

**A RESOLUTION REGARDING RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE REPORT OF
THE JOINT ADMINISTRATION/FACULTY TASK FORCE ON A POSSIBLE
FOUR-COURSE, FOUR-CREDIT UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULAR
STRUCTURE (06/5)**

- WHEREAS,** The George Washington University established a joint administration/faculty Task Force (the Task Force) under the leadership of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs in April 2005 to examine once again the desirability and feasibility of introducing a four-course, four-credit undergraduate curricular structure, and
- WHEREAS,** The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, in accordance with the Faculty Code, established a Special Committee of the Faculty Senate to receive and evaluate the report of the Task Force and to make comments and recommendations to the Faculty Senate, and
- WHEREAS,** The faculty is committed to a comprehensive review and improvement of curriculum, and
- WHEREAS,** Resolution (03/4) adopted by the Faculty Senate concluded that a 4X4 curriculum would greatly diminish the opportunities for breadth and number of required and elective courses students could take, and
- WHEREAS,** The Task Force claimed that the proposed 4X4 curricular structure would facilitate academic excellence but did not provide persuasive evidence to support that claim, and
- WHEREAS,** Transition to a 4x4 curriculum would significantly disrupt the operation of the University's educational activities and would require the expenditure of enormous faculty resources for the next several years, and
- WHEREAS,** A major curricular review should be undertaken, beginning in the fall of 2007, as a collaborative effort between the faculty and the incoming administration of President-elect Steven Knapp, and
- WHEREAS,** Exit surveys of graduating seniors have been cited as primary evidence of poor intellectual challenge and intellectual engagement, but such surveys are generally regarded as producing results of limited validity and recent surveys have actually revealed a modest improving trend under the University's existing curriculum, and

WHEREAS, The Task Force report assumes that students who are not currently challenged will have their learning increased with decreased “seat time” and that substantial cost savings will result from the implementation of a 4X4 curriculum, and

WHEREAS, Recent tabulations of undergraduate student course evaluations indicate students find that current courses are difficult and do provide a “great deal of significant high quality learning,” and

WHEREAS, The academic literature shows that increased learning and favorable educational outcomes increase with higher amounts of “seat time,” and accordingly, educational outcomes could not reasonably be expected to improve under a 4X4 curriculum that reduces the number of required classroom hours per semester, and

WHEREAS, Models presented in the Task Force report used to predict cost savings are simplistic and rely on unrealistic expectations, while reasonable alternative assumptions lead to predictions that costs could actually increase under a 4X4 curriculum, unless a 4X4 curriculum is simply used to inflate academic credit hours by reducing required classroom hours and faculty positions; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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

That the Faculty Senate recommends rejection of the adoption of the 4X4 curriculum model “scenario” as described in the report of the Task Force, and

That the Faculty Senate urges the faculties of the several schools to undertake a thorough curriculum review in their schools and establish metrics informed by scholarly literature on the learning process.

Special Committee on the 4X4 Curriculum Report
February 8, 2007