



# Faculty Senate

## Committee on Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom

Interim Report  
Academic Year 2020-21  
December 4, 2020

The Committee on Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom (PEAF) met this summer and again this fall via Webex. Between meetings, work was conducted via email and through subcommittee meetings.

### Title IX Policy

PEAF worked closely with Caroline Laguerre-Brown, Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement on revisions to the University's Title IX policy. This was necessarily done through a truncated process: The U.S. Department of Education promulgated its revised regulations in May but required universities to come into compliance with its changes by August 14. A PEAf subcommittee conducted an expedited review as materials were brought to its attention and provided extensive input through several meetings and ongoing email correspondence. When the PEAf met on July 7 to consider the revised policy, it was still in draft form. We approved the revised policy in principle, pending its finalization, as the subcommittee continued to work with Vice Provost Laguerre-Brown on perfecting the policy. She provided a report to the Senate on the revised policy at its July meeting. The policy was subsequently approved by the Board of Trustees. PEAf Co-Chair Swaine provided a report on the Title IX policy review process at the Senate's September meeting.

### Intellectual Property and Digital Recording

PEAF convened a subcommittee on Recording On-Line Instruction to consider some of the concerns raised by the move to online teaching in response to the pandemic. After the subcommittee began its work, we were invited to join with the Senate Committee on Appointments, Salary, and Promotion Policies and the Senate Committee on Educational Policy and Technology in developing a *Resolution on GW Course Intellectual Property and Digital Recording*. That resolution was adopted by the Faculty Senate at its August meeting.

### Code of Ethical Conduct

At the request of the FSEC Chair, PEAf responded to an invitation from Dorinda Tucker, Associate Vice President for the Office of Ethics, Compliance & Privacy, to collaborate on the revision of the University's current Statement of Ethical Principles, which was last issued in 2006. The revised document, renamed Code of Ethical Conduct, primarily organizes, references, and provides context for several other, existing codes and policies related in one way or another to ethical conduct and expectations of students, faculty and staff. (Notably, it does not provide new expectations or a new source of discipline or sanctions. This was an important consideration for the subcommittee and the full PEAf). The Code will be considered by the Board of Trustees early in 2021.

### Future Anticipated Work

At its December meeting, PEAf agreed to form a subcommittee to consider possible policies regarding the disclosure in faculty publications of related funded research and the disclosure of funding by University centers and institutes. PEAf also discussed, and anticipates further work concerning, the topics of (1) revisions to the University's Conflict of Interest Policy and (2) amendments to the Faculty Organization Plan and related documents that might facilitate distance voting at virtual meetings of the Faculty Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,  
Edward T. Swaine and David M. Keepnews  
Co-chairs, PEAf Committee