



# Faculty Senate

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SENATE MEETING  
HELD ON FEBRUARY 9, 2024  
HYBRID: 1957 E STREET/STATE ROOM & WEBEX**

Present: President Granberg; Provost Bracey; Executive Committee Chair Feldman; Parliamentarian Binder; Registrar Cloud; Senate Office Staff Liz Carlson and Jenna Chaojareon; Deans Ayres, Bass, Feuer, Goldman, Lach, Riddle, and Wahlbeck; Professors Anenberg, Badie, Borum, Briggs, Brinkerhoff, Callier, Clarke, Eakle, El-Ghazawi, Engel, Gore, Gutman, Kargaltsev, Kay, Kramon, Kulp, Lu, Mahshie, Marvar, Mazhari, Orti, Parsons, Rain, Schultheiss, Schwindt, Tschirhart, von Barghahn, Vyas, Wagner, Wilson, Wirtz, and Zeman.

Absent: Deans Henry, Kelly-Weeder, and Matthew; Professors Bamford, Gupta, Kieff, Olesen, Pittman, Sarkar, and Tielsch.

## CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:04p.m.

## APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The [minutes](#) of the January 12, 2024, Faculty Senate meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

## INTRODUCTION OF NEW SENATE MEMBER

President Granberg welcomed Professor Mary Tschirhart of the Columbian College of Arts & Sciences (CCAS) to the Senate. Professor Tschirhart was elected to complete the term of Professor Joe Cordes, who is on leave this semester.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Ellen Granberg, President)

The President's report is [attached](#).

## BRIEF STATEMENTS & QUESTIONS/PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Referencing the community plan, Professor Schultheiss asked about the status of efforts to clarify and reconcile conflicts between existing university policies, particularly in light of recent events. She added that she is very concerned about who is involved in the process of making policy decisions around free speech rules and regulations at the university. President Granberg responded that there has been a lot of community engagement recently around these issues, and she asked the Provost to provide further updates. Provost Bracey noted that the current work involves determining what is

permissible under existing policies and whether there might be clarifications and alignments under those existing policies without having to change them or create new policies. This work is happening within the Office of the General Counsel and with Dean of Students Colette Coleman. He affirmed that, if changes to existing policies or new policies are needed, he would want to bring in the relevant Senate committees (e.g., Education Policy & Technology (EPT)) to help with that work.

Professor Schultheiss noted that these issues have risen to top of the agenda at every university nationally since October and asked why GW is only now, months later, figuring out whether changes are needed. The Provost responded that different colleges and universities have placed different levels of attention onto their policies over the years depending on what their university communities have required. GW hasn't spent a lot of time updating policies for protesting and similar activities over the years in part because the university enjoys having a vibrant community that is committed to free speech and expression. The university likes the fact that its students are engaged, and this hasn't been an issue; GW has had customs in the past where it often coordinated with student organizations ahead of their protests so that the university was fully aware of and engaged with protests, avoiding surprises. A lot of this has changed in recent months, not just at GW but across the country. Nationally, colleges and universities are reckoning with their existing policies to determine if new ones are needed or if they can revisit their customs. This figures more prominently for some universities because of media coverage, but all univs are working with the same basic question, which is what is permissible under the existing policy framework, what sort of customs are in place that may have evolved, changed, or broken in the intervening months, and what actions need to be taken, whether those actions are customary or policy in nature. He asked whether General Counsel Barber or Dean Coleman wished to add anything to his comments.

Mr. Barber expressed that the matter was well summarized by the Provost. His office is reviewing various policies to make sure they're coordinated with each other and thinking about whether there are protocols or policies that need to be adjusted. There is certainly the understanding, he added, that if policy changes need to be considered, the Senate and others would be engaged to address them.

With regard to the strategic plan, Professor Feldman asked whether faculty would be involved in the process of distilling and defining the pillars that emerge from campus conversations this semester (and not just in the campus conversations). The President responded in the affirmative, with the caveat that the Board ultimately makes the decision about this. However, she and the Provost have been discussing mechanisms for a formal opportunity for faculty to participate in that distillation process.

On the topic of the tradeoffs between free speech and academic freedom, Professor Wirtz recalled that, at the November Senate meeting, the President indicated that discussions on this subject were necessary and that she and the Provost were working out how they would promote those conversations on campus. With the announcement last week of a comprehensive plan, he expressed concern that faculty were not invited to participate in the discussions that led to this plan. Beyond determining merely whether policies are conflicting, he asked whether there shouldn't also be discussions about the role of free speech and academic freedom and what happens when conflicts arise. President Granberg responded that these discussions will happen. The first has been scheduled and will take place next week; this is a forum with experts on free speech who will discuss free speech on campuses that the Law School put together very quickly. The thinking around this is to

see what the discussion at that forum is like and what the responses to it are and then determine next steps about a broader campus conversation.

She added that another piece of this issue centers on classrooms. One thing that has become very clear to her as well as the Provost is that, for many faculty and students, there is a silencing in the classroom. The issue is so fraught that faculty shy away from teaching material they think might be controversial. Therefore, another part of the plan is to hold conversations with both faculty and students about kind of classroom environment they want around free speech. The community plan currently contains information about how the university intends to begin those conversations; the plan's existence does not mean that conversations took place and a determination was made about what the free speech environment on campus should be.

Professor Wirtz expressed this this was very responsive to his point. He added that most of the faculty would feel very left out if these necessary discussions don't end up happening because the upcoming Law School forum somehow indicates they're not needed. President Granberg affirmed that this would not be the case. There is a set of legal theories about free speech on college campuses, and the upcoming forum will gather a set of experts (some from GW and some external) to have a conversation about the state of law as a kind of baseline. It is intended to be a level-setting activity and the beginning piece of a conversation that can help the university have its conversation, ideally sooner rather than later.

Professor Wagner spoke in her capacity as a co-chair of EPT. As a committee of 40 voting members with representation across the university, this committee has a lot of experience on the front lines over the past several months with issues of academic freedom & free speech. The committee is an excellent and deeply invested resource. She urged the President to bring EPT into the room as the committee is already thinking and strategizing about these issues. Strengthening the GW community means getting buy-in from GW community members and involving them ahead of releasing a major plan. She referenced a Hatchet report that only three students attended a function designed to obtain student feedback and observed that this should not be taken as a measure of the community. Low attendance might actually be indicating something about why the community is not coming together around this type of event. She noted that there are deeper, longer conversations to be had with a range of stakeholders; some of those should address where there are moments of fracture and distrust. Senate committees are key among the spaces where these discussions can take place. Finally, she suggested that a link to GW's guidelines on academic freedom be prominently placed on the plan's website in order to highlight the university's strong commitment in this area and not bury it further down the page.

President Granberg responded that these are excellent suggestions and that the Senate committees on Education Policy and Technology and Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom would be great places to have these types of conversations. She also thanked Professor Wagner for the excellent idea of prominently linking to something that explains GW's academic freedom commitment on the community plan website.

Professor Wilson encouraged the President to schedule additional activities beyond the Law School forum; this will generate valuable discussions.

Professor Gore noted that GW ranked very low in a recent survey on how comfortable students feel expressing their views in the classroom. She was therefore very glad that these conversations are

taking place. Acknowledging that it might be a challenge to bring this group to the table, she added that it is important to find a way to include students who feel that their voices are being marginalized. This group needs to know that they can speak up and be supported.

#### PROVOST'S REPORT (Chris Bracey, Provost)

The Provost's report is [attached](#).

#### BRIEF STATEMENTS & QUESTIONS/PROVOST'S REPORT

Professor Wilson asked whether the Diversity Summit will be recorded, noting that sessions often conflict with teaching schedule. Vice Provost Laguerre-Brown responded that the keynote sessions will be recorded but that the 35 workshops will not. This is due in part to resource constraints and in part to a possible chilling effect on candid participation if attendees know sessions are being recorded.

Professor Brinkerhoff shared her deep concern around the staffing issues in the Multicultural Student Services Center (MSSC). Vice Provost Laguerre-Brown's office is already under-resourced and will be hard pressed to staff the MSSC while new staff are being hired. She strongly encouraged the university to invest more in how it supports its students, faculty, and staff related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT (Ilana Feldman, Chair)

The Report of the Executive Committee is [attached](#).

Professor Feldman noted that, due to the sensitive nature of some of the material in CFO Fernandes's report on the Medical Faculty Associates (MFA), a request will be forthcoming from a Senate member to move this report to an executive session of the Senate. In addition, the Education Policy & Technology (EPT) committee chair has indicated a desire to move consideration of their resolution to after the executive session, with the understanding that details presented in the executive session may not be repeated in open session. Both of these requests have been shared with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) and have the support of that committee.

To address the EPT request first, Professor Feldman moved that the agenda be re-ordered as follows: the Research report, the MFA report (pending the outcome of the upcoming executive session motion), and the EPT resolution. The motion was seconded.

Unanimous consent was requested and obtained for the motion to reorder the agenda.

#### REPORT: Annual Report on Research (Pam Norris, Vice Provost for Research)

Vice Provost Norris's [full presentation](#) was distributed with the agenda for this meeting. Speaking to the Senate, she presented an [executive summary](#) of her presentation:

“For this presentation, I'll speak to the two primary areas that I focus on as Vice Provost for Research. The first is identifying ways to boost our impact by supporting faculty:

- I am always looking for new and creative ways to highlight faculty excellence across disciplines. I was proud to facilitate a panel discussion on academic excellence during President Granberg's inauguration. I work closely with the Office of Communications and Marketing to find new ways to highlight faculty in our Research Magazine and other publications.
- For the past two years I have started a new research orientation program that introduces the offices and programs available to support our scholarly community. We've created an online video library of these orientation sessions so that faculty and research staff can access them on-demand.
- My office continues to provide professional development opportunities to the scholarly community. Two recent examples are grant writing sessions and a three-day faculty writing retreat on the Mount Vernon Campus--- which we plan to continue to offer each semester going forward.
- This year we have continued to invest in our electronic infrastructure. We secured an enterprise-wide license for LabArchives, for example, which is an electronic lab notebook tool.
- GW faculty now also have access to the services of Lewis-Burke Associates, a federal relations firm who is helping us to gain intel around federal funding opportunities.
- Even as the regulatory landscape is changing, with significantly increased federal oversight, we are committed to finding ways to make compliance easier and less burdensome. We are undertaking comprehensive reviews of administrative functions and working to identify tools and streamlined processes to assist.
- I'm working to support the launch of new university-wide research institutes and initiatives, and I will soon be announcing a new pilot funding program for efforts to build teams and apply for center-scale funding opportunities.
- And I continue to work closely with the provost and with colleagues in the schools to continue to find ways to integrate research into the classroom and create more experiential learning opportunities for our students.

“The second major priority for me is enhancing our reputation and strengthening our connections with external partners.

- One of GW's strengths, what President Granberg likes to refer to as our “unfair advantage,” is our location in the nation's capital and our proximity to leading policy, governmental, and cultural institutions.
- We leverage this strength by convening and hosting impactful conversations. Just this year we hosted Research!America, the nation's biggest advocate for biomedical research and funding; an international forum on AI and data governance; a professional development day for DC science writers, and more.
- Next week, GW will have a robust presence at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. AAAS is the world's largest multi-disciplinary scientific society. And next month, GW will host a live taping of Science Friday, a popular radio show.
- GW is the recipient of multiple recent awards from the U.S. Navy, NIST and NSF, among others, to diversify and strengthen the nation's STEM workforce. GW is emerging as a real leader in this workforce development space, and I look forward to supporting other faculty that wish to expand in this arena.
- Our reach is expanding globally. Our Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship is expanding its engagements with international audiences, connecting them to the U.S. market.

- And we're no less active on the local level. Just last month I hosted a daylong workshop with nearly 100 of our region's leaders from academia, industry and government. The goal was to strengthen the innovation ecosystem here in the nation's capital. GW is a major player in the region's economic development goals and so creating opportunities to work together is critical to both GW's and this region's success.

“Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide this report. I welcome your questions on anything I've discussed here or in the materials that were circulated with your agenda.”

Professor Wirtz asked about GW's position in the Higher Education Research & Development (HERD) rankings by the National Science Foundation (NSF). He observed that the ranking has shifted up and down over time, notably jumping after former Vice President of Research Chalupa received an influx of funding upon his arrival, and asked whether the university is headed in the right direction with regard to this ranking.

Vice Provost Norris noted that, as the slide in the appendix of the pre-circulated slides shows, GW ranked 109<sup>th</sup> in federal expenditures in the HERD ranking in 2009. Following years of significant investments in things such as new institutes, that ranking increased to 80<sup>th</sup> in 2018. But while GW's research expenditures have continued to grow year over year, its overall ranking relative to its peers has continued to decrease in recent years and in FY22 GW ranked 95<sup>th</sup>. This suggests that GW's peers are growing more quickly.

She was excited to report, however, that after the first two quarters of FY24 GW's federal expenditures are up 23.1% compared to last year (whereas the university was down 12.7% at this point last fiscal year in the same year-over-year measure). Even more excitingly, nine of GW's ten schools are up this year, with six of ten being up more than 10% each.

Professor Wirtz asked whether GW anticipates improving in this ranking. Vice Provost Norris responded that this is difficult to predict without knowing exactly what GW's competition is doing. Significant investment in research infrastructure is needed to sustain this ranking. Professor Wirtz asked whether investments in research have increased in recent years. Vice Provost Norris responded that investment levels have not increased since her arrival but noted that she is very scrappy with her resources and is finding opportunities in places across the university to provide assistance to GW's faculty to continue increasing research funding.

Professor El-Ghazawi recalled that even before Dr. Chalupa arrived, the Board made direct investments in strategic academic programs under the direction of Executive Vice President Don Lehman. During Dr. Chalupa's tenure with the Research office, the board directly funded other initiatives (e.g., the Computational Biology Institute, the Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders Institute). The university does a very good job in terms of giving single investigators funds through programs such as the University Facilitating Fund, but big initiatives that require significant, multi-year investments have not been made in a long time.

Professor Feldman noted that, in her field, there are major concerns about the Institutional Review Board (IRB). First, staffing problems are leading to delays in not only faculty research productivity but also the pedagogical mission of training students. Second, the IRB approach to qualitative research (outside of biomedical) includes blockages and obstacles that lead to slowdowns as well. She asked whether there is there a plan to resolve this.

Vice Provost Norris responded that a number of changes have recently impacted GW's human research protection program. Federal regulations and guidance have undergone significant reforms, and the number and complexity of research projects that involve human participants have increased. As an AAU member, GW must now more than ever ensure that its human research protection program meets the standards of a preeminent research university. GW's Federal Wide Assurance (FWA) does not differentiate between clinical and non-clinical research; there is a single unified standard for all types of research. The university must continue to safeguard the individuals that volunteer for its studies. At the same time, Vice Provost Norris noted that her office is working to facilitate an efficient review and approval of submitted protocols and an overall positive experience for GW faculty.

In support of these commitments, the Office of Research Integrity and Compliance (ORIC) is leading an evaluation of its human research protection program. That review includes all of the units, staffing, policies, procedures, workflows, and systems that are involved. There will be multiple ways for faculty to provide input and feedback as that review advances.

Professor Wagner reported positive news from colleagues in that pre- and post-award support is showing improvement, which means a lot to investigators. However, she noted that there are still incredible inefficiencies in getting people on grants paid through university systems. Ultimately, if it is too cumbersome to administer a grant at GW, faculty will take the grant elsewhere even if that means leaving indirect costs (IDCs) on table. This creates a real reputational issue for the university when, for example, unpaid invoices go to collections. The time researchers spend trying to navigate the systems and get consultants paid and research staff hired takes away from valuable work time.

Professor Norris relayed that her office met with Human Resources (HR) two weeks ago to sort through this; hiring processes at GW are handled by different offices depending on who is being hired, and the principal investigator (PI) has to sort through all of these different offices and processes. She is currently working on how her office can support PIs in this. In addition, HR is starting to hold school-based meetings to learn about situations specific to the schools in this area.

Professor Brinkerhoff expressed concern about the consistent turnover in IRB staff and wondered if this has something to do with the nature of the job. She guessed that this might be connected to a sense of demoralization that many have around doing sponsored research at GW. She issued a plea to, while reconfiguring this office, think about job design and how to retain staff and reduce the current high levels of turnover. Vice Provost Norris responded that, upon arriving at GW, she immediately held skip-level interviews with staff in her office. It is so important as a research administrator to understand what you're able to do to lighten the administrative burden of researchers. She noted that she was pleasantly surprised when she held those interviews at the level of engagement more of the staff had; she indicated that it was time for another round of these interviews.

Professor Gore observed that she is receiving more and more requests from undergraduate students who want to engage with faculty in research and asked whether the university can do more to connect these students to projects. Vice Provost Norris responded that opportunities for undergraduate experiential learning are very important. She has worked with Vice Provost for Enrollment and Student Success Jay Goff on ways to expand this, including educating faculty about how to hire work study students to work on research projects and adding the zero-credit transcript

notations for research. She stated that she would continue to look for ways to increase undergraduate research opportunities.

Professor El-Ghazawi noted that faculty who already have NSF funding can request a supplement for their NSF grants to bring in undergraduate research assistants using the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) NSF mechanism. This is something GW can do more of to engage additional undergraduates on faculty research with financial support. Vice Provost Norris agreed, noting that last year OVPR reached out to all those with NSF awards to alert them to the REU supplement possibility and will do it again this year. The program, she noted, is the easiest sponsored research funding a PI will ever get; it is a simple two-page application for those with existing NSF grant that results in around \$7000 per student, typically for two students max (but for even more students if they are from underrepresented groups).

Professor Wilson noted that biomedical research has historically dominated the chart of where grant funding is going and noted that other academic areas often need help identifying sponsored research opportunities in their disciplines. Vice Provost Norris responded that the Spark to Impact series was developed to help address this; along with some NIH and NSF toolkit resources from Hanover Research. These resources cover all the fundamental components of applying for sponsored research so that any faculty member can pursue a funding opportunity. In addition, she has had conversations with all of the Associate Deans for Research about the array of resources available and has a good slide deck summarizing these resources. She added that she would be happy to visit any school and present on how to find and respond to research opportunities.

Professor Wirtz offered a privileged motion, as follows: “I move that the Senate move into executive session for a discussion of MFA finances and that Provost Bracey, Bruno Fernandes, Jonathan Post, and the deans of GW’s ten schools be invited to attend the executive session. I move further that time in executive session be limited to 30 minutes, at which point the Senate will return to regular session.” The motion was seconded.

President Granberg ruled that the question is one of privilege to be entertained immediately and asked whether anyone wished to speak on the motion to go into executive session.

Professor Brinkerhoff expressed some concern about the executive session motion from her faculty colleagues and asked what the plan is for transparency on these issues in the future. President Granberg responded that any information consistent with what would have been shared in open session can be shared with school colleagues. Professor Wirtz added that nothing in his motion is in any way intended to compromise the relationship between the administration and the Fiscal Planning & Budgeting (FPB) committee, which receives timely reports from the administration. In addition, by law, the university must present its audit reports no later than October to the university and must also make those reports fully public.

Unanimous consent was requested and obtained for the motion. An additional unanimous consent motion was approved to allow General Counsel Charles Barber to attend the executive session. The Senate adjourned to an executive session at 3:17pm and returned to open session at 3:55pm.



RESOLUTION 24/7: On the Impact of the Medical Faculty Associates Debt on Strategic Planning, Education, and Financial Aid at the George Washington University (Sarah Wagner, Co-Chair, Educational Policy & Technology Committee)

Professor Wagner moved consideration of the resolution; the motion was seconded. She introduced the resolution with the following remarks:

“I’d like to begin by making clear what this resolution is not: It’s not intended as an attack on the medical arm of the university – a point that I and other EPT senators hope to underscore in today’s discussion; rather, it’s born from a concern for the well-being and success of the entire university (as Mark Wrighton said, for GW “not just to survive but to thrive”) – especially in its educational mission.

“Next, I would underscore that this concern on EPT’s part is not new. We have been talking about, asking about, fretting about short and long-term investments into the academic side of the house, particularly related to our students’ success, for over two years. We formally began addressing the implications of the Medical Faculty Associates record of loss last fall. Here’s the brief timeline:

- Fall 2022 discussion, specifically an Oct 7 memorandum, noted in the committee’s interim report (“implications of the Medical Faculty Associates financial status for the university’s educational mission”) and again in our final report.
- In Fall 2023 we took up the topic again, with a second memorandum circulated in October, discussed in our December 15 meeting, again noted in interim report.
- After the December 15 EPT meeting, a subcommittee drafted the resolution (six of us, including my co-chair, Irene Foster, three from CCAS, one from Elliott School, one from Business School, and Lisa Schwartz, who provided particularly valuable input as an SMHS representative)
- The resolution was then debated and then approved by unanimous consent in our January 19, 2024, meeting.

“Why is EPT raising this issue to the level of a resolution? Why are we asking you to join us in expressing our concern and a call to action?”

- (1) Our faculty, from across the units, are alarmed by the MFA record of loss (as I asked Bruno earlier in the fall, “how much loss is too much loss?”); we are frustrated by encouraging words of turnarounds that haven’t materialized, and by the uncertain path forward in which enduring MFA losses of such scale may jeopardize GW’s educational mission, the student experience, and financial aid (as stressed in Whereas Clauses 1, 2, 5)
- (2) We are at a critical juncture of strategic planning (as noted in Whereas Clauses 3 and 10): “WHEREAS, The Medical Faculty Associates’ declining financial performance and high rate of indebtedness exposes the university to high levels of risk that prevent a coherent and rational strategic planning process which would consider what university priorities should be in the coming years and especially limit the ability to expand financial aid to students.”

“What constructive actions are we recommending?”

- Careful assessment of the impact and regular reporting;
- Following principles of shared governance, we’re requesting that EPT play a leading role in deliberations about how best to support our students’ academic success; and

- As stated in Resolving Clause 4: That in order to develop and implement future academic endeavors and engage in strategic educational planning of appropriate scale and scope across the university, the faculty need timely and accurate appraisals of the timeline for the Medical Faculty Associates return to profitability.”

Professor Feldman asked how, during the committee’s drafting process, the reporting timelines were determined, considering the existing quarterly reports to FPB and the Senate and what these requirements add to the current reporting burden. Professor Wagner responded that the timelines in the resolution are meant to align with the Board of Trustees meetings in February so that a timely report can be made after the end of the previous calendar year. She emphasized that the resolution is presenting a request that the administration bring these reports to the Board. Professor Feldman clarified that her question was about the proliferation of reports and the burden this creates, while not presupposing the value-added of new reports. Professor Wagner stated she was sympathetic to this concern. She noted that a thread she has been pulling at in this meeting and others is a discussion about a more active way to consider the enduring impacts of this issue that reverberate into GW’s classrooms. The purpose of reporting is not just to exchange numbers but gets at the heart of how fears and misconceptions can proliferate with a lack of conversation in the community.

Professor Orti spoke in favor of the resolution, appreciating especially the proactive suggestion to perform assessments of underfunded areas. He noted that his own department has serious infrastructure issues, especially around delivering introductory biology courses in substandard conditions in Bell Hall, and he applauded efforts to bring more attention to these areas.

Professor Wilson also spoke in support of resolution, noting that the proposed report in the resolution would be an entirely different focus than existing reports and is just as important.

Professor Parsons observed that there is a concern only about losses in the MFA. For him, this returns to questions about the function and existence of the MFA and its importance given the university’s changed relationship with hospital. He noted that he is not quite clear on what the MFA does and what would happen to GW’s medical school if the MFA ceased to exist. Professor Wagner reiterated her opening comment that the resolution is not in any way an attack on the medical arm of the university. The present questions are of viability and governance and its impact on the educational mission as a whole, which includes the medical school. She asked Dean Bass to speak to the MFA’s function.

Dean Bass stated that a clinical medical practice is absolutely essential to having a school of medicine. A medical school cannot exist without faculty to teach in clinical settings; the experiential learning component in years 3 and 4 of medical school has to occur in an environment staffed by faculty. To have an accredited medical school, one must have a clinical faculty of the appropriate size and scale to meet the educational needs of students. When the MFA was formed (originally as a separate entity from the university,) its bylaws stated that it was being created to serve exclusively the educational and training needs of School of Medicine & Health Sciences (SMHS) students. Other affiliations do exist; for example, the pediatrics department is housed at Children’s National Medical Center (CNMC).

Professor Wagner thanked Dean Bass for her explanation. She noted that the bigger picture and what drives current concerns is understanding the balance of the long-term investments. Long-term

investment in the MFA is valued provided that it is not a series of bad news and losses, which is invariably a drain on the university as it enters a strategic planning mode asking for big thinking. Without making this an all-encompassing conversation, she noted that some of this is about balance the anxiety that faculty across all the units—including the medical school—feel about the university’s ability to build out to the future as it wishes.

Professor Schultheiss spoke in favor of resolution. The noted that there is a lot of talk on campus about how the MFA is doing damage to other areas of the university because it is a big drain on resources. Some of that is grounded in misinformation about how the university’s finances work. In that vein, the resolution provides a structure for conveying how the relationship between the MFA’s finances and the other university enterprises actually functions. She noted that she has heard numerous rumors about how the MFA is sinking one enterprise or another and that she believes that to be inaccurate. The resolution provides a structure for clarifying how these entities actually relate to each other financially.

Professor Eakle asked whether there are processes that can be embedded within the resolution to delineate the MFA’s challenges from the financial solidity of the university. The request in the resolution for explicit reporting on the impact on GW’s educational mission goes exactly to that point and could generate a strong response on the health of the overall university finances.

Professor Marvar, speaking as a faculty member in SMHS, underscored Dean Bass’s comments on the importance of the MFA to the educational mission of SMHS. In the interest of providing more clarification for the group, he asked if Dean Bass might further her comments with regard to the model that exists at GW and how that differs from a traditional medical school. Dean Bass noted that there are innumerable models for academic medical centers. In many instances, a university owns a hospital and a whole integrated system; this is very different from what GW has. GW has a freestanding clinical faculty practice as a separate not-for profit corporation with the university as the sole corporate member, and an academic affiliation agreement with the hospital. Like many medical schools, SMHS has a different financial model than most of the other schools in the university. As a GW “closed” financial model school, SMHS relies on its own financial assets to run the school and maintain the physical infrastructure of the facilities; tuition, mission support funds from the hospital, extramural research funds, clinical practice fees, and philanthropy and endowment funds support program and faculty tenure lines for SMHS-employed tenured faculty.

Dean Bass added that this is an extraordinary and unprecedented time in health care. The COVID pandemic caused financial and healthcare delivery hardships nationwide, and recovery is not yet achieved in most markets. Disrupted health care work forces, changes in patient demographics and operational challenges, and rising costs have all contributed to this disruption. The turnaround efforts at the MFA addressing these challenges, coupled to a reset of the affiliation with the hospital, is delivering effective operational improvements which will drive financial stability. She is aware of the GW faculty’s often-stated perspective that the loans that the university has provided to the MFA could undermine university financial rankings and regrets that the recovery has been lengthy and has fueled GW faculty concerns. She noted that CFO Fernandes can speak to the fact that the MFA does make payments on the money it has borrowed so far, substantially contributing to the university’s expendable revenue on a monthly basis. The medical enterprise is walking out of very dark time, and she stated that she firmly believes that, with the new executive health care administrative expertise on board now and with the additional rigorous moves in the coming months, a turnaround will be completed.

Professor Wagner stated that the reason this resolution comes before the Senate is that there are significant recurring losses to the MFA. These ongoing losses place fear-based barriers around what the community believes it can plan for in a wish to make GW greater. The resolution emphasizes the need to focus on the student experience, student services, and financial aid; conversations in these areas are part of a longer-term strategy of investing in GW's students.

Professor Gore stated that she supports the resolution as written.

Professor Eakle asked why graduate aid is excluded in Resolving Clause 2. Professor Wagner responded that undergraduate aid is extremely important to the university's reputation; the ability of students to complete their first degree without taking on massive loans or outsized employment while in school is why the focus of this resolution is on undergraduate financial aid. This is not to say that graduate aid is not important, but the committee's focus was on thinking about undergraduate financial aid due to the critical importance this plays in thinking about how GW performs relative to its competitors in this area and in supporting its students.

Professor Schultheiss added that meeting the financial needs of its students is a core part of GW's educational mission, as is providing the kind of supports they need while studying here (e.g., counseling). The committee expressed a huge interest in knowing what impact these kinds of financial struggles have on that mission, and the resolution helps provide clarity on what that relationship is.

Professor Eakle stated that, in light of this concern, the resolution should also be inclusive of graduate education. Professor Wagner responded that the resolution was written to underscore undergraduate aid through the "especially" clause, not to exclude other areas. She added that the resolution was carefully vetted in committee to this end, considering the updates it received from Vice Provost Goff.

Professor Parsons asked, for the sake of perspective when thinking about MFA losses, what the annual SMHS budget is. Dean Bass responded that the SMHS budget and MFA all in is \$900 million-\$1 billion.

Discussion of the resolution closed, and amendments were considered.

Professor El-Ghazawi noted that the Senate Research Committee met today and discussed this resolution. The committee felt strongly that research is another area that needs a great deal of attention in this discussion given the shift away from sizable research investments. With this in mind, and with a concern that research not be left behind in these discussions, the Research committee voted to offer as an amendment a new resolving clause. The proposed clause would be placed after the existing second resolving clause as it mirrors the second resolving clause; it reads as follows:

"The Faculty Senate requests that administration and Board leaders conduct an assessment in cooperation with the Senate's Research Committee of the research enterprise including internal investment required to protect and enhance the reputation for excellence at the George Washington University."

Professor El-Ghazawi moved consideration of the amendment; the motion was seconded.

Professor Gutman opposed the amendment as the purpose of the resolution is to focus on an analysis of the MFA and the impact of its situation on the university and is not to extend to analyzing other aspects of university. Approving this amendment could open the floodgates to all manner of other special interests.

Professor Schultheiss asked a clarifying question about the amendment. Initially, she thought the assessment in the amendment clause was meant to address the impact of the MFA's situation on the research mission. If this is not the case, she would not be in favor of the amendment as it would be outside the scope of the resolution.

Professor El-Ghazawi responded that the amendment matches the references and proposals in the second Resolving Clause. Professor Wagner noted that one possibility might be to add the Research Committee to the second Resolving Clause, in tandem with EPT.

Professor Wirtz stated that he opposed this amendment as written but would propose adding the research component to Resolving Clause 2. He noted that EPT discussed including research in the resolution but ultimately decided not to do so because research is outside EPT's domain. The Research committee should be the ones to decide whether research goes in. Adding that he understood Professor Gutman's concern, he observed that there are three primary responsibilities of the university: teaching, research, and service. Adding research, one of the critical pillars of the university, would not open the doors to a long list of other additions.

Professor Foster was recognized as a co-chair of EPT. She agreed with Professor Wirtz and stated her opposition to the amendment as a new Resolving Clause. However, she would support the previous suggestions to add research to the existing Resolving Clause 2.

Professor Eakle reiterated his concern about excluding graduate education from this clause. Professor Foster responded that graduate education is not being excluded in this clause. Rather, the clause offers a focus on undergraduate education and aid.

Professor Gutman noted that a simple solution would be to strike the "especially" clause from Resolving Clause 2 and let the assessment process determine what the underfunded areas are and how the MFA's situation impacts them without prejudging the situation.

Professor Brinkerhoff stated that the bottom line of the resolution is to point out when losses at the MFA are enough and at what point the university decides that its mission is being damaged. This is already in the resolution language; the resolution speaks to the question of to what limits GW willing to go before recognizing that the academic mission is being jeopardized because of the situation at the MFA.

Professor Wirtz requested unanimous consent to amend Professor El-Ghazawi's amendment by not adding a new Resolving Clause 3 but instead by adding the Research committee to Resolving Clause 2. Unanimous consent was not obtained.

A vote on Professor Wirtz's amendment to Professor El-Ghazawi's amendment passed, 14-3. A vote on the amended amendment passed, 17-3 (with 1 abstention).

Professor Eakle noted his appreciation for the work the committee put into the resolution and asked if the appendix is necessary given that some elements of it seem to be inaccurate. Professor Wirtz, as the author of the appendix, requested details on the inaccuracies Professor Eakle has observed. Professor Eakle referenced the appendix's statement that the MFA does not have a long-term business plan, noting that Dean Bass's detailed comments about actions being taken to improve the MFA's situation point to the existence of a plan. He also questioned the assertion in the appendix that the situation spun out of control without anyone noticing, stating that the matter has received a great deal of attention.

Professor Wirtz stated that FPB and the Senate have for years been asking the university administration and Dean Bass for an MFA business plan. His understanding is that a business plan that makes sense would be heavily predicated on the assumption of increased foot traffic to the MFA. To best of his knowledge, he stated, there isn't any indication that this can happen. Therefore, arguing that there is an inaccuracy in the document isn't correct—a business plan has not yet been forthcoming for the MFA.

Professor Wirtz noted that he had no strong objection to eliminating the appendix but observed that the contents were accurate as of the date it was written. This is a constantly changing situation, and EPT is making its proposal largely because of what is presented in the appendix. In other words, this is essentially legislative history, providing some context for the basis on which the resolution is being offered now. If the Senate views that context as being irrelevant or unnecessary to the resolution, it can certainly vote to pull it back. His own view, however, is that it is relevant and does provide context for the rationale of the resolution.

Professor Wagner observed that the document is already part of two public documents (the December Senate minutes and the EPT interim report). It is fundamental to the resolution and discussions of it, and the committee would like to keep it intact.

Professor Eakle moved to remove the appendix and references to it from the resolution. The motion was not seconded.

Professor Eakle moved to amend Resolving Clause 2 by adding "and graduate" following "undergraduate." Professor Wagner opposed the amendment, noting that she was the Director of Graduate Studies in her department for three years and works closely with graduate students, as do many faculty. However, the phrase "underfunded areas" in the clause's preceding language and the emphasis on the needs of undergraduate students at this moment does not diminish the needs of graduate students.

Professor Gore stated that she is under the impression that undergraduate education is far more underfunded than graduate education. The current language in the resolution doesn't exclude graduate education but suggests that undergraduate education is more underfunded.

Professor El-Ghazawi noted that, this fall, GTAs will be paid more than they've ever been. He expressed a concern that, should budgets remain flat, departments will not be able to fund as many students as they could previously, creating gaps and shortfalls for programs.

A vote on the amendment passed, 11-9.

A vote on the amended resolution passed, 20-1; [the resolution as amended](#) was adopted.

#### INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

No new resolutions were introduced at the meeting.

#### GENERAL BUSINESS

- I. Nominations for membership to Senate Standing Committees  
No new nominations were presented at the meeting.
- II. Senate Standing Committee Reports  
No new standing committee reports have been received.

#### BRIEF STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

None.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08pm.

## Faculty Senate Meeting: President's Report February 9, 2024

Good afternoon, everyone. It's a pleasure to join you all today.

### Events and Updates

With the spring semester in full swing, I've had some great opportunities to engage with our faculty, staff, students, and university partners.

In January, I joined Dean Goldman and Professor Guenevere Burke for the School of Public Health's Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity Welcome Reception, where we welcomed 16 new fellows to GW for 2024. The new fellows come from across the US and overseas to complete a year-long professional development experience that starts here in Foggy Bottom on the GW campus. This is an outstanding group of committed physicians, attorneys, health professionals, and activists working to address some of our most serious health equity issues.

I also recently had the opportunity to host a lunch with the members of the Greater Washington Board of Trade, which I have recently joined, where we discussed how we can work together to foster more robust innovation ecosystems throughout the District. This was a great opportunity for me to share the incredible work you all do in both generating research and creating, supporting, and training startups and entrepreneurs.

Earlier this week, I attended a School of Medicine and Health Sciences faculty and staff town hall meeting for a great conversation on a variety of topics. This marked the last of my initial school visits with faculty and staff, and I look forward to future opportunities to continue these critical dialogues.

It may not surprise you to know that I heard many recurring themes across all of these meetings, including questions about compensation, staff retention, and budget and safety concerns— among others. As we progress with several of our planned strategic initiatives, including developing a strategic plan and a new budget model, many of these themes will be carefully considered.

### Board Meetings

Since we last met, I've also continued to have other important conversations about the future of our university. On Thursday and Friday last week, we hosted the year's first full Board of Trustees meeting.

One topic discussed that I am sure you are all interested in is the MFA. I know Bruno is here today to provide you with some updates, so I will defer to him.

This month's board meetings also served as a launching point for the first really substantive conversations around the development of our strategic plan. Over the course of two days, we had some very productive discussions with the Board regarding the future of knowledge, work, the workforce, and higher education for which we are planning. And, of course, our faculty has a unique and important perspective on these conversations, and Chris and I are planning opportunities for you to engage soon. We are also scheduling similar meetings with students and staff to discuss the same topics. We anticipate completing all these conversations by the end of the spring semester. Once this is complete, we will begin to establish our aspirations, strategic pillars, and thematic areas.



## **GWPD Arming**

Next, I want to update you on the process to arm GW police officers. In my report last month, I shared that the next group of officers was nearing the completion of the requirements to be armed, and we were carefully monitoring this process. I can now report that these requirements have been met, and five Lieutenants will be armed on Monday.

As we prepare for the next phase, I also want to update you on the GW Safety Advisory Committee envisioned in our implementation plan. As we have shared previously, this committee will include students, faculty, staff, and community members and will meet regularly to increase engagement on safety concerns. This is an important mechanism for identifying and highlighting safety concerns and challenges. Baxter Goodly and other university leaders will confer with the faculty's Implementation Advisory Subcommittee, the Student Government Association, and the Staff Council in the coming weeks as we prepare to open nominations for this committee by March 1. This will ensure that appointments to this committee can be completed in April and the committee can have its first meeting before the end of this academic year – before the next arming phase begins.

## **GW's Community Plan**

All of these updates show that, as a university and as a community, we are committed to learning and improving. As the Provost and I shared in our recent message to the GW community, we know that, for many of us, the last few months have been difficult in deep and unexpected ways. We have had hundreds of conversations with our students, families, faculty, staff, alumni, and university partners, and together, we have learned a lot about the strength, passion, and resilience of our community. We have also learned a lot about where we can continue to grow.

To build on the lessons learned over the last several months, strengthen our community, and lay a foundation for positive growth in the future, GW has launched a comprehensive plan to strengthen our community in these challenging times. The plan outlines three broad focus areas, including *Fostering Productive Dialogue*, *Strengthening Partnership and Support*, and *Reviewing Policy and Procedures*. Within each of these areas, we have shared initiatives, activities, and events intended to foster meaningful engagement across our community and support the important work already underway. We have also launched a separate [website](#) that addresses both our free speech commitments and our approach to contested questions around the topic. I encourage you to review both online.

This plan, while comprehensive, should be thought of as a starting point. We intend to work with the GW community to expand and improve these efforts as we define together a community ethos equal to our aspirations and our history.

Thank you, everyone. I am so grateful for your continued belief in GW, your partnership, and your support. That concludes my report, and I will open the floor to questions.



**Faculty Senate  
Provost Bracey Remarks  
February 9, 2024**

Good afternoon! I have just a few brief updates for you today.

Online Rankings

We shared some good news this week in GW Today about GW's online rankings in US News and World Report. Fourteen GW online degree programs ranked high among the best programs, including the university's online bachelor's degree, which rose to 13th overall this year. GW's online graduate nursing program made an especially strong showing, ranking first for veterans, fourth for nursing management and sixth overall. The graduate engineering program also held consistent high positions, ranking 11th overall and 12th for veterans.

As we continue to work to meet the needs of students and employers, our online programs will remain a crucial element of our academic enterprise. Our positive reputation and impressive performance in the rankings demonstrate our commitment to academic excellence across all our programs, both online and in person.

Wendy Ellis – Equity Institute Director

At the end of January, we announced that Wendy Ellis, assistant professor of global health and the director for the Center for Community Resilience in the Milken Institute School of Public Health, has been named the inaugural director of the Institute for Racial, Ethnic, and Socioeconomic Equity, or Equity Institute. She has already contributed significantly to the institute in her faculty capacity, and we look forward to seeing how her ability to translate research to actionable systems change and her fundraising prowess will translate to success as a director.

I would like to thank Dean Matthew, who led the Equity Institute in its beginning stages to its official chartering in early 2023 and has provided invaluable leadership of the institute during its many early accomplishments. I know the institute will continue to benefit from her wisdom in its new era.

Diversity Summit

Hopefully you saw the infomail that went out last week announcing the keynote sessions for the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Diversity Summit, "Defining Revolutionary: A Call for Justice, Liberation & Empathy." The keynote speakers are:

- Jenan Mohajir and Rebecca Russo of Interfaith America;
- Raquel Willis, an award-winning activist, journalist and media strategist dedicated to collective liberation, especially for Black trans folks; and

- Jeremy C. Young, Freedom to Learn Program Director of PEN America, in conversation with Laura Coates, Anchor of CNN's 'Laura Coates Live' and CNN Chief Legal Analyst, discussing today's threats against DEI in higher education.

We look forward to sharing the full schedule with the community very soon. The summit will feature a variety of educational, art, and poster sessions led by members of the GW community, in addition to the exciting keynote sessions. It promises to be a very engaging event for the entire community, so I encourage you all to register to attend. The deadline to register is February 16.

### Multicultural Student Services Center

Finally, a quick note on recent transitions within the Multicultural Student Services Center (MSSC). The university remains committed to supporting the MSSC's integral presence in the GW community as a home for diversity, inclusion, and social justice, a facilitator of education and programming, and a safe space for students of diverse identities and experiences.

Looking ahead, we are finalizing an interim director for the MSSC and will name that individual soon. That individual, supported by leadership within the Office for Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement, will lead the MSSC in the coming months while the university executes a search for a permanent director. In the near future, we will also be posting multiple other full-time positions within the MSSC dedicated to administrative support and cultural programming.

We look forward to sharing more information about these developments as it is available. In the meantime, I would like to reiterate the MSSC's crucial role in our community and encourage everyone to continue engaging with its resources, programming and space.

President Granberg, this concludes my report.



# Faculty Senate

Report of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC)

February 9, 2024

Ilana Feldman, Chair

## **FSEC Activities**

FSEC met on January 26 and engaged in a very productive discussion around academic freedom. The previously reported portal that will enable faculty to report any constraints on, or concerns about, their ability to exercise their academic freedom and use their expertise in the classroom and in their professional life is under development. The Senate Office has created a template for the portal and is currently assessing the optimal technological mechanism for its delivery. The goal is to bring the portal online as soon as possible following reviews by FSEC and the Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom Committee.

In addition, FSEC and the Board of Trustees Executive Committee held their regular joint meeting on February 1. A summary of that meeting will be posted shortly to the Senate website.

## **Senate Elections**

A quick reminder that the Faculty Organization Plan (FOP) requires that elections for Senate membership be completed by March 15 each year; election results should be reported out to the Senate Office as soon as possible. The Senate Office has also provided election guidelines to the College of Professional Studies so that they may prepare for the election of their first Senate delegates.

## **Faculty Organization Plan Revisions**

I am happy to report that the Board of Trustees has approved the Faculty Assembly resolution containing several revisions to the FOP. The Senate Office is working on a “clean” version of the FOP document that incorporates the redlined changes from the resolution.

## **Personnel Actions**

There are no active grievances at the university.

## **Calendar**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee is February 23, 2024. Draft resolutions and any other possible Senate agenda items should be forwarded to Liz Carlson in the Senate office as soon as possible to assist with the timely compilation of the FSEC meeting agenda, ideally by February 16. The next regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting is March 1, 2024 (note that this means that the Senate agenda will be posted as soon as FSEC approves it at their February 23 meeting).

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# RESEARCH UPDATE

GW Faculty Senate

Pamela Norris  
Vice Provost for Research

February 9, 2024



## Boosting GW's Scholarly Impact by Supporting Faculty

- Recognizing and highlighting faculty excellence across disciplines
- Enhancing onboarding of new research-active faculty
- Building community and capacity through workshops and writing retreats
- Implementing new enterprise-wide systems and tools
- Engaging and leveraging federal relations consultants
- Strengthening key research admin and compliance functions
- Investing in the launch of new center-scale initiatives
- Integrating the research and academic enterprises

## Enhancing GW's Reputation Through External Engagement

- Convening events to showcase GW experts and strengths
- Launching new comms channels to share research storytelling and news
- Sponsoring high-visibility media and exhibition opportunities
- Collaborating on workforce development programs
- Expanding global entrepreneurship engagements
- Strengthening collaboration with academic institutions and industry partners in DMV

THANK YOU!



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