



Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate will meet on Friday, November 13, 2020, at 2:00pm
via WebEx

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on October 9, 2020
3. **RESOLUTION 21/14**: To Expand Religious Holiday Accommodations (Professor Jason Zara, Chair, Educational Policy & Technology Committee)
4. **UPDATE**: Operational/Financial Planning (Thomas J. LeBlanc, President)
5. **REPORT**: Fall Census/Enrollment (Jay Goff, Vice Provost of Enrollment and Student Success)
6. **REPORT**: Planning for Office of the Provost Initiatives (Brian Blake, Provost)
7. GENERAL BUSINESS
 - a) Nominations for membership to Senate standing committees
 - b) Reports of Senate standing committees
 - c) Report of the Executive Committee: Professor Arthur Wilson, Chair
 - Summary of Responses to FSEC Survey on Initiatives Planning (see attached)
 - d) Provost's Remarks
 - e) Chair's Remarks
9. Brief Statements and Questions
10. Adjournment

Elizabeth A. Amundson
Secretary



A RESOLUTION TO EXPAND RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATIONS (21/14)

WHEREAS, GW's current policy limiting the timeframe for requesting faith-based accommodations to the first week of the semester is unnecessarily restrictive; and

WHEREAS, the Muslim holiday of Ramadan will coincide with the Spring final examination period for the next two years, thus posing a challenge to the academic performance of students who observe the holiday and whose faith requires them to fast throughout the entirety of the examination period; and

WHEREAS, in comparison to its market basket range, GW's Religious Holiday Calendar has the smallest number of distinct faiths represented (six) and has the third-smallest number of holidays included (thirty-two); and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of GW as a preeminent institution of higher education and global scholarship to provide students from all cultural backgrounds with an equitable academic experience;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

- 1) That the Faculty Senate hereby recommend the following changes be made to the University Religious Holiday Policy, effective immediately:

Religious Holiday Policy

1. Students must notify faculty ~~during the first week of the semester~~ as early as possible, but no later than three weeks prior to the absence, of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. ~~If the holiday falls in the first three weeks of class, the student must inform the faculty within the first week of the semester that they are enrolled in the course.~~
2. ~~To the greatest extent possible~~, faculty must continue to extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations.
3. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday must arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities.
4. Prior to each semester, the administration must circulate to faculty a schedule of religious holidays most frequently observed by GW students.

5. Student members of **all** religious groups **are** entitled to the same courtesies and accommodations.
 6. The administration must convey this policy to students by including it in the Schedule of Classes and other places deemed appropriate.
- 2) That the Faculty Senate hereby recommend the following change be made to the University Final Examination Conflict Policy, effective immediately:

Final Examination Conflict Policy

1. There must be written regulation affirming the University policy to have one final examination rescheduled if a student has three or more final examinations scheduled on the same day.
 2. **To the greatest extent possible and without interfering with the integrity of the exam, students who are observing a religious holiday during the final examination period shall be allowed to have any examination rescheduled that conflicts with their day(s) of religious observance. In the case that a student is observing a religious holiday that coincides with the entirety of the examination period, the student shall be allowed to reschedule necessary examinations to alternative days/times to eliminate the need to take more than one final examination in a given day.**
 3. The rescheduling must take place at least three weeks prior to the last day of classes and, whenever possible, the make-up examination be rescheduled during the examination period.
 4. The rescheduling must be achieved in consultation with the instructors involved and, whenever possible, the student selects which examination to reschedule.
- 3) That the Faculty Senate hereby recommend the Office of the Provost updates the GW Religious Holiday Calendar to include the complete list of religious observances proposed by the Student Association and the GW Interfaith Council (Appendix C), effective immediately.

Educational Policy & Technology Committee
October 5, 2020

Appendix A (from the Office of the Registrar)

Religious Holidays

The Faculty Senate has set guidelines pertaining to the observation of religious holidays. These have become university policy and are as follows:

1. that students notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.
2. that faculty continue to extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations.
3. that faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday arrange at the beginning of the semester to re-schedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities.
4. that, prior to each semester, the administration circulate to faculty a schedule of religious holidays most frequently observed by GW students
5. that student members of other religious groups are also entitled to the same courtesies and accommodations.
6. that the administration conveys this policy to students by including it in the Schedule of Classes and other places deemed appropriate.

Appendix B (from the Office of the Registrar)

Final Examination Conflicts

The administration has accepted a resolution of the Faculty Senate regarding final examination conflicts. The Senate recommended:

1. that there be written regulation affirming the University policy to have one final examination rescheduled if a student has three or more final examinations scheduled on the same day.
2. that the rescheduling take place at least three weeks prior to the last day of classes and that, whenever possible, the make-up examination be rescheduled during the examination period.
3. that the rescheduling be achieved in consultation with the instructors involved and that, whenever possible, the student selects which examination to reschedule.

Appendix C (from the Student Association)

Recommended 2020-2021 Religious Holiday Calendar:

| Holiday | Date | Week Day | Faith |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Eid al-Adha | July 30th - August 3rd | Thursday - Monday | Islamic |
| Krishna Janmashtami | August 11th | Tuesday | Hindu |
| Assumption of the Blessed Mother (Holy Day of Obligation) | August 15th | Saturday | Catholic |

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|--|---------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Paryushana | August 16th - August 23rd | Sunday - Sunday | Jain |
| Al-Hijra (Islamic New Year) | August 19th - August 20th | Wednesday - Thursday | Islamic |
| Onam | August 22nd - September 2nd | Saturday - Wednesday | Hindu |
| Ganesh Chaturthi | August 22nd | Saturday | Hindu |
| Ashura | August 28th - August 29th | Friday - Saturday | Islamic |
| Rosh Hashanah | September 18th - September 20th | Friday - Sunday | Jewish |
| Meskal | September 28th | Monday | Ethiopian Orthodox Christian |
| Navratri | October 17th - October 26th | Saturday - Monday | Hindu |
| Yom Kippur | September 27th - September 28th | Sunday - Monday | Jewish |
| Sukkot | October 2nd - October 9th | Friday - Friday | Jewish |
| Shmini Atzeret | October 9th - October 11th | Friday - Sunday | Jewish |
| Simchat Torah | October 10th - October 11th | Saturday - Sunday | Jewish |
| Installation of Scriptures of Guru Granth Sahib | October 16th | Friday | Sikh |
| Birth of B'ab | October 18th | Sunday | Baha'i |
| Birth of Baha'u'llah | October 19th | Monday | Baha'i |
| Dussehra (Dasara) | October 25th | Sunday | Hindu |
| Mawlid-an-Nabi | October 28th - October 29th | Wednesday - Thursday | Islamic |
| All Saint's Day (Catholic Holy Day of Obligation) | November 1st | Sunday | Catholic/ Christian |

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|--|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Deepavali (Diwali) | November 14th | Saturday | Hindu |
| Bandi Chhor Diwas | November 14th | Saturday | Sikh |
| Jain New Year | November 15th | Sunday | Jain |
| Day of the Covenant | November 24th - November 25th | Tuesday - Wednesday | Baha'i |
| Guru Nanak's Birthday | November 30th | Monday | Sikh |
| Immaculate Conception (Holy Day of Obligation) | December 8th | Tuesday | Catholic |
| Hanukkah/ Chanukah | December 10th - December 18th | Thursday - Friday | Jewish |
| The Nativity of Our Lord (Holy Day of Obligation) / Christmas | December 25th | Friday | Christian/ Catholic |
| Epiphany | January 6th | Wednesday | Christian |
| Feast of the Nativity (Russian Orthodox Christmas) | January 7th | Thursday | Eastern Orthodox Christian |
| Pongal/Sankranti | January 14th | Thursday | Hindu |
| Guru Gobind Singh's Birthday | January 20th | Wednesday | Sikh |
| Bodhi Day | January 21st | Thursday | Buddhist |
| Timkat | January 19th | Tuesday | Ethiopian Orthodox Christian |
| Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese New Year | February 12th | Friday | N/A |
| Ash Wednesday | February 17th | Wednesday | Christian/ Catholic |
| Purim | February 25th - February 26th | Thursday - Friday | Jewish |
| Maha Shivaratri | March 11th | Thursday | Hindu |
| Nineteen-Day Fast | March 1st - March 19th | Monday - Friday | Baha'i |
| Nowruz (Persian New Year) | March 21st - March 22nd | Sunday - Monday | N/A |

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|---|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Pesach (Passover) - first two days | March 27th - March 28th | Saturday - Sunday | Jewish |
| Palm Sunday | March 28th | Sunday | Christian/ Catholic |
| Holika Dahan | March 28th | Sunday | Hindu |
| Holika Dahan - Holi | March 29th | Monday | Hindu |
| Holy Thursday | April 1st | Thursday | Christian/Catholic |
| Good Friday | April 2nd | Friday | Christian/ Catholic |
| Pesach (passover) - last two days | April 3rd - April 4th | Saturday - Sunday | Jewish |
| Easter (Western) | April 4th | Sunday | Christian/ Catholic |
| Ramadan | April 12th - May 11th | Monday - Tuesday | Islamic |
| Ugadi | April 13th | Tuesday | Hindu |
| Vaisakhi | April 14th | Wednesday | Sikh |
| Ram Navami | April 21st | Wednesday | Hindu |
| Hanuman Jayanti | April 26th - April 27th | Monday - Tuesday | Hindu |
| Good Friday (Orthodox) | April 30th | Friday | Orthodox Christian |
| Easter (Orthodox) | May 2nd | Sunday | Orthodox Christian |
| Eid al-Fitr | May 13th | Thursday | Islamic |
| Shavuot | May 16th - May 18th | Sunday - Tuesday | Jewish |
| Birth of Buddha (Wesak) | May 19th | Wednesday | Buddhist |

**Yellow = New Holiday*
**Gray = Existing Holiday*



**Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) Survey (Nov 1 – 4, 2020)
Responses – Summary**

The FSEC contacted faculty who have been involved in planning discussions concerning four major initiatives recently led by the Provost, to ask a set of questions about the consultation and decision-making process. The summary below is an attempt to highlight the major conclusions; a spreadsheet with the raw data (complete answers) is available [here](#).

The Faculty Code of the George Washington University states: *“The faculty cannot perform an effective and responsible role in university decision-making without the cooperation of the administrative officers of the university. This cooperation includes the provision of such information as is necessary to the development of sound, well-informed recommendations. Faculty bodies charged with responsibilities for particular policy and planning areas are entitled, to the extent feasible, to be informed sufficiently in advance of important decisions within their areas of competence to be able to provide their advice or recommendations to the appropriate university officials.”* [Faculty Code IX.B]

Keeping the above in view, please answer the following questions concerning the Information Technology/Academic Technologies (AT/IT) reorganization, the Sponsored Research Complex reorganization, the Academic Masterplan, and Enrollment. If you have not been involved in a particular area, please enter "n/a" for that response.

Academic Technologies/IT centralization

- 1. Did you have a chance to offer suggestions to the Provost? On what dates? Did Provost actions take place before or after consultation?**
Seven respondents had a chance to offer suggestions at meetings starting in July. Provost actions (implementation of IT reform) took place after consultation.
- 2. Did the Provost's actions make use of existing and valid data relevant to your committee?**
No data were presented by the Provost to any of the committees.
- 3. Were your suggestions incorporated into actions taken by the Provost?**
None of the suggestions offered were heeded, except that classroom technology remains with LAI. In all other cases, requests or suggestions were ignored.
- 4. Did actions taken by the Provost conflict with what had been communicated to your committee?**
No. The Provost was pretty straight forward that he wanted to do this, and he did.
- 5. Evaluate actions taken by the Provost. How do they materially affect the reputation of GW, its operational effectiveness, the experience of the students, or the ability of faculty to do their research and to teach?**
The general perception is that IT services have been degraded during the transition and the results are very negative, or at least that it has become measurably more difficult for faculty to get IT support. The actions by the Provost also have undermined morale in the LAI team.

Sponsored Research Support

- 1. Did you have a chance to offer suggestions to the Provost? On what dates? Did Provost actions take place before or after consultation?**
Few respondents had a chance to offer suggestions at meetings starting in June or July. Provost took actions (creating a new “pod system”) after consultation took place.
- 2. Did the Provost's actions make use of existing and valid data relevant to your committee?**
No data were presented by the Provost to any of the committees to support his plan.
- 3. Were your suggestions incorporated into actions taken by the Provost?**
No. Suggestions to keep SRAs at the school level, based on 10 years of experience, the research ecosystem review, and prior failures of centralization were ignored.
- 4. Did actions taken by the Provost conflict with what had been communicated to your committee?**
Yes. The provost promised that significant actions would not take place without consultation, but implemented his plan in conflict with what he had promised and contrary to what he had been advised.
- 5. Evaluate actions taken by the Provost. How do they materially affect the reputation of GW, its operational effectiveness, the experience of the students, or the ability of faculty to do their research and to teach?**
Operational effectiveness may be compromised, depending on School, or it may be too early to tell. GW lost valuable personnel in the transition.

Academic Masterplan

- 1. Did you have a chance to offer suggestions to the Provost? On what dates? Did Provost actions take place before or after consultation?**
Seven respondents had a chance to offer suggestions. Early meetings happened in June. Provost actions to implement the plan never happened.
- 2. Did the Provost's actions make use of existing and valid data relevant to your committee?**
No data were presented, but the Provost seemed to have collected some information on departments, mainly on return on investment to be used to rank departments and programs. But none of this has been shared broadly, beyond preliminary evaluations seen by some respondents
- 3. Were your suggestions incorporated into actions taken by the Provost?**
No. Suggestions made by respondents that the masterplan evaluate research, use the available strategic planning documents, use valid metrics, and others were entirely ignored.
- 4. Did actions taken by the Provost conflict with what had been communicated to your committee?**
This was unclear at the time of the survey, since the Provost did not actually implement his plan. Communication of intentions of the plan was poor.
- 5. Evaluate actions taken by the Provost. How do they materially affect the reputation of GW, its operational effectiveness, the experience of the students, or the ability of faculty to do their research and to teach?**
Mostly secret consultation and poor communication created confusion among faculty, few were sufficiently informed.

Student Enrollment

1. Did you have a chance to offer suggestions to the Provost? On what dates? Did Provost actions take place before or after consultation?

Five respondents had a chance to offer suggestions on enrollment. This was an ongoing discussion since the beginning of the pandemic and before (under 20/30)

2. Did the Provost's actions make use of existing and valid data relevant to your committee?

Yes, comparative data from previous years, actual enrollment numbers, and several targets for enrollment were presented at various times.

3. Were your suggestions incorporated into actions taken by the Provost?

No. Suggestions made by respondents were not incorporated, except in one case (but the respondent did not specify what suggestion)

4. Did actions taken by the Provost conflict with what had been communicated to your committee?

Some confusion seems evident here. Some respondents believe there was no conflict, whereas others believe that promises made to abandon efforts to decrease enrollment were not done (or not put into place).

5. Evaluate actions taken by the Provost. How do they materially affect the reputation of GW, its operational effectiveness, the experience of the students, or the ability of faculty to do their research and to teach?

Loss of revenue and necessary austerity measures had to be adopted due to lower enrollment.