



**A RESOLUTION BY THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
ON SHARED GOVERNANCE IN UNIVERSITY DECISION-MAKING AND  
STRATEGIC PLANNING**

**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;

**WHEREAS**, the *Faculty Code* states 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 September 12, 2019, President Thomas LeBlanc presented the framework for the new strategic planning process to the university community and announced the formation of four committees to guide the strategic planning process (World Class Faculty, High-Quality Undergraduate Education, Distinguished and Distinctive Graduate Education, and High-Impact Research);

**WHEREAS**, at the Senate meeting on October 11, 2019, the Chair of the University Board of Trustees, Ms. Grace E. Speights, stated that she wanted to see the Senate fully engaged in the strategic planning process and that a draft of the new Strategic Plan would be brought to the Senate before it goes to the Board for approval;

**WHEREAS**, the *Faculty Organization Plan* states that the Faculty Assembly has the power to instruct the Senate to take action with respect to any matter of concern to the Assembly;

**WHEREAS**, the Faculty Assembly comprises both regular and special faculty and listed University officials;

**WHEREAS**, the Assembly met on October 22, 2019 and by voice vote approved a Petition calling for Senate action, through four of its committees and through the Senate as a whole,

on five items relating to ongoing university initiatives<sup>1</sup> and strategic planning (see Petition attached as Appendix A);

**WHEREAS**, the Petition refers to these four Senate Committees: Educational Policy & Technology; Fiscal Planning & Budgeting; Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom; and Research;

**WHEREAS**, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) is given the responsibility to "Assist in carrying into effect the actions of the Assembly..." and to "Act on behalf of the Senate in emergencies on matters requiring immediate action..."; and

**WHEREAS**, the FSEC considers that a fifth committee, Appointments, Salary, and Promotion Policy Committee (ASPP), should address the issues listed in the Petition.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- 1) That the four committees listed in the Petition plus the ASPP Committee should place the Petition on their respective agendas beginning with their next meeting, and review points in the Petition to prioritize those that are relevant to their respective competencies, with a focus on improving strategic planning at the University going forward;
- 2) That the five Senate committees should provide the Senate with a preliminary report on their findings in response to the Petition before the Senate meeting on November 8, 2019, if possible, and no later than the Senate meeting on December 13, 2019;
- 3) That the Chair of the Executive Committee should provide a copy of the Petition passed by the Assembly to the Chair of the Board of Trustees;
- 4) That the Chair of the Executive Committee should invite the chairs and co-chairs of the four Planning Committees to provide a preliminary report to the Senate at the next Senate meeting on November 8, 2019;
- 5) That the Chair of the Executive Committee should not automatically call a Special Meeting of the Assembly between January 13 and January 24, 2020, recognizing that the Faculty Organization Plan provides a petitioning process for Assembly members to call a Special Meeting of the Assembly; and
- 6) That the Senate Operations Coordinator should seek to reserve the State Room for additional Regular or Special meetings of the Senate in early 2020.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee  
October 28, 2019

Appendix A: A Petition to the Assembly

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<sup>1</sup>Besides strategic planning, the ongoing university initiatives addressed in the Petition include the increase in the percent of STEM majors, the decrease in undergraduate enrollment, and the initiative for improving GWU's culture.

6 October 2019

As stated in the Faculty Code, faculty may petition to add items to the Assembly Agenda and the Assembly may direct the Faculty Senate.

<https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.gwu.edu/dist/0/196/files/2019/02/Faculty-Organization-Plan-v3-2017-z76h5u.pdf>

Article 2. section 3. Part A.  
SECTION 3. MEETINGS

(a) A regular meeting of the Assembly shall be held at least once during the academic year. 1 A regular meeting may be called by the President, by request of the Senate, or by the petition of twenty or more members of the Assembly; and **the agenda as prepared by the President shall include any matter requested by the Senate or the Executive Committee of the Senate, or by petition of fifteen or more members of the Assembly.** The call of a regular meeting shall contain the time, place, and agenda of the meeting; and it shall be mailed not later than the tenth day preceding the day of the meeting.

And Article 2, section 4.2.  
Functions of the assembly:

..."The Assembly shall have the power to direct the Senate to include in the agenda of the Senate or any of its committees, or to study and report back to the Assembly, or to take such other action as may be appropriate with respect to any matter of concern to the Assembly."

Accordingly, we the undersigned request the following six (6) items be placed on the agenda of the regular 2019 meeting of the Faculty Assembly.

1. The Assembly directs the Faculty Senate as well as the Senate committees on a) Educational Policy & Technology, b) Fiscal Planning & Budgeting, c) Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom, and d) Research, to include on each of their respective agendas the following item: *"Did the adoption of the strategic plan of increasing the ratio of STEM majors and significantly decreasing undergraduate enrollment properly follow recognized principles of shared governance?"* The Senate and each of the four committees mentioned above ( a) Educational Policy & Technology, b) Fiscal Planning & Budgeting and c) Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom, and d) Research) shall report the entirety of their findings on the same webpage where the Senate publishes the minutes of its meetings by December 20, 2019 (<https://facultysenate.gwu.edu/minutes> ) and notify each member of the Faculty Assembly of the electronic location of this report that shall remain on the website of the Senate until at least February 15, 2020.

2. The Assembly directs the Faculty Senate as well as the Senate committees on a) Educational Policy & Technology, b) Fiscal Planning & Budgeting, c) Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom, and d) Research, to include on each of their respective agendas the following items: *“What is the total cost (past and future) of the Culture Initiative? How much money has and will be spent to hire outside consultants including the Disney Institute? Did the Disney Institute culture survey and focus groups use objective methods as recognized in peer-reviewed scientific literature produced by fields specializing in survey design and qualitative interviewing? Are the results of the culture survey and focus group scientifically valid?”* Given answers to these questions, the Senate and each of the four committees mentioned above shall evaluate the return on investment for monies spent on the Culture Initiative. The Senate and each of the four committees mentioned above ( a) Educational Policy & Technology, b) Fiscal Planning & Budgeting, c) Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom, and d) Research) shall report the entirety of their findings on the same webpage where the Senate publishes the minutes of its meetings by December 20, 2019 (<https://facultysenate.gwu.edu/minutes> ) and notify each member of the Faculty Assembly of the electronic location of this report that shall remain on the website of the Senate until at least February 15, 2020.

3. The Assembly directs the Faculty Senate as well as the Senate committees on a) Educational Policy & Technology, b) Fiscal Planning & Budgeting, c) Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom, and d) Research, to include on each of their respective agendas the following items: *“What data supported the decision to reduce undergraduate enrollment by 20% and increase STEM majors by 50%? Who specifically at GWU and who specifically from outside were involved in these decisions? What was the logic that supported these decisions? If outside consultants were involved in these decisions, how were they chosen, how much were they paid, what data was provided to the consultants, and what did the consultants report?”* The Senate and each of the four committees mentioned above ( a) Educational Policy & Technology, b) Fiscal Planning & Budgeting, c) Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom, and d) Research) shall report the entirety of their findings on the same webpage where the Senate publishes the minutes of its meetings by December 20, 2019 (<https://facultysenate.gwu.edu/minutes> ) and notify each member of the Faculty Assembly of the electronic location of this report that shall remain on the website of the Senate until at least February 15, 2020.

4. Given the faculty’s exclusive expertise in determining and delivering curriculum and in conducting research, the Assembly directs the Faculty Senate as well as the Senate committees on a) Educational Policy & Technology, b) Fiscal Planning & Budgeting, c) Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom, and d) Research, to include on each of their respective agendas the following items: *“As no objective and responsible research process involves starting with conclusions, should the charges of the each of the five strategic planning committees (World Class Faculty, High Quality Undergraduate Education, Distinguished and Distinctive Graduate Education, High Impact Research, Strategic Planning Task Force) be amended to include the following charges: 1. What is the best size of the undergraduate student body for delivering on the University mission to promote high quality education and high impact research? 2. Is there in fact an ideal ratio of STEM majors to the entire undergraduate population? If so, how should it be determined, and what should it be? 3. Given that “the mission of the George Washington*

*University is to educate individuals in liberal arts, languages, sciences, learned professions, and other courses and subjects of study, and to conduct scholarly research and publish the findings of such research," and that "the university is committed to recruiting, admitting and enrolling undergraduate and graduate students drawn from varying backgrounds or identities throughout all schools and departments," what impact will changing the student body's size and composition have on the curricular, research, and diversity and inclusion missions of the university?* 4. How can GWU produce high impact research that does not require its faculty to conduct team-based scholarship? In which instances does top-down mandates for team research undermine creativity and impact?" The Senate and each of the four committees mentioned above ( a) Educational Policy & Technology, b) Fiscal Planning & Budgeting, c) Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom, and d) Research) shall report the entirety of their findings on the same webpage where the Senate publishes the minutes of its meetings by December 20, 2019 (<https://facultysenate.gwu.edu/minutes> ) and notify each member of the Faculty Assembly of the electronic location of this report that shall remain on the website of the Senate until at least February 15, 2020.

5. Given the faculty's exclusive expertise in determining and delivering curriculum and in conducting research, the Assembly directs the Faculty Senate as well as the Senate committees on a) Educational Policy & Technology, b) Fiscal Planning & Budgeting, c) Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom, and d) Research, to include on each of their respective agendas the following item: *"Should the four strategic planning committees appointed by the President (World Class Faculty, High Quality Undergraduate Education, Distinguished and Distinctive Graduate Education, High Impact Research) report their findings to the Faculty for approval and /or amendment before these reports are sent to the Strategic Planning Task Force or the GWU administration?"* The Senate and each of the four committees mentioned above ( a) Educational Policy & Technology, b) Fiscal Planning & Budgeting, c) Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom, and d) Research) shall report their findings at a Senate meeting by November 8, 2019.

6. The Assembly directs the Chair of the Senate Executive Committee to call a special meeting of the Assembly between January 13, 2020 and January 24, 2020. The Agenda of that Assembly meeting shall include reports from the Senate and its committees to questions 1-5 above and the Assembly shall vote to approve or reject in separate votes.

**Signatories:**

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