



## Fall 2022 Interim Report Committee on Educational Policy & Technology

The Committee on Educational Policy and Technology (EPT) has met five times so far this year – on 19 May 2022, 19 August 2022, 16 September 2022, 21 October 2022, and 18 November 2022. The final meeting of the semester is scheduled for December 16, 2022.

**I.** The primary focus of the **spring meeting (May)** was on the anticipated large incoming class (a projected 2,940-2,995 students) and related instructional planning, namely about whether there were sufficient seats to accommodate the larger class, especially within CCAS, SEAS, and GWSB. EPT members also expressed concern regarding teaching assistant (TA) numbers, as well as DSS and other student services' capacity to support the incoming class given resources already overstretched by the pandemic. The subject of DSS accommodation—how it is determined and implemented—continued to be a topic of discussion.

In this same meeting, Deputy Provost for Academic Affairs, Terry Murphy, provided an update on the Data Privacy Task Force, noting that the report would be shared shortly. (The report includes three recommended core principles regarding the use of university data for analytical purposes; see the Provost's [official update](#) on September 9, 2022.)

Finally, in the May meeting, unanimous consent was given to renew the following subcommittees: shared governance; future enrollment planning; technology; and classroom recording. (See updates below).

Co-chairs Irene Foster and Sarah Wagner developed a set of questions to present to Deputy Provost Terry Murphy in late June regarding Fall 2022 instructional and COVID-specific policies (i.e., COVID testing and indoor mask requirements; classroom recording policies; DSS accommodation policy and procedures; incoming class update [on the melt, or lack thereof]; and IT support in classrooms at the beginning of the semester); on July 26, Sarah met with Terry and newly appointed Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs and Special Programs Jeffrey Brand to discuss these issues.

**II.** The **fall meetings (September- November)** have focused on enrollment (the large incoming class and future enrollment planning); implications of the Medical Faculty Associates financial status for the university's educational mission; instructional technology; and classroom recording:

Enrollment: Jay Goff, Vice Provost for Enrollment and Student Success, provided updates on enrollment and future enrollment planning in the August 19 and November 18 meetings. Key takeaways from the August update included:

- Registration was close to expectations, albeit with less melt than anticipated.
- International enrollments are rebounding, though still below pre-pandemic levels (including notable declines from China).

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- Residential undergrads expected to be 3-4% above target. The class is expected to be strong academically, diverse, with record numbers of underrepresented students, first generation students, and Pell grant recipients.
- Non-residential undergraduate enrollment is expected to be below targets.
- Graduate programs have seen an increase in international enrollment but decrease in domestic enrollment.
- The 5-year enrollment plan is being implemented and is on target.

Vice Provost Goff and Ben Toll, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, provided a follow-up presentation during the November meeting in which they reviewed total enrollment and trends. Adding to the preliminary picture provided in August, they confirmed that overall enrollment for this fall was on track at 25,939 students (the goal had been 26,000). They also sketched out early positive indicators for the AY2023-2024 admissions cycle, among them strong recruitment during summer/fall for next year's class; an increase in early decision applications; and an increase in international applications.

The presentation also addressed the question of retention, specifically in the context of recent classes. EPT members sought to understand why students who decided to leave felt disconnected—what was the predominant source of disconnect, were there patterns, etc.? In the spring semester, we will explore the topic further, soliciting input from Chanté Clarkson (Office of Student Success), Jeff Brand (Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs and Special Programs), and student support services, such as DSS and CARE/CAPS, in addition to Jay and Ben's team. As suggested by Eric Grynawski to the committee co-chairs, EPT should seek to have a faculty member from the committee participate in the retention data committee that is currently being formed.

Student support services: The August 19 meeting addressed instructional policy and student support services in light of the large incoming class:

- Associate Provost Jeff Brand outlined clear guidance for faculty to include in their syllabi (should state the policy of either: 1) no recording, 2) recording available by default, or 3) recording available by request only); also recommended faculty not require medical documentation for accommodations or distinguish COVID-19 absence policies from all other absences. (See below on the classroom recording subcommittee's work.)
- Dr. Maggie Butler, Director of DSS, explained that DSS had updated their website; that the office will be offering bi-weekly office hours for faculty/staff; and that they have made some hires but still need to fill additional positions.

Medical Faculty Associates (MFA) and the implications of continued debt: The September 16 meeting focused largely on understanding and discussing the financial situation of the MFA and its impact on the university, specifically its research and educational mission. Prior to the meeting, EPT member Phil Wirtz circulated a memorandum providing context about the MFA, its relationship to the university, and its recent run of deficits (FY20-\$40M deficit, FY21-\$48M deficit = \$88M over two years; see attached memo). The memo also provided an explanation of President Wrighton's announcement in the September Faculty Senate meeting of the 14 endowed professorships resulting from the sale of 20% stock in the GW Hospital, nine of which are allocated to SMHS, with five to the rest of the university. Fiscal Planning and Budgeting Committee Co-chairs Joe Cordes and Susan Kulp provided context and answered questions on these issues. EPT members expressed concern about the real cost to university when debt is taken on (e.g., the need to reallocate resources, limitations on scholarships, student services, marketing, etc.), as well as the desire to see

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a full business plan and regular reporting on the MFA's financial situation—in sum, greater transparency, given the troubling implications of its recurring deficits.

Instructional technology: In the November 18 meeting, chair of the Technology Subcommittee shared its findings presented in an update report provided to Provost Bracey on November 12, 2022. (See below.)

Classroom recording: In the October 21 meeting, the subcommittee discussed how best to solicit faculty input on their experiences and concerns related to classroom recording; in the November 18 meeting, chair Katrin Schultheiss presented preliminary findings. (See below.)

### Other Issues Discussed

- 1) The status of student housing and dining (updated provided by Seth Weinschel, Associate Vice-President, Business Services in the August 19 meeting), including updates on Thurston Hall and the rollout of the new dining plan, which is on hold until Spring 2023. See below for the Resolution 23/3 on a new residence hall.
- 2) The need for the religious holiday calendar to be distributed to faculty by late July. The committee also recommended that some members of EPT and student government work together to address the current list, possibly adding clarification regarding major versus minor holidays.
- 3) The restarting of the program for alumni to audit courses.
- 4) Libraries Committee (chair, Holly Dugan) provided a presentation on Open Access (OA) and Open Educational Resources (OER); in addition to making the case that open access is consistent with GW values and affordability is key as the costs of course materials can be prohibitive, the discussion underscored the point that LAI continues to be underfunded and understaffed.

### III. Subcommittees

- *Technology Subcommittee*: Eric Grynavski continues to serve chair this subcommittee, the original mandate of which was to collect data so as to benchmark organizational changes and communicate its findings to the chairs of EPT and the Provost's Office. In the November meeting, he shared a summary of those findings based on the first batch of classroom data produced by GWIT; those data allow the subcommittee to compare the performance of Fall 2022 with that of Fall 2021. (See the attached "Service Delivery Dashboard Report September 2022.") The subcommittee's update report notes three areas of clear improvement:

First and most importantly, in September, the number of tickets closed exceeded the number of tickets opened. This means in effect that the backlog produced by the first day of classes—which is inevitable—a was rapidly closed.

Second, the number of calls answered at peak (August) increased over the previous year. Last August, GWIT was capable of answering 4093 calls (70% of calls), and this year peaked at 4355 (86% of calls). In short, the volume and percentages are both trending up which is excellent news.

Third, I believe these numbers will rapidly improve, especially for classroom support. The rate at which calls were answered -- especially in classrooms -- was likely depressed due to the ongoing network problems. These create an instantaneous issue across the entire campus, leading many people to pick up the classroom phone at precisely the same second (at least anecdotally). No support system will be resilient to this. Once this problem is remedied, I expect more improvement to the Academic Technology piece of the statistics in particular.

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There of course remain continued needs in GWIT identified by faculty. Items include issues within support specifically for CCAS (owing to its size and legacy systems), the need to train staff and student workers, the ability of GWIT to resolve issues quickly, a needed upgrade to university enterprise systems, and of course the global supply chain and inflation. There also continues to be problems from the faculty perspective with tickets closed without resolution and a relatively low first call resolution rate. The size and complexity of CCAS in particular will continue to present challenges for the foreseeable future and there is no quick fix to this.

On balance however our conclusion about the trajectory of GWIT is **very** positive. The beginning of this semester was a substantial improvement from last AY, especially as it relates to Academic Technology. We have every expectation that this trend should continue. We are especially appreciative of the initial focus on improving the Academic Technology piece given the serious classroom issues last academic year.

- *Future Enrollment Planning Committee:* The subcommittee met with Vice Provost Goff once during the Fall semester. They discussed the updates that Jay provided to the Faculty Senate in its November meeting and to the EPT committee as a whole. In the November 18 meeting, subcommittee chair Phil Wirtz noted the subcommittee's strong support for Jay and Ben's team, which is significantly understaffed but whose members continue to do outstanding work; he also flagged the discussion raised about the current (higher) acceptance rate, which is ~50%.
- *Subcommittee on Class Recording:* An outgrowth of the 2021-2022 joint PEAFF/EPT subcommittee on the issue, this subcommittee met several times to discuss how best to gather faculty input on classroom recording (existent policies within the schools, pressure points, concerns, advantages, etc.). Subcommittee chair, Katrin Schultheiss, provided an update on the survey and its preliminary findings during the November 18 meeting. She began by outlining the survey: the subcommittee members developed a Qualtrics survey to assess faculty's experience with classroom recording. The survey was distributed to all schools except for the law school, which has its own system for recording. Thus far, the subcommittee has received 500 responses, representing all types of instructors. The following are preliminary findings based on the responses received thus far:
  - Lecture classes more likely to record and make available.
  - Fewer people did selective release.
  - Few people only recorded some classes.
  - Most either record all and release all or no recording.
  - Most faculty have concerns about recording. More training might be helpful (e.g., adaptive release, how to start/stop, erase, etc.).
  - Positive aspects of recording: accessibility for disability, illness.
  - Concerns: All factors were selected by some respondents. The greatest concern was unauthorized circulation by students. Other main concerns are attendance, IP, unauthorized use by administration.
  - Going forward a recommendation for a formal policy on recordings. This was a priority for EPT under previous provost no changes were made. Needs to remain priority.
  - Issues to consider are ownership of the recording, parameters for administrative use, what permissions are needed to record or use, and safeguard for authorized use.

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The subcommittee will continue to analyze the survey results and will present a comprehensive report to the full committee in the Spring semester.

- *Shared Governance*: Extending the subcommittee's work related to the 2021-2022 Shared Governance Task Force, the subcommittee continues to seek to clarify EPT's concerns/expectations regarding shared governance. In the November 18 meeting, subcommittee chair Mountasser Kadrie noted that in its initial meetings the subcommittee discussed the need for training or educational offerings for faculty and administration on how to manage and promote shared governance. They will explore this point further in their upcoming meeting in December, and will present a fuller report in the January 2023 meeting.
- *Academic Integrity Code Review*: This subcommittee continues the work of considering questions that have arisen since the adoption of the revised code; they will present their recommendations for additional revisions to EPT in Spring 2023.

### **Resolutions presented to the Faculty Senate**

RESOLUTION 23/3: In Support of a New Residence Hall/Jointly Submitted by the Committees on Physical Facilities and Educational Policy & Technology (Eric Grynaviski, Educational Policy & Technology Committee and Co-Chair, Physical Facilities Committee). The Resolution was approved by a vote of 22 in favor, 4 opposed, and 1 abstention.

### **New Business**

On 15 September 2022 the Faculty Senate Executive Committee charged the committee with the following:

1. Advise and work with Dean Henry on the reorganization of AT & IT services at GW.
2. Consider the issue of whether GW can mandate the recording of classroom interactions (and post them online).
3. Investigate how GW is working to collaborate with Amazon HQ2 and to navigate competition from other local universities.
4. Through the relevant subcommittee, continue to monitor issues around academic and information technology, including classroom technology, technology support, and faculty workstations.

The committee discussed the AY2022-2023 charge during its October 21 meeting, determining that it will seek to address these four areas while it pursues other pressing issues related to the educational side of the committee's mandate. In particular, following on the report about enrollment planning from Vice Provost Goff in the November 18 meeting, the committee will delve further into issues related to retention.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Wagner and Irene Foster  
Co-Chairs, EPT  
December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022



8.48/10 customer satisfaction



845 customer feedback received  
(survey sent for every resolved request)



3210 calls answered (adj) (90.92%) \*\*  
\*\* Adj % reflect Neg Abandon Calls  
Hang ups 15 sec or less



26 sec average speed to answer

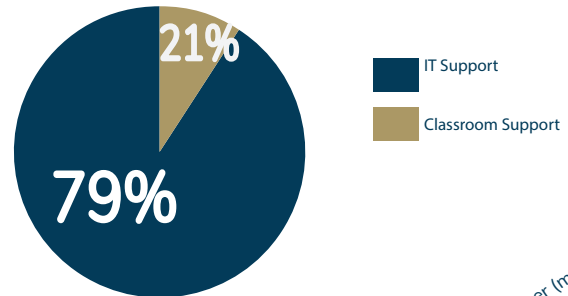


### September 2022 Service Disruptions

- 9/6 Blackboard Collaborate Service Disruption
- 9/7 MyLAW Access Issues
- 9/9 Wireless Service Disruption 9/1/2022
- 9/15 Zoom Service Disruption
- 9/15-Luste Performance Issues in Pegasus
- 9/24 Virginia Campus Maintenance
- 9/20 Business Intelligence performing a certificate renewal.
- 9/21 GWireless issues
- 9/22 Business Intelligence Services Banner Issue
- 9/23 TouchNet upgrade to Data Center
- 9/23 Service has been restored to Lustre
- 9/25 VSTC Wireless Maintenance
- 9/28 GWorld Maintenance
- 9/30 PI Dashboard Interruption

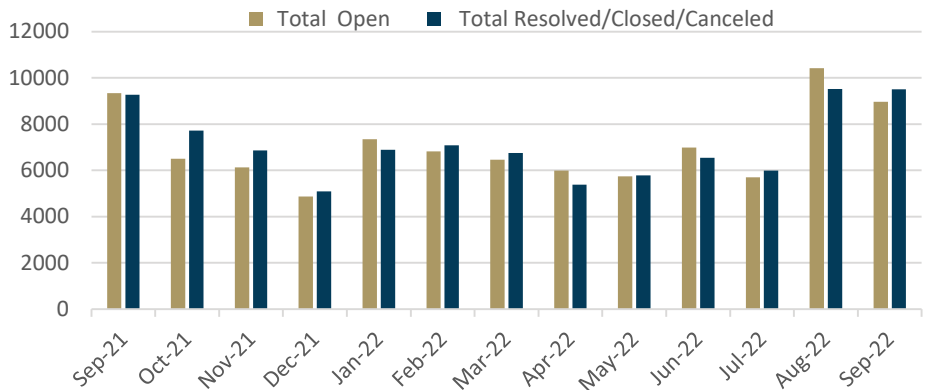
Peak Day September 9th - 652  
Peak Time 3p -4p

### Incoming calls by support type

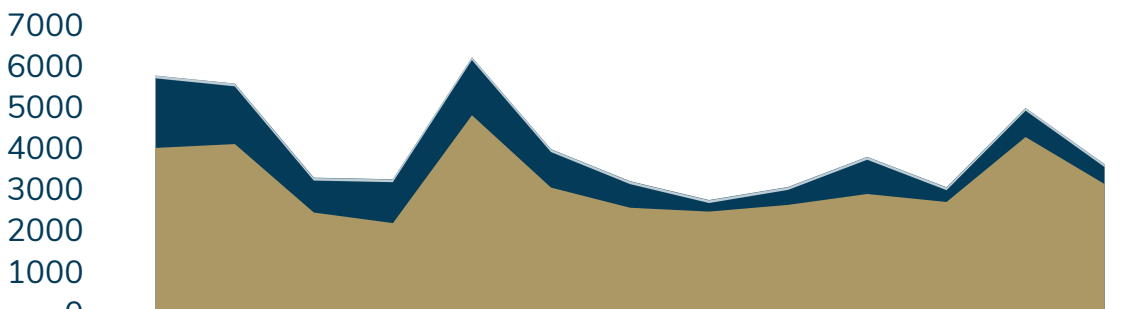


Support Type	Total calls	Calls answered	Adj % answered	Avg speed to answer (min)	Avg time to abandon (min)	Avg handle time (min)
IT Support	2928	2586	90.43%	0:24	0:38	7:55
Classrooms	763	624	90.43%	0:33	0:57	3:48
<b>Total</b>	<b>3691</b>	<b>3210</b>	<b>90.92%</b>	<b>0:26</b>	<b>0:47</b>	<b>7:08</b>

### Monthly Ticket Volume September 2021 - September 2022



### Monthly Call Volume September 2021 - September 2022



	Sept 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	April 22	May 22	June 22	July 22	Aug 22	Sep 22
■ Calls Presented	5847	5657	3369	3330	6292	4062	3283	2821	3143	3871	3133	5060	3691
■ Calls Answered	4093	4187	2520	2263	4887	3128	2634	2544	2704	2971	2778	4355	3210

**Hitchhiker's Guide to the GW Medical Faculty Associates (MFA)<sup>1</sup>**  
**October 7, 2022**

**Executive Summary**

- The Medical Faculty Associates (“MFA”) is comprised of the physicians who service the GW Hospital. It is structured as an independent 501(c)(3) entity, although the University has considerable oversight authority. Two members (Chichester, Lawrence) of the GW Board of Trustees as well as the GW President and the GW Vice President/Treasurer are members of the MFA Board of Trustees; the Dean of the GW Medical School is the CEO of the MFA; the MFA Board Chair, Ellen Zane, is formerly a member of the GW Board of Trustees; and although there is no public roster of the current MFA Board, it appears that former GW Board Chair Nelson Carbonell is also a MFA Board member.
- Over the past 3 fiscal years, the MFA expenses exceeded revenues by (\$43M + \$48M + \$78M =) \$169M. *You read that correctly: the MFA has lost \$169M over the past three years alone, and is seriously in debt, both to the University and to private creditors.*
- To cover these losses, the University has loaned the MFA a great deal of money (some of which has been “forgiven”) over the years, and the University has underwritten some major loans from private creditors.
  - The amount of MFA debt to the University is approximately \$120M;
  - The amount of MFA debt to private creditors appears to be in excess of \$115M, of which at least \$85M (and possibly all) is guaranteed by the University;
  - Therefore, the total MFA debt exceeds \$235M, with University exposure of at least \$200M;
  - It appears that last year the MFA *increased* its loan indebtedness to the University by more than \$70M; the University is continuing to pump tens of millions of dollars into an enterprise that hasn't come close to breaking even for at least three years.
- A recent MFA departmental website postings suggests that physician shortages may be leading to the inability to take new patients, raising concerns about maintaining current revenues.
- The University administration has repeatedly offered false assurances about the financial health of the MFA, and has, to date, declined to provide the Faculty Senate with (1) a MFA Business Plan showing how they are going to recover from this situation, (2) projected MFA quarterly forecasts of revenues and expenditures corresponding to the (unprovided) Business Plan, and (3) any assurance that it will submit for review by the Senate quarterly MFA Financial Statements (e.g., Balance Sheets, Profit and Loss statements) demonstrating that they are meeting the projections specified in the (so far unprovided) quarterly forecasts.

**This is a serious problem, with the potential to have major long-lasting effects if not addressed immediately. What is needed is complete transparency, including immediately providing the Senate with a credible and auditable short- and long-term MFA-specific Business Plan, quarterly MFA revenue and expenditure forecasts that are consistent with the Business Plan, and quarterly MFA Financial Statements that demonstrate successful execution of the MFA Business Plan. Deferring, yet again, to the end of the fiscal year to see if the MFA has turned around without a Business Plan would be extremely risky.**

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<sup>1</sup> This document draws heavily on the presentation by Professors Joseph Cordes and Susan Kulp to the May, 2022, meeting of the GWU Faculty Senate: <https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.gwu.edu/dist/0/196/files/2022/06/5-2022-minutes-attachments.pdf>. Those numbers, in turn, are drawn from the University's published audited financial statements, provided at <https://finance.gwu.edu/reports>. If there are any errors contained in the current document, they are exclusively attributable to this document's author, Professor Philip Wirtz (pww@gwu.edu).

**1. What is the “Medical Faculty Associates” (MFA)?**

The Medical Faculty Associates, Inc. (“MFA”) is an independent 501(c)(3) (nonprofit) corporation whose sole corporate member is The George Washington University. The MFA operates exclusively for the benefit of the University.

**2. Who are the employees of the MFA?**

According to GWToday<sup>2</sup>, the “Medical Faculty Associates is the largest academic physician practice in the metro D.C. area, with 800 physicians who provide comprehensive patient care in 51 medical and surgical specialties. As faculty members in the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the GW MFA physicians serve as teachers and mentors for medical students, residents and researchers.”

**3. What function does the MFA serve?**

The MFA

- provides certain clinical, teaching, research and administrative services to the University;
- provides professional physician services and related health care services, including diagnostic and therapeutic procedures and services, to patients in the greater Washington, DC community and other areas, including those unable to pay for such care;
- Furthers the advancement of medical knowledge through basic and applied research in medicine, lectures, consulting, publishing information and teaching, particularly regarding medical and health care issues prevalent in urban communities;
- Undertakes teaching the diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions to medical students, interns, residents, fellows and other professionals in connection with the University;
- Employs physicians duly licensed to practice medicine, who hold a faculty appointment at the University, and other qualified personnel and makes the service of such personnel available to indigent and other persons requiring such care; and
- Performs the other necessary or appropriate functions and services in connection with the above purposes.

**4. How is the MFA structured?**

- The GWU Medical School Dean is the CEO of the MFA.
- The MFA has its own Board of Trustees who are appointed by the GWU Board of Trustees. Those trustees include several GW Trustees (currently Chichester, Lawrence), the GW President (Wrighton), and the GW Vice President/Treasurer (Fernandes)
- The Board Chairman of the MFA is former GW Trustee (Zane).
- The University has considerable oversight authority over the MFA as set forth in the “Amended and Re-stated By-Laws of the MFA”.
- MFA physicians:
  - i. Salaries and benefits of MFA are paid by the MFA.
  - ii. MFA physicians are clinical faculty in the GWU School of Medicine.
  - iii. MFA physicians are represented in the GWU Faculty Senate.
  - iv. Dependents of MFA clinical faculty qualify for GWU tuition benefits.

**5. What is the financial relationship between the MFA and GWU?**

- Although the MFA and the University are two separate financial entities, the University has loaned the MFA a great deal of money (in the form of structured loans and a line of credit) and is a guarantor of many of the existing private loans to the MFA.
- The University and the MFA each file separate IRS 990 informational tax returns to the IRS and prepare separate audited financial statements.
- Starting in 2020, consolidated financial statements have been prepared.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://gwtoday.gwu.edu/george-washington-university-and-gw-medical-faculty-associates-restructure-relationship>



- As a result of a December 2018 restructuring of the GW-MFA relationship, although the MFA is still a separate non-profit, the University is the sole corporate member and as such has greater control over the medical enterprise.
- There are numerous transactions between GW and MFA, including
  - i. Guarantee of debt
  - ii. Loans / lines of credit
  - iii. Debt forgiveness
  - iv. Contractual relationships (e.g., faculty)

## 6. What is the financial situation of the MFA?

Based on the recently-released University Consolidated Statements for FY2021-2022, the MFA Consolidated Balance Sheet dated June 30, 2021 and the MFA Consolidated Statement of Activities for the year ending on June 30, 2021:

- In FY2021-2022, MFA *operating expenses exceeded operating revenue* by \$78.68M.
- In FY2021-2022, the total net assets of the MFA exceeded -\$157M, not including an “elimination” (i.e., a transfer to the University’s balance sheet) of approximately -\$3M. Because a large portion of the MFA debt is in the form of loans to the MFA that GW has either made directly or has underwritten, this means that if all activity of the MFA had stopped on June 30 2022, the University would have been “on the hook” to cover \$157M. Some of this \$157M would be in the form of “bad debt” that would no longer be available as assets to pursue the academic mission of the University; the remainder would be debts owed to creditors that would demand payment.
- Independent of the MFA’s debt, in the fiscal year 2020-2021, the MFA’s expenses exceeded its revenue by more than \$48M.
- In the previous fiscal year, the MFA also incurred a substantial loss: the MFA’s expenses exceeded its revenue by \$43M<sup>3</sup>.
- *Thus, across the three-year period July 1 2019-June 30 2022, the MFA’s expenses exceeded its revenues by a total of \$168M.*
- The MFA has covered these losses through a series of loans/lines of credit, many of which are directly provided by or guaranteed by GW. As of June 30 2022, the MFA had a total loan balance exceeding \$235M.
- In the 2021-2022 fiscal year alone, it appears that the MFA increased its loan indebtedness to the University by more than \$70M.
- In 2019, the University forgave \$17.5M of the MFA’s debt to it<sup>4</sup>.

## 7. Is the University’s stake in the Hospital directly related to the MFA?

Not in any direct sense. Until very recently, the University owned a 20% stake in the GW Hospital. This past summer, the University sold its 20% share for \$54M. President Wrighton announced at the September Faculty Senate meeting that (without any apparent Faculty consultation) the \$54M would be invested in 14 endowed Faculty positions, including nine in the School of Medical and Health Sciences. *This has no direct bearing on the financial operation or circumstances of the MFA. The \$54M went into the University quasi-endowment, and has zero relationship with the MFA’s operations.* It has been noted, however, that President Wrighton chose (again, without any apparent Faculty consultation) to delegate a significant portion of the \$54M to endowed Faculty positions in the School of Medical and Health Sciences at the same time that the MFA has been running a significant deficit each year and has had to borrow heavily to cover its expenses. In addition to this \$54M, it is reasonable to presume that there are additional provisions associated with the sale of

<sup>3</sup> This value differs from the report given to the Faculty Senate. It is drawn from Page 40 of the GWU Financial Report, 2019-2020, [https://finance.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs4696/files/2022-06/2020-the-george-washington-university-annual-report\\_12212020.pdf](https://finance.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs4696/files/2022-06/2020-the-george-washington-university-annual-report_12212020.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> This number differs from the value presented in the report to the Faculty Senate. It is drawn from Page 22 of the GWU Financial Report 2018-2019, [https://finance.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs4696/files/2022-06/evpt\\_financialreport2018-19.pdf](https://finance.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs4696/files/2022-06/evpt_financialreport2018-19.pdf)

GW's stake that have not yet been shared with the Faculty as of now.

**8. What role has COVID-19 played in the MFA's financial situation?**

COVID-19 related variants, most notably Omicron, have had an adverse impact on MFA volumes, particularly in the months of December 2021 and January 2022. As of June 30 2022, while the number of people commuting into DC for work had increased, it was reportedly still far below pre-pandemic levels, which continued to have an adverse impact. To help mitigate the adverse impact of COVID-19, the MFA received federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) grants of \$15.6 million and \$4.8 million for the years ended June 30, 2022 and 2021, respectively. In addition, during the year ending June 30, 2021, the MFA received \$9.9 million in grants from the Washington, D.C. government to help to mitigate the adverse financial impacts of COVID-19. In the absence of a MFA Business Plan or associated earnings forecasts, it is not currently possible to estimate any continued drag of COVID-19 on MFA revenues.

**9. Have the MFA deficits impacted the operations of the University's academic units?**

- As previously noted, in 2019, the University forgave \$17.5M of the MFA's debt to it. That is \$17.5M that was not, therefore, available to fulfill other aspects of the University's academic mission.
- In order to cover the losses incurred annually by the MFA, the University has chosen to loan the MFA significant amounts of money and provide a line of credit which has been largely drawn upon. These are funds which could otherwise have been used to fulfill other aspects of the University's academic mission.
- Given the significant deficits incurred by the MFA operations in the past several years, there is basis for concern that the University might choose to loan the MFA more money, to forgive additional MFA indebtedness, and/or to act as guarantor of additional private loans. This, again, potentially depletes funds which would otherwise be available to fulfill other aspects of the University's academic mission.

**10. What assurance has the University administration provided to the community that the MFA financial situation is improving?**

- At the May 2022 Faculty Senate meeting, Medical School Dean Bass asserted that "in short order, the MFA's accounts payable to the university will be reconciled". No specifics have been provided, and there is no way to verify the veracity of Dean Bass' assertion.
- Merely "reconciling" the MFA's accounts payable to the University would be suboptimal if it was accomplished by securing additional private loans for which the University was the guarantor.
- A recent GWU medical department posting suggests physician shortages may result in the inability to take new patients, raising questions about ongoing financial viability (see Appendix A).
- At the September 2022 meeting of the Faculty Senate, President Wrighton assured the Senate that "a fulsome discussion of the MFA's finances will take place in the Senate this fall."

**11. Does the MFA have a business model and revenue/cost forecasts?**

If there are such documents, they are unknown to (and have not been shared with) the Faculty Senate. Professor Yezer made precisely this point at the May 2022 Faculty Senate meeting.

**12. How could the situation have gotten this out of hand without anyone noticing?**

It was noticed by the Faculty Senate, and false assurances were provided in response.

- At the October 2020 Faculty Senate meeting, President LeBlanc was asked "how the MFA is performing this year, financially, and how it is anticipated to perform next year."<sup>5</sup> President LeBlanc replied that "the MFA is geared back up now and working hard to recover some of

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<sup>5</sup> <https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.gwu.edu/dist/0/196/files/2020/11/October-2020-minutes-attachments.pdf>

its lost patient care revenue. MFA leadership is optimistic that the MFA has the opportunity to break even this year, which would be a sizable accomplishment in face of the pandemic. He noted that Dean Bass and the MFA Chief Operating Officer are working hard to make this happen, noting that increased efficiency in scheduling allowing for more appointments and telemedicine are helping to keep revenue flowing into the MFA.”<sup>5</sup> That was the fiscal year in which the MFA closed out with a \$43M loss.

- As previously noted, at the May 2022 Faculty Senate meeting, Dean Bass asserted that “[s]he anticipated that, in short order, the MFA’s accounts payable to the university will be reconciled.”<sup>6</sup> Dean Bass’ presentation to the Senate failed to disclose that, in less than 2 months, the MFA would close out the fiscal year with a \$78M loss and \$250M in debt.

### 13. Where do we go from here?

The absence of a Business Plan, including credible and auditable quarterly revenue/cost forecasts, which demonstrate that the MFA has structured a way to return to solvency, is *very* concerning. It would appear that the MFA is spiraling financially downward at high velocity with no end in sight, taking its primary creditor -- the University -- with it. The rest of the University is paying a very high price, with University funds which would otherwise be invested in key academic initiatives flowing instead to the MFA to cover its spiraling debts. And if the excessive losses continue, the very existence of the University becomes imperiled.

The time has come for the central GW administration and the MFA leadership to prepare and share with the Faculty Senate a fiscally responsible MFA Business Plan, including credible, defended quarterly estimates of (among other details) revenues, expenses, cash flows, assets, liabilities (including debts), profits, and losses, in order to demonstrate that the MFA is returning to fiscal health. It would not be sufficient to provide generic undefended “we plan to be at \$X by quarter Y” without providing full documentation supporting such assertions.

The problem is *not* that the University and the MFA have a symbiotic relationship: the MFA has played a critical role in the provision of medical education at GW. The problem *is* that the MFA's fiscal performance has continued to deteriorate ever since the University assumed more direct control over it in December 2018. The MFA’s fiscal performance is undermining our capacity to perform our overall education and research mission, and rosy claims that the problems were addressed have repeatedly been undermined by the audited year-end reports released by the University.

In order to restore the faith of the GW community that the MFA is truly on the path to fiscal recovery, it is critical that the University share the business plan that will guide the MFA in the years ahead and that MFA quarterly performance be shared with those of us who have been trying to ring the alarm bell for several years.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.gwu.edu/dist/0/196/files/2022/06/5-2022-minutes-attachments.pdf>

**Appendix A**  
**Department of Gastroenterology & Liver Diseases Notice to Patients**

- Department of Gastroenterology & Liver Diseases  
<https://gwdocs.com/specialties/gastroenterology-liver-diseases>

Accessed on October 3, 2022

“Dear Patients,

The GW MFA Division of Gastroenterology is undergoing a transformation, and as always, we remain committed to delivering the best possible care for our patients. With this in mind, our goal is to enhance access and continue to deliver high-quality care for our current patients at our 2150 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, location.

Like so many academic medical centers around the country in the aftermath of the pandemic, we are rebuilding our physician and advanced practitioner teams and are excited for our new colleagues to start this fall. As we grow, we expect to be able to welcome new patients to our practice again soon. Thank you so much for entrusting the GW MFA with your care. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our offices.

Thank you very much for your patience and understanding during this time.”