



A RESOLUTION ON SHARED GOVERNANCE WITH RESPECT TO SIZE, COMPOSITION, AND QUALITY OF THE UNDERGRADUATE CLASS (20/9)

WHEREAS, the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education (ACE), and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) jointly issued a directive stating:

“The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process. On these matters the power of review or final decision lodged in the governing board or delegated by it to the president should be exercised adversely only in exceptional circumstances, and for reasons communicated to the faculty. It is desirable that the faculty should, following such communication, have opportunity for further consideration and further transmittal of its views to the president or board.” (*Section 5*)

“With regard to student admissions, the faculty should have a meaningful role in establishing institutional policies, including the setting of standards for admission, and should be afforded opportunity for oversight of the entire admissions process” (*Note 4*)

“Such matters as major changes in the size or composition of the student body and the relative emphasis to be given to the various elements of the educational and research program should involve participation of governing board, administration, and faculty prior to final decision.” (*Section 2b*)¹;

WHEREAS, the Faculty Organization Plan, Article III, Section 1 (4) states that the Senate shall “be the Faculty agency to which the President initially presents information and which he consults concerning proposed changes in existing policies or promulgation of new policies”;

WHEREAS, the Senate, and in particular its Educational Policy and Technology Committee, has in the past consistently been consulted and has contributed to the formulation of policy about the size, composition, and quality of the undergraduate student body;

WHEREAS, President LeBlanc announced on July 9, 2019, a plan to reduce undergraduate enrollment by 20% and to change the relative proportions of the student majors and therefore to alter the curricular program of the university² without having previously consulted in sufficient detail

¹ <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>

² <https://gwtoday.gwu.edu/message-president-leblanc-strategic-planning-process>

with the relevant Senate committees and the Senate as a whole and proceeded to implement the plans with the enrollment of the 2019/2020 class;

WHEREAS, President LeBlanc stated repeatedly that changes to the undergraduate student body will not cause diversity to go down “one iota”³ and the chair of the Board of Trustees reaffirmed that diversity will not be impacted as a result of this plan⁴, while the Senate and its Committees have not yet received or been given the opportunity to evaluate any compelling evidence that these current diversity and academic quality standards can be maintained while simultaneously reducing the size of its student body and increasing STEM majors; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

- 1) That the process of adoption and implementation of plans to reduce the size of the student body and to increase the ratio of STEM majors was inconsistent with established principles of shared governance;
- 2) That shared governance requires meaningful input and oversight by the Senate as a whole and by all relevant Senate Committees prior to implementation or announcement of major initiatives;
- 3) That the administration’s and Board of Trustees’ commitment to diversity is to be applauded;
- 4) That the Faculty Senate calls on the university to develop plans that raise academic excellence and that maintain or increase diversity and expand inclusion; and
- 5) That the Senate asks the administration to refrain from further implementing plans to reduce enrollment and increase STEM until after a) the financial implications of these plans are validated by the Senate; b) it submits a valid model under which academic quality and diversity are not diminished; and c) its plans are considered, debated, and accepted through recognized processes of shared governance.

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Revision Submitted by Guillermo Orti, Daniel Schwartz, and Ioannis Eleftherianos
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Amendments to the Resolving Clauses Adopted by the Faculty Senate
January 10, 2020

Amendments to the Whereas Clauses Proposed by Special Drafting Committee
January 20, 2020

Adopted by the Faculty Senate
February 14, 2020

³ <https://gwtoday.gwu.edu/faculty-president-leblanc-discuss-strategic-plan-objectives-process>

⁴ Faculty Senate Minutes for October 11, 2019 Regular meeting