they may need mechanisms to go through these processes differently. Is the goal for them to have to go to talk with somebody? And what about credits? If you pay for 12 credits, you can take 15 credits. In a way that can hurt classes.

Dean Brown Leonard: If you don't take 15 credits per semester, you won't make progress for a 4 year (time) limit.

A Senator provided an example of a student who didn't submit homework, only took exams as evidence of why supporting the limit to 2 attempts.

Dean Brown Leonard: Students could seek permission for a 4th attempt, but the advisor would reach out at 2nd attempt.

Senator: Some colleges have invested in advising in a different way. Not all units have the same advising process. If we went to "2", many more students would be impacted?

Dean Brown Leonard: Let's see the data before we make other decisions.

Senator: What is the difference when a student requests an Incomplete?

Dean Brown Leonard: An Incomplete becomes an F if the student doesn't fulfill requirements, like a sort of contract. Incompletes are to be used in extraordinary circumstances such as health or other issues. Many Incompletes have term cutoffs.

VI. Remarks for the Good of the General Faculty

Updates on Malicious Email: Marilyn Smith, Vice President and CIO, Information Technology Services: Mail firewalls put in, but phishing still continues. She recommends you either delete malicious emails or let the support center know about them. If you do not respond to messages, they (hackers) cannot get into them. A particular group of hackers has been using gmU emails. A Banner upgrade is going in next year on Patriot Web which will require use of two-factor VPN.

Faculty Student Basketball game: Please let Keith Renshaw know if you are interested in participating.

Chair Renshaw reminded Senators to; **please submit questions you have related to philanthropy at GMU, and the specific work of both Advancement and the Foundation.**

This is intended to facilitate open dialogue – the Office of Advancement and the GMU Foundation will work to prepare written answers to questions, which will be distributed to Faculty Senate in advance of a Spring meeting. They will then attend a Faculty Senate meeting to answer any follow-up questions based on this material.

VII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon N. Davis
Secretary

Attachment A

Academic Policies Committee

Agenda Items for December 6, 2017

1) Summer 2018 calendar

The summer terms are the same as they have been in past years: Sessions 1, A, B, C and D, with various meeting schedules in each term. This year, the Add, Drop, and Selective Withdrawal dates have been adjusted so they are roughly proportional to the dates as found in the Academic Policies section of the University Catalog.* The dates would vary within a given term because of the different meeting schedules**, which does not occur during the standard academic year semester. Because administering several Add, Drop, and Withdrawal dates within a term would be burdensome, the latest date for each deadline among multiple schedules was chosen.

The AP committee has not received a finalized calendar.

* AP.1.3.2 Changing Registration

The last day for adding a 14-week course is eight calendar days after and including the first day of classes. The last day for dropping a 14-week course is five calendar weeks after the first day of classes (including the first day).

AP.1.5.1 Selective Withdrawal for Undergraduates

The academic calendar for each semester will include an open withdrawal period beginning the day after the last day to drop the class and extending through the ninth week.

** For the most extreme example, in Session B, there are three meeting schedules: MW, 2hr. 40 min.; TR, 2hr. 40 min.; and MWF, 2hr. The Add deadline for each of these (corresponding to 1-week of meetings in the standard academic year semester) would be after the first meeting for MW and TR and after the second meeting for MWF. The Add deadline is chosen to be on Thursday, which is generous for the MW and TR classes, and correct for the MWF class.

2) Academic Year 2020-2021 calendar

At the last Faculty Senate meeting, the AP Committee presented a graphic of the university's proposed calendar for the 2020-2021 academic year. The committee has not yet received the publishable text copy of the calendar.

3) Course repeat limit

The Academic Procedures Advisory Committee (APAC), which consists of a group of Assistant/Associate Deans and administrators who regularly interact with students and is chaired by the Registrar, will present their proposal to limit to three the number of times an undergraduate student may attempt any course without approval.

This presentation under New Business is intended to inform Senators of various options and to solicit responses. The recommendation follows the discussion last month in the Faculty Senate regarding academic units that wish to impose repeat restrictions on some or all of their courses, to both majors and non-majors. The Academic Policies Committee will further consider the proposal before making a recommendation to the Faculty Senate in the Spring.

Background information appears under [New Business](#). These are some highlights:

The limit ($N = 3$) would be university-wide. Units may have lower limits. Units may give permission to exceed the university limit according to their own criteria.

The limit is for **graded attempts**. The limit does not include the W notation.

The intent is to counsel students before they are able to register for the 4th attempt.

Statistics for Fall 2010-Spring 2016, including summers (these data are very rough and include both graded attempts and W's and so the actual numbers of courses and student attempts are probably smaller):

There were 568 courses where at least one student attempted the course (graded or W) at least 3 times (~7000 student-attempts). In 368 of those courses, there were no attempts by any student beyond 3. So students were presumably satisfied with their 3rd attempt or decided not to attempt for a 4th time (either by choice or not). $368/568 = 65\%$

Of the remaining 200 courses (970 students), students stopped after a 4th attempt in 116 courses. $116/200 = 58\%$

86% of repeated courses ($N \geq 3$) come from 17 departments/academic units

