



Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate will meet on Wednesday, May 20, 2020, from 11:00am-1:00pm
via WebEx

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on May 8, 2020
3. UPDATE: Financial Operations and FY21 Budget and Academic Planning (Thomas LeBlanc, President, and Brian Blake, Provost)
4. RESOLUTION 21/3: On Convening Additional Senate Meetings (Arthur Wilson, Chair, Faculty Senate Executive Committee)
5. RESOLUTION 21/4: On Budget Austerity Principles (Murli Gupta, Chair, Appointment, Salary, & Promotion Policies Committee)
6. RESOLUTION 21/5: On the Immediate Need to Fill Positions in the Deanery of Libraries and Academic Innovation (Harald Griesshammer, Chair, Libraries Committee)
7. GENERAL BUSINESS:
 - a) Nominations for election of new members to Senate standing committees: Joan Meier (Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom/voting member from Law) and Lilien Robinson (Educational Policy & Technology/voting member from CCAS)
8. Brief Statements and Questions
9. Adjournment

Elizabeth A. Amundson
Secretary



A RESOLUTION ON CONVENING ADDITIONAL SENATE MEETINGS (21/3)

WHEREAS, urgent circumstances exist with regard to COVID-19,

WHEREAS, the Faculty Organization Plan (FOP) states that "Regular meetings of the Senate shall be held at stated intervals as determined by it but no less often than twice during each semester of the academic year."

WHEREAS, the FOP provides that the Senate may adopt bylaws concerning its government as it considers appropriate,

NOW, THEREFORE

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

Section 1(a) of the Senate Bylaws is hereby amended to add after the current sentence stating: "The Executive Committee may cancel any regular meeting for which there is not sufficient business," a new sentence stating:

"In urgent circumstances, the Executive Committee may determine that additional Regular Meetings are needed in shorter intervals and may act to arrange such Regular Meetings during each semester of the academic year or during the summer."

May 12, 2020

Faculty Senate Executive Committee



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 Thomas 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 Thomas 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 salary reductions to their faculty and staff through layoffs, furloughs and freezes; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE,

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

- 1) That the administration should continue to have meaningful consultations and ongoing dialog with the university faculty through the faculty senate, faculty senate committees and town halls;

- 2) That the administration protect current university employees—faculty, staff and administration—with whom the university already has commitments;
- 3) That the university share the burden of any financial cuts across the board as much as possible to minimize layoffs;
- 4) That in the event that cuts must be made, the university continues its contributions to health insurance in full in order that all employees can remain protected with their health insurance coverage;
- 5) That if furloughs are to be used, the university acknowledge that there are different levels of “essentiality” that might impact how these furloughs are applied; and
- 6) That possible financial cuts be discussed in advance with the faculty before the decisions are made.

Faculty Senate Committee on Appointment, Salary and Promotion Policies (ASPP)
May 15, 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



A RESOLUTION ON THE IMMEDIATE NEED TO FILL POSITIONS IN THE DEANERY OF LIBRARIES AND ACADEMIC INNOVATION (21/5)

WHEREAS, the Libraries Committee “periodically reviews the operation, materials and facilities of all the libraries of The George Washington University; evaluates the level of satisfaction of faculty and students with the materials and services provided; estimates the levels of cooperation between the component parts of the libraries among themselves and with the community-at-large; and makes suggestions for the continuing development and planning of the facilities”; and

WHEREAS, GW has announced a round of budget cuts to deal with the fallout of COVID-19;¹ and

WHEREAS, GW’s Libraries already suffered from a round of devastating budget cuts in 2016, in which the then-administration prioritized the integrity of the collection over Librarian and staff positions²; and

WHEREAS, President LeBlanc volunteered at the faculty Senate meeting on May 8, 2020, that preparation for online education is not free but needs investments; and

WHEREAS, GW’s smooth transition to online learning in Spring 2020 was in large part thanks to the professionalism, dedication and tireless effort of the Libraries and Academic Innovation (LAI) team; and

WHEREAS, the administration has alerted the faculty that they need to plan how to deliver instructions in Fall 2020 both on-campus and online as well as in a hybrid-mode; and

WHEREAS, for GW’s smooth operation of instruction and research in Fall 2020, faculty will thus heavily rely on the team overseen by the Dean of Libraries and Academic Innovations (LAI); and

WHEREAS, at the Senate’s April meeting, Dean Henry shared that LAI requested 5 expert Librarians and 2 staff positions as system-critical with anticipated hiring dates of May 1, 2020, and additional expert Librarians and staff as system-critical with anticipated hiring dates of July 1, 2020, and Provost Blake reported that “some library positions should be kept open” and confirmed “that this area is extremely important to nurture this infrastructure”³; and

¹ <https://gwtoday.gwu.edu/update-budget>

² <https://gwtoday.gwu.edu/departmental-reorganizations-announced>

³ <https://facultysenate.gwu.edu/files/2020/04/April-2020-minutes-attachments.pdf>

WHEREAS, these requests are held up for approval in an administrative committee which is to evaluate each individual exception from the GW-announced hiring freeze, albeit concrete candidates or finalists have been identified already, and reference or background checks have in part been conducted;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

1. That the Senate expresses its highest appreciation for the ceaseless dedication and expert advice of the LAI team to get GW online in Spring 2020; and
2. That the Senate urges the President and Provost to direct the administration to approve immediately the expert Librarian positions and staff hires requested, cognizant that time is of the essence if they are to be ready to help GW faculty and students prepare for and work in Fall 2020.

Faculty Senate Libraries Committee
May 15, 2020