

# University Standing Committees Charges

(Updated June 21, 2023)

## Academic Appeals Committee

*Motion to establish a University Academic Appeals Committee as a University Standing Committee approved by the Faculty Senate April 9, 1997.*

**Charge:** To serve as a final locus for appeal of decisions regarding late withdrawal, late add, suspension and dismissal for academic reasons. At its discretion, the Committee may choose to review other individual cases that are relevant to the application of University-wide policies. Does not hear grade appeals or appeals of Honor Committee decisions.

**Membership:** Five faculty members, including at least one member of the Faculty Senate, and the Provost or his/her designee who will serve in an ex-officio, non-voting capacity.

## Academic Initiatives Committee

*Motion for a University Standing Committee to Review Curriculum and Faculty Matters in Current and Future Campuses, Academic Programs and Activities of George Mason University approved by the Faculty Senate - April 1, 2009. Charge was amended and approved by the Faculty Senate – October 7, 2009 and March 2, 2011.*

### Charge:

A. To fulfill faculty responsibilities for curriculum oversight within the University:

- 1) Gather accurate information from the Provost's Office to review
  - a) Initial, current and projected course and program enrollment;
  - b) Any Memorandum of Understanding or similar governing document or contract specifying arrangements between George Mason University and the host government, state, or responsible organization;
  - c) Reports presented to any created governance structure such as a Board of Governors between George Mason University and any host government, state, or responsible organization;
  - d) Vetting and approval processes for faculty hiring and course offerings e) Information about resources, pay scales and other financial information relevant to faculty support, faculty and staff hiring, and curriculum development.
- 2) Provide a regular report to the Faculty Senate every semester.

B. Function as a faculty liaison from initial planning through implementation and continuing operations on major global education projects (involving multiple academic units or emanating from the central administration) and participate in discussions of major additional projects.

C. Create sub-committees as necessary within the Committee to ensure adequate attention is paid to the variety of satellite campus locations and opportunities.

D. Committee representation of faculty from no less than five different academic units to serve staggered two-year terms. The Vice President for Global and International Strategies (or the functional equivalent in the Provost's Office) will serve on this Committee as a non-voting member and will provide regular reports and updates on ongoing and new initiatives.

## **Admissions Committee**

*(Charge as revised and approved by the Faculty Senate February 3, 2021)*

### **Charge:**

Be in dialog with the admissions office about current admissions statistics and practices and provide reports to Faculty Senate. Explore aspects of admissions standards that may impact student recruitment, enrollment, success, and retention. Communicate to faculty via the Faculty Senate about activities they can engage in to help the Admissions Office. Be a resource to the Admissions Office for answering questions from multiple perspectives. Bring recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding issues impacting the admissions process.

**Committee Membership:** The committee membership comprises seven members.

Admissions Office -appointed member.

Senate appointed member from Budget and Resources committee.

5-elected members with three-year terms.

### **Meetings:**

The Committee will meet monthly.

## **Adult Learning and Executive Education Committee**

*(formerly the Non-Traditional, Interdisciplinary, and Adult Learning Committee, charge revised and approved by the Faculty Senate April 23, 2014)*

**Charge:** To actively consult with the Provost's Office and the Office of Continuing Professional Education to support, evaluate and refine programs in the areas of adult learning and executive education, including program development, admission policies, awareness programs, online resources, program evaluation, and degree completion initiatives.

## **Athletic Council**

*(Charge updated and approved by the Faculty Senate September 22, 2021; previously approved by the Athletic Council)*

**Charge:** To act in an advisory capacity to the President in all matters pertaining to Intercollegiate athletics. The Council provides general review of the policies and operations of the University's athletic program with primary focus on academic integrity and student-athletes well-being. The Council provides the opportunity to involve faculty, administration, students, and other concerned groups of the University. The Council assists with educating the university community about intercollegiate athletics.

## **Effective Teaching Committee**

*(Charge revised and approved by the Faculty Senate April 23, 2014)*

**Charge:** To develop and help implement procedures which encourage and reward effective teaching, and to enable faculty to improve their teaching effectiveness independent of any evaluation procedures, and to implement procedures or evaluation of effective teaching. Also, to

recommend policy to the Senate and to monitor the use of such policy for the evaluation of teachers and courses, including the following:

- A. Review, improve, and provide guidance for Institutional Research and Reporting on the course evaluation form and related procedures at least once every three years;
- B. Review existing policies relating to the faculty evaluation process, identify alternatives to these policies and recommend changes to the Faculty Senate;
- C. Work closely with the Center for Teaching Excellence to support the use of formative and self-assessment techniques and materials for promoting faculty professional growth and teaching effectiveness, including strategies for robust student feedback.

## **Committee on External Academic Relations**

*(Charge as revised and approved by the Faculty Senate - November 18, 2009)*

**Composition:** Six members who are elected for two-year terms. Three members of the Committee should be senators, two others are elected from the faculty at-large, and one ex-officio member is the Provost's designee.

At the beginning of each academic year the Committee must meet to select the representatives to the Virginia Faculty Senate from among its members, excluding the ex-officio member. At least one of these representatives must be a senator. In case of vacancies, the Nominations Committee nominates the new members, and the Committee internally evaluates and possibly reallocates the assigned responsibilities.

### **Charge:**

- A. Represent GMU faculty at Virginia higher education faculty governance organizations, including the Faculty Senate of Virginia. The seats allocated to GMU at the Faculty Senate of Virginia are to be filled by members of CEAR.
- B. Report to the GMU faculty senate on the proceedings of the Virginia Faculty Senate and voice back to this organization issues of relevance to GMU.
- C. Gather information on key matters about higher education in state legislation, state committees, and local venues, and report back to the GMU Senate.
- D. Provide forums and avenues for the exchange of ideas with representatives of SCHEV, state legislators representing Northern Virginia, and community groups related to higher education in Northern Virginia.

## **Faculty Equity and Inclusion Committee (FEIC)**

*(Approved by the Faculty Senate December 5, 2018, formerly Minority and Diversity Issues Committee. See [FS Agenda December 5, 2018](#), p. 3 )*

**Composition:** Five members. Term, tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to serve on this Committee. Members serve staggered two-year terms.

**Charge:** Working with the Offices of the Provost, Faculty Affairs, and Office of Compliance, Diversity and Ethics to foster equity and inclusion among the faculty with the goal of improving recruitment, retention, and overall well-being of under-represented faculty members.

## Faculty Handbook Revision Committee

*(Approved by the Faculty Senate April 28, 2010; revisions approved March 2, 2022)*

### Committee Membership:

- Three members of the instructional faculty elected by the Faculty Senate to 3-year terms. Two faculty must be tenured and one faculty must be a term faculty at the rank of Associate Professor or higher. At least one member must be a Senator.

In order to maintain continuity, the faculty members of the Committee shall have staggered terms. The Chair of the committee is appointed by and from among the elected faculty members;

- A non-voting administrator appointed by the Provost from the Provost's office;
- A non-voting administrator from Human Resources appointed by the Vice President of Human Resources.

### Charge:

The Committee will review the Faculty Handbook each year for potential changes. Proposed changes may also be brought to the Committee by any member of the faculty, administration, or Board of Visitors. The Committee is charged to confer with other members of the faculty and the administration during the review, as appropriate.

The Committee will present its proposed revisions to the President, Provost, and Faculty Senate for discussion at least 5 weeks before a final set of recommended revisions is presented to the Faculty Senate for a vote. During a discussion meeting, the President, Provost, or Faculty Senate may recommend changes to be considered by the Committee.

The Committee will review all recommended changes.

At the meeting during which the Committee presents its final set of proposed changes, the Faculty Senate may accept or reject the proposed revisions but may not amend them. Revisions that are approved by the Faculty Senate are then presented to the Board of Visitors. All revisions require the formal approval of the Board of Visitors.

Any meeting where proposed revisions are presented may be a Special Meeting of the Faculty Senate.

## Faculty Roles and Rewards

*(Approved by the Faculty Senate on April 12, 2023)*

The University Standing Committee on Faculty Roles and Rewards is charged with ensuring that the processes and timelines proposed to achieve the five goals laid out in the Task Force on Reimagining Faculty Roles and Rewards final report of Fall 2022 are implemented. These goals include:

- *Creating transparent workload guidelines that are equitable and inclusive of all faculty appointment types.*
- *Redesigning RPT guidelines that represent more inclusive frameworks for all faculty work.*
- *Developing a strategy for implementing continuous contracts for full-time instructional and*

*clinical faculty.*

- *Clarifying the relationship between the annual review criteria and the RPT criteria.*
- *Creating a robust culture of faculty cohesiveness through career development for all.*

The Committee shall report to the Faculty Senate on the progress toward these goals at least once each year and shall confer and collaborate with the appropriate committees and campus offices.

The committee shall recognize tenure as a major safeguard of academic freedom, the quality of education offered, and the continuity and stability of the institution.

### **Composition**

- Chair or designee of the Faculty Matters Committee (co-chair);
- Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Development (co-chair);
- Chair or designee of the Faculty Handbook Committee;
- Three tenure-line I/R faculty, elected by the Faculty Senate;
- Three term I/R faculty, elected by the Faculty Senate;
- One Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs (or similar role, appointed by Provost);
- One representative from Research Council (appointed by Provost); and
- Two Local Academic Head/Department Chairs (one elected by the Faculty Senate, one appointed by Provost)

The committee shall be co-chaired by the member from the Faculty Matters Committee and the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Development. The overall composition of the committee MUST include representation from *at least* 6 different schools and colleges.

### **Faculty/Staff Parking Appeals Committee**

*(Motion approved by the Faculty Senate March 4, 2020 to establish three (3) Faculty representatives to serve on the University's Faculty/Staff Parking Appeals Committee).*

**Charge:** To make final decisions in the parking citation appeals process for faculty, staff & visitors on behalf of the University's Parking & Transportation Department. Three-(3) Faculty and/or Staff representatives are required to form a quorum & will meet as frequently as once a

month, but historically about four-(4) times per year, to hear appellants, review facts & make decisions to waive, downgrade or uphold citations. The University's Parking Coordinator, or Director of Parking & Transportation, will serve in an ex-officio, non-voting capacity.

**Membership:** Three-(3) Faculty members with staggered terms for continuity.

## **Grievance Committee**

*(Charge as revised and approved by the Faculty Senate – November 18, 2009)*

In March 1998, the Faculty Senate approved the creation of the Grievance Committee, replacing the *ad hoc* University Grievance Committee, effective September 1998. The Charge was amended by a Faculty Senate vote on February 12, 2003 to enable the Committee to hear grievances from research faculty on matters of infringements of academic freedom, unfair or inappropriate conditions of employment, and any other due process issue. The charge was further elaborated in the Faculty Handbook adopted in 2009 concerning termination for cause and grievances against administrators.

**Composition:** Five members. Non-tenured faculty, chairs, and others serving in administrative capacities are ineligible to serve on this Committee. Members serve staggered two-year terms.

**Charge:** To investigate grievances of tenured, tenure-track, and term faculty:

A. which involve faculty matters from more than one local academic unit. Issues of investigation include alleged infringements of academic freedom, alleged unfair or inappropriate conditions of employment, alleged unfair or inappropriate termination for cause, and any other due process issue with the exclusion of retention, promotion and tenure appeals; (See also Faculty Handbook Section 2.93 Termination of Appointment for Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Term Faculty Members for Cause (pp. 47-49)).

B. which are not addressed by, or do not fall within the purview of the grievance committee of the pertinent local academic unit; (See also Faculty Handbook Section 2.10.1 University Policies (p. 48)) and

C. for local academic units that do not have grievance committees established, or when a grievance committee does not conform to the written procedures of the local academic unit. Other faculty appeals from local academic unit grievance committees are excluded. (See also Faculty Handbook Section 2.10.3 Faculty Work Assignments (p. 49) in case where Grievance is against a dean or director).

D. which involve administrators at or above the level of Dean or Director. (See also Faculty Handbook Sections 2.11.2 Grievances, 2.11.2.1 Policies Concerning Grievances, 2.11.2.2 Grievance Procedures (pp. 53-54)).

## **Mason Core Committee**

*(Charge as revised and approved by the Faculty Senate – April 1, 2009, composition of membership amended September 7, 2011. Revisions including new name: Mason Core Committee approved by the Faculty Senate Dec. 4, 2013. Revisions approved by the Faculty Senate February 3, 2021. Revised charge and composition approved by the Faculty Senate on April 26, 2023.)*

### **Charge**

The Committee will work in cooperation with the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education on all matters concerning the Mason Core (formerly general education).

For all foundation, exploration, and integration Mason Core requirements, the Committee will approve



courses to fulfill these requirements.

(The) Committee will develop procedures for assessing, reviewing, and recertifying courses that carry a Mason Core attribute. Utilizing Mason Core assessment data, the committee will review and revise, as necessary, the overall structure and outcomes of the Mason Core. The Committee will review and approve procedures used to substitute or waive Mason Core requirements. The Committee will confer with the Faculty Senate Committee on Academic Policies when changes to Mason Core requirements impact the entire university and/or would be a substantive change to the university catalog. The Committee will provide an annual report to the Faculty Senate. The report shall include a) The courses approved for inclusion in or removed from the Mason Core, and b) Changes in the criteria for the Mason Core. More frequent reports to the Faculty Senate might take place as adjustments to the Mason Core program may warrant.

**Composition:** The membership of the Committee comprises 14 voting members:

- A. Eight faculty elected by the Faculty Senate for staggered three-year terms ensuring that at least 6 academic units are represented, at least one should be a senator;
- B. Four faculty appointed by the Provost;
- C. The Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education;
- D. One student elected by the Student Senate.

Ex-officio members are invited to provide input into the work of the committee and consist of the following:

- A. The Mason Core Director
- B. A representative from the Stearns Center
- C. A representative from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning and
- D. One representative from the Writing Across the Curriculum Committee

Meetings: Meetings will be held monthly during the academic year.

## **Multilingual Students Academic Support Committee**

*Approved by the Faculty Senate - December 7, 2016*

*In response to the 2015 Multilingual Student Task Force Report, the Faculty Senate established a new University Standing Committee, entitled Multilingual Academic Support.. Revisions approved by the Faculty Senate September 8, 2021.*

**Charge:** The committee will be responsible for assisting in the implementation of efforts to support Mason's multilingual students' academic success. This will include identifying the needs and accomplishments of multilingual students, offering input on the types of direct student resources (e.g., classes and tutoring services) needed for students with varying English language (writing, speaking, listening, and reading) abilities, assessing the types of faculty development support needed to enhance the teaching of linguistically diverse students across the curriculum, and evaluating the types of administrative support needed to enable key programs to lead specialized curriculum and faculty development efforts. The committee will make recommendations about policies and resources based on this work to Faculty Senate and to any university leaders or committees whose initiatives impact the success of Mason's multilingual students.

**Composition:** The Committee will include one representative from each of the following areas: Writing Center, Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning, Writing Across the Curriculum Program, University Libraries, Composition/English Courses Faculty, Basic Communication

Courses, INTO Mason, Center for Culture, Equity, and Empowerment, Undergraduate Education, Graduate Education, Academic Advising Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, and Office of International Programs and Services. There will be one student representative, elected by the Student Senate. In addition, there will be three elected faculty representatives (including one faculty senator), from at least two separate colleges/schools, each serving staggered 2-year terms.

### **Recreation Advisory Committee**

*(Approved by the Faculty Senate – February 9, 2011)*

**Charge:** To act in an advisory capacity in all matters pertaining to faculty and staff use of recreational facilities.

**Membership:** Three faculty members, three staff members, and three members chosen by Human Resources and Payroll.

### **Research Advisory Committee**

*(Motion approved by the Faculty Senate to create a new University Standing Committee entitled “Research Advisory Committee” – November 2, 2016)*

**Composition:** The composition of the committee will include seven tenure-line faculty members (at least one of whom is a Faculty Senator) elected by the Faculty Senate. These faculty members should represent a minimum of five different colleges/schools, with **at least two faculty** members at the level of Professor and at least two faculty members at the level of Associate Professor. These seven elected members will serve staggered 3-year terms. Finally, the committee will include one ex-officio member, who is one of the two faculty representatives to the BOV Research committee.

**Charge:** To work in concert with the Office of Research and its subsidiary offices (e.g., Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, Office of Sponsored Programs), as well as the Associate Vice President for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, in shaping the research initiatives and policies of the university. The committee will serve in an advisory capacity to the Vice President of Research, the Associate Vice President for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and associated offices. In this role, the committee will meet at least twice per semester with the Vice President of Research, and as needed with other individuals and offices. The committee will provide a report on its activities to the Faculty Senate at least annually.

### **Salary Equity Study Committee**

*Motion proposed by the Faculty Matters Committee to establish a Standing Committee on December 4, 1996. The motion was amended and approved by the Faculty Senate on December 11, 1996. The charge was further amended on April 7, 2004, and April 23, 2014).*

**Composition:** Five members. The composition of the committee must include members with a knowledge of statistical measures and with a knowledge of university compensation policies. The Faculty Senate shall elect 3 members one of which must be a Senator; the provost and equity Offices will appoint one member each.



**Charge:** To systematically study annually the distribution of faculty salaries at all ranks as identified in Sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the Faculty Handbook; to systematically study salaries by gender, by race/ethnic divisions, by local academic unit, and other variables as may be relevant; to examine frequencies of men/women and of members of different race/ethnic categories within LAUs; and additionally to investigate the potential for individual equity measures. Working with the support of Institutional Research and Reporting and Human Resources, the committee shall monitor the establishment and maintenance of a database of faculty compensation including all categories and ranks of faculty, and shall report its aggregate findings on salary and on the status of the database annually to the Faculty Senate and provide specific data to the Equity Office, the Provost, Deans and Directors, and to other LAU administrators.

### **Technology Policy Committee**

**Composition:** Seven members, at least two of whom must be senators and one an ex-officio faculty member designated by the Provost. The composition should be such that most academic units are represented.

**Charge:** The Committee will actively advise the Vice-President of Information Technology and other administrators in investments and in implementation of computer-based technologies that impact the educational techniques in the University. The Committee also advises on the development of new computer-based educational techniques and research capacities within the University. The Committee will work cooperatively with the central administration to formulate the technology budget of the University. These actions will ensure that the recommendations issued by the Committee reflect the position of the faculty concerning allocations to programs and/or individuals. The Committee will work with the administration to review and maintain a clear and equitable policy pertaining to intellectual property rights of the faculty.

### **University Promotion, Tenure and Renewal Appeal Committee**

*(Approved by the Faculty Senate February 13, 2013 and by the Board of Visitors March 20, 2013; inclusion in the Faculty Handbook effective July 1, 2013. Revisions approved by the Faculty Senate February 1, 2017 and by the Board of Visitors May 11, 2017; inclusion in the Faculty Handbook effective July 1, 2017.)*

## **2.8.2 University Promotion, Tenure and Renewal Appeal Committee**

### **2.8.2.1 Committee Charge**

Upon written appeal, the UPTRAC reviews the decision of the Provost or President not to recommend tenure, promotion, or renewal. The committee must publish and follow standard procedures for its conduct that are consistent with provisions in this section. The committee members (including the member chosen by the appellant) do not act as advocates for either the appellant or the university. The committee does not review the merits of the tenure, promotion, or renewal case itself.

### **2.8.2.2 Committee Composition**

The UPTRAC shall be composed of three tenured faculty members and two alternate tenured faculty members, elected by the Faculty Senate to staggered terms; and two tenured administrators and one alternate tenured administrator, selected by the Provost to staggered

terms. Committee terms are for two years. No two committee members may be from the same local academic unit or administrative unit. A member can serve a maximum of two consecutive 2-year terms, although subsequent non-consecutive service is permitted. Elected alternate members' terms formally begin during the first year that they participate in an appeal. For the purpose of service on the UPTRAC, a local academic unit administrator is considered an administrator.

The appellant will choose a tenured administrator to serve as the sixth member of the committee for the duration of the appellant's appeal. The administrator must be someone who does not have a conflict of interest, who did not participate at an earlier stage of the appellant's promotion, tenure, or renewal process, and who does not come from the same administrative unit as one of the Provost's appointees.

If any member of the UPTRAC has a conflict of interest, participated at an earlier stage of the appellant's promotion, tenure, or renewal process, or is otherwise unable to serve, such member shall not participate in the appeal, and an alternate will serve instead. In the event there are not sufficient faculty alternates to serve, the Faculty Senate shall elect additional alternate members to serve for the appeal. If the need for faculty alternates arises after the last Faculty Senate meeting of the academic year, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee will select the alternate(s). In the event there are not sufficient administrators to serve, the Provost shall select alternate members to serve for the appeal.

### **Writing Across the Curriculum Committee** *(Charge revised April 26, 2023)*

**Charge:** To advise and collaborate with administrative and academic units to support faculty who teach with writing across all academic disciplines. Specifically, the WAC Committee (WAC-C):

- A. Provides guidance related to writing courses and writing instruction for faculty, academic units, university leaders, other committees, and the full Senate;
- B. Works with the Mason Core Committee on the overall structure and outcomes of general education writing, including Writing-intensive courses;
- C. Collaborates with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning and other units on the assessment of writing and writing-enriched learning;
- D. Identifies the needs of Mason's student writers and faculty who teach with writing;
- E. Supports the intentional integration of writing and writing instruction into courses across the curriculum at Mason, including Writing-intensive courses;
- F. Acknowledges and celebrates the accomplishments of Mason faculty who teach with writing in order to recognize best practices specific to their discipline;
- G. Advocates for equitable practices and conditions that foster meaningful teaching and learning with writing across the curriculum.

**Composition:** One elected representative from each of the academic units offering undergraduate degrees, the Director of the WAC Program who is an ex-officio member with no vote or possibility to chair the Committee.