



Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate will meet on Friday, April 11, 2025, at 2:00pm
in the State Room (1957 E Street/7th floor) and via Zoom

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Approval of the [minutes](#) of the meeting held on March 11, 2025
3. Acknowledgment of [Senate Members Completing Terms](#)
4. [Resolution 25/8](#): Of Appreciation for Ilana Feldman (Amita Vyas, FSEC)
5. President's Report (Ellen Granberg, President)
6. Brief Statements and Questions/President's Report
7. Provost's Report (Chris Bracey, Provost)
8. Brief Statements and Questions/Provost's Report
9. Executive Committee Report (Ilana Feldman, Chair)
10. Brief Statements and Questions/Executive Committee Report
11. [Resolution 25/9](#): To Maintain the University's Commitment to Tenure (Heather Bamford, Co-Chair, Appointments, Salary, & Promotion Policies Committee)
12. [Resolution 25/10](#): Regarding Institutional Neutrality (Guillermo Orti, Co-Chair, Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom Committee)
13. Report: [On Newly Proposed Guidelines for University Policy Review Process](#) (Guillermo Orti, Co-Chair, Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom Committee)
14. Introduction of New Resolutions to be Referred to Committee
15. General Business
 - a) Nominations for membership to Senate Standing Committees
 - b) Standing Committee reports received
16. Brief Statements and Questions/General
17. Adjournment



Faculty Senate

Departing Senators April 2025

CCAS

Oleg Kargaltsev
Don Parsons
Sarah Wagner

GWSB

Yixin Lu

LAW

Blake Morant

GWSPH

Jim Tielsch

SMHS

Paul Marvar
Bob Zeman



A RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR PROFESSOR ILANA FELDMAN (25/8)

WHEREAS, Professor Ilana Feldman's term of continuous service on the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate (most recently as Chair) reaches its three-year limit under the Faculty Organization Plan in April 2025;

WHEREAS, Professor Feldman has skillfully guided the Faculty Senate during university strategic planning, particularly in representing the Senate's collective interests in promoting excellence at GW. This includes significant discussions with the Board of Trustees Executive Committee that have fostered greater trust between the faculty and the Board of Trustees;

WHEREAS, as Chair of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Professor Feldman encouraged greater faculty participation in Senate committees, emphasizing the importance of faculty engagement in university governance;

WHEREAS, Professor Feldman deserves special recognition for her active collaboration with the new president. She played a key role in facilitating discussions during a significant presidential transition, which involved direct interactions and dialogues with the president;

WHEREAS, Professor Feldman has tirelessly invested countless hours in improving the lives of GW's students, staff, and faculty, in addition to the quality and reputation of the University;

WHEREAS, Professor Feldman has championed academic freedom and shared governance during challenging times; and

WHEREAS, Professor Feldman has earned the highest level of respect, gratitude, and admiration of her colleagues on the Faculty Senate as well as the esteem and appreciation of the entire University community;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY THAT THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT OF APPRECIATION BE ISSUED:

Professor Ilana Feldman has provided distinguished service as a member of the Faculty Senate since January 2023, as a member of the Senate Executive Committee since January 2023, and as Chair of the Executive Committee for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 Senate sessions.

As Chair of the Executive Committee, Professor Feldman has provided outstanding leadership to the University, particularly in the areas of communication and shared governance.

As a consequence of this extraordinary leadership, THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HEREBY EXPRESSES ITS DEEPEST ADMIRATION, APPRECIATION, AND GRATITUDE TO PROFESSOR ILANA FELDMAN FOR HER DISTINGUISHED SERVICE.

Adopted by unanimous consent of the Faculty Senate
April 11, 2025

Ellen M. Granberg, President



Faculty Senate

A RESOLUTION TO MAINTAIN THE UNIVERSITY'S COMMITMENT TO TENURE (25/9)

- WHEREAS,** Article I.B and Article I.C of the Faculty Code define two principal grades of academic personnel—Regular Faculty and Specialized Faculty—yet Specialized Faculty are not currently recognized within the Code as part of the Regular Faculty for the purposes of counting tenured and tenure-track faculty;
- WHEREAS,** the teaching, service, and/or research contributions of Specialized Faculty are significant and vital to the functioning of the University;
- WHEREAS,** Article IV.C of the Faculty Code affirms that The George Washington University (GW) aspires to be a preeminent research university, for which tenure and a robust tenure-track system are fundamental;
- WHEREAS,** tenure is necessary to ensure Research 1 universities are at the forefront of research and innovation, and the criteria for membership in the Association of American Universities are closely correlated with the freedoms and responsibilities inherent to tenure;
- WHEREAS,** Article I.B of the Faculty Code stipulates that, except for the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the School of Nursing, the Milken Institute School of Public Health, and the College of Professional Studies, the proportion of Regular Faculty serving in non-tenure-track appointments shall not exceed 25 percent in any school, nor shall fewer than 50 percent of a department's Regular Faculty appointments be tenured or tenure-track;
- WHEREAS,** Specialized Faculty are not included in these calculations under the current Code because, by definition, they are not considered Regular Faculty;
- WHEREAS,** Specialized Faculty now compose an increasing proportion of the full-time faculty at GW, obscuring the intent of the 25 percent/50 percent thresholds set forth in Article I.B;
- WHEREAS,** the denominator for calculating the proportion of tenured and tenure-track faculty should accurately reflect the current and actual composition of GW's full-time faculty; and
- WHEREAS,** there is an established pattern of non-compliance with Article I.B as written, owing in part to the exclusion of Specialized Faculty from the relevant calculations;

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

- That the Faculty Senate of The George Washington University calls upon the administration to adhere to the established intent of Article I.B and maintain the University's commitment to tenure and a strong tenure-track faculty; and
- That the Faculty Senate hereby proposes the following amendment (Exhibit 1) to the Faculty Code to ensure consistent and transparent compliance with the 25 percent/50 percent thresholds.

Appointments, Salary, & Promotion Policies Committee
Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom Committee
April 2, 2025

Exhibit 1

Redline Version of Proposed Amendments

I. GRADES OF ACADEMIC PERSONNEL

Amend Section B

B. Regular Faculty

Regular Faculty are full-time faculty members with the title of university professor, professor, associate professor, assistant professor, and instructor who are tenured or tenure-track, and non-tenure-track full-time faculty members who are on a renewable contract, do not hold either a regular or tenured appointment at another university, have a nine or twelve month appointment and who have contractual responsibilities for all of the following: research, teaching, and service. ~~However, the proportion of regular faculty serving in non-tenure-track appointments shall not exceed 25 percent in any school, nor shall any department have fewer than 50 percent of its regular faculty appointments either tenured or tenure-track. The foregoing shall not apply to the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the School of Nursing, the Milken Institute School of Public Health, and the College of Professional Studies~~

Add new section G

G. Proportion of Tenured or Tenure-track Faculty

Except for the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the School of Nursing, the Milken Institute School of Public Health, and the College of Professional Studies, the proportion of the Regular and Specialized Faculty serving in non-tenure-track appointments shall not exceed 25 percent in any school, nor shall any department have fewer than 50 percent of its Regular Faculty appointments in tenured or tenure-track positions.



Faculty Senate

A RESOLUTION REGARDING INSTITUTIONAL NEUTRALITY (25/10)

WHEREAS, “Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interests of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition”¹;

WHEREAS, the free search for truth and its free exposition represent cornerstone objectives of The George Washington University; and

WHEREAS, the George Washington University Faculty Senate has heretofore implicitly, but not explicitly, endorsed its adherence to the tenets of the free search for truth and its free exposition;

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

1. That the GW Faculty Senate endorses the AAUP *Statement on Institutional Neutrality*², and the attached “PEAF Statement on Institutional Neutrality,” and in so doing remains unequivocally dedicated to safeguarding the free search for truth and its free exposition for all members of the GW community to promote robust academic freedom and intramural and extramural speech;
2. That any institutional statements regarding issues under public discourse shall not be presented as, nor be interpreted as representing, the collective view of the GW Faculty; and
3. That the GW administration and Board of Trustees are strongly encouraged to join the GW Faculty in providing assurance to all members of the GW community, through concrete actions and decisions, that the free search for truth and its free exposition underscore the basic mission of the University, treating *all* members of the community with respect, and neither privileging nor disadvantaging any identity or ideology.

Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom Committee
April 3, 2025

¹ [AAUP \(2025\). Advancing academic freedom](#)

² [AAUP \(2025\). On institutional neutrality. Feb 2025](#)

Appendix 1
Professional Ethics & Academic Freedom Committee
Statement on Institutional Neutrality
March 17, 2025

PREAMBLE

Universities are integral to a healthy, functioning democracy. As institutions of learning, they offer spaces where the challenging work of debating ideas takes place through free inquiry, deliberation, and expression. In today’s unsettling times, it is important to reiterate,

“Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interests of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.”³

Over the past year, amidst political scrutiny, many universities have committed to ‘institutional neutrality’- whereby they are choosing to remain silent and avoid taking a political stance. Proponents argue that “by adopting institutional neutrality, universities signal their dedication to debate, viewpoint diversity, and the pursuit of knowledge rather than undermining academic dialogue with political statements⁴.” On the contrary, critics see it as a tool for repelling social criticism and a convenient excuse for university leaders to stay silent as politicians restrict how leaders and universities operate. Further, critics argue institutional neutrality ignores classroom realities and enables university presidents to foreclose public debate on campuses⁵.

PEAF’s SUBCOMMITTEE ON NEUTRALITY

The Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom (PEAF) formed a **Subcommittee on Neutrality** in November 2024 with a charge to discuss if GW should include the topic of institutional neutrality in developing its strategic framework. On November 4, 2024, the GW Hatchet [reported](#) that GW would not consider adopting neutrality amid a national push for schools to adopt this stance. Since then, the GW administration has assured the faculty and GW Hatchet that it has not yet adopted institutional neutrality.

The Subcommittee members reviewed several reports and articles (published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Education*, etc.) on institutional neutrality and institutional restraint and met in Dec 2024. After weighing the pros and cons of adopting institutional neutrality at GW, its members concluded that **institutional neutrality and institutional restraint are not the solution or panacea to the problems facing GW or other universities**. Hence, GW should look inward at its character, educational mission, and core values to project itself outward, i.e., uphold its core values of academic freedom and shared governance.

³ [AAUP. \(2025\). Advancing academic freedom](#)

⁴ [Heterodox Academy. \(2025\). New report: The rising tide of statement neutrality](#)

⁵ Ghachem, M.W. (2024). A better way to protect free speech: Grand statements ignore classroom realities. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Feb 3, 2023.

Ford, A. (2024). The Chicago principles are undemocratic. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. May 6, 2024.

Vasquez, M. (2024). Is institutional neutrality catching on. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Feb 8, 2023.

At its February 2025 meeting, PEAFF recommended that the Neutrality Subcommittee members examine peer institutions to see how they are dealing with the issue of “neutrality” so that PEAFF can make sure the administration will not *unilaterally* make any decision about adopting institutional neutrality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing the AAUP’s newly released *Statement on Institutional Neutrality*⁶ and other articles published on universities rushing to adopt institutional neutrality, this Sub-committee reaffirms its commitment to our earlier conclusion.

1. We argue that GW, as an institution of higher learning, should **focus on safeguarding principles of shared governance and upholding the academic freedom of its constituents** (faculty and students⁷). It should stand for teaching, learning, and the basic tenets of the university by remaining a firm supporter and forum for vigorous, data-informed discussion, debate, scholarship, and teaching. In asserting this Subcommittee’s conclusion, we quote the AAUP’s Statement on Institutional Neutrality:

“A commitment to neutrality,” the new statement declares, “is not some magic wand that conjures freedom. Calls for neutrality instead provide an opportunity to consider how various practices of an institution—not only its speech or silence but also its actions and policies—might promote a more robust freedom of teaching, research, and intramural and extramural speech.”

“The statement calls for principles of academic freedom and shared governance to be chief considerations in the issuing of institutional and departmental statements as well as decisions on financial investments and campus protest policies.”

2. Further, our members are concerned that any statement made by the university administration could be misconstrued as reflecting the views of the faculty as well. We want to emphasize that academic freedom is distinct from and does not constitute a collective faculty view. Hence, this Subcommittee reiterates that **University statements on any issue under public discussion do not and should not be presented/ interpreted as representing a collective view of the University Faculty.**
3. We urge the University administration and Board to **assure members of its community through their concrete actions and decisions that it will uphold principles of shared governance, protect academic freedom and free speech, treat *all* with respect, and that it will neither privilege nor disadvantage any identity or ideology** (see AAU President’s statement below).

We conclude with a quote from the Editorial Board’s Opinion⁸ piece published in the New York Times (March 14, 2025):

“College presidents do not need to become pundits. But they do need to defend the core mission of their institutions when it is under attack. University leaders would help themselves, and the country, by emerging from their defensive crouches and making a forthright case for inquiry, research, science and knowledge.”

⁶ [AAUP. \(2025\). On institutional neutrality. Feb 2025](#)

⁷ Please refer to [AAU President, Barbara R. Snyder’s statement](#)

⁸ [New York Times, March 14, 2025](#)