

Faculty Senate Committee on Educational Policy

Annual Report: 2017-2018 Academic Year

The Educational Policy Committee met on September 15, 2017; October 13, 2017; November 10, 2017; December 8, 2017, January 18, 2018; February 9, 2018; and April 13, 2018.

1. ONLINE AND HYBRID DEGREE PROGRAMS

At the September meeting, the Committee received and discussed the Report of the Joint Task Force on Online, Hybrid, and Off-Campus Degree Programs. Emeritus Professor Kurt Darr, Task Force Chair, presented the key findings presented in the Task Force Report (available at <https://facultysenate.gwu.edu/files/2016/07/October-13-Meeting-Minutes-Attachments-12xqxsd.pdf>). Following Professor Darr's presentation of the Report to the Senate and Chair Wirtz's discussion with the Online Committee (which raised questions about several of the assertions made in the Report), the Committee asked the Provost to present to the Committee in January recommendations and administrative steps taken to address areas of concern cited in the Report; based on his presentation at the January meeting, the Committee recommended he offer similar guidance at an upcoming Senate meeting. (Provost Maltzman's report is available at <https://facultysenate.gwu.edu/files/2018/02/Feb-2018-minutes-attachments-14lmjzr.pdf>). The Committee endorsed Provost Maltzman's report, and prepared Resolution 18/6, which, as amended and adopted by the Senate, is available at <https://facultysenate.gwu.edu/files/2016/07/March-2018-minutes-attachments-2d11wr5.pdf>.

2. ACADEMIC INNOVATIONS AND ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY

At the October meeting, the Committee met with Geneva Henry, Dean of Libraries and Academic Innovations; PB Garrett, Senior Associate Dean for Innovation, Teaching, and Learning & Chief Technology Officer; Yordanos Baharu, Executive Director of Academic Enterprise Applications; Katherine Miscavige, Educational Developer; and Kes Shroer, Program Associate. The discussion focused around five primary areas of academic innovation: the University Teaching-Learning Center, the Instructional Technology Lab, the Teaching Network for Early Faculty Learning, the STEWORKS program, and the new partnership arrangements with existing internal resources (e.g., SMHS, SON). The Committee discussed with our guests extant efforts to bring scholarship and skills to faculty members' teaching through workshops such as the small teaching/course design institute; a new online faculty development course; the online syllabus initiative; the availability of GWorld photos in Blackboard; free video services available for faculty creating online courses; and a number of STEWORKS initiatives, including WebEx appointments to accommodate online students, Pearson online tutoring facilities, peer coaching, workshops in quantitative course support, and providing consultants to assist in particular substantive areas (such as econometrics).

3. ADMISSIONS POLICY

At the November meeting, the Committee met with Laurie Koehler, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, Costas Solomou, Director of Admissions, and Michelle Arcieri, Interim Director of Financial Aid. There appears to be preliminary evidence that the University's new "test-optional policy" is achieving several salutary outcomes; however, important validation metrics (such as differences between "submitters" and "non-submitters" on screening tests for entry to introductory Economics courses, which the Committee views as an important indicator of the impact of the policy) have not yet been assessed. The Committee discussed with Vice Provost Koehler and her team key metrics upon which the assessment of the University's admissions policy is based, and the preliminary values for these metrics.

4. RETENTION POLICY

At the December meeting, the Committee discussed retention policy with Vice Provost Koehler and Oliver Street, Executive Director of Enrollment Retention. Although several metrics suggest that the University's retention rates are improving (particularly with regard to Freshmen), the University still lags behind several peer and aspirant schools in this area. Vice Provost Koehler and Executive Director Street discussed with the Committee several new initiatives that are being implemented to address this issue.

5. WITHDRAWAL POLICY

At the April meeting, the Committee discussed with the Provost a recent administrative revision to unify across five schools the date on which undergraduates are permitted to withdraw from courses. Concern was expressed about several aspects of this revision; the Committee decided to defer extensive consideration of the issue to the first meeting of the Fall semester, when more time would be available for informed debate.

6. TEXTBOOK POLICY

At the April meeting, the Committee discussed textbook policy with Alicia Knight, Senior Vice President for Operations, Karen Zinn, Executive Director for Business and Auxiliary Services, Auxiliary Services Contract Manager Anya Hughes, GWSA President Peak Sen Chua, and GWSA Executive Vice President Sydney Nelson. **The Committee wishes to bring to the Faculty's attention the critical need for diligence in timely submission of book adoptions (no later than mid-April).** Among many reasons, doing so can save students more than \$200,000 in textbook fees. The Committee discussed barriers to early textbook adoption notification (including delayed teaching assignments and just-in-time notifications of the deadline), and offered recommendations for increasing timely adoption rates (including better Discover integration, earlier notification to faculty, and a focus on courses where the textbooks remain unchanged across semesters).

Respectfully Submitted, Philip W. Wirtz, Chair

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Scott Beveridge	Candice Johnson	Robert Phillips	Ormond Seavey	<i>PB Garrett*</i>
Olivia Blackmon	Ioannis Koutroulis	Marie Price	Megan Siczek	<i>Peter Konwerski*</i>
Geoffrey Carter	Jannet Lewis	Pradeep Rau	Philip Wirtz	<i>Forrest Maltzman*</i>
Yuliya Dobrydneva	Lisa Lipinski	Lilien Robinson	Anthony Yezer	<i>Terry Murphy*</i>
Rohini Ganjoo	Henry Nau	Silvana Rubino-Hallman	<i>Elizabeth Amundson*</i>	<i>Oliver Street*</i>
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**Ex-Officio*