GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, November 21, 2016, 2:30 – 4:00 p.m.
Johnson Center Room 327 (Meeting Room C)


I. Approval of Minutes of October 21, 2016: The minutes were approved as distributed.

II. Announcements
President Cabrera will address the Faculty Senate at December 7th FS Meeting.

Provost Wu reported on two sessions held after the (presidential) election to offer any faculty who wanted to share experience in classroom of students’ (responses) to election. For the first session, about 40-50 people showed up. Quite a few faculty did not know how to react to upset students on both sides – “I voted for Trump, does that make me evil?” Overall, a very productive session. The second session was reasonably well attended too. President Cabrera’s letter was well received.

GMU Admissions Director statement
Last week’s episode with Mr. Bunting – Provost Wu indicated he thought our response was pretty good: “…made political comments on a private social media account which were later shared publicly by a media website. The views expressed by the employee were his own personal views, not the views of the university – referenced President Cabrera’s letter to the Mason Community on January 10th.” Provost Wu added there were a lot of attacks from state legislators on the right side, to be expected. It is beneficial that President Cabrera was able to say we are accused of being too far right, we did stick with our same argument, what a university is all about. We are in a reasonable place, firestorm dying down.

Discussion among Executive Committee members included response was well-stated; equal amounts of complaints from both sides; even before social media, we should be talking about people’s personal responsibility to write things available to public when in a position of responsibility; Chair Renshaw indicated that this is dealt with frequently in clinical psychology.

Provost Wu continued: conversation about developing set of guidelines – the federal government does this – be careful when you say something as a public official or as a private citizen, to be clear about it. We may invite them to come into conversation with us, we are considered a private entity.

III. Progress reports, business, and agenda items from Senate Standing Committees

A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Slayden
For the next Faculty Senate meeting, we hope to present the Posthumous Degree Policy. We did hear back from the Registrar’s Office on the Summer School Calendar and are looking over some of the materials. When you looked at last year’s calendar (approved November 7,
2015 by the Faculty Senate) there was a new session and other changes made without showing it to the Faculty Senate for its approval. Other concerns included mistakes in the add and drop deadlines, which we have asked about and received a non sequitur response from the Registrar’s Office.

B. Budget and Resources – Tim Leslie

November is a slow month for us. We are getting the number of credits taught by everybody lined up – there are likely to be a number of adjuncts to be included in data, so we can go back and ask HR for those details. With the specter of 7.5% government budget cuts, $3M cut in spring budget, the university is also to look at tuition increases. BOV approves the 12 credit total, but full time tuition between 13-16 credits is the same. Might need to consider increases to those totals. If you took 12 credits per semester, it would take more than four years to graduate.

Discussion: Cuts in the number of credit hours students take (due to tuition increases) would affect lab courses. On the other hand, most of our peers charge more already. Who will such increases hit? Graduate tuition prices may take a serious hit, also raises in number of in-state vs. out-of-state students. A tuition task force may be quietly formed over the break.

C. Faculty Matters – Alan Abramson. No report.

D. Nominations – Mark Addleson

We have received about 20 nominations to serve on the Research Advisory Committee. We will put forward 7 nominees, there may be more nominations from the floor. The number of nominees must be distributed by colleges on slate. The bylaws at present do not allow for preferential voting. Statements by the nominees will be distributed with the agenda. Rebecca Jones (COS) is nominated to fill a vacancy on the O & O Committee.

E. Organization and Operations – Lisa Billingham

A draft motion to create a Multilingual Academic Support Committee was distributed and discussed. How many faculty to have on the committee? Need for staggered terms. If majority of members are appointed, does it change the reporting? No – see the example of Mason Core Committee: even with several appointed members, they still report back to the Faculty Senate. The committee needs faculty directly involved with the complexity of these programs to serve. Chair Renshaw asked EXC members to email additional suggestions over the next week or so, for inclusion on the December 7th FS Meeting agenda.

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives

A. Faculty Handbook Committee – Suzanne Slayden

The committee will present some proposed changes to the University Promotion, Tenure, and Renewal Appeal Committee (Section 2.8). The proposed revisions are presented first (December 7, 2016) for input from the faculty. A second presentation will be made in spring 2017 with no additional opportunities for changes. If objections are raised, the proposed revisions will be referred back to committee. If approved by the Faculty Senate, they will be presented to the Board of Visitors for its approval. Please note also that proposed revisions
presented to the Faculty Senate have been agreed upon by the Faculty Handbook Committee, the Provost Office, and the university’s legal counsel.

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion

New Task Force Charge and Composition: There are problems with term faculty in particular, and faculty engagement more broadly. If the task force is going to try to address the evolving two-tier system and how term faculty fit in with faculty at large, then might need a broader charge for the task force (overall model of faculty roles, etc.). Chair Renshaw has been working a bit on this with AP Kim Eby and Pres Fellow Eden King – email summaries distributed within EXC. The basic framework could be for work to take place over three semesters – Spring 2017 to collect input – Fall 2017 to generate recommendations and get feedback – Spring 2018 finalize and roll out recommendations. There would need to be a mechanism for rolling out solutions more quickly than spring 2018 if appropriate and possible. Definition of faculty roles, duties, rewards, and recognitions by type. A large portion of task force to study roles of term faculty across the university. Concerns vary substantially across departments. The task force would also look at tenured faculty, tenure track faculty and term research faculty; input from unit heads, deans and chairs. How could this be couched, how big should group be? Will need broad representation but not a fifty person committee. Do not have to be a task force member to give information. Is there any kind of way to off-set resources, such as course release, for term faculty who serve on the task force?

Discussion: What about contracts? Salary, lengths of contract – term faculty do not do the same thing. Variable contract lengths for those term faculty here a long time. Jurisdiction would basically be “the world” – all faculty in all different ranks. Suggestion was made to instead start small, see where information gathering gets, then expand it. To start with term faculty and get the associated information they need to get. Provost Stearns made decision term faculty would go to one year contracts, he had the authority to make decision, thought term faculty to have three, five year term contracts. What role do we expect term faculty to play? Given current climate and funding… what’s our model moving forward? How to address professional development?

To deal initially with term faculty issues, and as they uncover suggestions, to go into phase two. On the other hand, there is some concern about rolling out too many Task Forces (already had adjunct, now do term, then do faculty roles). When you talk about contracts etc. raises questions about roles. We need clarifications – not to spend too much time data gathering at this stage unless too hard to do. Salary will always be tricky by department. Still needs info gathering – number of term faculty going up, tenure track faculty going down. When bring top tier researchers like Harvard does, have to know ahead of time where faculty are going here – strategic plan for university

Chair Renshaw then asked how to move forward – term faculty only, or broader faculty roles? Provost Wu: Adjunct Task Force worked well, co-chaired by dean and adjunct faculty member. Did a survey of all adjunct faculty to understand what they want. Results surprising to me – e.g. discounted parking etc. To do homework to understand. Suggests jumping in with a survey, can leave charge of task force as vague. Suggestion to go through Provost Wu, not EXC to hold a meeting.
Provost Wu is willing to collaborate. He is concerned about trends too, a natural momentum as not enough money to go around, deans become more risk averse. Provost Wu and Chair Renshaw will discuss to come up with what the Task Force will be, who will be on it, and then will be in touch.

**Mason Korea Faculty:** President Cabrera asked for their input. Chair Renshaw has reached out too, no response received yet. Suggested involvement of Academic Initiative Committee. Would not have separate Faculty Senator as not enough to meet criteria on their own, perhaps to be with S-CAR? How would our Faculty Handbook work with Mason Korea?

**Desired level of involvement in emergency planning:** Last year discussion of Faculty Matters Committee how much faculty involvement do you want? What are your thoughts? Chair Renshaw will send email to EXC about whether we should be in charge of this – mainly run by Registrar's Office.

**Resolution on DACA:** A draft resolution from Senator Betsy DeMulder and several others was discussed. Reference to sanctuary campus.

**Discussion:** Provost noted that interpretation of DACA in Virginia from State Attorney General has been friendly toward DACA. We have 139 declared DACA students who pay in-state tuition. Several suggestions in the draft resolution already implemented:

- University-wide training: University Life initiating through Diversity Office: Multicultural Competency Training this fall.
- Mental Health Services has added two psychologists and one staff person.
- The Office of Compliance, Diversity and Ethics and University Life are about to begin campus-wide climate survey.
- We do not share student information with anyone re FERPA.
- University Police does not work with immigration service, it is not their job.

Since we are already doing all of this, we could inadvertently hurt DACA students by calling attention to them. We have to act within the law, we cannot be directed by a resolution to act illegally; suggestion to add phrase “to the extent legally possible”. President Cabrera's recent speech in support of DACA students as one of the important issues in our time. Need to clean up resolution a lot before it goes forward. Provost Wu is meeting with Advisory Group for DACA at 4:30 p.m. Chair Renshaw to reach back out to co-sponsors of the resolution to see if they are open to working with Provost Wu on wording.

**VI. Agenda Items for December 7, 2016 FS Meeting**
- Draft FS Minutes November 2, 2016
- Announcements
  - President Cabrera
  - Provost Wu
- Committee Reports
  - Academic Policies Committee: (1) Posthumous Degree Policy and (2) Summer 2017 Calendar
Nominations Committee: (1) Election of nominees to Research Advisory Committee and (2) Rebecca Jones (COS) nominated to fill vacancy on the Organization and Operations Committee.

- Organization and Operations: Multilingual Academic Support Committee
- Faculty Handbook Committee: Section 2.8 UPTRAC Committee Revisions, first view

**VII. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned approximately 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Caniano
Faculty Senate clerk