



# Faculty Senate

## **MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL SENATE MEETING HELD ON APRIL 30, 2021 VIA WEBEX**

Present: President LeBlanc; Provost Blake; Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair Wilson; Parliamentarian Charnovitz; Registrar Amundson; Senate Staffers Liz Carlson and Jenna Chaojareon; Deans Ayres, Bass, Feuer, Goldman, Henry, Lach, and Mehrotra; Interim Dean Feuer; Professors Abramowicz, Agnew, Baird, Borum, Cohen-Cole, Cordes, Costello, Eleftherianos, Galston, Garris, Griesshammer, Gupta, Gutman, Johnson, Khilji, Kurtzman, Lewis, Marotta-Walters, Mylonas, Orti, Parsons, Perry, Prasad, Rain, Roddis, Sarkar, Schumann, Storberg-Walker, Subaiul, Swaine, Tielsch, Vonortas, Wagner, Yezer, Zara, and Zeman.

Absent: Deans Jeffries, Matthew, and Wahlbeck; Professors McHugh, Moersen, and Wirtz.

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:06p.m. The President opened the meeting with the following remarks:

“As we near the end of the semester, I just want to again express my appreciation for your work and helping ensure high quality instruction throughout, and despite the challenges of the past year.

I am continually impressed and gratified by the way the faculty have all worked together in the best interest of our students and in furtherance of our mission.

Constructive collaboration is critical to everything we do, and something I believe is at the heart of a strong and successful university and is the responsibility of all parties within shared governance.

I’ve been disappointed and I’ve regretted that at times we did not always achieve the goal of constructive collaboration, an area of critical importance as we seek to strengthen our shared governance.

To those of you who participated in the faculty survey, I want to say that I’ve read your feedback, and I’ve taken it to heart.

To those of you who have reached out to me personally, with thoughtful, candid feedback, I want to thank you as well.

And to everyone, I share your commitment to building a stronger and more collaborative approach to shared governance, and to work together in good faith.

I'm listening, I take your feedback seriously, and I intend to act on it.

As you know, we are in the midst of a presidential assessment, a process that's overseen by the Board. It is being facilitated by a neutral evaluator. This process is designed to include the views of a wide and comprehensive group of university stakeholders and constituents, including faculty. You have asked, and I agree, that the results of the faculty survey be shared with the evaluator. In fact, they already have been shared with the evaluator, including the quantitative and qualitative data, analysis, and all comments. This material was shared with the expectation that it will be considered in the presidential review.

With that said and in order to avoid inhibiting debate, I will leave you to your agenda and turn the chair's gavel over to the Provost. I want to thank the faculty again for your ability to be agile and innovative over a challenging year. I have great respect for your work and your dedication to our students."

The President then turned the meeting gavel over to Provost Blake, who assumed the Chair role for the remainder of the meeting. The Provost confirmed that this is a special meeting of the Faculty Senate called for the sole purpose of considering two matters: a special rule for debate at today's meeting and Resolution 21/17, both proposed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC).

### CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED SPECIAL RULE

Provost Blake noted that proposed special rule is a debatable matter and requires a 2/3 vote to be approved; he added that he would ask the Parliamentarian to respond to any questions about process. He then invited Professor Wilson to present the special rule.

Professor Wilson introduced the [attached](#) special rule for today's meeting. The rule was circulated with the agenda, but the currently proposed special rule includes two amendments to the version circulated with the agenda: 1) a change from a 2/3 majority to a simple majority to extend the debate time; and 2) an additional clause stating that the resolution will be considered as read and will be open for amendment at any point, which would permit the first amendment offered to the resolution to be an amendment in the nature of a substitute for the text of the resolution. He noted that this would permit the Senate to consider significant changes to the resolution as a whole rather than one clause at a time. Parliamentarian Charnovitz noted that the Senate has never adopted a special rule of this type to limit debate. The rules require that such a rule be pre-notified (and then passed by a 2/3 majority) and that it would be irregular to attempt to amend a pre-notified special rule. He expressed his view that the rule represents an unfortunate movement toward legalization to adopt such a rule. Professor Yezer expressed his agreement with the Parliamentarian's views.

Professor Cordes asked whether the proposed rule would mean that debate cannot continue beyond 60 minutes and how, if the amendment to the rule is not adopted, a substitute resolution might be considered during the meeting. The Parliamentarian responded that, in accordance with Robert's Rules, when a committee recommends a resolution, the process would begin by opening the

resolution to amendments to improve the resolution; this is done on a clause-by-clause basis. Following that work to perfect the resolution, someone wishing to offer a substitute resolution could do so. Then a vote would be held comparing the original resolution to the substitute. This process is designed to protect the committee that authored the original resolution and is how the Senate has always proceeded. He noted that there have been occasions when an authoring committee has rewritten a resolution in the period between the publication of the agenda and the Senate meeting. In those instances, a new resolution was made available to all Senate members, and unanimous consent was requested to accept the new resolution as an amendment, with the substitute to be treated as a zero-degree amendment. In this instance, he noted that the substitute has not been circulated to the full Senate or to the Parliamentarian and that he has therefore not been in a position to analyze whether the substitute would be in order.

Professor Cohen-Cole asked the Parliamentarian to indicate where in Robert's Rules it states that amendments can't be offered in substitute. The Parliamentarian responded that Robert's Rules does not prohibit offering amendments in substitute. Given this, Professor Cohen-Cole noted that it would therefore be in normal order for the Senate to adopt a rule on this matter, and he asked that the process proceed with Professor Wilson requesting unanimous consent to amend the special rule.

Professor Wilson requested unanimous consent for the amended special rule. Unanimous consent was not obtained, with objections from Professors Yezer and Costello noted. Professor Cohen-Cole moved to amend the special rule with the additional clause as indicated in the attached rule. The motion was seconded and passed by a 24-6 vote (with one abstention).

Unanimous consent was then requested and obtained to amend the first clause of the special rule to require a majority vote (as opposed to a 2/3 vote) to extend time.

A vote on the amended special rule passed 29-2 (with one abstention).

RESOLUTION 21/17: On the Response to the Faculty Survey (Professor Arthur Wilson, Chair, Faculty Senate Executive Committee)

Professor Wilson introduced the [attached](#) resolution, noting that it came out of a collaborative writing process with the FSEC following the work of the faculty survey recommendation group. He noted his sense that the FSEC and the Senate felt this resolution should be addressed before the end of the current Senate session so that the new Senate can move forward with new business. He noted that it has been clear for some time that some parts of the resolution might not have broad agreement, particularly Resolving Clauses (RCs) 3 and 4. He expressed his feeling that the current resolution is not a final document but rather one that needs further revision through the amendment process. He referenced a straw vote in the April special FSEC meeting supported including the survey data as appendices to the resolution, noting that President LeBlanc objected to their inclusion. Professor Wilson stated that, following his sense that the resolution and special meeting needed to proceed, he removed the appendices secure in the knowledge that they could be returned via the amendment process. He noted that this action appears to have led to confusion about the intent of the resolution, and he apologized for having created that perception. He noted that he feels Professor Wagner's substitute resolution—to be offered as an amendment today—represents a better resolution than the one initially offered by the FSEC.

The Parliamentarian noted that the special rule adopted by the Senate privileges a substitute to be offered but that, prior to that point, it would be appropriate to allow for questions to the FSEC, who have written the original resolution.

Professor Gutman asked whether Professor Wilson's preference for Professor Wagner's substitution resolution is the view of the FSEC as a whole. Professor Wilson responded that he could not speak for the remainder of the FSEC on this point.

Professor Yezer noted that it is difficult to discuss a resolution if the committee proposing the resolution doesn't actually support it; he requested a parliamentary opinion on this situation. The Parliamentarian responded that there have been instances when a resolution is revised by an authoring committee following its formal posting. When this has occurred, the Senate has agreed to consider the revised resolution by unanimous consent. However, he noted, this has not been done by a special rule, and it has only been done when the Parliamentarian has had an opportunity to see the revised resolution and determine that it is in order and when the substitute has been made available to all members of the Senate. He noted that it is not clear that Professor Wagner's substitute resolution has been made available to all members of the Senate, noting that it was not made available officially to the Parliamentarian. He further noted that the administrative members of the Senate (the deans of the university), while not voting members, do fully participate in the Senate and have the opportunity to comment on matters before the Senate. However, they cannot do so without having seen the content to be discussed.

Professor Yezer reiterated his point that it is difficult to ask questions about a resolution to an authoring committee that does not seem to support that resolution. Professor Wilson suggested that Professor Wagner's amendment be interpreted as a friendly amendment and proceed on that basis. The Parliamentarian noted that there is not a process for friendly amendments and that the Senate must proceed with amendments under the rules; in this case, from Professor Wilson's comments, it is not clear that the amendment is friendly or otherwise.

Professor Wagner moved to amend the resolution as a whole, offering the [attached](#) amendment. She noted that she shared this amendment with her colleagues in the Senate with the intention, in as forthright a manner as possible, of engaging in a civil and professional discussion. She apologized to the Parliamentarian for her oversight in not sending the amendment to him, noting that this was by no means an effort to circumvent what she sees as a professional and courteous process of working with her colleagues. She offered her amendment, making the following introductory remarks:

"I offer this amendment in the nature of a substitute. I wish to thank all of my colleagues who offered input, including suggested revisions.

I believe this resolution accurately reflects the findings of the faculty survey — that is the voices of our colleagues who took the time to express their experiences and views about our current university leadership.

As I mentioned in my email circulating this text, my aim in drafting it was to offer us a more straightforward path to consensus.

I also kept in mind throughout the extraordinary effort — hundreds of hours — that the survey team (Arthur Wilson, Shaista Khilji, Jamie Cohen-Cole, and Susan Kulp)

dedicated in service of the Faculty Senate, but more importantly, the Faculty Assembly.

I hope our debate this afternoon matches the high bar of professionalism set by the survey team in their efforts to distill the quantitative and qualitative data in as objective a manner as possible.

Several colleagues join me in co-sponsoring this substitute resolution: Phil Wirtz (who cannot be here today), Guillermo Orti, Harald Griesshammer, Jamie Cohen-Cole, Murli Gupta, Joe Cordes, Francys Subiaul, and Harris Mylonas. There are others who have lent their support, and I very much appreciate it.”

Professor Gupta seconded the motion.

Professor Garris offered the following motion:

“According to Resolution 21/17, the Faculty Survey was sent to 1781 full-time faculty. However, the Faculty Senate Office did a head count on the number of voting members of the Faculty Assembly at the end of 2020 and arrived at the total number of full-time faculty eligible to vote to be 2461. This means that the Faculty Survey failed to be sent to 680 full-time faculty members of the Faculty Assembly who are eligible to vote. Thus 680 full-time faculty were disenfranchised and were not given the opportunity to contribute to the Faculty Survey. This error is disturbing and undermines the legitimacy and accuracy of the survey results reported. There was no valid reason why the universe of surveyed faculty failed to match the universe of Faculty Assembly members who initiated the call for the survey.

Therefore, I move to recommit Resolution 21/17 to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee with instructions to put the resolution on hold until either the omitted faculty are surveyed or, even better, that a new survey is launched in the next academic year.”

The Parliamentarian commented that the motion is in order if there is a second; Professor Johnson seconded the motion.

Professor Orti deferred to the survey committee on the details of how the survey recipient list was composed but noted that, at the outset of the project, the FSEC’s request for help from the administration’s official survey office was denied. It was therefore more challenging to create a list of survey recipients without access to the distribution lists used for university surveys. Professor Wilson added that, without support from the administration when compiling the list of survey recipients, the survey team gathered faculty data as best it could, using Banner to identify eligible faculty (which is challenging due to quirks of the Banner system) and sending the survey to individuals who communicated that they had been omitted and were determined to be eligible to participate. He added that some emeritus and part-time faculty participated in the survey who should not have done so under the survey’s distribution plan; those responses had to be excluded. He noted that the observed discrepancy in numbers was largely found, about a month after the survey was completed, to be clinical faculty affiliated with Children’s National Medical Center (CNMC), and he expressed his view that these faculty members are technically full-time faculty but have minimal

involvement with the university. He noted that had any members of this group asked to be admitted access to the survey, those requests would have been granted.

Professor Khilji spoke on behalf of the survey team, noting that this is a question that was asked previously and that the survey team has responded to several times. In addition to Professor Wilson's comments, she stated that this was a well-intentioned survey that reached out to all faculty members that were provided to the survey team by the Banner system. From that data, all full-time faculty members were invited to participate, and the survey yielded one of best response rates in recent years at the university. She encouraged the university to look into the reasons for the discrepancy between the Banner listing and the Assembly membership.

Professor Cohen-Cole noted that the primary criteria for inclusion for the initial survey outreach were those full-time faculty members who were primarily employed by GW as full-time faculty, resulting in the vast majority of the initial outreach going to university and Medical Faculty Associates (MFA) faculty members. Those faculty members not initially contacted were not primarily employed by GW. He added that the survey team provided outreach on an almost twice-per-week basis via Qualtrics, the FSEC, and, in some cases, the deans' offices. This resulted in additional faculty members being added to the survey recipient list. In fact, he noted, this survey had more outreach than any previous university survey in its efforts to identify missed recipients.

Professor Garris noted that the 2461 he referenced does not include emeriti or administrators but rather includes voting-eligible Assembly members. He expressed his view that the survey does not have legitimacy until those faculty omitted are brought into the survey. He reiterated his view that the best way forward is a new survey (given that new responses would come post-pandemic and would therefore not be obtained under consistent circumstances) but stated that, at the very least, these additional 680 faculty should be offered the option of taking the existing survey.

Professor Gupta noted that the Provost's Core Indicators report presented to Senate in February lists 1326 full-time tenured, tenure track, and non-tenure track faculty for 2020.

In response to Professor Wilson's comments about School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) faculty, Professor Costello noted that full-time faculty in SMHS include basic scientists and health sciences faculty in addition to clinical faculty, which include faculty from CNMC and the MFA. They all have a very vested interest in the university and the university's relationship with the hospital, and they teach students in SMHS. She noted that clinical faculty have a vested interest in the welfare and presidential leadership of the university.

Professor Griesshammer requested a point of order on the motion to recommit, asking whether it is permissible while an amendment is under consideration. The Parliamentarian responded that a recommit motion has higher privilege and takes precedence.

Professor Galston noted that, whether the additional 680 should have been included or not (taking Professor Gupta's point that they were not included in the Core Indicators report), Professor Garris referenced fairness in his motion. She expressed her view that it is not fair to raise this issue now, when it might have been raised at an earlier point in this months-long process. She moved to vote on Professor Garris's motion.

A motion was made and seconded to close debate on Professor Garris's motion. The vote passed 30-1. A subsequent vote on the motion to recommit failed 30-2, and discussion returned to the proposed amendment.

Professor Wagner clarified that all voting members of the Senate have seen this substitute resolution. She noted that the red text in the amendment represents suggested edits and additional supporting citations (identifying the precise points in the various quantitative and qualitative data that undergird the resolution's statements, particularly around the Whereas Clauses (WCs)) that were incorporated following her initial draft.

Professor Marotta-Walters moved to recommit the resolution to the FSEC for a different reason than Professor Garris. She noted that she believes the survey is fine as is and was done and analyzed with full integrity. Her objection, she stated, is that moving forward with either the original or substitute resolutions in that process seems very out of the ordinary. Through this resolution, the Senate would be taking the work of a committee created specifically for this purpose and gainsaying the results of that group's work, which sets an unwanted precedent for Senate committee work. She noted that she saw no reason to hurry this resolution any longer, as the Assembly meets next in October (and the Senate did not meet the original deadline from the Assembly). She observed the reactivity she is seeing in this meeting and over the past week and noted that this is too important an issue to try and achieve an arbitrary end-of-Senate-session deadline. Professor Johnson seconded the motion.

A motion was made and seconded to close debate on Professor Marotta-Walters's motion. The vote passed 23-7. A subsequent vote on the motion to recommit failed 24-7, and discussion returned to the proposed amendment.

Professor Galston asked Professor Wagner to confirm her understanding of the reason for deleting the original RCs 3 and 4, which discuss working with the President through shared governance moving forward and the removal of which represents the main difference between the initially proposed resolution and the amendment under consideration. She noted that her understanding is that there were two main reasons for this: 1) these two RCs do not accurately convey the results, sentiments, and comments of those filling out the survey, who were, by a majority or great majority, adverse to continuing in that relationship with the current leadership; and 2) these two RCs contradicted and undermined some of the WCs that did accurately convey the sentiment of the majority or great majority of those who filled out the survey.

Professor Wagner confirmed this understanding. She added that, from comments by the President in a recent Columbian College of Arts & Sciences (CCAS) meeting and in this meeting, it appears that the President believes that the survey results are about shared governance and communication, while the survey shows major concerns in the five areas outlined in WC 7: leadership team; consultation; decision making; university vision: identity, values, strategy; and competence/execution. These are areas in which the President has failed to gain the confidence of a majority of the faculty, and this is demonstrated at the school-level survey results as well. The original resolution's RCs 3 and 4 were not reflective of the preponderance of evidence. Professor Wagner noted that the footnotes in her amendment signal the exact points in the survey results that point to this, and she encouraged any faculty who have not yet read the results documents carefully to do so.

Professor Abramowicz made the following statement:

“I want to thank Professor Wilson, Professor Gupta, and Professor Wagner, as well as many others, for their hard work and thoughtful and courteous leadership, and I find some of these changes to be helpful. Nonetheless, I respectfully oppose the motion. The original resolution as developed by our committee appeared to me to be a constructive step toward developing a process for considering how to achieve the goal of shared governance. Shared governance requires not condemnation, but collaboration. I do not believe that our problems rest entirely with the President. I understand that he won an award for his contributions to shared governance at his last institution. It seems more plausible to me that the problems are institutional than that they are personal. Not only the President, but also other actors, including the Board of Trustees and also the Faculty Senate, should introspect about what they can do to improve cooperation. Conducting the survey and sharing the results with the Board of Trustees could be one important step in this process, if those survey results are placed in context. This survey occurred after a very challenging year in the University’s history. GW was hit especially hard by the pandemic, because of its large footprint in both healthcare and housing. Frankly, I would have thought that survey results would be much more negative after a difficult period of budget cuts and layoffs. The survey did reflect a general view that the Administration prioritized the health and safety of our community. I hope that the Trustees will keep these things in mind in reviewing the survey results and that the Senate will be constructive rather than condemnatory in the Resolution that it eventually submits.”

Professor Gupta spoke in his capacity as the chair of the recommending group, noting that this group of thirteen faculty spent a lot of time over a short period studying all of the survey material, synthesizing the qualitative comments, and developing recommendations that were sent to FSEC. He expressed that he was disappointed that the original resolution from FSEC did not include many elements that were in the recommendations report (and that were referenced by Professor Abramowicz). While initially conflicted over the original resolution and Professor Wagner’s amendment, he was persuaded by the basic idea that it is not the faculty’s responsibility to show the administration and the Board of Trustees what they need to do, and the version of this resolution posted with the agenda includes recommendations along those lines. He noted that he supports Professor Wagner’s substitute wholeheartedly.

Professor Yezer disputed the notion that this was a collaborative endeavor, noting that he made a number of suggestions about the manner in which the results were conveyed in the resolution that were disregarded. He offered an apology to Professor Marotta-Walters for the lack of debate on her motion, noting that a motion should be given the courtesy and respect of debate on the Senate floor.

He suggested amendments to the document, observing a discrepancy in the respondent numbers (1202 in WC 5 and 1223 in footnote 2) that should be corrected and noting that, where the resolution reports the fraction of those responding, it should also report the fraction of those surveyed as he had suggested in earlier emails. The resolution says 1,202 responded but then reports percentages responding that exclude many of the 1,202 who responded that they lacked information or skipped the question. This confusion over those responding is deceptive because the current resolution gives the impression that the responses of all 1,202 responders were counted in the



percentages reported in the resolution as responding, and this is not true. The Parliamentarian noted that the practice in considering a substitute resolution is to treat them the same as an original resolution would be treated, opening the substitute to amendments following general debate on the substitute. Any amendments to the substitute, including Professor Yezer's suggested amendments, should be taken up in that order.

Parliamentarian Charnovitz intervened to suggest that the time was now appropriate for a unanimous consent request to extend the time limits for debate. Professor Wilson moved to extend debate for a further 30 minutes, until 4:00pm. Unanimous consent on the motion was requested and obtained.

Professor Cordes spoke in his capacity as a member of the recommending group. He noted that the group wanted to send through constructive recommendations that also adequately conveyed the sense of faculty. He expressed his view that the initial version of this resolution was a best shot effort that fell short in that it did not adequately reflect the faculty views in the survey. He noted that he is in full support of Professor Wagner's amendment, noting that it is not confrontational but simply states the facts of the survey findings.

Professor Wagner noted that she understood Professor Abramowicz's concerns, expressed earlier. She added that the final WC is a roadmap of the multiple times the Senate has sought to provide a path forward for the President and the leadership to join the faculty in shared governance or in accountability for decision making. She noted that she is loath to add an additional RC that would amount to empty language. In response to Professor Yezer's comments, she noted that she is not a mathematician but can follow the reported numbers as written and that footnote 2 provides a clear explanation of the difference between the 1223 and 1202 numbers (this point has been repeated in multiple documents over the course of the results reporting process).

Professor Parsons enthusiastically endorsed the amendment resolution, noting that he has been arguing that this is how the process should go since the survey project began. He noted that he could not imagine a situation in which the Georgetown Faculty, for example, would express discontent with their university leadership and think that they should turn to GW's Faculty Senate for expert advice on how to remedy their problem. The Senate faculty are not, he observed, experts in this type of remediation and should leave remediation strategies, if required, to those who can purchase it if it wishes—namely, the Board of Trustees.

Professor Swaine thanked all involved for their hard work on the survey and its analysis. He focused on the final sentence in WC 7: "Collectively, these views indicate the existence of severe and persistent obstacles to the university's research and educational mission." He noted that this sentence strikes him as quite sobering, particularly if one imagines this as a pull-quote that might be read by potential stakeholders, such as donors or prospective faculty members, and he noted that the faculty surveyed was not asked this question directly. He expressed concern that, as written, this sentence seemed vague and might be understood to reference obstacles that transcended the particular matter at issue. While not asking to offer an amendment at this point, he suggested that this sentence might be a candidate for removal.

Professor Wagner thanked Professor Swaine for his comments and their previous interactions on this topic. She noted that, as one of two coders on questions 11 and 16, she observed that faculty respondents repeatedly expressed the frustrations they were encountering as a result of decision

making, of what they deemed to be competence and execution by the general leadership, and of the misalignment of the university vision that seemed to be undermining their ability to carry out the research and education missions. She took this view directly from her impressions as a coder of hundreds of responses and expressed her strong feeling that the statement in WC 7 is backed up by the evidence. Acknowledging Professor Swaine's concern that this statement could be pulled out and used negatively, she noted that this is regrettable but represents the consequence of what the responding faculty expressed.

Professor Zeman reiterated Professor Swaine's gratitude to those working on the survey project. He noted that Professor Wagner's amendment eliminates overreach issues that are present in the original resolution. He expressed his concern about preserving a collaborative relationship with the Board and the university's leadership and worried about what this says about GW as a university and as a faculty. He noted that the discussion has been divisive—and the results leak mean-spirited—and worried about the effect on students, alumni, donors, and future leadership. For this reason, he noted that he did not support the resolution.

Professor Griesshammer commended the current level of discussion of the amendment, which is focused on substance. He echoed Professor Zeman's comments that the original resolution overstepped its bounds. It is not up to the Senate to tell the President or the Board what to do. The Senate needs to report the survey results. The Board must then decide how to proceed in view of those results, and how effective it believes the university leadership can be in moving GW forward. In this vein, he noted, every word in Professor Wagner's text is backed up by direct references to evidence in the survey. Some may not agree with the survey results, but these results are what the faculty has collectively handed to the Senate. He noted that the faculty is watching these proceedings and observing whether the Senate can act productively and lead rather than behave as the French revolutionary Alexandre Auguste Ledru-Rollin, who had to follow the people he purported to lead in order to know where they were going. He expressed that the Senate should not be dragged to the end point of this process like dogs to a hunt.

Professor Gutman noted that his service on the recommending group was guided by a desire to be faithful to the Assembly's charge, to the results of survey, and to principles of fairness. He observed that the original FSEC resolution failed on the second point, and Professor Wagner's amendment far more accurately reflects the sentiments of the survey. He expressed concern about fairness and providing the President an opportunity to respond to the survey results, ideally on specific points. He noted that the Senate's duty is to provide the survey results to the faculty and the Board, but he expressed concern that some fairness has been lost in this proposal by excluding the opportunity for the President to respond. He emphasized that inviting such a response does not imply that he should continue in his role.

Professor Khilji noted that the amendment before the Senate represents the faculty survey results quite accurately; it is very true to the sentiments she has read in both the qualitative comments and the quantitative results. She expressed her support for the amendment and moved to close debate on the amendment; Professor Gupta seconded the motion. A vote to close debate on the amendment failed to achieve a 2/3 majority (19 in favor, 15 opposed, and 1 abstaining).

Professor Cohen-Cole noted that a recent response from the President on the survey seemed to mischaracterize the survey response as being about his not understanding shared governance and his not communicating well. This response missed that the primary issues were centered on the

leadership team, decision making, and university values. He expressed that the simplest course now is to adopt the current amendment and proceed accordingly.

Professor Wagner echoed Professor Cohen-Cole's comments, noting that the fact that it is not clear whether the President has responded to the survey results speaks volumes. In response to Professors Swaine's and Zeman's comments, she noted that one thing that came across in the survey was the pride and satisfaction that faculty derive from their relationships with their colleagues, deans, and especially students. There is a strong and motivated faculty community at GW; the survey demonstrates a lack of confidence in this particular president to lead the university. She noted that the President has had ample time to review and to think about how he would like to reach out to the faculty and the Senate. She added that she is not worried about GW but rather about its leadership.

Professor Yezer noted that the problem isn't the president but rather a series of decisions made by the preceding administration that left the university deep in debt. The current president has no choice but to cut back and has no degrees of freedom in which to operate. Professor Yezer added that the President had to cancel plans for a new dorm and only has funds to repair Thurston Hall, which is widely regarded by students as a dump.

Professor Wilson requested and obtained unanimous consent to extend debate until 4:15pm.

Professor Sarkar thanked all those who worked on the survey and the recommendations. He observed that, through his limited reading of the survey results, he observed a certain amount of appreciation for the President in handling the COVID-19 situation. He noted that it would not be out of place to think that anything done at the university during the pandemic will be seen through that lens. The pandemic placed financial stressors on the university, and some decisions made were warranted by those circumstances. He noted that he is also concerned with fairness while simultaneously understanding that the Senate's role is to report the survey results.

Professor Costello noted that the Senate has partially met the Assembly's charge by conducting the survey and sharing the results with the full-time faculty, the President, the Board, and the firm that is conducting the Presidential review by the Board of Trustees. She noted that the missing piece now is the recommendations, and she wondered why this needs to be done as a resolution when there is clearly division among Senate members about how to craft and develop recommendations in resolution terms. She suggested that, in the spirit of transparency, some individuals are being shortsighted and releasing information that perhaps does not need to be publicly available. She pointed out that the WCs exclude survey responses that are positive (e.g., 77% of responding faculty were in support of the President's management of the health and safety of GW's students during the pandemic).

Professor Marotta-Walters noted that she would vote against the resolution as it is not, in her mind, a completed work. She added that she wanted to go on the record to say that the Senate has inappropriately separated the results of the quantitative and the qualitative comments, because there are two very different kinds of analyses that need to be taken into account together. She noted that the voting patterns here, and earlier in the week in discussions of the resolution, lead her to think that there is a bimodal distribution of the quantitative results. For very solid reasons, CCAS has a lot of problems with the administration, and, SMHS seems not to have the same problems. These results have to be assessed together; the sentiments do not in and of themselves stand alone. She stated that the process has erred by giving them too much weight. She expressed her understanding

that the schools are variably engaged with this process, and she asked the Senate to remember this as it considers the direction it will take.

Professor Tielsch noted that time is of the essence in Senate response, observing that the Board will shortly make some decisions about the future of the leadership of the university; they are in a formal review process now. He noted that if the Senate wants any kind of voice in this, it needs to make a decision about this resolution. He stated that he would vote for the amendment, which limits its comments to the actual results of the survey. He expressed his more fundamental concern that he has not yet seen presidential leadership at GW. This is not just about making hard choices and having a vision but also being able to sell that vision and bring university constituencies together in the process. He noted that he was a proponent of much of the President's vision but observed that the President has not been able to bring the university together to follow that vision. This is a critical element of leadership.

Professor Wagner responded to several commenters. In response to Professor Sarkar, she noted that the qualitative data report addresses the question of the pandemic's influence on the results (she referred Professor Kausik to the Q&A that begins at the bottom of page 23). In response to Professor Costello's concerns, she suggested revisiting the in-depth discussion in the report, including the bar graphs on pages 25-27. In response to Professor Marotta-Walters's concerns about skewed reporting, she noted that responders who were more positive could have expressed those opinions in greater depth and with more specificity, but they did not do so in a way that balanced the extensive and detailed comments of those expressing more negative opinions.

Professor Orti echoed Professor Tielsch's comments and quoted the conclusion of the qualitative report:

“The qualitative responses to the faculty survey were serious, thoughtful, and plentiful, and broadly representative of faculty in the university, with a nearly 75% response rate among full-time faculty. Backed by a remarkable level of interrater agreement among the qualitative data analysis team, these conclusions hew close to the evidence, which is copious and tends to “speak for itself.” That the predominantly negative sentiment towards the leadership is characterized by diversity and variation should not be a surprise, given the variety of the schools, programs, and individuals represented in the responses. What is more impressive, however, is how the survey responses carefully, repeatedly, and with remarkable acuity, circle around and are interwoven with certain key themes: Leadership, Consultation, Decision making, University Vision: Identity Values and Strategy; and Competence/Execution. Negatively framed, they address not only decisions and actions that predate the COVID-19 pandemic, but also the university leadership's overall capacities, values, and performance.”

Professor Perry noted that she was part of the team that coded the qualitative data and that the point about there perhaps being bimodality in the quantitative data is addressed and resolved with the qualitative narrative, which provides a resounding sense of what the concerns are on the part of the many faculty that filled out the survey. She expressed her view that Professor Wagner's amendment affirms the integrity of the survey results. She appreciated the reiteration of the corpus of previous Senate resolutions as well as the practical resolution to convey the results to the

Assembly. She noted she would support the amendment for those reasons and based on the work she engaged in on the qualitative data with the survey team.

Debate concluded, and no amendments were proposed to Professor Wagner's amendment in the nature of a substitute.

A vote on Professor Wagner's amendment passed, 25-10.

Professor Orti proposed an amendment to substitute a link to the full appendices for the existing footnotes referencing specific survey results reports. The Parliamentarian noted that, following a vote to adopt the discussed amendment, the resolution had been fully amended, and so this proposal can only be offered via unanimous consent.

A vote on the amended resolution passed, 24-10. The final, adopted resolution is [attached](#).

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:21pm.



## Faculty Senate

Special Rule of Order for  
the April 30, 2021, Faculty Senate Special Meeting

To be adopted by the Faculty Senate

With this advance notice, 2/3rds of those present and voting at the meeting must approve these rules.

1. The time limit for discussion for the agenda action item shall be 60 minutes. The 60-minute time period is inclusive of discussion with respect to the main motion and any subsidiary motions to the main motion. At the end of 60 minutes, the time limit may be extended by motion made, seconded and approved by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at the meeting. Otherwise, at the end of the discussion period, the motion (as amended, if relevant) will be put to a vote.
2. (PROPOSED AMENDMENT) The resolution will be considered as read and be opened for amendment at any point. This will allow the first amendment offered to the resolution to be an amendment in the nature of a substitute for the text of the resolution.
3. The chair has the right to limit debate to two minutes per speaker.
4. On any issue, no speaker shall be called upon a second time until all those who have not spoken and wish to speak have an opportunity to speak.



**A RESOLUTION ON THE RESPONSE TO THE FACULTY SURVEY  
(21/17)**

- WHEREAS,** On November 18, 2020, the Faculty Assembly approved a petition that stated:  
“The Assembly directs the Faculty Senate to conduct a survey of the faculty, with both quantitative and qualitative responses possible, regarding its views of the leadership and communication abilities of the President.<sup>1</sup> The survey shall be launched no later than December 15, 2020, and the complete results shall be reported to the Assembly no later than January 31, 2021, along with comments and recommendations from the Senate. These might include an indication of “no confidence,” “censure,” “approval,” “praise,” or “trust” in the President and his administration;”
- WHEREAS,** From December 17, 2020, to January 31, 2021, a survey of campus climate and the faculty perception of President LeBlanc’s leadership was administered to GW faculty as directed by the Faculty Assembly. The survey comprised quantitative and qualitative questions;
- WHEREAS,** The survey reports results from 1,202 respondents.<sup>2</sup> The responses were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively;
- WHEREAS,** The quantitative results indicate broad-based dissatisfaction with President LeBlanc. Although there was no formal no confidence vote, in quantitative results, a slight majority of faculty report that they do not have confidence in President LeBlanc’s effectiveness as a leader, and slightly more than a quarter of faculty express confidence;
- WHEREAS,** Of the 1,223 faculty who responded to the survey, 734 provided over 4,000 written responses to eight questions;
- WHEREAS,** The qualitative results indicate broad-based dissatisfaction with President LeBlanc;
- WHEREAS,** The Senate is deeply concerned by the widespread negative views of President LeBlanc’s leadership among the faculty in five critical areas: (1) Leadership Team; (2) Consultation; (3) Decision Making; (4) University Vision: Identity, Values, Strategy; and (5) Competence/Execution. These views collectively result in severe hindrances to shared governance;
- WHEREAS,** Among the 22 themes considered, including the five above, many of the faculty also expressed concerns with:

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<sup>1</sup> The faculty survey included questions related to the campus climate and President LeBlanc’s leadership. This resolution is focused on the assessment of President Le Blanc’s performance.

<sup>2</sup> Of 1,781 surveyed, 1,223 participants responded. Of these, 21 self-identified as part-time faculty members whose responses were eliminated since the survey population was defined as full-time faculty members. Faculty participation in the survey was voluntary, and faculty were given the option to decline to answer any question and withdraw from participation. These reports are available to GW faculty on GW Box (<https://gwu.box.com/v/FacultySurvey>).

- a) Hiring practices;
- b) Communication and transparency;
- c) Diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- d) Failure to address faculty perspectives and concerns regarding strategic plan initiatives; and
- e) Low faculty morale;

**WHEREAS,** Faculty who discuss the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) appreciated the President's efforts to readjust the relationship with the hospital. However, in the qualitative results, none of the schools, including SMHS, expressed more positive sentiment than negative sentiment in regards to his performance; and

**WHEREAS,** The Faculty Senate has passed four resolutions that stated concerns about the very issues revealed by the survey being reported here: 20/9 (on Shared Governance with Respect to Size, Composition, and Quality of the Undergraduate Class/February 14, 2020), 21/7 (on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion/July 17, 2020), 21/10 (on Research/July 24, 2020), and 21/13 (of Severe Disapproval of President LeBlanc Regarding the Appointment of Heather Swain/October 9, 2020);

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY THAT**

1. The Senate recommends that the Board of Trustees share the complete quantitative and qualitative survey results and the report on the qualitative results in its entirety with the firm evaluating President LeBlanc's performance.
2. Given these findings of misalignment between the faculty and the university leadership, the Faculty Senate expresses serious concerns about the leadership's abilities to advance GW's vision and mission effectively, the success of which require broad support from faculty, students, and staff.
3. The Senate requests that, by the September 10, 2021, Faculty Senate meeting, the President, with the purpose of rebuilding trust with the faculty, develop and share with the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Assembly/faculty at large a specific written plan detailing how he will integrate a collaborative leadership approach, transparency, and principles of shared governance that involve 1) providing the Faculty Senate and other members of faculty leadership necessary information; 2) offering opportunities for dialogue with the administration; 3) permitting meaningful faculty input and consultation; and 4) giving genuine consideration of the faculty's views.
4. The Senate recommends that the President, Senate, and Trustees work together to:
  - a. develop a strategic plan that builds on the University's existing strengths and pursues new areas of opportunities;
  - b. develop any proposal that would rebalance or resize the educational or research profile of the University;
  - c. recruit, admit, hire, retain, and support underrepresented students, staff, and faculty;
  - d. enhance research infrastructure and financial support for faculty;
  - e. continue to develop a vision for post-COVID education innovations; and



- f. develop a campus masterplan that depends on and comes only after the prior detailing of the university's academic goals in its strategic plan.
5. The Faculty Senate recommends that the Faculty Senate (with institutional help from the central administration) conduct regular faculty surveys regarding their views of the campus climate and the leadership abilities of the President and their team. Future surveys may also address other matters of current concerns beyond the leadership abilities of the President and their team.
6. The Faculty Senate directs that, at the next Faculty Assembly, the Chair of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (or designees of the Chair) report the abovementioned survey-based recommendations.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee  
April 23, 2021



**A RESOLUTION ON THE RESPONSE TO THE FACULTY SURVEY  
(21/17)**

- WHEREAS**, On November 18, 2020, the Faculty Assembly approved a petition that stated:  
“The Assembly directs the Faculty Senate to conduct a survey of the faculty, with both quantitative and qualitative responses possible, regarding its views of the leadership and communication abilities of the President.<sup>1</sup> The survey shall be launched no later than December 15, 2020, and the complete results shall be reported to the Assembly no later than January 31, 2021, along with comments and recommendations from the Senate. These might include an indication of “no confidence,” “censure,” “approval,” “praise,” or “trust” in the President and his administration”;
- WHEREAS**, From December 17, 2020, to January 31, 2021, a survey of campus climate and the faculty perception of President Le Blanc’s leadership was administered to GW faculty as directed by the Faculty Assembly. The survey comprised quantitative and qualitative questions;
- WHEREAS**, The survey reports results from 1,202 respondents.<sup>2</sup> The responses were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively;
- WHEREAS**, The quantitative results indicate broad-based dissatisfaction with President LeBlanc: 52.4% of **responding** faculty report that they do not have confidence in President LeBlanc’s effectiveness as a leader, **20.5% were neutral**, and 27.1% express confidence;<sup>3</sup>
- WHEREAS**, Of the 1,202 faculty who responded to the survey, 734 provided over 4,000 written responses to eight questions;
- WHEREAS**, The **Faculty Survey Qualitative Data Report notes that the** “overwhelming majority of the written responses expressed negative views of the current university leadership.”<sup>4</sup> The survey data find that none of the schools has more positive sentiment than negative sentiment in regards to the performance of President LeBlanc;
- WHEREAS**, The Senate is deeply concerned by the widespread negative views of President LeBlanc’s leadership among the faculty in five critical areas of concerns, including (1) Leadership Team; (2) Consultation; (3) Decision Making; (4) University Vision: Identity, Values, Strategy; and (5)

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<sup>1</sup> The faculty survey included questions related to the campus climate and President LeBlanc’s leadership. This resolution is focused on the assessment of President Le Blanc’s performance.

<sup>2</sup> Of 1,781 surveyed, 1,223 participants responded. Of these, 21 self-identified as part-time faculty members whose responses were eliminated since the survey population was defined as full-time faculty members. Faculty participation in the survey was voluntary and faculty were given the option to decline to answer any question and withdraw from participation. These reports are available on GW Box: <https://gwu.box.com/v/FacultySurvey>.

<sup>3</sup> Quantitative Data Tabulated Results (Bar Charts), Question 14.4.

<sup>4</sup> “Faculty Survey Qualitative Data Report,” Executive Summary, March 21, 2021.

Competence/Execution.<sup>5</sup> Collectively, these views indicate the existence of severe and persistent obstacles to the university's research and educational mission;

**WHEREAS**, Among the 23 themes considered, including the five above, many of the faculty also expressed concerns with:

- a) Hiring practices;
- b) Communication and transparency;
- c) Diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- d) Failure to address faculty perspectives and concerns regarding strategic plan initiatives;  
and
- e) Low faculty morale;<sup>6</sup>

**WHEREAS**, The Faculty Senate has passed four resolutions that stated concerns about the very issues revealed by the survey being reported here: 20/9 (on Shared Governance with Respect to Size, Composition, and Quality of the Undergraduate Class/February 14, 2020), 21/7 (on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion/July 17, 2020), 21/10 (on Research/July 24, 2020), and 21/13 (of Severe Disapproval of President LeBlanc Regarding the Appointment of Heather Swain/October 9, 2020);

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY THAT**

1. The Senate recommends that the Board of Trustees share the complete quantitative and qualitative survey results and the report on the qualitative results in its entirety with the firm evaluating President LeBlanc's performance.
2. Given the repeated calls for solutions contained in the abovementioned four resolutions and the survey's findings of persistent misalignment between the faculty and the university leadership, the Faculty Senate expresses serious concerns about the leadership's ability to uphold and advance GW's vision and mission, the success of which require broad support from faculty, students, and staff.
3. The Faculty Senate directs that the Chair of the Senate Executive Committee or designees of the Chair report the faculty survey results at the next Faculty Assembly.

April 29, 2021

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<sup>5</sup> See "Figure 1: Sentiment Analysis by Themes/Topics of Concern in Faculty Comments, weighted by frequency," in the "Faculty Survey Qualitative Data Report," (p. 2).

<sup>6</sup> See Figure 1, as well as the "Coding Interconnected Themes" and "Findings" sections in the "Faculty Survey Qualitative Data Report," (pp. 12-24).



**A RESOLUTION ON THE RESPONSE TO THE FACULTY SURVEY  
(21/17)**

- WHEREAS**, On November 18, 2020, the Faculty Assembly approved a petition that stated:  
“The Assembly directs the Faculty Senate to conduct a survey of the faculty, with both quantitative and qualitative responses possible, regarding its views of the leadership and communication abilities of the President.<sup>1</sup> The survey shall be launched no later than December 15, 2020, and the complete results shall be reported to the Assembly no later than January 31, 2021, along with comments and recommendations from the Senate. These might include an indication of “no confidence,” “censure,” “approval,” “praise,” or “trust” in the President and his administration;”
- WHEREAS**, From December 17, 2020, to January 31, 2021, a survey of campus climate and the faculty perception of President LeBlanc’s leadership was administered to GW faculty as directed by the Faculty Assembly. The survey comprised quantitative and qualitative questions;
- WHEREAS**, The survey reports results from 1,202 respondents.<sup>2</sup> The responses were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively;
- WHEREAS**, The quantitative results indicate broad-based dissatisfaction with President LeBlanc: 52.4% of responding faculty report that they do not have confidence in President LeBlanc’s effectiveness as a leader, 20.5% were neutral, and 27.1% express confidence;<sup>3</sup>
- WHEREAS**, Of the 1,202 faculty who responded to the survey, 734 provided over 4,000 written responses to eight questions;
- WHEREAS**, The Faculty Survey Quantitative Data Report notes that the “overwhelming majority of the written responses expressed negative views of the current university leadership.”<sup>4</sup> The survey data find that none of the schools has more positive sentiment than negative sentiment in regards to the performance of President LeBlanc;
- WHEREAS**, The Senate is deeply concerned by the widespread negative views of President LeBlanc’s leadership among the faculty in five critical areas of concerns, including (1) Leadership Team; (2) Consultation; (3) Decision Making; (4) University Vision: Identity, Values, Strategy; and (5)

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<sup>1</sup> The faculty survey included questions related to the campus climate and President LeBlanc’s leadership. This resolution is focused on the assessment of President LeBlanc’s performance.

<sup>2</sup> Of 1,781 surveyed, 1,223 participants responded. Of these, 21 self-identified as part-time faculty members whose responses were eliminated since the survey population was defined as full-time faculty members. Faculty participation in the survey was voluntary and faculty were given the option to decline to answer any question and withdraw from participation. These reports are available on GW Box: <https://gwu.box.com/v/FacultySurvey>.

<sup>3</sup> Quantitative Data Tabulated Results (Bar Charts), Question 14.4.

<sup>4</sup> “Faculty Survey Qualitative Data Report,” Executive Summary, March 21, 2021.

Competence/Execution.<sup>5</sup> Collectively, these views indicate the existence of severe and persistent obstacles to the university's research and educational mission;

**WHEREAS**, Among the 23 themes considered, including the five above, many of the faculty also expressed concerns with:

- a) Hiring practices;
- b) Communication and transparency;
- c) Diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- d) Failure to address faculty perspectives and concerns regarding strategic plan initiatives; and
- e) Low faculty morale;<sup>6</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, The Faculty Senate has passed four resolutions that stated concerns about the very issues revealed by the survey being reported here: 20/9 (on Shared Governance with Respect to Size, Composition, and Quality of the Undergraduate Class/February 14, 2020), 21/7 (on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion/July 17, 2020), 21/10 (on Research/July 24, 2020), and 21/13 (of Severe Disapproval of President LeBlanc Regarding the Appointment of Heather Swain/October 9, 2020);

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY THAT**

1. The Senate recommends that the Board of Trustees share the complete quantitative and qualitative survey results and the report on the qualitative results in its entirety with the firm evaluating President LeBlanc's performance.
2. Given the repeated calls for solutions contained in the abovementioned four resolutions and the survey's findings of persistent misalignment between the faculty and the university leadership, the Faculty Senate expresses serious concerns about the leadership's ability to uphold and advance GW's vision and mission, the success of which require broad support from faculty, students, and staff.
3. The Faculty Senate directs that the Chair of the Senate Executive Committee or designees of the Chair report the faculty survey results at the next Faculty Assembly.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee  
April 23, 2021

Adopted as Amended by the Faculty Senate<sup>7</sup>  
April 30, 2021

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<sup>5</sup> See "Figure 1: Sentiment Analysis by Themes/Topics of Concern in Faculty Comments, weighted by frequency," in the "Faculty Survey Qualitative Data Report," (p. 2).

<sup>6</sup> See Figure 1, as well as the "Coding Interconnected Themes" and "Findings" sections in the "Faculty Survey Qualitative Data Report," (pp. 12-24).

<sup>7</sup> The resolution as reported by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee was amended by a substitute resolution proposed by Professor Wagner.