



Faculty Senate

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SENATE MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 20, 2023 VIA WEBEX

Present: President Granberg, Provost Bracey; Executive Committee Chair Feldman; Parliamentarian Binder; Associate Registrar McLane; Senate Office Staff Liz Carlson and Jenna Chaojareon; Deans Ayres, Bass, Feuer, Henry, Lach, Mehrotra, and Riddle; Professors Anenberg, Badie, Bamford, Briggs, Brinkerhoff, Callier, Cordes, Eakle, El-Ghazawi, Gore, Gupta, Kargaltsev, Kay, Kieff, Lu, Olesen, Orti, Parsons, Pittman, Rain, Sarkar, Schultheiss, Schwindt, Tekleselassie, Tielsch, von Barghahn, Vyas, Wagner, Wilson, Wirtz, and Zeman.

Absent: Deans Goldman, Kelly-Weeder, Matthew, and Wahlbeck; Professors Borum, Clarke, Gutman, Kramon, Kulp, Marvar, and Mazhari.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:01p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the September 20, 2023, Faculty Senate meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

WELCOME TO NEW SENATE MEMBERS

President Granberg recognized three new Senate members:

- James Mahshie, Professor of Speech, Language & Hearing Science, Columbian College of Arts & Sciences (CCAS)
- Eric Kramon, Associate Professor of Political Science & International Affairs, Elliott School of International Affairs (ESIA)
- Abe Tekleselassie, Professor of Educational Leadership, Graduate School of Education & Human Development (GSEHD)

Professor Kramon was elected to serve while Professor Mylonas is on sabbatical this year, and Professor Tekleselassie was elected to serve while Professor Engel is on sabbatical this fall.

INTRODUCTION: Arielle Geismar, Student Association President (Ilana Feldman, Executive Committee Chair)

This agenda item was deferred as Ms. Geismar was not in attendance.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT (Ellen Granberg, President)

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

BRIEF STATEMENTS & QUESTIONS/PRESIDENT’S REPORT

None.

PROVOST’S REPORT (Chris Bracey, Provost)

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

BRIEF STATEMENTS & QUESTIONS/PROVOST’S REPORT

Professor Wagner thanked the Provost, noting that it is encouraging to hear that funds are being made available for faculty scholarly travel. However, she noted that travel funds for graduate students to attend conferences remains an unmet need. Recognizing that this issue falls to the individual schools, she asked whether there might be a mechanism at the Provost level to assist schools in getting their students to essential spaces for networking and presenting their work as part of the broader work on the graduate student experience. The Provost responded that he would like to be in position to support everyone who needs support financially to advance the research or educational mission. He noted that part of the job of the Provost and the deans is to make difficult prioritization decisions. He stated that he would take this concern under advisement, thinking about how support for this area might be built into next year’s fiscal planning and talking with school leaders about how they might better prioritize the funding of graduate students as part of their school-level mission. Professor Wagner recognized that part of the challenge is that budgets aren’t settled yet and funding for this puts a pinch on other areas. However, she emphasized again how important students’ ability to travel and present their scholarly work is to them and in turn to the success of GW’s graduate and PhD programs.

Professor Tielsch observed that many faculty miss “Only at GW” events, either due to schedule conflicts or not being aware that they are taking place. He noted that he is often asked, when interacting with graduate students in his school, what makes GW unique and asked whether Communications and Marketing might be able to develop an online repository of “Only at GW” events that the community can access. President Granberg reported that she received an immediate message from Vice President Moran indicating that this is an excellent idea that she will investigate.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT (Ilana Feldman, Chair)

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

BRIEF STATEMENTS & QUESTIONS/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

None.

RESOLUTION 24/4: To Amend the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate (Jim Tielsch, Co-Chair, Physical Facilities Committee)

Professor Tielsch introduced [Resolution 24/4](#) and moved its adoption, noting that the resolution arises from the changing nature of the committee's work in response to charges from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC). The motion was seconded, and the resolution was adopted by unanimous consent.

RESOLUTION 24/5: On Community Safety: Data Transparency, Shared Governance, and the Strategy of Arming the Campus Police (Professor Katrin Schultheiss)

Referencing a [summary](#) of [Resolution 24/5](#), Professor Schultheiss offered some background for the resolution. In April 2023, the Board announced its intention to arm some GW police officers. In that announcement, the Board stated that its decision was "based on more than a year of careful consideration and deliberation, review of safety data and best practices, and input from experts." However, she noted, none of that data or expert input was shared with the broader GW community including the Faculty Senate.

In response to that announcement, over 230 faculty members signed a letter objecting to the arming of the police. A couple of days later, 410 undergraduate and graduate students from the Milken Institute School of Public Health submitted a letter to President Wrighton and the Board voicing their objections to the initiative.

Over the course of the late spring and summer, a group of faculty met with former President Wrighton, Chief of Police Tate, and current President Granberg. President Wrighton and Chief Tate stated in those meetings that they were not aware of the data or studies that the Board of Trustees used in arriving at their decision.

The university set up a webpage to collect GW community feedback on the decision, but the responses gathered were only reported out in aggregate form.

The present resolution is motivated by a strong feeling among many faculty and students that this major decision—to arm some GW police officers—affects the atmosphere and learning environment at the university and thus requires transparency and the trust of the GW community that only transparency can achieve.

Professor Schultheiss noted that it is important to note what the resolution is doing and what it is not doing. It is not calling for a reversal of the Board's decision. Rather, it is a call for a pause in the implementation of the decision in the interest of transparency and shared governance.

She moved consideration of the resolution by the Senate; the motion was seconded.

Professor Gupta expressed his support, as one of signatories, for the resolution. He noted his concern about recent shootings at Bowie State and Morgan State universities and reiterated his call for active shooter training that is rolled out university-wide and not limited to availability only upon a unit's request. Chief Administration Officer Paulsen responded that information about training, including how to request it, is available online. Professor Gupta noted that he would like to see information about this communicated more broadly to the university community; Ms. Paulsen indicated that her office is working on these communications. Professor Gore noted that her department invited Chief Tate to visit; this small group setting worked very well as questions could be tailored to the specific settings and concerns of the particular group. This session, while not formal active shooter training, was extremely helpful, providing ideas for how best to protect students in an emergency situation. Professor El-Ghazawi added that there have been previous suggestions for a short online training that can be done at any time to provide a basic level of preparedness; this could be paired with a training session tailored to a specific space or unit.

Professor Brinkerhoff, another signatory of the resolution, noted that, as a professor of public administration, she is sensitive to the challenge of balancing expertise with democratic practices or, in this case, shared governance, as the key to building and sustaining trust in any community. While there may be very clear reasoning and evidence behind the decision to arm the police and the timeline to do so, she added, none of this has been shared; in addition, the resolution notes a great deal of research and evidence that would contradict the decision that has been made. This evidence, supported by the expertise of GW's faculty, makes the need for transparency even greater. She stated that transparency and governance must encompass not only the decisions made and the processes by which they are made but also the reasoning behind those decisions. After many months, the GW community is still waiting to learn the reasoning and evidence behind this decision. She noted that people trust, accept, and abide by decisions when they have had an opportunity to engage in the process around those decisions. The GW community was stymied in this regard, but, she added, it is not too late to rectify these two glaring governance omissions. The resolution calls for sharing the reasoning and evidence behind the decision taken to date and for an opportunity for community engagement around these to better understand that reasoning, provide additional input into the decision, and, ultimately, produce a strategy based on shared understanding and commitments.

Professor Orti offered a statement: "I also am a signatory of this resolution. The topic of this resolution certainly refers to an important issue that has the potential to significantly affect life at the university and the ways we all feel safe in our campus. But it is also a significant issue connected to the way we conceive and aspire to exercise our role in shared governance at this university. Now is the Faculty Senate's opportunity to make a statement about the way we conceive shared governance. The Senate was a late guest invited to barely participate in the implementation of a decision, but we were left out completely of the process leading to this decision. Seeing in real time how our neighbor in the District, American University, is approaching such a process, it is important to ask the question 'why can't such an open and transparent process happen at GW?' I believe that we can, and

this resolution is a clear signal that we need to take steps in that direction. I strongly endorse this resolution.”

Professor Bamford relayed her support for the resolution as one of its signatories. Both this resolution and the one just adopted show great concern on campus with safety. The present resolution also raises two of the most important principles of the university: shared governance and research-based decisions.

Professor Wilson provided clarification around the Witt Associates report referenced in the fifth Whereas clause and, noting that his information came from the May 2009 Faculty Senate minutes, offered an amendment to this clause to more accurately represent the circumstances of this report: “Whereas, in the wake of campus shootings at Virginia Tech in 2009, President Knapp called for and received a Witt Associates report on arming the police and chose not to arm police after receiving that report.”

The amendment was approved by unanimous consent.

The resolution as amended was adopted by a vote of 21-4.

[REPORT](#): Benefits Changes and New Offerings (Sabrina Minor, Vice President and Chief People Officer, and Jennifer Lopez, Associate Vice President, Total Rewards, Human Resource Management & Development)

Ms. Minor provided a brief history of the Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC), which has been in place at GW for over a decade. Membership of the committee rotates every three years and includes faculty, staff, and medical residents who work to assess GW’s benefits programs and provide feedback on the full range of active benefits and programs to Human Resources, considering the needs of GW’s very diverse population. She affirmed that keeping benefits at a top tier level supports the mission of attracting and retaining faculty to the university. Ms. Lopez then briefly [summarized](#) the [slides distributed with the agenda on this topic](#), highlighting the contributing factors to a higher increase in employee health care premiums for 2024 as compared to recent prior years.

Professor Parsons noted that he was stunned by the reported increases in inpatient costs over the past year and asked what might be driving this, expressing concern for the wellbeing of GW’s population given these numbers. Ms. Lopez confirmed that these elevated costs reflect increases in both the incidence and severity of hospitalizations. Ms. Minor added that many people deferred care during COVID, which has compounded the problem, resulting in much higher costs.

Professor Schultheiss noted for the record that, while costs have increased due in part to inflation, salaries never seem to respond to inflation in a similar way.

Professor Cordes noted that the BAC is a model of what the Senate has discussed with regard to shared governance and has been very ably led by Ms. Lopez and Director of Benefits Janet Monaco. He asked whether Ms. Lopez might provide an explanation for the Senate of what it means to be “self-insured,” as GW is. Ms. Lopez responded that a “fully insured” model is typically used by smaller employers. The services covered (and the percentage of costs covered) are determined by the administrator (the health plan), and the employer buys into the administrator’s plan at a set rate. A

fully insured model typically carries higher rates, but the administrator takes on all the risk around claim costs. “Self-insured” plans are typically used by larger employers, who have a larger population that can smooth variances in costs. As a self-insured employer, GW decides what is covered and at what percentages. The university engages and pays an administrative fee to the administrator to operate the claims process and negotiate provider networks for the university, but the university owns the risk around claim costs. GW periodically audits and monitors the administrator for network robustness and other competitive factors.

Professor Cordes thanked Ms. Lopez for this explanation, adding that the university needs to be careful about the university absorbing more of the cost as this impacts the budget. This was in evidence several years ago when health plan costs increased, and the fringe benefit rate was raised; this had a direct impact on unit budgets as they had to absorb the increase in this rate.

Professor Gupta noted that, as a member of the BAC, he and the entire committee have worked hard over the years to make sure that coverage increases and costs to faculty stay as low as possible. He added that the BAC will always press for as low an increase in employee costs as possible, and he encouraged the university to do what it can to contribute more toward the cost of health care for its employees. He observed that the benefits administration has been very responsive to the BAC’s work toward changing and improving GW’s benefits offerings, and he noted his appreciation for the very positive working relationship the BAC enjoys with the administration.

Professor Wilson requested clarification of the pharmacy benefits manager at GW. Ms. Lopez responded that United Healthcare is the medical plan administrator, and CVS Caremark is GW’s pharmacy benefit provider. Professor Wilson asked how GW ensures it is not being charged outsized rates for pharmacy coverage. Ms. Lopez responded that the university engages in a rigorous, monthly process of monitoring pharmacy service, claims, and coverage. Ms. Minor added that the university is always looking for ways to achieve the best offerings on prescription coverage. The benefits administration office regularly meets with other providers and compares their offerings; at present and after a recent review, CVS Caremark remains the lowest cost and most competitive in this group. Professor Cordes noted that a challenge in this area comes from the fact that there is not as much competition in the field of pharmacy benefits managers as there is in health plan administrators; he affirmed that the BAC is aware of all these considerations in their discussions.

UPDATE: MFA Financial Performance Update (Bruno Fernandes, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer)

Mr. Fernandes briefly reviewed the [slides distributed on Wednesday on the financial performance of the Medical Faculty Associates \(MFA\)](#). He emphasized that the MFA will continue to deploy risk and mitigation strategies to improve efficiencies and address continuing challenges. Two big areas of continued focus are reducing unnecessary spending and improving access. An ambulatory oversight group is being launched that will focus on how the MFA can align its facilities and services with patient needs. After the Q1 results have been fully reviewed, he stated, he will be working with the Fiscal Planning & Budgeting committee of the Senate to provide updated reports and information. Before turning to questions, he added that GW’s liquidity position is very strong, allowing the university to make investments in infrastructure (e.g., housing, dining) and other areas in addition to its MFA investments. Furthermore, the university is looking at making strategic investments and taking advantage of other investment opportunities in support of the GW community and mission.

Professor Wirtz commented that it is important to distinguish between the overall situation of the university and the specific situation of the MFA. He stated that real mistakes made in projecting enrollments have led to stressful financial situations in the academic units. This, he emphasized, is a problem independent of the MFA issue. He noted he has heard it stated that the MFA is an entirely separate entity, but they are necessarily intertwined when considering the substantial loans the university has made to the MFA directly and that the university has essentially underwritten for the MFA. To date, \$200 million loaned to the MFA has consequently not been available to the academic enterprise, so any assertion that the what's happening at the MFA is not affecting the university as a whole is inconsistent with the facts.

Professor Wirtz agreed with Mr. Fernandes's assessment that, without the last-minute issues in FY23, the MFA would have finished the year just about exactly on target. The unfortunate reality, however, is that the MFA has accumulated a \$250 million deficit over the past several years. He also observed that, while it is true that the MFA is repaying its loans to the university, part of the reason it is able to do so is that the university has extended another \$80 million loan to the MFA, which allows it to continue to meet these repayment obligations.

Professor Wirtz noted his appreciation for this accurate and transparent report and the fact that the level of transparency the Fiscal Planning & Budgeting committee is seeing now as compared to the previous administration is incredibly good. The Senate has grown accustomed to the administration saying early in the year that the MFA would break even for the year followed by increasingly more dire predictions. He asked Mr. Fernandes whether he might be able to provide a rational estimate for how much MFA will reflect in losses this year, and, if they do not have cash on hand, how those losses will be covered. With Q1 just completed, and with President Granberg's assurances that the Board is very attentive to this matter, he asked what Mr. Fernandes can share with regard to the Q1 results and how those results translate into expectations for where the MFA will be at the end of the year.

Mr. Fernandes responded that he would very much like to give the new MFA CFO—who just started on Monday—a chance to review the Q1 financials; additional work is still needed on those numbers due to the conflict with the mission support element on the revenue side. He noted that he was therefore not yet comfortable providing an estimate. With that said, he added that he shared with the Fiscal Planning & Budgeting committee that he thought, on a consolidated basis, the number would be in the \$30-40 million loss range, possibly as high as \$50 million, depending on negotiations with the mission support disagreement. If the consolidated number is in the \$40-50 million range, that would mean that the MFA would lose about \$25-30 million for the year.

He indicated that he would not be trying to say that the MFA will break even this year; he expressed his belief that, at some point, this will happen but that it is too early to give that projection given the areas of uncertainty still remaining. He confirmed that he will work through this with the new MFA CFO and university leadership. He added that the recent \$35 million loan from the university equates to the proceeds that would have been received from the deferred sale of the M Street building. He anticipated that this would last at least through the first six months of the year before new initiatives begin to turn things around. Noting that these naturally take some time, he affirmed that regular updates to the Fiscal Planning & Budgeting committee will continue.

Professor Wirtz asked that this topic be placed on the November Senate agenda so the Senate can receive firm Q1 numbers. He asked whether there is anything in the Q1 numbers that would give Mr. Fernandes pause about the possibility of a \$25-30 million loss this year. Mr. Fernandes responded that a complete review of all expenses is still underway, leading to his hesitation to provide a number at this point. There are some increases in expenses, largely driven by inflation, but there are also improvements on the revenue side of about 8-9% on quarter-over-quarter and year-over-year comparisons.

Professor Schultheiss asked for a definition of “mission support service.” Mr. Fernandes that these are third-party agreements that the MFA has in terms of providing academic and mission support. This can be reflected as a percentage of net patient revenues.

Professor Wilson noted that the interest rates charged to the MFA don't seem to reflect the risk to the university and asked whether the university should consider charging a risk premium on these loans. Mr. Fernandes responded that the university decided to charge the effective rate of the university on its loans to the MFA, noting that there is an existing loan with a much higher rate (LIBOR+6%). He noted that present efforts are focused on cleaning up the balance sheet and rationalizing some of that debt (particularly the external debt). He noted that negotiations with external parties have led to lower rates and paydown of some external debt, which represents savings to the university as a whole. Professor Wilson noted that, if the university is bearing all of the risk, perhaps a risk premium should be part of the picture. Mr. Fernandes responded that, because of the consolidated balance sheet, this would ultimately just be moving money around from an interest expense and interest income perspective. He indicated that the university can look into this (and has done this in the past); most of the time, the university simply passes on its cost of capital. This is something he feels very comfortable with and that also standardizes some of the loan agreements.

Professor Cordes asked about the membership of the new group working on ambulatory care concerns. Mr. Fernandes responded that this group is made up of trustees from both the GW and the MFA boards as well as GW and MFA administrators. This task force will be working closely together on the issues raised today.

Professor Wagner asked, from an informational and well-meaning perspective, how much loss is too much loss and for how long GW can, for its well-being, sustain these kinds of losses. She wondered if there is a point at which leadership decides this venture is no longer good for the university. As a faculty member, she noted, she wants to understand the forecast for the university with this level of sustained loss. Mr. Fernandes responded that this is not a question he can answer without working through a full evaluation of the medical enterprise and what it means for the university with regard to tangible and intangible opportunities. Professor Cordes added that the overall financial position of the university in terms of its balance sheet and cash position is quite solid and lets the university continue to do things like invest in the MFA. One could reasonably ask what GW could have done if funds invested in the MFA instead remained with the university. However, the context around this is a particularly challenging problem—namely, that the MFA was never set up to be a typical business enterprise but was instead set up to provide medical services as well as clinical faculty for the medical school. There may come a point when an alternative model should be considered.

Professor Wirtz reiterated his request that this topic be placed on the November Senate agenda to allow Mr. Fernandes to present an updated Q1 forecast and more refined numbers following his

review with the MFA CFO. President Granberg noted that FSEC would take this request up at its meeting next week.

Professor Parsons asked whether there is a model of a successful version of this endeavor toward which the university is working, or if this is a truly unique environment. Mr. Fernandes responded that there are models of success; one challenge at GW, in particular, is a struggle with having people return to an urban setting to use the MFA's services. In addition, the MFA and UHS are still working through their relatively new agreement.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

No new resolutions were introduced at the meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS

I. Election of the CCAS FSEC Representative

Professor Guillermo Orti was elected to FSEC by unanimous consent.

II. Nominations for membership to Senate Standing Committees

Professor Tielsch noted that most of the additions to the Physical Facilities and Campus Safety committee roster represent the members of the temporary faculty implementation advisory subcommittee that will assist the administration with the GWPD arming implementation plan. Adding these subcommittee members as nonvoting members will permit the committee to achieve a quorum at its regular meetings, which subcommittee members are not likely to attend. He added that he has nominated Trustee Rubin to the committee in a nonvoting capacity due to her expertise in real estate.

Professor Wirtz expressed a concern that a number of committee conversations might be made more awkward by the presence of a trustee on the committee. He was not prepared to oppose the nomination but thought the Senate should discuss the ramifications and possible precedent of appointing a trustee to Faculty Senate committees. Professor Tielsch recognized this concern and noted that this is why he wanted to provide some explanation for the list of committee nominees.

Professor Cordes asked whether the trustee could be titled as "observer," much as he and Professor Feldman are recognized and permitted attendance at the Board's meetings.

The Parliamentarian noted that committee membership is ultimately the decision of the Senate. Her read of the *Faculty Organization Plan* (FOP) is that any individual may be elected as a nonvoting member, and the President may make administrative nonvoting appointments to committees; however, as Professor Wirtz has noted, Senate members might want to weigh in on this question. A trustee serving on a Senate committee is not formally precluded or included in the FOP, and the decision is in the Senate's hands.

Professor Brinkerhoff asked if the trustee could join committee meetings as resource by invitation but not attend all regular meetings of the committee. Professor Tielsch responded that he was not clear on the process for doing so beyond inviting attendance on a case-by-case basis.

President Granberg relayed a message she received in the moment from Vice President Post, who noted that the question of Board members sitting on Senate committees was discussed at a joint Board Executive Committee/FSEC meeting. The Board leadership discouraged this as a practice; Mr. Post suggested that requests be channeled through the Board office to assist with committee needs related to Board expertise. Professor Tielsch responded that this would work and that he could also try to solicit recommendations from his GWSB Senate colleagues for someone with this expertise who would be willing to join the committee.

Unanimous consent was requested and obtained to remove Trustee Rubin's name from the slate of committee nominees. The updated [attached nominations](#) to committees were approved by unanimous consent.¹

III. Senate Standing Committee Reports

The Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom (PEAF) committee submitted an [interim report](#), which was distributed with the agenda for this meeting. Any questions about the report may be directed offline to the PEAF co-chairs, Professors Orti and Houghtby-Haddon.

BRIEF STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Professor Feldman note for the group that the idea of having faculty members serve on Board committees and Board members on Senate committees was raised as part of a broader discussion around operationalizing shared governance and bringing the Board and the Senate into more regular communication. From Mr. Post's comment, it sounded to her as though the Board may not be comfortable with that, but she wished to note that this was the context in which these ideas were discussed. Professor El-Ghazawi affirmed that, when the Shared Governance Task Force discussed mechanism for operationalization, this was proposed as one possibility. At the time, the suggestion of this method of bidirectional engagement was not accepted.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:11pm.

¹ After consulting with the Parliamentarian, the Senate Office has determined that all appointments to Senate standing committees—voting and nonvoting—will be formally approved by the Senate. Exceptions, as noted in the Faculty Organization Plan, are nonvoting appointments coming from the President.

President's Report to the Faculty Senate October 20, 2023

Introduction

Thank you, everyone. It is such a pleasure to join you all this afternoon.

Before I begin, I want to acknowledge the horrible act of terrorism in Israel last week and the escalating conflict between Israel and Hamas. This has had a devastating impact on so many people at home and abroad, including the innocent people on both sides of this conflict with all of those groups represented here at GW. We have our own communities in pain, and many of us know people who are directly involved in this conflict. I know this is an extremely difficult time for our entire GW family, and many of us continue to feel a combination of grief, fear, and anger. I have also felt many of these same feelings, and I want to assure you that my foremost priority remains ensuring that the entire GW community is safe, supported, and welcome. I've been spending a lot of time with our students; they are having the same range of conflicting emotions. I've also had conversations with national leaders and with faculty, and staff across our campuses. Some of these conversations have been challenging; sometimes they've been very painful. They have always been enlightening. I have come away from each with an enhanced understanding of this conflict and the way it plays out within our community in particular. More than ever, I appreciate the thoughtfulness and diversity that characterizes the GW family. I particularly want to recognize those who organized what I thought were some very successful events this week that brought to light various elements of the conflict; I know some of you were involved in those.

Meetings and Upcoming Events

Since we last met in September, I have now met with faculty at nearly every school and college, with just one or two more to go. Despite the one rogue fire alarm Ilana and I experienced at the Elliott School, these conversations have been quite productive, and I sincerely appreciate everyone's engagement.

GW also hosted a number of meetings including faculty from other universities. One of those was the AAU Academic Officers Annual meeting, where GW Provost Chris Bracey played a leading role. I joined Provost Bracey in welcoming our colleagues to the GW campus. This was an exciting opportunity for us to deepen our collaborations with the AAU and our partners.

Since we last met, the weeks have been packed with some true "only-at-GW" moments.

On September 18th, I joined Provost Bracey, Dean Bass, Trustee Todd Klein, and several other members of the GW community to celebrate the dedication of the Seva Teaching Kitchen, made possible by donors Seema and Sonny Kakar. This facility will help ensure that generations of physicians and care providers understand how food can support health in their own lives and the lives of their patients – representing a fundamental, sustainable approach to medicine. The Seva Teaching Kitchen and the Culinary Medicine program are wonderful examples of the innovative, hands-on approaches our faculty and students take to improve the health of our community.

The following week, on September 26th, I had the pleasure of joining Chef José Andrés and Robert Egger, founder of DC Central Kitchen, for Professor Tara Scully's World on a Plate class. José's participation was a fun surprise for the class, and we all took some time to answer questions and mingle with the students.

The very next night, GW, in partnership with Politics & Prose Bookstore, hosted award-winning actor, director, producer, activist, and proud GW alum, Kerry Washington, to discuss her new book, “Thicker Than Water,” with Tony Goldwyn. Earlier in the day, she took time out of what I know is a very busy schedule to speak with students from the GW Corcoran Theatre Arts program. And following her talk, we were honored to announce an extraordinary gift from Kerry that is creating a one million dollar scholarship endowment. We already have four students benefiting from this remarkable scholarship.

The evening after that, we launched the Frank Sesno Newsmaker Conversation Series with Senator Cory Booker as our inaugural guest. This series, made possible through the generosity of GW alumni Ted and Meredith Segal, creates a fantastic platform for GW students to engage with diverse perspectives on the critical issues surrounding democracy, public understanding, and civil discourse.

On October 2nd, I was delighted to launch my first dinner with faculty in a series of conversations I plan to have over the coming months. Each dinner, I am inviting a small group of our distinguished faculty to join me and Provost Bracey to discuss our university. I want to thank everyone who joined me at this first meeting, and I look forward to hosting many more of you soon.

I am also starting to get out and meet with our alumni and families around the country. I was delighted to have my first GW Together Alumni, Families, and Friends reception in Philadelphia last month, where I was joined by Chair Speights—a Philadelphia native—for an evening of fantastic conversations.

Just this morning, I got back from a trip through Austin, Denver, then Chicago where I met with even more alumni and families. What really stands out to me about these events is how much the alums appreciate their GW experience: their coursework, the faculty they worked with, the internships they held. There is a lot of gratitude for the faculty out there in all these different cities.

I am also meeting with alumni here on campus, and Sonya and I had a wonderful time at our first Alumni and Families Weekend. Again, almost all the feedback has been stellar, remarking on wonderful classes, degree programs, and experiential learning. GW faculty should be very proud; people love the work you do on behalf of our students.

I was also very gratified to be joined by many of our faculty and staff for the GW Convocation and Welcome Day of Service. At the ceremony, which included Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair Ilana Feldman as marshal, we welcomed the Class of 2027 and new transfer students to our campus. During the event, I urged our new students to engage constructively despite differences, to work across disciplines, and to learn important lessons from a wide range of perspectives and experiences – a message that is now more important than ever and a message I want to continue to emphasize across all parts of the university. I also encouraged them to connect with our faculty and staff to explore their interests, find ways to engage outside of the classroom, and discover new disciplines that may interest and excite them. So, you might want to be on the lookout for a new group of students asking for research internships and advice!

News and Updates

I now want to provide a brief update on the arming process. Since we last met, we have hosted two public conversations, one with staff and one with students, to answer questions about the arming process. Both conversations included Chief Tate, with Vice President and Chief People Officer Sabrina Minor moderating the staff session and Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Colette Coleman moderating the student event. During the two conversations, Chief Tate answered both pre-submitted and live questions that came from the more than 200 staff and students who registered for the sessions.

As for Phase 2, the officers are in the process of completing the enhanced training requirements articulated in the implementation plan. Once they do that, which should be by the end of the month, they will get their commission from the District and we will proceed into Phase 2.

Finally, I want to provide a brief update on strategic planning. I had a conversation with the Board on an approach to strategic planning; I would like to start the strategic planning conversation in the spring with discussion about where the world of higher education is going and what we are seeing and expecting in terms of its future. Specifically, I would like to consider the kinds of students we'll be getting in the next 5-7 years, the future of work and the workforce, and the most important new directions in research and knowledge. I would like us to understand where these elements are going so that, when we do start to identify thematic areas and begin a more formal planning process, we understand the future into which we are planning. The Provost and I have been talking about various ways we can approach this; we have some ideas and are working toward being able to have that conversation broadly across campus in the spring semester. Of course, we want robust involvement from the faculty in that conversation.



**Faculty Senate
Provost Report
October 20, 2023**

Good afternoon, everyone! I hope you enjoyed a restful fall break last week. I have a few updates for you today.

[Fall Semester](#)

First, I want to give a great big shout out to all of our residential undergraduate and graduate students. Our students have settled into their routines of coursework, research, internships, and extracurriculars. I mentioned at Convocation in September that I am hearing from all areas of the university that our first-year class is particularly engaged and present and taking advantage of all the many benefits of residential life. After two months, I can say that our returning and graduate students seem to be thriving much the same. I have seen this myself as I observe campus activities across the several schools, and I hope we are all working to ensure that our students continue to enjoy a robust and stimulating student life experience at the university.

[Israel-Hamas War](#)

One of the things that makes GW truly unique is our ability to convene thought leadership and hold public discussion on issues of consequence that impact the world. We have had such “only at GW” moments on a variety of topics. But I am especially proud of efforts undertaken by our faculty, administrative leaders, and student leaders to create spaces for healing, discussion, and engagement regarding the devastating armed conflicts in multiple locations at present, including Ukraine and the Middle East. GW faculty have hosted several educational events in recent days to discuss the Israel-Hamas War, and all have been conducted in a civil and respectful manner, with an eye towards providing support for community members. Many colleges and universities struggle in this area, but we are fortunate to have a dedicated cadre of academic leaders who are committed to ensuring that all of our students and faculty feel acknowledged, respected, heard, and embraced as members of our university community. And we will continue to do this, as part of our holistic approach to providing a student learning environment premised upon inclusive excellence.

[Special Relief Grants for Research Support](#)

I noted in Faculty Senate last month that I would be working to identify funding for research-related travel for any faculty not receiving funding through internal or external sources. I firmly believe that it is critical that our faculty be able to continue doing the impactful research that has led to GW becoming a member of the Association of American Universities – the premier group of leading research universities in North America.

In late September, I announced that the Provost’s Office will make available a limited number of special relief grants for full-time, regular-status faculty in CCAS, ESIA and GSHED who are presently engaged in impactful research projects and have no other means of travel support for AY 23-24. The application period closed last week, all applications have been reviewed, notifications of

awards to faculty awardees were distributed on Wednesday of this week, and the funds that I set aside for this purpose will be moved to the schools in the coming days to fund these research projects.

[Global Food Institute](#)

I also want to share some exciting developments regarding the Global Food Institute. We recently announced some new faculty leadership within GFI: Bill Dietz, chair of the Sumner M. Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness in the Milken Institute School of Public Health, will serve as GFI's director of research and policy. Tara Scully, associate professor of biology and director of the sustainability minor program, will serve as director of curriculum development. They are both respected leaders in their disciplines and great partners to faculty and students, and we are very excited to have them on board.

We are also gearing up to formally launch the search for the Carbonell Family Executive Director of the Global Food Institute, so stay tuned for that forthcoming announcement.

[School of Business Dean Search](#)

A quick status update on the School of Business dean search. As you may recall, Dean Anuj Mehrotra will be leaving us at the end of the calendar year to serve as dean of the school of business at his alma mater Georgia Tech. A search firm has been selected to manage the search for his successor. I will soon convene the Business faculty search committee members to discuss selecting additional members from other stakeholder groups, such as students and alumni, to join the committee, as per the *Faculty Code* and the school bylaws. The Chair of the Board of Trustees has already passed along names of trustees who will also serve on this committee. Once the full search committee is formed, I will charge the committee and we will formally launch the search.

I mentioned in Faculty Senate last month that I would formally solicit from School of Business faculty nominations for an interim dean, who will begin in the role in January 2024 while the search for a permanent dean continues. I sent a message this week to business faculty, and recommendations are rolling in. I will continue to update the community as this process develops.

[Dining](#)

A quick update on Dining at the University. Several dining options have opened on the first floor of the University Student Center over the past month, following renovations and construction. In late September, the Indian cuisine-inspired Chaat House opened. And just this week, Absurd Bird, a fried chicken vendor; District House Market, which offers grab-and-go items; and an updated Panera Bread also opened for business in the same space. Being able to offer a variety of affordable options is critical to the student experience, and it remains a priority for me, Colette Coleman, Seth Weinschel, and other administrators.

[Graduate and Postdoctoral Experience](#)

The graduate and postdoctoral experience remain a priority of mine, and we recently launched the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs website – gradpostdoc.gwu.edu. This creates a home

page for Vice Provost Suresh Subramaniam's office and provides a handy summary of resources for prospective and current graduate students and postdocs, including program offerings, academic resources, financial aid, university policies, and upcoming events. Detailed program information still lives on individual school and college websites, but this new website takes a step in the direction of building community among a population that historically has been somewhat siloed.

The GW Postdoc Association and the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs also recently hosted Postdoc Appreciation Day to shine a light on all the ways our postdocs contribute to our academic mission and now our membership in the AAU. Vice Provost Subramaniam will continue to find ways to engage this population.

[Admission Policy Task Force](#)

As I mentioned in September, following the SCOTUS decision prohibiting the use of race-based affirmative action practices in the college admissions process, I convened an Admissions Policy Task Force to make recommendations regarding possible future practices that encourage diversity in student enrollments in ways that are consistent with the new federal law landscape. The Provost Office is reviewing these recommendations and will issue guidance in the coming weeks.

[Diversity Summit](#)

As a reminder, part 1 of the 9th annual Diversity Summit will take place next week, October 25-27. This year's theme is "Defining Revolutionary: A Call for Justice, Liberation & Empathy." The Diversity Summit is an opportunity for us to work together and define ourselves as a community, so I encourage you to participate. Registration closes today, so please register. You can find information about the schedule on the Diversity Summit website.

[Presidential Inauguration](#)

Finally, as you all know, the inauguration of our 19th president, Ellen Granberg, is just 2 weeks away. Faculty should have received an invitation from me earlier this week to register for inauguration events, including the investiture ceremony as well as an event recognizing scholarship at GW: "Celebrating GW: A Symposium on the Impact of Academic Excellence." This event will feature remarks from President Granberg and a panel of GW faculty experts in conversation with Pam Norris, Vice Provost for Research. I highly encourage you to attend this engaging discussion, should your schedule allow.

I very much look forward to celebrating this exciting moment in our university's history alongside the community, and I hope to see you there.



Faculty Senate

Report of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC)
October 20, 2023
Ilana Feldman, Chair

FSEC Activities

FSEC and the Board of Trustees Executive Committee held their regularly scheduled joint meeting on October 5, 2023. [A summary of the meeting has been posted to the Senate website.](#)

FSEC Membership and Standing Committee Chairships

On today's agenda, Professor Guillermo Orti is presented for election as the CCAS representative to FSEC. Professor Orti is currently also serving as co-chair of the Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom (PEAF) standing committee of the Senate. Historically, it is unusual for an FSEC member to also serve as Chair of a Senate standing committee.

In recent years, FSEC members have tended not to also chair a Senate standing committee. However, there is precedent for such double service, and it is fully consistent with the Senate's governing documents. Beyond the governing documents, Senate norms expect the FSEC representative for each school to be nominated by the Senators from that school. Senators can feel confident that FSEC and the standing committees share a common interest in a robust and accountable Faculty Senate.

Faculty Assembly

The agenda for the November 6 Faculty Assembly will shortly be posted online and communicated to the faculty via email; this message includes registration details. The Assembly will be held in the Jack Morton Auditorium at 4pm with a wine & cheese reception to follow. A hybrid meeting option will be available for voting members of the Assembly.

Personnel Actions

There are no active grievances at the university.

Calendar

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee is October 27, 2023. 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, particularly given that the meeting takes place one week from today. The next regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting is November 10, 2023. This meeting will be held in a hybrid format; the Senate membership is strongly encouraged to attend in person. The remaining Senate meetings for the 2023-2024 session will be held in the State Room with a hybrid option.

RESOLUTION ON COMMUNITY SAFETY: DATA TRANSPARENCY, SHARED GOVERNANCE, AND THE STRATEGY OF ARMING THE CAMPUS POLICE

In the interest of **transparency**, the University is requested to:

- Provide specific data on community feedback from the GWPD webpage;
- Provide copies of consulting reports and research data used to make decision;
- Provide financial reports on changes to liability and operational costs;

In the interest of upholding **shared governance principles**, the University is requested to:

- Participate in a public community forum organized by students and alumni;
- Collaborate in a multi-stakeholder task force that will produce a report on the relevant data collected;

With respect to future policy **strategy**, University is requested to:

- Support de-escalation and bystander intervention training;
- Pause implementation of arming police until resolutions are carried out.



Faculty Senate

Nominees for Standing Committee Membership October 2023

Appointment, Salaries, and Promotion Policies

Mindy Galvan (GW Staff Council), nonvoting

Athletics and Recreation

Scott Kieff (LAW), voting/FSEC Liaison

Mayse Yousif (GW Student Association), nonvoting

Honors and Academic Convocations

Scott Kieff (LAW), voting/FSEC Liaison

Libraries

Tricia Greenstein (GW Staff Council), nonvoting

Ira Issoufou (GW Student Association), nonvoting

Physical Facilities

Christie Bogel (GSEHD), nonvoting

Jeff Delinski (CPS), nonvoting

Wendy Ellis (SPH), nonvoting

Ernie Englander (GWSB), nonvoting

Katie Fox (University Resilience), nonvoting – *appointed by the President*

Jonathan Hsy (CCAS), nonvoting

Ishan Lal (GW Student Association), nonvoting

Monica Ruiz (SPH), nonvoting

Richard Southby (SPH), nonvoting

Sharon Testor (GW Staff Council), nonvoting

Karen Wright (SMHS), nonvoting

University and Urban Affairs

Heather Richards (GW Staff Council), nonvoting

Benefits Advisory Committee

Members: Typically six faculty, six staff and one medical resident. Managed by HRMD with support from benefits consultant and actuary. <https://hr.gwu.edu/benefits-advisory-committee>.

Current Faculty:

Linda Briggs (SON)

Joseph Cordes (CCAS)

Murli Gupta (CCAS)

Lisa Schwartz (SMHS)

Philip Wirtz (GWSB)

The mission of the Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC) is to provide feedback regarding GW's full range of active employee benefits and programs to Human Resource Management and Development, supporting the goal of providing benefits that best meet the needs of GW and its diverse employee population.

- Encourage feedback from employees, including concerns, potential solutions and innovative ideas related to GW's benefit plans
- Submit ideas for enhancements, changes or modifications based on employee feedback



WHAT'S CHANGING FOR 2024: Contribution Rates

Medical



Faculty and Staff will see a

5.8% increase

in employee contributions (across all plans and coverage tiers) for medical coverage.

Faculty and Staff monthly contributions will increase

\$2 to \$48

depending on plan and coverage tier.

Dental



Faculty and Staff will see a

4% increase

in employee contributions (across all plans and coverage tiers) for dental coverage.

Faculty and Staff monthly contributions will increase

\$2 to \$6

depending on plan and coverage tier.

Vision



Faculty and Staff will see a

1.5% increase

in employee contributions (across all plans and coverage tiers) for vision coverage.

Faculty and Staff monthly contributions will increase

< \$1

depending on plan and coverage tier.

Medical Claim Cost Drivers

- YTD trend through June 2023 on a PEPM basis was approximately 19% (22% medical and 12% prescription drug).
- High trend driven by significant increase in catastrophic claims. Spend on individual claims of \$50k+ has increased 65% compared to the same period in 2022.
- Inpatient admissions per 1,000 increased 38% compared to YTD 2022, and inpatient spend increased 96%.
- Top clinical cost drivers include:
 - Cancer
 - Mental health disorders
 - Musculoskeletal
 - Maternity
- 2024 healthcare cost increases are at highest rate nationally in over 10 years.