



**Faculty Senate
Provost Bracey Report
October 4, 2024**

Good afternoon! I would like to begin by echoing President Granberg's remarks about President Emeritus Wrighton and express my own acknowledgment of his achievements at GW. He was an excellent partner to me in my capacity as provost and I am very grateful that we had the opportunity to recognize his contributions to our community with last week's portrait unveiling.

I have just a few other updates for you all today.

Strategic Framework

As President Granberg mentioned, we are excited to embark on this Strategic Framework process with the community. The full details are available online at strategicframework.gwu.edu. Put briefly, based on the future-focused conversations with the community this past spring, we organized areas of opportunity and innovation around four themes:

- Advancing Impactful Knowledge Production Through Interdisciplinary Excellence,
- Reimagining Skill Development for the Future,
- Redefining Authentic Leadership for Modern Challenges, and
- Turning Ideas into Action as a Premier Global Convener.

Starting this fall, two committees will drive community engagement and the development of the strategic framework in three phases: the Research and Work Phase, the Conversation Phase, and the Deliverable Phase.

In the Research and Work Phase, the Innovation Committee that President Granberg mentioned will review baseline institutional research and conduct environmental scans that will inform the identification of opportunities for strategic growth. During the Conversation Phase, the committee will collect input from the GW community through a variety of means, including written ideas and town halls. Ultimately, the committee will produce a draft report that provides an analysis of its research and suggests recommendations based on GW's strengths and opportunities in the thematic areas.

In the Deliverable Phase this spring, based on the Innovation Committee's draft report, the Steering Committee will solicit from the community more detailed proposals and then distill the Innovation Committee's recommendations into a final framework to be submitted to the Board of Trustees for review and approval. Implementation of aspects of the framework will begin following this approval.

We will be standing up a page on the strategic framework site soon that shares membership for the two committees, so stay tuned. There is a feedback form available on the Strategic Framework website as just one way for members of the community to share their thoughts throughout this process. We look forward to engaging with the community this academic year as we plan for GW's future.

Faculty Working Groups

Hopefully, you also saw my recent message that shared the final reports from the summer's faculty-led working groups and provided information about which recommendations we would advance this semester and in the longer term. These recommendations included:

- Embracing a “free speech within a shared community” vision and beginning to consider the development of a comprehensive free speech framework,
- Committing funding to support undergraduate course development around the topic of “engaging free speech within a shared community” and humanitarianism if the course is supported by department chairs and deans, and
- Promoting lectures by Professor Mark Tessler of the University of Michigan and international law experts, respectively, to discuss the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Of course, just this week we held the very well-attended and illuminating Professor Tessler lecture entitled “Overview of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Critical Junctures, Past and Present.” We look forward to promoting more lectures, and I would like to thank the Lecture Series working group for kicking us off with this very successful event.

I am very grateful to the faculty members who participated in this working groups over the summer and I look forward to partnering with the community to continue advancing these recommendations.

Malcolm Gladwell

Just yesterday, we were honored to host a Politics & Prose event at Lisner Auditorium with journalist, author and public speaker Malcolm Gladwell, who recently published “Revenge of the Tipping Point,” which reframes the lessons of his groundbreaking first book “The Tipping Point.” He had a very lively conversation with journalist Steve Inskeep of NPR.

Given our location, we have remarkable convening power – and as you know, “Turning Ideas into Action as a Premier Global Convener” is one of the themes helping to shape our strategic framework. So I encourage our faculty to take advantage of the many incredible events we host on campus every day, whether it is with an external scholar like Mark Tessler, a journalist like Malcolm Gladwell, or anyone else contributing to the important conversations of the day. These dialogues enrich our intellectual community and are crucial to advancing our mission as a vibrant academic institution, and I urge you to find some time in your busy schedules to attend them.

US News Ranking

Hopefully you saw the news that GW rose four spots in the rankings this year, to No. 63. This upward trajectory puts us in a tie at a higher level with excellent institutions like Brandeis and Tulane. We are working with the Office of Institutional Research to unpack the data, but this is an exciting development and a testament to our efforts to continue to advance the academic enterprise, especially paired with other impressive rankings, such as being in the top 100 for Best Colleges for Veterans and Best Value Schools. Rankings are not the be all-end all as we consider academic excellence, but they are an important indicator.

Graduate Student Organization

The university is aware that SEIU, Local 500 recently announced a public campaign to organize graduate students. This announcement follows union efforts over the last few years to organize graduate students nationally with promises to enhance compensation, benefits, and experiences. In 2022, we created the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs to enhance the graduate student experience. Suresh Subramaniam, Vice Provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs, outlined many of these achievements for graduate students in an email last week. This communication also included a direct invitation to work with him on additional enhancements. To date, Vice Provost Subramaniam has received several positive responses to his outreach. The university continues to believe that direct communication between administrators, faculty, and students is the most efficient and positive way to make change.

GFI at Climate Week

Finally, as President Granberg briefly mentioned, the Global Food Institute played a role in this year's New York Climate Week. Carbonell Family Executive Director Stacy Dean joined high-profile food world presenters at a summit entitled "Restaurants and Farms: A Key Solution to the Climate Crisis." Dean gave an overview of GFI's report entitled "The Climate Reality for Independent Restaurants: A Deep Dive into the Supply Chain," released in February, which illustrates the immediate threat posed to the independent restaurant industry by climate change.

Stacy also attended several other events during the week, including the Clinton Global Initiative's 2024 Annual Meeting. You can read more about GFI's Climate Week engagement in *GW Today*, and I very much look forward to seeing GFI's profile continue to rise on the global stage and contribute to these critical issues impacting our planet.

President Granberg, this concludes my report.