



Faculty Senate

Committee on Educational Policy & Technology

Annual Report (2023-2024)

The Committee on Educational Policy and Technology (“EPT”) convened for a total of ten meetings beginning in May 2023. Our final meeting for AY 2023-2024 will be held on May 7, 2024, and the AY 2024-2025 committee will convene with a meeting in August 2024.

I. Overview of the Year

During the regular academic year meetings (August 2023 – April 2024), EPT’s monthly agendas contained updates from various subcommittees that were either established this year or were continuing work from the previous year. Detailed descriptions of subcommittee work on specific issues is provided in Section III below. Section IV contains summaries of EPT discussions related to the development and implementation of the university’s strategic framework.

FSEC charge: On 3 July 2023 the Faculty Senate Executive Committee charged the committee with the following:

- Continue to consider the potential impact of generative AI on learning, teaching, and academic integrity. Building on the initial university statement, consider whether additional policies and training are needed to meet this challenge;
- Evaluate the current Title IX/EEO training module, for approval or suggestions for improvement; and
- Discuss graduate enrollment trends with the Vice Provost for Enrollment and Student Success and offer possible suggestions to bolster recruitment and retention of graduate students.

As noted in the January 4, 2024 interim report, the committee completed its Title IX training module review at the end of the Fall 2023 semester. It dedicated its November 17, 2023 meeting to the review and discussion of the Generative Artificial Intelligence Subcommittee’s comprehensive report, and members of the subcommittee continue to address the impacts of GAI through other channels (e.g., Libraries and Academic Innovation genAI Faculty Advisory Group; pilot study on student use; effects on WID program). The future enrollment planning subcommittee met several times to discuss enrollment, though focus remained largely on undergraduate trends, in light of the SCOTUS decision and problems presented by this year’s FAFSA process.

The incoming FSEC may find this final report, including its continuing business noted at the conclusion, a useful resource in determining the AY2024-2025 charge to the committee.

II. EPT Spring 2024 Meeting Summaries

Note: The fall meetings (September - December) focused on GW's response to the Supreme Court's decision on affirmative action enrollment; continuing discussion on monitoring student retention and academic performance in Fall 2023; Generative AI practice and policy; Title IX training module feedback; developing the Instructor Frequently Asked Questions resource; and implications of the Medical Faculty Associates financial status for the university's educational mission. Summaries for the Fall 2023 meetings are included in the Interim Report, submitted on January 4, 2024.

The spring meetings (January - April) focused on the continued implications of the Medical Faculty Associates financial status on GW's educational mission (see Resolution 24/7, detailed below); GAI, including the related increase in academic integrity violations and subsequent need to adopt panel mitigation strategy (see Resolution 24/8, detailed below); enrollment planning; academic freedom and free speech (see Resolution 24/9, detailed below); the Provost's task force on academic credentials (micro-credentialing and badges); and the Graduate Teaching Assistantship Program and its Oral English Proficiency Screening component. The following summaries capture the scope of each meeting; more in-depth information on specific topics is provided in Sections III and IV.

January 19, 2024

At the January meeting, the committee discussed the “**Draft Resolution on "Strategic Planning, Education, and Financial Aid,"**” which addressed the issue of the MFA's finances and their implications for the university's educational mission. The debate covered the value and contributions of MFA to the school of medicine and allied health disciplines; the effect of its debt on strategic planning, financial aid and meeting full need, services supporting student success and increasing diversity. Members noted that, rather than blaming the MFA for financial losses, the resolution seeks a reporting system and transparency from the Board of Trustees. The resolution was passed by unanimous approval. Jason Torres (LAI Director of Strategic Digital Learning Initiatives) presented the “**Report from Pilot Study on Student GAI Use,**” namely its findings based on responses from 336 GW students, including motivations for and challenges with using the tool. Jay Goff (Vice Provost for Enrollment and Student Success) provided an **update on future enrollment planning**, including the positive indicators that the Fall 2024 admission application cycles remain on track and graduate applications, both domestic and international, more than 10% ahead of this time last year. Christy Anthony (Director, Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities) presented the “**Draft Resolution based on Academic Integrity Panel Mitigation Report and EPT Survey**”; after deliberations, the committee did not approve the resolution but will form an ad hoc subcommittee to revise and strengthen the resolution.

February 16, 2024

The committee received an update from the **Future Enrollment Subcommittee** (Jamie Cohen-Cole [chair] and Jay Goff, Vice Provost for Enrollment and Student Success), which addressed the impact that the delayed FAFSA is having on the admissions process. Jay reported a 10% rise in both domestic and international graduate applications at GW, in part due to the REV UP campaign. Applications from the D.C. area have grown by 8%. He also noted that GW continues to be on-track with application counts in line with our five-year goal, a good sign, given the changes from the Supreme Court, new systems, and FAFSA issues. Christy Anthony, Director of the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, presented the revised **Draft Resolution based on Academic Integrity Panel Mitigation Report and EPT Survey**, which passed by unanimous consent and was sent to the Faculty Senate to be included on March 1 agenda. The co-chairs thank Eric Grynaviski for his suggested revisions providing additional context for the necessity of the temporary mitigation strategy. Finally, the committee discussed the **Draft Resolution on Academic Freedom**, presented by Jamie Cohen-Cole. Members focused in particular on issues related to free speech policy and suggested amended language; the committee voted electronically later that day to approve the resolution, which was then sent to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for inclusion on the March 1 agenda.

March 22, 2024

In its March meeting, the committee received an update on the work of the Provost-initiated **Task Force on Academic Credentials** from its chair, Carol Sigelman. Following her presentation of the task force-approved version of the "Guidelines for Certificate and Other Alternative Credential Programs," the committee discussed several issues, including record management, the role of faculty in certificate/micro-credentialing development, financial and structural constraints, potential exploitation of adjunct labor, and the initiative's connection to the current future workforce-centered strategic planning. The task force recommends there be a continuing committee on alternative credentials; Carol noted that she would share the task force's "Guidelines for Combined Degree/Certificate Programs" in the coming days (which she did on April 3). This report will be disseminated to the committee on April 26 for likely inclusion on the May meeting agenda. The committee then received a report from Eric Grynaviski on **GW's Living-Learning Communities**, which underscored the challenges of limited oversight of and insufficient investment in the programs themselves and specifically the Mount Vernon Campus, as well as the need to improve the first-year experience programming. The update (and serious concerns raised) will be emphasized in EPT's final report. At the very end of the meeting, the committee resumed its discussion of **free speech policies**, with Christy Anthony, Director, Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities present to answer questions regarding the administration's efforts to clarify policies (e.g., related to protests and demonstrations) and the relative lack of communication with faculty on the issues, despite repeated requests by EPT members in the Faculty Senate.

April 26, 2024

Though originally scheduled to receive updates on student success and retention, presentations on those topics from the Office of Student Success were delayed until the May meeting. The committee therefore focused on two issues related to **graduate studies**: the [Graduate Teaching Assistantship Program](#) (GTAP); and its [Oral English Proficiency Screening](#) (OEPS) component. Suresh Subramaniam, Vice Provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs, provided the committee with an overview of the policies (old and new), detailing how his office has addressed concerns raised over the past two years regarding each. Responding to feedback about the previous one-size-fits all structure, from Fall 2024 onward, the GTAP program will include a certification course for graduate students serving as teaching assistants and a second, advanced certification course for those serving as course instructors. The committee discussed the OEPS testing and training program, including its previous emphasis on “accent modification,” as well as ongoing improvements in response to student experiences and departmental hurdles. The committee will revisit the policies next year to learn the effects of the changes. Finally, the committee co-chairs asked members Ben Bronner and Thomas Choate to look into **GAI’s impact on WID courses** (in consultation with the University Writing Program), with the aim of helping to develop guidelines for WID instructors in Fall 2024. At the close of the meeting, EPT co-chairs noted that Provost Bracey has asked the committee to provide input on best practices for managing discussion of difficult issues in the classroom, part of the administration’s “[Fostering Productive Dialogue](#)” initiative. The committee will discuss the issue in its May 7 meeting in relation to the current demonstrations on campus.

III. Additional information on specific topics:

Medical Faculty Associates (MFA) and the implications of continued debt:

A continuing EPT concern rests with the impact of the MFA budget crisis on the adequacy of the University’s ability to fulfill its educational mission. It appears from the Report presented by EPT member Phil Wirtz that MFA expenses exceeded revenues by (\$43M + \$48M + \$78M + \$79M =) \$248M – nearly a quarter of a billion dollars – over the past 4 fiscal years, and that similar debt is projected for the current fiscal year. Fiscal Planning and Budgeting Committee Co-chairs Joe Cordes and Susan Kulp met with EPT to provide context and answer questions on these issues. In the context of reduced resources to perform basic academic functions (e.g., travel support to scholarly meetings for doctoral candidates and faculty members, limitations on scholarships, student services, marketing, etc.), EPT members expressed concern about the significant cost to University when debt of this magnitude is assumed. EPT members found troubling the University’s inability to produce a MFA Business Plan, and endorsed the requirement for regular reporting on the MFA’s financial situation—in sum, greater transparency, given the troubling implications of its recurring deficits.

Academic Integrity Subcommittee:

The Academic Integrity Subcommittee of EPT consulted with the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and helped to draft a resolution to streamline the academic integrity process and resolve a backlog of cases. The resolution, since finalized and adopted (see Resolution 24/8 detailed below), reduces to three the number of panelists required for an academic integrity panel.

Future Enrollment Planning Subcommittee:

The future enrollment subcommittee held meetings in the fall and spring to discuss enrollment strategies affects retention, long-term enrollment strategies, and new and renewed initiatives by the retention team. In addition, the committee held meetings on the admission team's proactive measures to address challenges posed by the delayed rollout of the new FAFSA.

Provost's Task Force on Microcredentials/Badges:

In September 2023, the Provost's office established the GW Microcredentials Committee to investigate strategies and guidelines to support microcredentials offerings at the university. Mountasser Kadrie represented the EPT on the task force. In April 2024, a comprehensive draft of the "Guidelines for Combined Degree/Certificate Programs" was shared with the Provost for further action.

On academic freedom and free speech:

The EPT Committee stressed the importance of faculty and student free speech protections to the educational mission of the university, referencing the "[Guidelines for Academic Freedom](#)" that were passed by the Faculty Senate in 2017 and reaffirmed in 2018, as well as the AAUP's longstanding Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure. The committee lamented the administration's failure to consult with faculty in the development of its "[Strengthening the Community in Challenging Times](#)" initiative, announced in January 2024, and stressed the need for shared governance on matters of freedom of speech going forward. To that end, the Committee drafted and discussed "A Resolution on Academic Freedom." The resolution was presented to the Senate (see Resolution 24/9 detailed below) at the March 1, 2024 meeting where it passed with amendments. The EPT Committee continues to discuss issues related to free speech and academic freedom as they relate to the university's educational mission and continues to emphasize the centrality of shared governance in the formulation of policy related to these essential educational values.

IV. EPT input on the strategic framework in development

On undergraduate education:

The future of GW needs to include a focus on undergraduate education. First-year students should have meaningful interactions with full-time faculty by creating opportunities for mentorship. We hope this might increase student success and retention, as well as combat feelings of isolation or

alienation. Advanced students in all fields should have the ability to take advantage of the research university by having hands-on research experience and close, personal interactions with faculty integral to GW's mission as a comprehensive research university.

The future of the GW undergraduate experience might also include a reimagining of our special programs, designed to attract the best students to the university. The current programs are backward looking, such as the University Honors Program, which emphasizes a humanities-only design that is unappealing to many students in the social sciences and STEM. A future-focused program might include classes that enable students to accelerate plans of study in their fields and gain practical research experience early on. Doing so would require thinking about significant clusters of students that have a shared academic and social component. This reimagining might focus on developing these programs with an eye toward making the Mount Vernon Campus an academic and social hub through an investment in relatively inexpensive, specialized academic and social programming for students at the campus.

On meeting full need:

An important priority for the strategic framework should be to meet full need (i.e., meet 100% of the demonstrated financial need), doing so sooner rather than later and especially targeting GW's strongest academic students. Prior studies indicate that not meeting full need causes students significant stress, with some working more than 20 hours per week in order to support themselves. Providing less than full need harms both students and the academic missions of the university. Therefore, in line with the strategic framework with its scalable funding, the committee encourages the university to set specific goals toward meeting full need, for example:

- For next year (i.e., entering fall of 2025), extend offers of meeting full need for all ACRK 1 applicants;
- For 2026, extend offers of meeting full need for all ACRK 2 applicants;
- For 2027, extend offers of meeting full need for all ACRK 3 applicants; and
- For the remainder of the strategic framework, strive to meet full need for the remainder of the entering student body.

Committing to meeting full need for its strongest academic students will improve GWU's academic profile and increase the level of our instruction. It will also positively impact matriculation rates, retention, and graduation rates.

V. Subcommittees

EPT had several subcommittees working on a range of issues during the AY2023-2024, including those related to the FSEC charge.

- *Technology and Classroom Recording*: Chair, Katrin Schultheiss, Jason Torres, Phil Wirtz, Andrew Smith, Matt Bochniak, Cody House

- *Future Enrollment Planning Subcommittee*: Chair, Jamie Cohen-Cole, Phil Wirtz, Thomas Choate, Sarah Wagner
- *Subcommittee on Generative Artificial Intelligence*: Chair, Gaetano Lotrecchiano, Eyal Aviv, Ben Bronner, Scott Quinlan, Sue Bhati, Margaret (Meg) Ulfers, Jared Johnson, Dan Jaqua, Crystal DeVoss Mahany, Brooke McDonough, Jason Torres, Andrew Smith, Cody House
- *Student Success*: Chair, Irene Foster, Kevin Knudsen, Ben Bronner, Phil Wirtz, Sameh Badie, Jamie Jeune
- *Title IX module review*: Chair, Rohini Ganjoo, Brooke McDonough, Jamie Jeune, Sarah Wagner
- *Shared Governance*: Chair, Mountasser Kadrie, Sarah Wagner

VI. Resolutions presented to the Faculty Senate

1. The committee reviewed and deliberated [Resolution 24/7](#): “On the Impact of the Medical Faculty Associates Debt on Strategic Planning, Education, and Financial Aid at the George Washington University.” The resolution was presented to the Faculty Senate on February 9, 2024, by Sarah Wagner, Co-Chair, Educational Policy & Technology Committee. (20 in favor, 1 opposed).
2. The committee reviewed and deliberated the temporary academic integrity panel mitigation strategies set forth in [Resolution 24/8](#): “To Approve Temporary Changes to the Code of Academic Integrity.” The resolution was presented to the Faculty Senate on March 1, 2024, by Sarah Wagner, Co-Chair, Educational Policy & Technology Committee. (The amended resolution was adopted by unanimous consent).
3. The committee reviewed and deliberated [Resolution 24/9](#): “On Academic Freedom.” The resolution was presented to the Faculty Senate on March 1, 2024, by Katrin Schultheiss, member, Educational Policy & Technology Committee. (The amended resolution was adopted by unanimous consent).

VII. Continuing Business for the Committee

1. Faculty request to Provost’s office regarding the timely release of the Fall 2024 syllabus template (mid-late July), the religious holidays calendar (also mid-late July), and updates to the “Instructor Frequently Asked Questions” (IFAQ).
2. Student Success and Academic Performance.
3. Generative Artificial Intelligence and Writing in the Discipline course guidance.
4. First-year experience and undergraduate special programs, including the Mount Vernon Campus.

5. Academic freedom and free speech, including providing input on best practices for managing discussion of difficult issues in the classroom, part of the administration's "[Fostering Productive Dialogue](#)" initiative.
6. Additional input on the Task Force on Academic Credentials' report, "Guidelines for Combined Degree/Certificate Programs."
7. The educational mission of the strategic framework.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Wagner and Irene Foster
Co-chairs, EPT Committee
May 2, 2024

Roster of EPT Members (2023-2024)

Wagner, Sarah*, Chair
Foster, Irene, Co-Chair
Vyas, Amita*, FSEC Liaison
Anderson, Suse
Aviv, Eyal
Badie, Sameh*
Baharu, Yordanos
Beil, Cheryl
Beveridge, Scott
Bhati, Sue
Bochniak, Matt
Brand, Jeff
Bronner, Ben
Choate, Thomas
Clarkson, Chante
Cloud, Katie
Cohen-Cole, Jamie
Culbreath, Andre
Ensor, Brian
DeVoss Mahany, Crystal
Feuer, Michael
Frierson, Tobe
Ganjoo, Rohini
Goff, Jay
Greiff, Tobias
Grynaviski, Eric
Henry, Geneva
House, Cody

Jaqua, Dan
Jeune, Jamie
Johnson, Candice
Johnson, Jared
Kadrie, Mountasser
Kern, Michael
Khilji, Shaista
Knestrick, Joyce
Knudsen, Kevin
Lotrecchiano, Guy
McDonough, Brooke
Murphy, Terry
Quinlan, Scott
Rain, David*
Schultheiss, Katrin*
Schwartz, Lisa
Siczek, Megan
Smith, Andrew
Subramaniam, Suresh
Thorpe, Jane Hyatt
Toll, Ben
Torres, Jason
Trammel, Shauntae
Trunnel, Misty
Ulfers, Margaret
Williams, Kimberley
Wirtz, Phil*
Zara, Jason

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