



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

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**MINUTES OF THE GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE
Wednesday Oct. 18, 2017, 4:00-6:00 p.m.
Murray Room, 5th Floor Lauinger
(Approved with corrections, 11/13/17)**

- PRESENT:** Biesenbach-Lucas, Boettcher, Bronstein, Calvert, Davis, J. Teiterbaum (for Donohue), Ecelbarger, Gale, Gewanter, Goharian, Goldfrank, Groves, Grzywacz, Huang, Iglarsh (Zoom) Jensen, Johnson, Kern, Kertesz, Krim, Lieber, Marhanka, Moreno, Mastowfi, Nolan, Pfeiffer, Shaw, Shields, Weigert
- ABSENT:** Abusharaf, Almeida, Arend, Berlinerblau, Bloch, Bode, Byers, Byrne, Celenza, Cohn, Coker-Appiah, Colie, Cumby, Danielsen, De Fina, Djakiew, Dutton, Engler, Ernst, Evangelista, Feinerman, Fitzpatrick, Gentic, Glazer, Haddad, Harbert, Harris, Healton, Hoffman, Kaltman, Kamrad, Lamm, LaRocque, Luta, McCabe, McCartin, Mishori, Moore, Olesko, Otter, Parsons, Pasachoff, Roett, Ross, Sadowska, Salles-Reese, Singer, Stemer, Suarez-Quian, Treanor, Vroman, Wilkinson, Young
- GUESTS:** Charles DeSantis (Associate Vice President for Benefits, Payroll & Wellness and Chief Benefits Office), Peggy Fry (Acting University Librarian), Megan Pritts (University Counsel).

The meeting was called to order by Wayne Davis at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion #1: The minutes of Sept. 14, 2017 were approved with the following votes:

Aye	Nay	Abstain
22		

Open Forum.

The Acting University Librarian, Peggy Frye, informed the Senate of two initiatives. One is the replacement of GEORGE with a more effective system. The second is a survey that the library has developed that will take a deeper look at the information needs of faculty, students, and staff. The survey is currently undergoing IRB and should be coming out later this semester.

Appointments

Motion #2: To confirm the following appointments:

1. Grievance Code Review Committee: Sherm Cohen (Law) and Karen Anderson (Psychiatry).
2. Graduate School Executive Council: Kier Lieber (SFS) to replace Kathy Olesko (through 2018).
3. Main Campus Research Steering Committee: Patrick O'Malley to replace Patricia Viera (Fall 2017).
4. Media Advisory Board: Suzanne Chase (Lauinger) to replace Beth Marhanka (Lauinger) (through 2019).

Motion #2 was approved with following votes.

Aye	Nay	Abstain
22		

Motion #3: To confirm the temporary appointment of Josh Teitelbaum (Law) as a replacement for Richard Diamond and/or Laura Donohue (Law) on the Faculty Senate Steering Committee.

Motion #3 passed as below:

Aye	Nay	Abstain
22		

Proposed Benefits Revisions

Charles DeSantis (Associate Vice President for Benefits and Chief Benefits Officer) presented revisions of benefits package proposed by the Benefits Advisory Committee. These revisions were developed after a general review of the benefits package that Georgetown offers its employees and comparing them to other institutions. GU is spending about \$140 million/year on benefits. DeSantis indicated that the 10% contribution that GU makes to 403.b plans puts us in the top four or five among universities. The University wants to maintain this level of contribution. There are three adjustments which are currently being looked at:

- a) 403.b Plan Contributions. A two year phase-in of the University's contribution to the 403.b plan for employees who do not already have one. Persons who have already a 403.b match – for example faculty or administrators hired from other universities – would be exempted. In the first year, the University would not contribute. In the second year, the University would contribute 5% if the employee contributed 3%. Beginning in the third year, the University will contribute 10% if the employee contributed 3% or 5% if the employee opts out of the 3% contribution. The savings from this change would be \$3-5 million per year.
- b) Eligibility for Retirement Health Benefits. In addition to the current requirement 55 years of age plus 10 years of service to GU, employees would have to satisfy the common "rule of 75": the sum of their age and years of service would have to be at least 75. Cash savings would be modest (approximately \$ 200 to 400,000 per year), but since the actuarial costs have to be booked as liabilities, there would be a significant decrease of these (about \$10 million).
- c) A voluntary retirement plan for staff/AAP that would include some sort of phased retirement and a bonus at the end of the period. The savings depend heavily on the response rate and could be in the \$ 2.2 million range.

There was significant discussion, especially about the change to the 403.b plan. Social justice and common values were mentioned by some, especially given that employees coming to Georgetown with 403b plans already would immediately receive the 10% match. Others saw the changes as relatively modest when compared to other options and given the overall competitive position of GU in the higher education environment. It was observed that real base salaries have increased significantly over the years, making the University's 10% contribution a much richer benefit. DeSantis was urged to "auto-enroll" employees in the voluntary 3% 403b contribution, making it "opt-out" rather than "opt-in" to reduce the large number of employees who do not make these contributions. DeSantis thanked for the input and said that he will take all aspects of the discussion into consideration as the changes are finalized.

Update on UCRT Membership

Wayne Davis updated senate members on an agreement between President DeGioia and the Senate president that they together appoint an additional member from a humanities department to the University Committee on Rank and Tenure if there is no objection from the Senate. (In this way, the 50/50 appointment powers between the president and the faculty Senate will be maintained.)

Parliamentary Procedure Guide

A review of the guide that was distributed to members of the Senate was postponed to get on with more pressing business.

Senate Constitution Revision

Final review after sending it out to the faculty for comment. Two additional changes were recommended by the Steering Committee.

- a. There is an unclarity in the following passage:

The Senate shall elect biennially from its membership, at the first regular meeting following election of new Senators, a President, a Vice President from each campus, and a Secretary-Treasurer.

This does not specify that 'its membership' refers to the members of the Senate in the year in which the new officers will begin serving rather than the membership during the year in which the election is held. The issue arose in 2007 when someone was nominated for office in May but would not be a Senate member until July. The converse problem could also arise. The Steering Committee proposes the following fix:

The Senate shall elect biennially from its membership at the first regular meeting following election of new Senators, a President, a Vice President from each campus, and a Secretary-Treasurer. Officers are eligible to serve only when they are members of the Senate.

This amendment also makes clear that an officer who is not re-elected to the Senate before his or her two-year term of office is complete can no longer hold the office, creating a vacancy to be filled.

- b. There is another unclarity in the following passage:

All faculty members with full-time appointments and at least one year of full-time service at the University shall be eligible to vote in elections for the Senate, and to serve as members of the Senate, provided they are either employed by the University or appointed to a Scholar or Educator track for non-employees.

An interpretive problem arose in 2004 when a faculty member with many years of service left the university for a few years and then returned. Was he eligible to serve in the Senate the year he returned? In May 2004, the Senate approved the following interpretation, which is now posted with other rules of procedure on the Senate website:

A faculty member is eligible to serve in the Senate as long as he or she will have “one year of prior service” on the faculty by the time the Senate term begins, either in the faculty member’s current appointment or in a prior appointment.

The Steering Committee debated whether to put the redlined clarification in the revised Constitution, leave it a rule of procedure, or abandon the 2004 rule and require one year of immediately prior service. In the course of the debate, it came up with an alternative solution. Members of the committee who ran campus elections reflected on how difficult the one-year rule makes it to certify eligibility to vote given the way faculty records are maintained and the fact that elections are conducted mid-year. The question was then raised whether the one-year requirement could simply be dropped. One good reason for the requirement emerged: it made faculty with merely visiting appointments ineligible. Faculty contracts and databases specify whether faculty are visiting as well as whether their appointments are full-time. So non-visiting status as an eligibility requirement would be easy to verify. The Steering Committee therefore recommends the following amendment:

All faculty members with full-time non-visiting appointments ~~and at least one year of full-time service at the University~~ shall be eligible to vote in elections for the Senate, and to serve as members of the Senate, provided they are either employed by the University or appointed to a Scholar or Educator track for non-employees.

Motion #4: to approve the two proposed amendments.

The motion was approved with following votes:

Aye	Nay	Abstain
19		

One comment on the proposed revisions to the Senate Constitution was received after it was sent out to all faculty for review. Strengthening a suggestion he made at the September 14th Senate meeting, Peter C. Pfeiffer recommends amending 6.b.iv to say that the other members of the Steering Committee appointed by the officers and the University President’s designee must be members of the Senate. The Steering Committee discussed the proposal and opposes it for a number of reasons. Principally, it sees no reason for the exclusion, and believes past Steering Committee members who have not been Senate members have made valuable contributions, and expects that non-members would do the same in the future. Micah Jensen suggested that this change might increase the perceived legitimacy of Senate leadership. Josh Teitelbaum noted, on the other hand, that having outside members of boards of directors is quite standard. A lengthy discussion ensued before Sandy Calvert made a quorum call. Due to lack of a quorum, the meeting ended at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter C. Pfeiffer
PCP/WAD/jhg

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