



A RESOLUTION ON BUDGET AUSTERITY PRINCIPLES (21/4)

WHEREAS, the *Faculty Code* states that the regular faculty shares with the officers of administration the responsibility for effective operation of the departments and schools and the university as a whole, and that in the exercise of this responsibility, the regular faculty also participates in the formulation of policy and planning decisions affecting the quality of education and life at the university;

WHEREAS, the *Faculty Code* states that Faculty bodies charged with responsibilities for particular policy and planning areas are entitled, to the extent feasible, to be informed sufficiently in advance of important decisions within their areas of competence to be able to provide their advice or recommendations to the appropriate university officials;

WHEREAS, the *Faculty Organization Plan* designates the Faculty Senate as the entity to which the President initially presents information, and which is consulted concerning proposed changes in existing policies or promulgation of new policies;

WHEREAS, on April 27, 2020, President LeBlanc announced through GW Today: “One additional step we are now taking, after careful consideration, is to freeze all salaries and not award merit increases this year to faculty and staff” and this was announced without any consultation with the ASPP committee;

WHEREAS, on April 27, 2020, President LeBlanc announced through GW Today: “At this time, we are not planning immediate layoffs or furloughs. We will do everything we can to utilize these types of personnel actions only if necessary, but there may come a time when we will need to exercise these options, as other universities have done;”

WHEREAS, many institutions nationwide have announced plans to introduce benefit and salary reductions to their faculty and staff, including layoffs, furloughs and freezes; and

WHEREAS, the president and provost have recently commenced extensive consultations with the Faculty Senate committees; and

WHEREAS, because such decisions involve education and research, which are areas of faculty specialty;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

- 1) That the administration shall continue to have meaningful consultations and ongoing dialogue with the university faculty and staff through the faculty senate, faculty senate committees and town halls;
- 2) That any budgetary shortfalls should prioritize discretionary spending reduction and efficiency implementation, as identified through Senate-administration collaboration, and rely on furloughs and layoffs only as a last resort;
- 3) That should salary or benefit reductions become necessary, they must be for a specified limited time, of short duration, and implemented only after consultation with the relevant Senate committees and/or the Benefits Advisory Committee; Moreover, in the case of such reductions, consideration should be given to ubiquitously applying graduated percentage reductions based on employee base salaries;
- 4) That any personnel-, salary, or benefit-related changes (including furloughs and layoffs) beyond the already imposed freeze in merit pay must first be done outside the core research, education, and service missions of the university. Any subsequent changes to personnel, salary, or benefits that affect the direct engagement with education, research, and/or service should be implemented only after consultation with the Benefits Advisory Committee and relevant Senate committee(s) as designated by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) along with considerations provided by the dean of each school regarding the unique needs that each school has in supporting its mission;
- 5) That the administration be fully transparent with all faculty and staff in providing clear rationale for all decisions through the use of open town hall meetings (virtual if necessary) and ongoing engagement with the appropriate Faculty Senate committees;
- 6) That procedures and rules for assigning in-person and online teaching shall be established with the advice of and consultation with the appropriate Faculty Senate committee(s) as designated by the FSEC along with considerations provided by the dean of each school regarding the unique needs that each school has in supporting its mission;
- 7) That any decisions regarding a partial or complete return to on-campus instruction (or about remaining online) shall require prior consultation with the appropriate standing committee(s) of the Senate as designated by the FSEC, with mutual effort to achieve consensus and to provide appropriate protection for those who are at "a higher risk of getting very sick."

Faculty Senate Committee on Appointment, Salary and Promotion Policies (ASPP)
May 18, 2020

Adopted as amended by the Faculty Senate
May 20, 2020

APPENDIX

The George Washington University Faculty Senate Committee on Appointments, Salaries, and Promotion Policies (ASPP)

Budget Austerity Principles

ASPP committee is calling on the Faculty Senate to put together a list of the principles GW's schools should consider as those schools develop their contingency plans for the different financial scenarios each school might face in the upcoming 12-24 months. While we recognize that each school will feel financial impacts differently and will thus need to make individualized plans, it's also important that GW's faculty and staff be able to provide input on the main principles we think should guide some of the difficult financial decisions that may need to be made in the coming months.

To assist in beginning to develop these principles, ASPP members began a tentative list. These are initial, brainstorming suggestions—the committee simply raised points we thought could become a starting point for faculty, staff and administration conversations as these principles are developed:

- 1) **Protect** current university employees—faculty, staff, and administration—with whom the university already has commitments.
- 2) **Share** the burden of any financial cuts across the board (faculty, staff, and administration) as much as possible to minimize layoffs.
- 3) If **furloughs** are used, acknowledge that there are different levels of “essentiality” across faculty, staff and administration that might impact how those furloughs are implemented (while keeping in mind the general principle of sharing the burden of financial cuts as broadly as possible).
- 4) **Pay bands** might be considered as a way of fairly sharing the burden of furloughs or pay cuts, but more research would need to be done on what bands are appropriate (we can't assume past pay bands—that were developed for different purposes—are appropriate to this situation).
- 5) Continue to protect the health insurance benefits of **retired** faculty.
- 6) Consider **buyouts** to eligible employees before furloughing others.

Respectfully submitted,
Murli M. Gupta
Chair, ASPP Committee
April 24, 2020
Updated May 16, 2020