



**A RESOLUTION ON DISTINGUISHING SHORT-TERM FISCAL ADJUSTMENTS FROM
LONG-TERM STRUCTURAL CHANGES (21/6)**

WHEREAS, the George Washington University is currently facing multiple and unprecedented challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, the schools of the university and its central administration must undertake substantial budget adjustments to mitigate the projected financial impact of the pandemic on university operations;

WHEREAS, such budget adjustments may include a combination of temporary measures aimed at mitigating the effects of lost revenue and more permanent changes in the structure of the university, with these combined measures targeting both non-academic and academic realms of operations;

WHEREAS, through its Resolution on Budget Austerity Principles (21/4), the Faculty Senate affirmed the role of shared governance in deliberating budget and prioritizing cuts impacting the effective operation of the departments, schools, and the university as a whole;

WHEREAS, under the principles of shared governance, the Board of Trustees is charged with the ultimate fiduciary responsibility for the university, and the faculty is charged to safeguard its academic (educational and research) mission and integrity;

WHEREAS, the University administration and the Board of Trustees have stated that the schools and faculty should make long-term as well as temporary changes;¹

WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate acknowledges that the long-term well-being of the university may be enhanced by well-targeted permanent changes;

WHEREAS, the administration has enacted a diligent choice of measures with small impact on the academic mission which stabilize the university's operations for the next few months and thus allow for a thorough deliberation of more permanent changes which impact the academic mission of the university;

¹See remarks by Chair of the Board of Trustees Grace E. Speights to the Senate on May 3, 2020, and her "Statement from the George Washington Board of Trustees," on May 18, 2020, which indicated that permanent measures "could include but are not limited to opportunities to restructure programs and services with the intention of materially improving the operations and financial efficiency beyond minor changes that would normally be implemented in a less severe financial downturn."

WHEREAS, proper targeting of such permanent changes requires a process of careful deliberation and regular consultation with the faculty, namely the Faculty Senate and its relevant committees, following the principles of shared governance affirmed repeatedly by the Faculty Senate and accepted by the administration during the 2019-2020 academic year; and

WHEREAS, a quantitative assessment of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic via enrollment and teaching models beyond rough estimates will only be possible after a substantial portion of the Fall 2020 semester has been conducted;

NOW, THEREFORE

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

1. The University administration be strongly encouraged to rely first on making fiscal adjustments to address the budget gap that, while significant, are also reversible and temporary, and to follow the advice of the Faculty Senate Resolution on Budget Austerity Principles (21/4);
2. Permanent structural changes be distinguished from the short-term fiscal adjustments taken in response to the pandemic;
3. Any proposed permanent structural changes which affect the academic mission or integrity of the university follow a distinct track and timeline of deliberation and consultation with faculty, namely the Faculty Senate and its relevant committees, along with considerations provided by the Dean of each school regarding the unique needs that each school has in supporting its mission;
4. The University administration and faculty collaborate to identify potential long-term changes and present a joint proposal for review by the Board of Trustees by no later than Spring 2021;
5. A period of at least two weeks be allowed before submission of such a proposal to the Board of Trustees for final comments by the Faculty Senate, its relevant committees and the Deans of each school; and
6. As part of the process on consultation the University administration make available the information needed to make an informed analysis of options in a timely manner and with sufficient time for deliberation.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee
June 4, 2020

Adopted by the Faculty Senate
June 18, 2020