



FACULTY SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS, SALARIES AND PROMOTION POLICIES (ASPP)

Annual Report (2019-2020)

ASPP committee met 6 times this year- several of the fall 2019 meetings were to respond to the Faculty Assembly resolutions and to the Strategic Planning Committee Interim reports. Specifically, we spent fair bit of time considering the 4 pillars of the strategic plan (research, undergrad, grad, world class faculty) and formulating our response to those reports. We attended the Faculty Assembly meeting in February and presented ASPP committee views on the 4 pillars of the strategic plan reports. We submitted a number of responses to these reports for presentation to the Faculty Senate; these documents are attached to this annual report.

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) proposed the following three items for us to consider this year:

- (a) Last year's task was to follow-up on **retiree health benefits**, including exploring options beyond GWU/Tower. Please provide a report on your activities in this area by the interim reporting period which is due in December.
- (b) Continue to participate in the **Salary Equity** process begun by the Provost's office and ensure that its regular annual cycle is implemented.
- (c) Explore ways to engage faculty in the fall roll out of the **Culture Initiative**.

Retiree Health Benefits

We formed a subcommittee that searched a variety of sources to obtain a better understanding of how GW's approach to retirees' health insurance stacks up against that of other universities. The result of our survey of market-basket schools reveals that GW is roughly in the middle in terms of what it offers; some offer considerably more, some considerably less. GW provides a retiree health insurance (RHI) benefit of \$200/month for eight years following a faculty person's retirement, assuming that they had coverage through GW at the time of retirement. This money is used to defray the cost of healthcare-related expenses; the money is handed over to a third-party organization, VIA, which pays authorized expenses directly and the unused funds carry over to later years. This RHI supplement, which appears to have been in place for a long time, has never been adjusted for inflation. The Chair of the ASPP committee requested the Benefits advisory Committee (BAC) to consider extending this benefit to longer than 8 years and also to do annual indexing. The recent response from BAC is that, in the interest of equity between faculty and staff, they are not predisposed to consider enhancing this benefit that is available to only faculty. We learned that there are 220 retired (emeritus) faculty of whom there are 124 within 8 years of retirement and are thus availing of this benefit through GW.

Salary equity process update

As reported in our Interim Report, the Salary Equity Committee under Vice-Provost Bracey has streamlined the salary equity review process so its completion now fits within the annual salary merit review process. Data on rank, department and years in rank were included, such that anyone falling

one standard deviation below the mean in their class would be investigated further in cooperation with the deans. This year Medicine and Health Sciences were not included though Health Sciences faculty will be included in future cycles after it was pointed out that their structure was more like CCAS and less like the MFA. Public Health and Nursing were reviewed. Vice-Provost Bracey gave a detailed presentation on this topic in November 2019 to the Faculty Senate.

Culture Initiative

Many of the faculty members had attended the OurGW events and reported being underwhelmed by this.

Health care costs

We continue to monitor the health care costs and the university contributions towards these costs. At the recent meeting of BAC, we learned that the medical expenses for 2019 are on target and that's a good news. Baseline view is that the total plan costs for 2020 are expected to be below the 2020 budgeted costs. According to the preliminary projections, the total medical costs for 2021 are projected to increase by about 5.5%. Two scenarios were presented: (1) GW and the employees all pay 5.5% increase, and (2) employee contributions increase by 1.5% which would make GW costs to increase by 6.8% over 2020. (We indicated to BAC that the second scenario is preferred by faculty and staff.) In late spring, decisions would be made on the health care premiums for 2021- we hope that the total increases stay below the projected 5.5% but the recent coronavirus pandemic situation may change everything.

Response to Faculty Assembly Resolutions

On an urgent request from FSEC, ASPP Committee members considered the Faculty Assembly Resolutions dated October 6, 2019 and provided our responses regarding the proposed reduction in undergraduate enrollments and potential elevation of 10 doctoral programs to national preeminence level. The preliminary version of this document was circulated at the November meeting of Faculty Senate, and a committee response document is available with the minutes of the December Senate meeting. We also provided our responses to the Strategic Planning Committee Interim reports. These documents are available on the Faculty Senate site as part of the Senate Agendas and Minutes, and are also attached with this report.

Respectfully Submitted

Murli M. Gupta, Chair, ASPP Committee
March 3, 2020

2019-2020 Committee Roster

- [Murli Gupta](#), Chair (CCAS)*
- Robert Harrington, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Liaison (SEAS)*
- Eugene Abravanel (CCAS)
- Oluwatomi Adetunji (SEAS)
- Tyler Anbinder (CCAS)
- Brian Biles (Emeritus)
- Brian Blake (Provost)**

- Christopher Bracey (Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs)**
- Dana Bradley (Chief Peoples Officer)**
- Linda Briggs (SON)
- Joseph Cordes (CCAS)*
- Gurwinder Gill (SMHS)
- Carol Hayes (CCAS)
- Sharon Hill (GWSB)*
- Natalie Houghtby-Haddon (CPS)
- Shaista Khilji (GSEHD)*
- Susan LeLacheur (SMHS)
- David McAleavey (CCAS)
- Arlene Pericak (SON)
- Margaret Plack (SMHS)
- Pradeep Rau (GWSB)
- Moses Schanfield (CCAS)
- Abe Tekleselassie (GSEHD)*

*Senate member

**Non-voting member



FACULTY SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS, SALARIES AND PROMOTION POLICIES (ASPP)

ASPP Committee Response to Faculty Assembly Resolutions dated October 6, 2019

Here is the ASPP Committee response to the Faculty Assembly Resolutions dated October 6, 2019 regarding the proposed reduction in undergraduate enrollments and potential elevation of 10 doctoral programs to national preeminence level.

- a) GW faculty need a voice in the decisions being made as well as transparency in the process, as required by the Faculty Code. We also need to keep the needs of our students in mind and possibly add undergraduate programs in data management and data skills.
- b) GW needs to ensure that increase in STEM areas do not cause a decline in faculty appointments in humanities and other non-STEM areas. This concerns not only regular faculty hires but also part time and specialized faculty hires.
- c) While the number of undergraduates in five schools (CCAS, ESIA, GWSPH, SB, SEAS) increased by 1284 (13.81%) over 5 years between 2013 and 2018, the number of regular full time faculty increased only by 15 (1.82%) [See attached Table]. When we increase enrollments in STEM areas, we must ensure that the numbers of tenured lines also increase commensurately.
- d) The criteria for the selection of 10 or so doctoral programs that will be elevated to national preeminence level ought to be publicly described and discussed so the selection and vetting process is, and seen to be, unbiased. GW must ensure that the other existing doctoral programs are not simply allowed to wither thereby reducing the diversity of graduate offerings at GW?

Here is the ASPP committee's response to the resolutions of Faculty Assembly:

RC1: *"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?"*

ASPP Committee Response: GWU did not properly follow the principles of

shared governance as the 20% decrease came down from the Board of Trustees.

RC2: *“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?”*

ASPP Committee Response: Not known. We do not have any of this information.

RC3: *“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?”*

ASPP Committee Response: We have no knowledge.

RC4: *“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?”*

ASPP Committee Responses:

- 1. Best size: We have no idea**
- 2. Stem ratio: This information is probably available somewhere but we don't know**
- 3. Impact: This needs to be determined. ASPP committee supports the mission of the university.**
- 4. Team based research: The premise is unclear. What stops team-based**

research?

RC5: “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?”

ASPP Committee Responses: The timeline for the strategic planning committees is being modified currently.

Respectfully Submitted

Murli M. Gupta, Chair, ASPP Committee
November 22, 2019

Enrollments and Faculty Size (2012-2019)

Undergraduate Enrollments and Faculty Size 2012-2019 updated								
FT Ugrad enrollments data				Faculty data				
Residential schools				Residential schools				
CCAS, ESIA, GWSPH, SB, SEAS				CCAS, ESIA, GWSPH, SB, SEAS				
Source: Cheryl Beil (November 7, 2019)				Source: Cheryl Beil (November 7, 2019)				
Year	FT Ugrad Population	Annual Change	% change	Regular Faculty size (TT+NTT)	Annual Change	% change	Specialized Faculty size	Part time Faculty size
2012	9488			794			45	1122
2013	9296	-192	-2.02%	822	28	3.53%	49	1004
2014	9489	193	2.08%	850	28	3.41%	49	953
2015	9805	316	3.33%	835	-15	-1.76%	50	945
2016	9963	158	1.61%	829	-6	-0.72%	59	928
2017	10256	293	2.94%	826	-3	-0.36%	65	949
2018	10580	324	3.16%	837	11	1.33%	70	962
2019	10199	-381	-3.60%	Data not available			Data not available	Data not available
5 year Change between 2013 and 2018	1284	13.81%		15	1.82%		21	-42

Faculty Senate Committee on Appointments, Salaries and Promotion Policies (ASPP)

Committee responses to

GW Strategic Planning Committee Interim Report **Distinguished and Distinctive Graduate Education**

At the outset, the major concern has been that if we would have 10 preeminent graduate programs, **what would happen to the remaining graduate programs that are thriving at GW—will they wither and die?** Though this issue has been addressed in this report, it would be good if this can be brought to fore early in the report. We agree with the description of the **Current State, Principles**, and **Proposed Goals & Initiatives**. It is important to advertise widely the selection criteria for Distinguished Doctoral Program designation. We believe the proposed **Metrics** are doable in the listed timeframes.

As with High Impact Research, **it is important to make adequate investments in graduate education**. In *the* past, the focus has been on making demands for improvement in graduate education quality without adequate investments required to achieve that goal. **Vice Provost for Graduate Studies may add more bureaucracy** without actual improvements in graduate education.

The Graduate Education Quality Criteria should come from the faculty - voted on either by the Faculty Senate or by the Faculty Assembly. They should not be coming from a strategic planning committee.

Faculty Senate Committee on Appointments, Salaries and Promotion Policies (ASPP)

Committee responses to

GW Strategic Planning Committee Interim Report High-Impact Research

Overview:

1. The Report makes several important recommendations related to developing an appropriate infrastructure for high impact research. However, for most part, it doesn't recommend inclusive processes and language. **In addition to the junior faculty members, focus should also be placed on senior faculty members to encourage them and to support them in engaging with high quality research.** The proposed process of identifying high impact faculty (by working with Deans and Chairs) isn't inclusive enough. It is likely to lead to some hand-picked faculty members- alienating many more. There should be a process in place for faculty members to self-identify.
2. The process of identifying senior leadership for the Research Centers etc. should be re-evaluated to make it more **inclusive** (see above).
3. Both High Impact Research and World Class Faculty Reports propose establishing new centers focused on developing HI research and world class faculty. **The goals, purpose, roles and responsibilities for these centers should be clarified.** Questions such as, "Would these centers add to the existing bureaucracy", "how these would serve diverse interests of diverse faculty members" and "how these would adopt inclusive language, practices and processes" should be carefully considered in consultation with GW community.
4. We need a clear definition of HIR and metrics to measure it ensuring recognition of the wide range of research currently being undertaken by faculty including the scholarship of teaching and learning.
5. Investment in research infrastructure needs to be balanced, considering the needs of both hard sciences as well as the social sciences and humanities.

6. The Report makes the point that “The research aspirations of the university need to be scaled to the resources that are available to implement the recommendations of the report.” **This is a critical point that is worth emphasizing.** In the past, we have seen research standards raised without adequate increase in funding and infrastructure. HIR cannot be achieved without the necessary infrastructure and funding to support it.
7. Interdisciplinary research has been promoted at GW for many years, without sufficient incentives in place to motivate and reward it. This needs to be addressed as GW continues to focus on interdisciplinary research.
8. The interim report currently makes no mention of the GW libraries, yet the libraries are—or should be—a cornerstone for high impact research. The report needs to add a discussion of the current inadequate funding the libraries receive and recommend new attention and expanded library funding as a high priority. This addition to the report could receive its own separate attention, or be embedded in existing discussions of the research “ecosystem” of GW.

We believe that this is a well thought out, comprehensive report and we applaud the objectives and goals contained in this report. We agree with “Providing that the research ecosystem issues are satisfactorily addressed, the university can advance on the path to preeminence as a comprehensive research institution.” We agree with the **SWOT Analysis**, in particular with **HIR Internal Weaknesses: Research ecosystem**. Under **Principles**, we agree that **GW’s unique identity should be clearly defined and leveraged across all disciplines**. All the **Proposed Goals, Initiatives and Metrics** are laudable and doable. Please take note of the comments in the above Overview.

Faculty Senate Committee on Appointments, Salaries and Promotion Policies (ASPP)

Committee responses to

GW Strategic Planning Committee Interim Report

High-Quality Undergraduate Education

Overview: Of the four GW Strategic Planning Committee Interim Reports, we found this report on **High-Quality Undergraduate Education** to be the least persuasive.

Under **Current State**, we are not sure what is meant by the following: “The building of the Science and Engineering Hall has helped to attract and retain STEM undergraduates, who are now academically on par with non-STEM students.”

Question: Why would our STEM majors not be at par with non-STEM majors? The Report ought to be more precise. Is there data out there which show that up until recently, undergrad STEM majors at GW had entered college with lower average test scores or high school GPAs than the rest of the undergrad population? More data need to be provided to back such an assertion.

The **Principles**, perhaps contain some sort of an idealism. We don't agree with the report that every undergrad at GW should engage with "people and institutions in the DC area," though we hope that it does happen. The main impulse behind this section seems to be to defend the ancient university mission of aiming for Truth, as opposed to providing mere training for economic competencies; one does not need to only want to train people how to be workforce ready.

Under **Proposed Goals & Initiatives**, the ideas under **Goal 1** are impractical and unsustainable: Neither "pop-up courses" nor "discovery tracks" are going to happen at GW unless people decide to change a lot of things. Eliminating all general education requirements (except possibly the University Writing one) envisions a freer, more wide-open landscape where "pop-up" courses might readily find a home; and in that requirement-free space, having "discovery tracks" available would indeed provide useful guidance for many students as well as faculty. However, it would be a pie-in-the-sky without a massive buy-in from the faculty.

The idea of first year experience under **Goal 2** has already been tried and abandoned at GW. **How can the first year schedules be rearranged so that “these programs are more supportive and increase retention”?** As for Goal 2's envisioning a University-wide first-year experience, we had a college wide first year experience (in CCAS) in the form of Freshman Advising Workshops that involved faculty advising a group of 20 or so

freshman. That program achieved a tremendous amount for at least the first three or four years. But it was underfunded, and not enough faculty were willing to participate. Thus it didn't take too long before it became a grim machine and after six or seven years, its benefits no longer outweighed the forces dragging against it. We also have had many years when all freshmen read a specified book—that also got abandoned after a few years.

Under **Goal 3**, is it practical to provide “academic credit from experiential learning opportunities”—that sounds like what comes from many for-profit institutions.

Under **Goals 5 & 6**, we are not convinced that the University Teaching and Learning Center needs to be front-and-center in our lives as we teach our courses, nor do we think that students have to encounter courses that blend STEM topics with "social historical, and cultural competencies."

Under **Goal 6**, item B, we see the possibility of a new Honors Program for STEM students. But, we already have an Honors Program which can include STEM stuff as appropriate. There is no need to create a second elite and possibly ineffectual system.

Under **Goal 7**, we are unaware that GW has a goal of “covering 100% of financial need for admitted students”. This goal is a laudable ideal but that's a serious fundraising problem.

Faculty Senate Committee on Appointments, Salaries and Promotion Policies (ASPP)

Committee responses to

GW Strategic Planning Committee Interim Report World-Class Faculty

Overview

1. Goal 1 relating to Faculty Excellence and Diversity is an important one. Given the breadth of diversity from demographic to perspectives and disciplines, it would be crucial for GW to **clearly outline what type of diversity it would seek and retain**. Given the emphasis of interdisciplinary research, **would disciplinary diversity be something that GW ought to emphasize? How about racial, ethnic and gender diversity?** We also need to better define the types of diversity that need to be targeted as this has implications for the strategies used to increase diversity.
2. This Report recommends the establishment of a Center for Faculty Excellence. The HIR report is recommending the establishment of an Academic Research Leadership Team. **There must be a way to combine leadership teams across initiatives to reduce bureaucracy and the additional demands on the time of more productive faculty?** It is often the case that our “World Class” faculty are the ones that are asked to lead such centers and committees, leading to reduced ability to perform the tasks that have made them World Class. **We encourage the committee to build upon the existing infrastructure (e.g. University Teaching and Learning Center) versus adding another siloed Center?**
3. The Report states that the 2019 Colonial Survey indicates faculty dissatisfaction with the intellectual life at GW. However, the report doesn't clearly outline **how it would establish intellectual life for diverse faculty members. This is critical for developing world class faculty (along with those engaged in high impact research).**
4. The Report focuses on tenure track and junior faculty members. In the interest of diversity (see above), there should be equal efforts to engage with all faculty whose appointments include research expectations, including senior and tenured faculty members, as well as full-time contract faculty whose contracts include research. **It is**

important for GW to adopt inclusive language/ practices that engage all types of faculty in a variety of initiatives outlined in the report.

Both High Impact Research and World Class Faculty Reports propose establishing new centers focused on developing HI research and world class faculty. **The goals, purpose, roles and responsibilities for these centers should be clarified.** Questions such as, "Would these centers add to the existing bureaucracy", "how these would serve diverse interests of diverse faculty members" and "how these would adopt inclusive language, practices and processes" should be carefully considered in consultation with GW community.

Specific Comments

Under [Current State](#), we agree with the Report that "2019 Colonial Group Faculty Survey is not a highly sophisticated survey instrument, and its questions could be more refined and nuanced." Under SWOT, we agree that "the principal threat is that other universities will figure out how to more rapidly build up faculty capacity and attract resources that might otherwise come to GW."

Under [World-Class Faculty Principles, item 2](#), we suggest the addition of "identify and" so as to read "Clearly identify and communicate pathways to excellence and infuse..."

Under [B. Develop a University-wide High-Impact Hiring Plan focused on diversity](#), we agree with the need to "Provide a framework for building out our aims as part of focused recruitment efforts, in order to ensure that all recruitments include an approved diversity plan, contain clearly established evaluation criteria..." Further, we believe it is very important that "...new faculty are announced and welcomed across campus, relevant centers, institutes, and programs are notified, and that, where relevant, they are integrated into a mentoring plan..."

Under [C. Recognize and Celebrate Our GW Faculty](#), is it practical to build "a University-wide, cross-disciplinary research portal that documents proposed, current, and past faculty research to promote collaborations that is accessible and user-friendly"? We believe that there are other ways to reward GW faculty and these should be explored.

Under [D. Mentor Program](#), while this is laudable, its impact may be marginal.

Under [Recommendations for the Distinguished Faculty Goal](#), there have to be other better ideas. The shared database in the first bullet would not do much.

Under [Metrics](#), we believe that there are other metrics that need to be included, e.g., invited lectureships, and plenary talks. Also, why only the new faculty hires are included in the second bullet. All existing faculty should be included in any baseline data.