



**Faculty Senate
Provost Bracey Remarks
December 10, 2021**

Good afternoon. I will keep my update brief.

End of Semester Message

Hopefully, you saw the end of semester message I sent to faculty yesterday. Above all, it was a message of celebration. We are celebrating our resilience as a community at the end of our first in-person, on-campus semester since the pandemic began; we are celebrating our shared commitment to health and safety protocols, which has kept the COVID-19 positivity rate on campus low; and we are applauding the time and effort that we as a community have devoted to prioritizing our culture of empathy, especially for students. The pandemic is not yet over, and in the new year, we will need to continue our commitment in these areas as we work together to achieve preeminence as a global research university.

In the message, I also acknowledged and thanked President LeBlanc for his dedicated service to the university. His steady leadership over the last four years, particularly during the disruption of the pandemic, has positioned the George Washington University for future excellence. I am grateful for having had his partnership during my time as interim provost and wish him well on his retirement from the university.

I also expressed excitement to welcome interim president Mark S. Wrighton on January 1. With years of experience as an administrator and educator, he will be a strong leader during this transition period as we search for a permanent president.

The message linked to the [Provost site](#), which has some important end-of-semester information.

Regarding recent campus health messages, I shared dates and timing for scheduling COVID-19 tests following the winter break. I also shared that our Public Health Lab is able to conduct genetic sequencing, and as of now, the positive cases we have screened in the past month show no cases of the Omicron variant. We will continue to monitor cases and assess whether any additional safeguards are necessary. We encourage you to be safe if you plan to travel for the holidays.

I encouraged faculty to submit fall grades as soon as possible after the completion of final exams. Grades should be submitted within 5 business days of the final. Exams taking place on the last day of finals, December 22nd, should be submitted by 5pm on December 31st.

You can find the rest of the information on the [Provost site](#), in the [top link under the Updates tab](#). This update includes information about student and faculty wellbeing resources, course material adoptions for Spring 2022, digital accessibility for course materials, and faculty awards nominations, which are due TODAY. Supporting materials are due January 21st.

Shared Governance Task Force

As Chair Wilson mentioned, the Shared Governance Task Force work continues. The steering committee, consisting of myself, Dr. Shaista Khilji, and Trustee Amr ElSawy, met this morning. We discussed some elements of the forthcoming faculty survey, including its structure and the timing and manner of its distribution, as well as the cadence of forthcoming meetings. In an update to Professor Wilson's comments, the steering committee has determined that the next meeting of the full task force will include a determination of the steps and timeline to follow with regard to town halls and a faculty survey. I look forward to working closely with the steering committee and the task force at large in the coming months.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program Review Update

Our work on the diversity, equity and inclusion program review continues. We are currently working to identify the personnel we anticipate we will need to accomplish the review — this includes both a committee at large as well as sub-committees assigned to focus on faculty hiring and the student experience. We will share an announcement when the roster is finalized. Shortly thereafter, we plan to distribute a DEI survey instrument to the community.

Finally, keep an eye out on the diversity website in the coming weeks as they upload videos of some of our excellent panels from the Diversity Summit.

I wish you all a safe, healthy, and happy holiday break with your families and loved ones, and as always, thank you for all you do for the George Washington University. I will see you in 2022.