CALL TO ORDER

The Assembly was called to order by President Trachtenberg at 3:10 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the regular Assembly of October 9, 2001, were approved as distributed.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW FACULTY

Donald R. Lehman, Vice President for Academic Affairs, said it was his pleasure to welcome new faculty who have joined The George Washington University this year, and he called upon those present to step forward to a microphone in the front of the room to introduce themselves to the Assembly. He asked that they describe their appointment, indicate the school in which they had been appointed, and say a few words about their interests in scholarship, research, or teaching at the University. More than thirty five new faculty then introduced themselves.

PRESENTATION OF THE BENDER TEACHING AWARDS

Vice President Lehman noted that the Bender Teaching Awards were established thanks to the generosity of Morton A. Bender, a friend of GW and an advocate of quality teaching. Recipients of the six Awards given each year are selected by a committee of faculty and students based on letters of support, student teaching evaluations, and examples of teaching materials and completed student work. Recipients may use the $500 Award for travel to a professional meeting, the purchase of equipment, or for some other activity related to faculty development.

The following faculty each received a Bender Teaching Award:

For teaching by a non-tenured, full-time faculty member
Steve Roberts, School of Media & Public Affairs

For teaching by a part-time faculty member
Christopher Wilson, Department of Fine Arts & Art History

For use of innovative technologies in teaching
Victoria Sardi, Department of Counseling/ Human & Organizational Studies
Earl Skelton, Department of Physics
General teaching recognition (any full-time, part-time, tenured,  
on-tenured faculty member)
Robert McRuer, English Department
Mary Beth Stein, German and Slavic Languages and Literatures Department

REMARKS BY THE CHAIR OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE

Professor Lilien F. Robinson congratulated the winners of the Bender Teaching Awards,  
and welcomed new faculty to the University. On behalf of the Executive Committee of the  
Faculty Senate, Professor Robinson presented her report to the Assembly. (Report by Professor  
Robinson is enclosed and made a part of these minutes.)

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

President Trachtenberg said (in a happy and light-hearted way) that he was never sure whether or not he ought to be chagrined about the modest attendance at Faculty Assembly  
meetings, or not. He then contrasted having grown up in academia at Boston University during the Vietnam era, when 500 plus faculty would attend a full faculty meeting in order to instruct the President of the United States as to how he ought to do his job, with the apparent relative contentment on the part of GW faculty, as they do not show up carrying red flags and shouting at these meetings, leaving the Faculty Senate and the Administration to peacefully sort out their various modest disputations. President Trachtenberg then presented his Remarks. (Remarks by President Trachtenberg are attached and made a part of these minutes.)

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Vice President Lehman reported generally on the University’s Strategic Planning Efforts, and particularly on the work of the Academic Excellence Committee. His report, he added, was basically the same one which had been presented to the Board of Trustees at its October meeting. The University’s Strategic Plan will be implemented over the next three to five years, and while the Plan has been carefully designed, it is flexible, and requires yearly review and updating. It is focused on fundamentals, and this focus is critical to sustain the University’s current momentum for achieving a higher level of academic excellence underpinned by a superiorly run infrastructure that has as its primary mission supporting the academic enterprise.

The whole key to the success of the Plan, he said, is to sustain momentum throughout the implementation of the Plan, because there is a very real urgency to solidly position GW for enhanced reputation and prestige. It is important to remember, he said, that other universities are not standing still, and GW’s efforts to excel must in some respects hit a moving target.

Some of the objectives of the Plan present challenging hurdles, not the least of which, as already alluded to by President Trachtenberg, is the need to generate the necessary resources through internal reallocation, generation of new revenue sources, attracting new grants and
contracts, and fundraising targeted to Strategic Planning initiatives. Fundraising is key, he said, because it helps to provide for internal resource allocation, and helps to provide revenue for specific endowed support (such as Chaired Professorships), and for targeted undergraduate programs.

Among key points of the Plan outlined by Vice President Lehman is the effort underway to uniquely position GW in the academic marketplace. That unique positioning will assist in bringing the market to GW. The Plan will focus on the undergraduate area, since this is GW’s main source of revenue, and a strong, recognized undergraduate experience is one of the keys to excellence. The Plan will also seek to build GW’s reputation through a Student Engagement and Academic Challenge Initiative, which has two main components: revamping the Freshman Experience, including the appointment of a Dean for Freshmen, and a Writing Development Program, which will permeate the entire curriculum for undergraduates through their senior year. The Plan will also build GW’s prestige through excellence in its doctoral program offerings, underpinned by first-tier scholarship and research by GW faculty. The Plan will also foster development of, and investments in, selected areas of academic excellence. In order to succeed, he added, the Plan to achieve distinctive academic excellence at GW depends critically on the collaborative effort of the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, and staff. No one element of the University, he stressed, can do this alone.

A guiding principle of the Plan is selective Academic Excellence, both in strategic planning and in strategic decision-making. It is important, he said, to realize that the University cannot do everything, and must direct resources to areas where they can have the largest impact.

Several key strategic outcomes are sought to raise GW’s level of recognized academic excellence by enhancing its reputation for quality undergraduate education, and its prestige in doctoral education and research. The successful implementation of the Plan will uniquely position GW in the higher education marketplace at the same time that it helps GW achieve a high level of operational excellence in all of its institutional components, including academic and service delivery.

Vice President Lehman then described the underpinning logic of the Strategic Plan. Firstly, the driving principle is that what the University does to uniquely position GW in the marketplace must come from leveraging its academic assets, both the University’s existing academic strengths, and its strategic alliances and partnerships in the Washington Metropolitan area. The University has wonderful physical resources, he said, as well as excellent faculty. A number of alliances and partnerships are in place at this point, but other opportunities remain to be developed. Secondly, all proposals chosen for investment and development over the next five years are to be evaluated in the context of leveraging the University’s assets and the assets of the Washington Metropolitan area that are brought to bear on those programs, and all must contribute to the enhancement of the overall undergraduate experience obtainable at GW. Thirdly, all such activity must have strong connectivity to an outstanding faculty which is fully engaged in scholarly work, provides service to the University and the community, and is committed to being scholars of teaching, as well as scholarly teachers. Lastly, the business and service components of the University must also function well. Once all of these elements are
linked together, the University should be able to leverage to the fullest its internal and external assets.

Vice President Lehman then briefly described the Gap Survey conducted by the Business and Service Committee. The Survey reviewed what the University does well in academic areas, and attempted to pinpoint where there was room for improvement. It also asked how the University could position itself more strongly relative to its competitors. Excellence in the service and business areas, he said, would drive the University to operational excellence, and to do very well all things that must be done in order for the University to improve its position as a viable competitor which is uniquely positioned in the higher education marketplace.

Vice President Lehman then updated the Assembly on the work of the Academic Excellence Committee, which he said had focused on six major areas. The first was the development of a Model for Academic Excellence, which expresses the Committee's academic aspirations for GW, and guides all efforts to enrich the University academic enterprise, now and in the future. The second focus was on enhancing the Intellectual Engagement of GW Undergraduate Students, which was a direct outgrowth of the Academic Excellence Model, which states that:

*GW baccalaureate graduates will be well prepared for entry into the 21st century global society through an education that has its foundations in substantial writing, linked to development of oral communications and advocacy, critical thinking, analytical problem solving, computational literacy, and depth of study in their chosen academic major.*

Complementing the Enhancement Program will be quality control and the maintenance of educational standards. The University will seek to raise the academic expectations of students before they arrive at GW, and ensure that they understand the University's primary focus and the rigor of the academic program. Students will be oriented to GW's academic life so that they understand its importance, and can focus on the primary reason for taking a heavy course load, which is to learn and gather wisdom during their years here.

Along with the Writing Program Proposal described below, the University is in the process of increasing the number of top teachers instructing freshmen and sophomores, so that a large number of them are taught by some of the best professors at GW.

Following up on staying the course of academic enrichment in the middle years, the work of the Retention Task Force, established in collaboration with the Faculty Senate, will be revisited. A new merit scholarship to be awarded for truly stellar performance is also planned, in the amount of $4,000, to be awarded upon the achievement of a 3.8 GPA in 60 hours of course credits at the University. Intensive language programs in semester and summer abroad courses will be offered. For students' senior year, a capstone experience will be added to those programs which presently lack them, signifying the culmination of the GW undergraduate experience.
An enhanced focus on faculty will also be part of the Academic Excellence effort, with emphasis on the scholarship of teaching, and the role of teaching in annual report evaluations. Enhanced faculty development resources will also be made available. There is also much to do, he added, on curriculum enhancement and development of the campus culture, and it is important that a dialogue in these areas commence.

The Academic Excellence Committee also put together a Writing Development Program Proposal. A Writing Program Task Force has been formed, which will be meeting bi-weekly, and three groups of the Task Force are working on components of the Proposal. As already mentioned by Professor Robinson, the Educational Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate is taking an active role in examining the proposal, and the Chair of that Senate Committee is on the Task Force. Desired outcomes are being considered carefully, as is the content of the proposed freshman writing seminar. Devising ways to measure whether outcomes have been achieved is also an important component of the Task Force’s work.

Vice President Lehman then went on to describe the upcoming Review of Doctoral Programs, as stated in the Committee’s Model of Excellence:

GW will offer a select number of doctoral programs based on the available infrastructure, the financial support available to participating students, the need and demand for graduates, and the integration of faculty research, scholarship, and teaching into the doctoral student learning process. Doctoral programs will be offered in areas in which there are faculty members whose research and scholarly activities are recognized externally for excellence.

In this area, a Task Force has also been formed, and one meeting has taken place, with another being scheduled for this week. A Senate designee, Deborah Sheldon, (SBPM) is serving on the Task Force. The data collection process has already begun, and very soon departments will be informed more fully of their role in this process.

Vice President Lehman then described the seven Academic Excellence Proposals which have been selected for investment and development. They are:

GW Initiative for Excellence in Transportation Safety and Security

Public Policy and Public Service at GW: Building on Our Strengths to Achieve Greater National Distinction and Prominence

The Sigur Center for Asian Studies

GW Institute for Biomedical Engineering
Department of Political Science: Proposal for Investment and Development to Promote Academic Excellence

Excellence in History: A Challenging Undergraduate Curriculum

Distinguished Doctoral Program: “Human Evolution at GW”

Proposals that were not selected have all been notified, and referred back to their home schools for further consideration.

In terms of funding, Vice President Lehman said that funding allocations are being finalized for FY ’03, with a grand total of $500,000 for one component. A related piece is graduate student support, which will be linked to doctoral program excellence. There will be increased stipends for students, in the amount of approximately $250,000 in FY ’03, and $500,000 for FY ’04.

Other work underway by the Academic Excellence Committee includes a formal write-up of the Strategic Plan document, and the integration of Strategic Plans from the individual Schools. An Executive Summary of the Plan will be produced, along with a descriptive brochure. It is expected that the written materials will be available in spring, 2003.

Public relations components are also in process, phased in throughout the 2002-03 Academic Year. There was a recent article in By George describing the Strategic Plan and more articles to keep the University community up to date are planned. Publicity surrounding formal completion of the full Plan’s written document is also underway.

Vice President Lehman concluded by saying that it is very important to link the Strategic Plan to fundraising. The budget underpinning - reallocation, and the investment plan is one area that the Committee is still working on, with some very preliminary initial discussions having already been held. Serious work remains to be done, he added, during the fall semester. (Vice President Lehman’s report is attached.)

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE/BUSINESS AND SERVICE COMMITTEE REPORT

Louis Katz, Vice President and Treasurer, reported on the work of the Committee on Service and Business, which is the second component of GW’s Strategic Planning initiative. The mission of the Committee was to determine the best ways to support the overall Strategic Plan, and in order to do that, the Committee focused on several efforts. They began by looking at some of the tools that could be used to track how well services are delivered at the University, and how well GW is doing as an institution. The Committee examined benchmarks of peer group institutions, and then developed the “Gap Analysis” already described by the President and the Academic Vice President. A review of the University’s overall resources was also undertaken, in both relative and absolute terms. In terms of funding for Strategic Plan initiatives, Vice President Katz said there were two primary sources. The first is new revenues,
for example, in tuition, increased research support, and fundraising. The alternative to new revenue, he added, is resource reallocation.

The Committee developed a separate Gap Analysis for the various stakeholder’s groups at GW that include faculty, students, staff, parents and alumni. Most of the Gaps that were identified, he said, should not be surprising. Some of these problems can be solved through one-time fixes, but for others, a more systemic approach is indicated. The Committee focused on looking for solutions to Gaps in the service delivery area, and determined that a three-tiered approach would be best. The first approach would be self-service, with a lot of that obviously coming through the Web, and giving appropriate information to the various stakeholders so that they can actually navigate the institution. The second approach would be more general, more than likely through some sort of phone-bank or through help lines. A third approach would be the use of specialists, who would “own” a problem until it was solved.

As an example of the Committee’s work, Vice President Katz said that the student experience in working with the Registrar’s, Financial Aid, Student Accounts and Cashier’s Offices was examined, with a view toward determining whether or not the interaction between those various offices was seamless. A key element of the service delivery system the Committee looked at was institutional web pages, which turned out to be basically departmental web pages, which might or might not be linked to other things. This way of delivering information to students so that they can better understand University policies and procedures is key in enabling students to better use the institution. While service delivery is not a key element in a student’s decision to enroll at GW, it does affect whether or not they are happy here. The Gap Analysis would continue, he added, with all of the various stakeholders, not just students, so that more seamless service could be achieved, hopefully in more cost-effective ways.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Assembly, and upon motion made and seconded, President Trachtenberg adjourned the meeting at 4:35 p.m. He then invited everyone to the reception immediately following.

Dennis L. Geyer
Dennis L. Geyer
Registrar
Interesting Times And Maybe Time For A Change

By

Stephen Joel Trachtenberg

"May you live in interesting times" is an old Chinese saying. Actually, I hear, it isn’t a saying — it’s a curse, a serious one reserved for the worst offenses, like raining brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah. I think the Chinese are on to something. Our times, if not exactly cursed, are certainly interesting enough to make them often hard to bear and to make me worry about the future.

This is especially true in universities these days. Part of our plight, hasten to add with pleasure, is our great success in recent years. GW, in particular, has seen the quality of its faculty, of the students it admits, of its facilities, and of many other things improve notably. Being a better university — and especially a better university on its way to being a great university — comes at a price. To be accurate, it comes at many prices, with more money for salaries, for financial aid, for building new buildings and refurbishing old ones, for buying

Address by Stephen Joel Trachtenberg, President and Professor of Public Administration, the George Washington University, to the Faculty Assembly, November 11, 2002.

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books and technology and rose bushes. There's no such thing as a free lunch and there's no such thing as a free Media and Public Affairs building either.

Mind you, I am not saying money alone makes instructors teach well and scholars publish articles of great merit. Nor do I mean that improved yield and retention rates among our applicants and students are commodities available at wholesale. But salaries and financial aid are two of the greatest costs in any university's budget, and without meeting these costs as generously as possible, the university stagnates. And it is not surprising, therefore, that when we are best able to fund faculty and students, we have the greatest success.

What happens, of course, is we get used to success and want more of it. Why not? It feels good to be better, to strive to be better, to cook up the ideas that make us better. I can't imagine getting out of bed every morning and beseeching God to make me truly second-rate — let alone getting the answer to my prayers.

But our interesting times are applying stresses and strains that are truly daunting. And not only to us at GW. I don't think there is a university or
college in the country — public or private — that is not wondering how it will
continue to pay all the many prices it must pay to hold its own, let alone
succeed in improving itself.

At the same time, we know here at GW — as university faculties and
administrations elsewhere also know — that a lot of what we call success is
not the extraordinary feat or action that may be represented in the bricks and
mortar of a new building, the addition of a new program, the snaring of a
high-flying professor, or the receipt of a stupefyingly large gift. All of these are
welcome, and I spend many of my daily hours pursuing goals like these.

But there are things with less drama, but not, I think, of less importance to
our success and well-being that we also must pursue. As I’m sure you know,
we have produced a strategic plan to help guide GW for the next three to five
years. You will be hearing a great deal more about it shortly, but not much
about it from me today. Except this:

Part of the plan was a specialized kind of poll of students, faculty, parents,
administrators, and alumni called a gap survey. The survey asked them first
what they thought needed improvement and then a second, equally critical
question — how important is this deficit or problem to you? In other words, the survey told us how big a gap exists between what is and what is actually needed while also helping us to establish an approximate pecking order.

For example, some of the biggest gaps perceived by GW faculty were in graduate financial aid, especially for doctoral students, and the holdings in the library. Some of the smallest were GW's academic reputation and parking availability. I am not telling you anything you didn’t know before, but it was useful to get some quantified expression of what we all in fact knew before...

Because this will guide us in selecting the things we need to do first. And for good reason. Any institution has gaps it wants to close. And most institutions, certainly this one, do not have the resources to take on everything all at once. Thus, we place the resources we have where we think the need is most urgent and where those resources will produce the most good. Now as I said, improving the amount of support we offer doctoral students may lack the drama of the new building or the endowed chair, but I do not think it is any less important to our success. Success is not always flashy.
Nor does it ever come for free. Even maintaining the status quo — something I would never be content to do and a feeling I hope you share — is not cheap or easy. It used to be that universities were labor-intensive, spending most of their money on salaries. Salaries are still the largest item in the budget, but as we have grown, we have become capital-intensive as well. I think we’re all glad we have a new home for the Elliott School and a rebuilt Marvin Center. But I wish — who wouldn’t? — that they had been produced exclusively by some large benefactions. They were not. We had to raise the capital.

And we had to do it at a time when giving is down because the markets, terrorism, and the uncertainty about war and its effects on prices and prosperity are inhibiting donors, large and small. And we had to do it at a time when our endowment income is also down. It may be an ironic benefit of having a comparatively small endowment, but a half-percent decline in the market does not send ours down by more than $90-million, which is the case for Harvard... although I think I’d swap present losses for remaining endowments with them if they are willing.

Now this leads me to the greater issue. What I have said about the various demands on GW’s resources is important to understand: there are the
glamorous expenses, the less-than-glamorous efforts, and the meat-and-potato expenses that we must face, and finance, day after day. But what I have said is not a conclusion and it is not dispositive. It simply provides a local point of reference for the prevailing facts — and, I hope, a local point of departure for ideas and solutions among ourselves. Institutions of higher education everywhere are facing similar problems and similar stresses, arising from tough financial times and, as I have said, from the success we have all grown accustomed to achieving. Harvard is not exempt, nor is Princeton — the richest university per student — nor even the state universities. I want to talk about the more widespread problems before returning to what we at GW may consider doing.

Let me begin with a public university and our neighbor, George Mason University. GMU has just announced a 13% tuition increase for the spring semester — following a 25% increase last spring, a compound increase of over 41% in less than a year. The increase, they say, will avoid layoffs and preserve a full roster of classes. But still, 150 faculty positions will not be filled. Most of Virginia's other public universities — the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, Old Dominion, Radford, and Longwood so far — have all announced they will probably raise fees this spring as well.
The University of Maryland raised tuition 5.5% last year and, given Maryland's budget is $1.3 billion out of whack, will probably have additional increases and quite possibly layoffs or program closings. As The Washington Post observed, Maryland voters are more concerned with primary and secondary education than with the state university system.

This assessment of the public's sentiment is significant. Many public universities have endowments, some of them admirable in size. But their true endowments are the state treasuries. When revenues fall and taxpayers — not to mention legislators — recoil from tax increases, the sure result is identical to decreased endowment income. What is happening now in Virginia because of a $2-billion shortfall in the state budget is almost sure to happen in Maryland.

Private colleges and universities rely on endowment income and nearly all have seen falls in income—even the rich ones. For example, Wellesley, down 6%. MIT, down 12%. Boston University, down 27%. Dartmouth, down 5.7%, and so delaying construction of a new residence hall and life sciences building. Berea College in Kentucky, which does not charge tuition, down
26%, leading its chief financial officer to say the school will probably terminate programs "with the fewest majors... which we cannot afford." And Indiana University, the champion among public institutions in building its endowment, is down nearly 9%.

The results of course are obvious. The College Board recently announced that tuitions at public institutions are up 9.6% this year over last and up 5.8% at private institutions. Of course, private university prices are about two and a half times as great as public on average. Aside from the direct impact increases like these have on students and their families, there is collateral damage. For example, only about 10% of students pay the full freight at private institutions. The rest get loans — which means young people may start their careers with, typically $17-thousand of debt — or hope to win some financial aid in the form of a grant. This in turn puts pressure on the colleges and universities to provide as much as they can to attract and retain the most promising students — that is to say, they're reducing their revenue anyway. Or, many students spend more time working for pay than for learning because they have to. And finally, 20 years ago Pell Grants covered 84% of an education at a public university. Today, they cover 42%, half as much.
All right. These facts may seem mundane, and they are certainly dreary. But they are the prevailing facts in American higher education. And no doubt will obtain for years. Naturally, everyone is trying to save money, sometimes in ingenious ways. Dartmouth has installed a centralized computer printing system for its students. Kent State and the University of Akron share joint software licenses. The 16 campuses of the University of North Carolina have formed a purchasing co-op for software. Ingenious, but the savings are comparatively small — a few hundred thousand dollars — when the shortfalls are in the millions. Other universities have been draconian, for example, 10% across-the-board cuts at the University of Missouri and greatly increased use of non-tenured lecturers at the state universities in Georgia.

These last two measures are unacceptable to me and I’m sure to you, too. We can save some here and some there, and everything we save adds up. Saving a quarter of a million dollars on software licenses pays three good salaries, after all. But our interesting and daunting times require saving more — or bringing in more. Both, to be sure, but I think it is possible to increase revenue.

Let me tell you what I’m thinking. But first, let me take the risk of quoting
myself. A couple of weeks ago, I was preparing a talk I'm planning to give to the National PTA. I observed that schools still run on the agrarian calendar, a leftover from earlier times. It makes, I said, no sense to subordinate teaching to planting, cultivating and harvesting when so few of us work on farms or live by agriculture. A colleague then asked me if this should also apply to universities, since we use pretty much the same calendar. I said no because the terms and stakes are different. The time off for work and research is critical to students and faculty alike. And I stand by that.

But we do not need the summer off. Work and scholarship are possible in any season. So this is what I am thinking and proposing to you.

What if we went to a trimester system? It might work like this. The entire calendar year would be divided into three trimesters, still each 14 weeks long, with breaks between them. Students would be on campus for two of three trimesters, and faculty would teach two of three trimesters. The learning and the teaching requirements would remain the same as they are now.

But I think there would be advantages. First, instead of trying to accommodate 8000 undergraduates all at once as we must now, we could
slightly increase enrollment to 9000, yet have to accommodate only 6000 students during any one trimester. We have 6000 beds — so we could escape the pressure to build more residence halls. A larger enrollment, with the additional students spread over three trimesters instead of two semesters, would increase revenue while class sizes could actually remain stable and possibly decline slightly.

The idea is simply to make full use of both the year and our facilities. We are maintaining and paying for our buildings and grounds 12 months a year, but we are profiting from them fully a little more than half the year. Two 14-week semesters actually. I learned recently that GW makes money from the residence halls in the summer, but not mainly from students. We rent them out to interns and to groups holding meetings and conferences. It is not full utilization.

I find the logic of full use of time and facilities apparent and compelling. So I am proposing to you today that we begin to consider switching to a trimester system at GW. I am also proposing a working group of faculty, staff, trustees, and students to study the implications of such a new system. I will ask them to look broadly at how a trimester system at GW would affect — indeed,
improve — academic and co-curricular life here and to report to me by May 1.

I also want them to look narrowly at everything involved, including the effects on student learning, our policies concerning teaching, research, and sabbatical leave, registration, the coordination of general university events like commencement, the possibility of replacing the current five-course semester requirement with four more robust courses, likely additional revenues and expenses, staffing requirements, and the evidence from other universities that employ alternatives to semesters.

Mind you, this is a radical proposal. Research by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers reveals that only about eighteen percent of American universities use a trimester or quarters system — though in most quarters systems, the summer quarter is rather like traditional “summer school,” an exception being Dartmouth, which requires some summer attendance. Moreover, trimesters and quarters are shorter than our traditional semesters, usually only 11 weeks rather than 14. This means that students often study three out of three consecutive semesters or quarters. I am proposing something else. Radical, as I said.
But, stress, this is a proposal. If the study group finds too many problems, we will abandon the idea. If they believe it can work, we will pursue the idea further. But a proposal has an intention—to succeed. I said a little while ago that we are dealing with facts that are mundane and dreary, and so they are. This proposal, believe, is neither. At the very least, it liberates us from old assumptions about how the machinery of GW must operate. It invites us to refresh our ideas about teaching and learning. And it counters the idea that interesting times must be a curse when they may be offering us better opportunities and a happier future. Memory need not be the enemy of change.
Strategic Planning for Academic Excellence

Background
Strategic Planning Updates
Other Work Underway
Summary - Overview

Faculty Assembly – 11 November 2002
Background
Sustaining Momentum

Academic Affairs

- Strategic Plan for 3- to 5-year period
- Focused on the fundamentals
- Urgency to achieving the objectives
- Challenging hurdles are before us
Key Points of the Plan

- **Uniquely** position GW
- Focus on the **undergraduate** area
- Build GW’s **reputation**
- Build GW’s **prestige**
- Achieve **distinctive** academic excellence
Guiding Principle

Selective Academic Excellence
Key Outcomes Sought

- Raise GW’s level of recognized academic excellence
- Uniquely position GW
- Achieve operational excellence
Driving principle – the unique positioning of GW in the higher-education marketplace must come from leveraging our assets:

- The University itself
- The Washington Metropolitan area
Strategic Planning Updates
Strategic Planning Products

Academic Affairs

Business & Service Committee
• Gap Survey

Academic Excellence Committee
• Model for Academic Excellence
• Intellectual Engagement Initiatives
• Writing Development Program Proposal
• Doctoral Programs Review
• Academic Excellence Proposals
Other Work Underway
Other Work Underway

Academic Affairs

- Strategic Plan – Broad Document
- Public Relations Component
- Budgeting Resources
- Linking Plan to Fund Raising Initiatives
- Carrying out the Planned Objectives
Summary-Overview
Timeframe/Design

Academic Affairs

Three- to Five-year Timeframe

Fundamentals

Urgency

Hurdles

- We are launched!
- We are on schedule!
- We have much to do!
- We have challenges ahead!

And, the opportunities are before us!
Thank you!
On behalf of your colleagues on the Faculty Senate, I would like to report on matters which have been and are currently before the Senate.

RESOLUTIONS

Twelve resolutions were considered by the Faculty Senate since the October 9, 2001 Faculty Assembly. These resolutions are reflective of the work of the Faculty Senate, as they address a broad variety of internally and externally initiated issues of importance to our faculty. It should be stressed that the Senate is both responsive and proactive with respect to matters of concern across school lines. It is the primary vehicle of faculty communication with the officers of the administration and the Board of Trustees. The work of the standing committees, reports and resolutions, reflective of the priorities and concerns of the faculty, are transmitted, through a variety of mechanisms, to the administration and to the Board of Trustees and/or its committees.

Let me now turn to six of the resolutions.

1. Resolution to Develop a Revised Student Evaluation of Courses

Presented by the Joint Committee of Faculty and Students, this resolution provides for the appointment of an expert panel to develop an instrument, or set of instruments to provide more useful course evaluations.

The resolution was prompted by student concerns that faculty members, already participating in departmental course evaluations, viewed the current student evaluations as duplicative and not discipline-specific. That view was shared with Vice President Lehman and in turn transmitted to the Senate's Executive Committee, which directed the matter to the Joint Committee of Faculty and Students.

2. Resolution Regarding the Administration's Establishment of a "Compliance Line"

This resolution was prompted by widespread faculty concern over the institution of a "compliance line", about which they were advised through a letter and accompanying brochure encouraging reporting of complaints not only with respect to possible violations of law but complaints based on individual ethical perceptions. The document encouraged the lodging of anonymous allegations.
Faculty members expressed special criticism of the potential for abuse and that the policy was put into effect without any consultation with the faculty, as required by the contractual agreement, the Faculty Code, which provides for shared governance. Senate members stressed that consultation on matters that impact upon the discharge of professional duties is not a matter of choice, but a requirement.

The resolution requests that the Administration suspend the "Compliance Line" and related procedures and refer the matter for further study by the Faculty Senate and all relevant components of the Administration.

A second resolution, passed at the following meeting of the Faculty Senate (April, 2002) revisits the same topic, requesting action on the part of the administration.

3. **Resolution on the "Regulatory Compliance Help and Referral Line"**

Passed at last month's meeting, this resolution was presented by the Executive Committee. It was the product of actions that followed the passage of our second resolution on the "Compliance Line".

Pursuant to that resolution three faculty members were appointed by the Executive Committee to work on Guidelines proposed by the University's General Counsel's Office. They were successful in substantially modifying the Guidelines. Most of the dangers of the Compliance Line appear to have been eliminated. Additional provisions were also inserted by the Executive Committee and by the Senate during its deliberations, providing further safeguards.

The guidelines now provide the following:

- That the Referral Line have no investigatory powers;
- That individuals referring calls would not maintain files identifying people by name;
- That there would be a joint committee of faculty and administration which would have oversight responsibilities and assure that the Guidelines are followed and regular reports made to the Senate; and
- That procedures established in the Faculty Code would be used to address Referral Line issues relating to the faculty.

4. **Resolution to bring the School of Public Health and Health Services into Compliance with the Faculty Code with respect to tenure and tenure-accruing appointments for regular active-status faculty**

This resolution, presented by the Committee on Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom, calls for the development of a plan for compliance by the School of Public Health
and Health Service with the Faculty Code requirement that no fewer than 75% of regular active-status faculty of a School be tenured or have tenure-track appointments and that the 50% in each department be either tenured or in tenure-accruing positions. The current distribution in SPHHS is 40% for the School and 30% for the departments.

5. **Resolution to Amend the Faculty Code to Provide a Requested Statement of Reasons to Long-Term Contract Faculty upon Nonrenewal of their Appointments**

   This resolution would provide a contract faculty member with a minimum of nine years of service the right to receive, upon request, a written statement of reasons for non-renewal of contract. This was intended to facilitate: a successful search for a new position, to promote sound decision-making, and to encourage the University to properly follow annual report procedures and other means of providing feedback to contract faculty.

6. **Resolution on Proposed Restructuring of University Governance**

   Prompted by expressions of serious faculty concerns throughout the University regarding the academic leadership of the University, this resolution was introduced by the Executive Committee. It addresses the potential creation of the position of University Provost with considerable academic responsibility over part of the University. The Faculty Code and the Faculty Organization Plan, our documents of shared governance, do not provide for this position. Moreover, no nationwide search is contemplated with respect to this position.

   It was the view of the Faculty Senate, by a 16-4 vote with one abstention, that such a structure would divide academic oversight between the Provost and the Academic Vice President as all schools currently reporting to the latter would not continue to do so. It was our understanding that three schools would be reporting to the Provost. The consensus of the Senate was that the schools would be divided academically and strategically, thus severely hindering the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the achievement of the academic mission of the University.

   The resolution urges the administration to reconsider this proposed plan; identify the concerns it believes need to be addressed; and requests that no fundamental changes of academic governance, budget authority, or significant personnel changes be made without additional study and active involvement of the faculty. Further, the resolution stresses that the Faculty Senate is prepared to work with the administration in determining avenues for strengthening the academic governance structure in order to achieve the University’s academic goals as defined in the Strategic Plan for Academic Excellence.

   Subsequent to the passage of this resolution, the Executive Committee received a response to the resolution from President Trachtenberg, which was distributed to the
Senate, and portions of which were also quoted in the Hatchet. Our understanding of that response was that the President was still inclined to appoint a Provost. On the matter of academic oversight of the Schools, the President indicated that no decision had been made with respect to the Provost's role in the governance of the Law School. The organizational chart accompanying the memorandum also does not acknowledge the formal role of the Vice President for Academic Affairs in academic decisions involving the School of Medicine and the School of Public Health and Health Services.

The Executive Committee's subsequent response to the President's memorandum, distributed to the Senate, addresses concerns shared by colleagues throughout the University. Among these are the lack of a national search to fill an appointment, and the division of academic authority in which all nine Schools do not report to a single academic officer. At present the reporting line for all academic decisions is to the chief academic officer, the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

At the end of last week the Executive Committee received a second memorandum from President Trachtenberg. The Executive Committee has not had an opportunity for discussion of that communication. There are important points that need to be clarified with the President before the Executive Committee can provide a full report and, if appropriate, its recommendations.

(Please note that summaries and complete Minutes of Faculty Senate meetings can be accessed through the Faculty Senate web site.)

**STATUS OF FACULTY PERSONNEL MATTERS**

One grievance case in the School of Business and Public Management has just recently been resolved through the mediation process. One case in Columbian College is in the mediation phase.

It should be noted that we are now operating under a new and, to date, more effective and efficient grievance process. Extensive efforts of the Faculty Senate, colleagues from the Law School, and University Counsel contributed to these new procedures.

The Executive Committee acted on one administrative nonconcurrence with a faculty tenure recommendation in Columbian College. The Executive Committee advised that it did not find the required "compelling reasons" for the nonconcurrence. As the Dean did not withdraw the nonconcurrence, the Department requested final adjudication by the Board of Trustees. The Board concurred with the decanal nonconcurrence.
REPORTS TO THE FACULTY SENATE

Established by the Executive Committee, the program of presentations by the Deans has continued. We have had presentations from Dean Tong (SEAS), Dean Southby (SPHHS), Dean Whitaker (CPS), Dean Phillips (SBPM), Dean Baxter (Mount Vernon), Dean Young (Law), and Dean Harding (ESIA).

The Senate also received reports providing information on a variety of matters. These include: status report on research, update on the University Health Plan offerings, update on the University’s preparation for institutional response in the event of another emergency, faculty salary tables, and fiscal planning and budgeting.

MATTERS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY SENATE COMMITTEES

Included among numerous items under consideration are the following:

- Consideration of the Writing Proposal drafted by the Academic Excellence Committee (Committee on Educational Policy)
- Grading Practices (Committee on Educational Policy)
- Ratios of full-time tenure-track faculty to non-tenure track faculty and to part-time faculty and ratios of students to faculty (Committee on Fiscal Planning and Budgeting)
- Report of the Task Force on establishing a School of Public Policy within Columbian College (Committees on Educational Policy, Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom, and Fiscal Planning and Budgeting)
- Consideration of changes to the Code of Academic Integrity (Joint Committee of Faculty and Students)

This report lists only some of the activities and accomplishments of our colleagues, members of the Senate, and volunteer members of its standing committees. They have expended much time and energy on behalf of the University. Since the last meeting of the Faculty Assembly, your colleagues, with your assistance and support, have addressed diverse and serious matters of considerable long-term impact on the academic enterprise of our University.

Essential to our success as a faculty participating in a shared governance structure is your involvement. The issues affect, often critically, many aspects of our professional lives. Our main vehicle of expression and action is through the Faculty Senate. It has achieved a long and remarkable record of success through the work of generations of colleagues throughout the University.

On behalf of our Faculty Senate colleagues I extend sincere thanks for your past contributions and continued involvement.