Faculty Senate
Provost Bracey Remarks
February 18, 2022

*Diversity Program Review Team*

I was proud to announce earlier this week the formation of the Diversity Program Review Team. When I was named interim provost this past summer, I identified the previously-announced diversity audit as a top priority. The university originally envisioned using an outside party to conduct the review, but it became apparent that the university should empower its own faculty, staff and students to conduct the review. Members of our own community are best positioned to lead the examination of the diversity and equity issues we face.

The Diversity Program Review Team, comprising faculty, staff and students, will conduct a comprehensive review of the university’s diversity, equity and inclusion efforts to inform the development of a sustainable action plan. The team was chosen in consultation with campus partners, who provided recommendations about community members who would be valuable leaders in this process. The review will be transparent, collaborative, and university-wide, and the engagement of the whole community will be critical in this endeavor.

The goal is to submit to leadership in Spring 2023 a recommended diversity action plan, so there is a lot of work to do over the next year. A page has been launched on the Provost’s Office website under the Initiatives tab. We will post updates there as well as share updates with the community. An opportunity for the community to provide feedback is forthcoming as well, though I have already begun to receive outreach from members of the community with questions and feedback, and I am of course happy to address those at this time.

I encourage you all to stay tuned for opportunities to be involved, and I thank you for your support of this crucial process.

*Paperless Faculty Grade Change Process Now Live*

We were very pleased to announce earlier this week that the new paperless process for submitting grade change requests is now live. This process is faster and more streamlined, and, of course, electronic. Paper grade change forms will no longer be accepted after spring break, so faculty can familiarize themselves with the new process by going to the Office of the Registrar site under the Resources tab and clicking Grading. There is a PDF with step by step instructions. My thanks to Beth Amundson and her team for making this important update possible.

*GW Research Showcase*

As you know, each year, undergraduate, graduate, and professional students are invited to present their research as part of the GW Research Showcase. This university-wide event celebrates the breadth of student research across all disciplines and provides an opportunity for students to receive feedback on their projects, hone their presentation skills, and compete for prizes.
This year’s event will be held virtually the week of April 11-14. Abstract submissions are due March 1. Please, if you know of any students who may be interested in sharing their research, encourage them to submit their abstract and make sure they know about the deadline. This is a great opportunity for our students to share some of their innovative research with the broader community, so I encourage you all to attend at least some of the presentations.

Adapting Course Materials for Equity Faculty Grant

The George Washington University Libraries & Academic Innovation is requesting applications for its new Adapting Course Materials for Equity Faculty Grant.

As you know, course material costs can be a significant barrier to student success. Using high quality open and affordable educational resources can improve equitable access to course materials and support student success, but faculty may face barriers to adopting alternatives to commercial textbooks. These barriers could include lack of time or support to find quality open and affordable materials and modify a course. The Adapting Course Materials for Equity Faculty Grant program seeks to provide both financial and pedagogical support to faculty who redesign or develop courses using open or zero-cost course materials. It also seeks to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion by prioritizing applications that increase culturally inclusive course content and diverse perspectives.

This program will award grants between the amounts of $250 to $1000 to faculty who want to adopt and adapt open or zero-cost course materials in undergraduate courses taught between Fall 2022 and Fall 2023. Applications are due by Friday, March 11 at 11:59pm, so please apply on the Library website by navigating to the Teaching & Faculty Support Tab and clicking Open & Affordable Course Materials.

President’s Day

Finally, I want to acknowledge Presidents’ Day on Monday, officially known as Washington’s Birthday (which is actually February 22). As we embark on our third century as an institution, it is fitting to recognize and celebrate on this holiday our namesake and the qualities we have as an institution that reflect his example. George Washington was a courageous and inspiring leader at the forefront of some of the most critical moments in our young nation’s history. In his last will and testament, Washington envisioned a university in the nation’s capital that would serve as an intellectual hub for the country. We have fulfilled that promise – like Washington, we exist at the forefront of innovation, and our students graduate with the knowledge, passion, courage, and ability to transform the world. Let us work to continue to honor George Washington’s memory over our next two hundred years.

I hope you all enjoy the long weekend. This concludes my remarks.