



**Faculty Senate
Provost Bracey Remarks
January 14, 2022**

Hello to all – happy 2022, and of course a very warm welcome to President Wrighton in his first few weeks at the George Washington University as well as his first Faculty Senate meeting. He has certainly hit the ground running.

Spring Semester Updates

The regular schedule of classes began this week. Hopefully you saw the welcome message I sent to the community on Monday that celebrated our scholars' continued excellence in classes, research, and internships, and thanked all our community members for their hard work in making that continued excellence possible.

Non-clinical faculty started the semester teaching remotely. Although some classes began on January 3rd, the bulk began this week. Our messaging about the remote start to the semester began before winter break and has been strong and consistent over the past several weeks, so my thanks to the Communications team and all the offices who have pitched in to shape this messaging for our community.

In this vein, we confirmed on Wednesday that in-person instruction will begin on January 18th as planned. I followed up with an additional message to faculty containing more guidance. We are asking that faculty to anticipate disruptions in their teaching this semester as students test positive and are required to isolate. Instructional continuity will be necessary for these students to continue their classwork while isolating. We are also advising faculty that if they should test positive, they should move their classes to remote learning until their isolation period ends, unless, of course, their illness is serious. At that point, they should consult with their department chair and dean for next steps.

I've received several notes from faculty and students who are concerned about the high positivity rates in the DMV and are worried that classrooms (which lack social distancing) will be a site for omicron spread. We are reassuring all members of our community that our layered approach to protection – testing, vaccinations, the booster, and the indoor mask mandate – offers strong protection against classroom spread, and that classroom spread has not historically been an issue. We are also planning to distribute N95 masks to the community to provide extra protection over other types of masks.

Shared Governance Task Force

As Chair Wilson reported, the Shared Governance Task Force continues its work. I will simply echo his comments and say that the town halls are a great opportunity to encourage faculty participation

and we look forward to the insights they will provide as we look to shape the faculty survey. I am very grateful to my faculty colleagues for their collaboration in this important work – Professor Shaista Khilji, Chair Arthur Wilson, Professor Joe Cordes, and Professor Christine Pintz.

Board of Trustees

The Board remains very much engaged. I will be presenting to three committees this cycle. For the committee on Academic Affairs, I will be providing an enrollment update, and update on our academic advising efforts, an update on study abroad, and an update on the GW academic leadership academy.

For Strategic Planning and Enrollment, we will be providing a more robust presentation on enrollment and academic planning.

Finally, for the External Relations committee, we will be focusing the entire discussion on student recruitment. Vice Provost Jay Goff and I will provide an overview of student recruitment efforts, and this conversation will be supplanted by reports from Stacey DiLorenzo in Communications & Marketing, Donna Arbide in Development and Alumni Relations, and Renee McPhatter in Government and Community Relations.

Diversity Program Review Team

We are sending invitation letters to members of the community, asking them to serve on our Diversity Program Review Team in various sub-groups. We expect that these teams will work over the coming year to produce reports containing quantitative and qualitative data in a number of areas. We would like to announce our teams and the launch of this process in the coming weeks, so stay tuned.

Finance and Budget

Finally, there is continued interest in FY22 and FY23 budgeting. We are in the mist of making several corrections to the FY22 budget to align with the priorities of our academic enterprise. These will be presented to the budget office for fulfillment. We are currently looking at FY23 proposals and will present those to the budget office as well. Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that our budgeting process more closely aligns with our academic enterprise aspirations.