
Detailed Notes on the UAS Meeting of February 27, 2026

Chair's Report

- *On Weekly Appointing Officer Calls:* The Chair and Vice Chair of UAS attend the calls, which center on updates to the state and federal landscape. There is broad representation from Academic Affairs, which includes the members of the Provost's Office and the Deans. These calls highlight that the administration is keeping abreast of what external factors could impact GVSU and planning accordingly. Updates can be found on the [website](#) of the Division of People, Equity, and Culture.
- *On Meeting with the Vice President of Information Technology and Chief Digital Officer:* The Chair and Vice Chair will meet with the Vice President of Information Technology and Chief Digital Officer this month for their quarterly meeting. VP Topić and his department have been engaging well with UAS. The UAS Chair is a member of the Data Advisory Committee. An update will be provided to UAS at the end of the Winter semester or beginning of the Fall semester. The ECS Chair and Vice Chair met with members of IT regarding the Digital Transformation Strategy, who were already meeting with the appropriate committees (e.g., FFPAC, ATAC). VP Topić shared that opportunities for faculty and staff to engage in conversation around how Microsoft 365 and Google Workspace are used in their work. The ECS Chair and Vice Chair shared feedback from faculty requesting that IT engage with faculty who have expertise in survey design when sending surveys. VP Topić shared how faculty had been engaged in helping IT develop surveys and expressed openness to having additional faculty contribute to the process. The Chair and Vice Chair of UAS expressed appreciation for how VP Topić and his division have been engaging with UAS this year.
- *On the Year-End Reception:* The end of the year reception for current, outgoing, and incoming UAS members will be held on Friday, April 24 at 5pm in DCIH 520.
- *On the State of the Student Body Address:* Chair Karasinski attended the State of the Student Body address and was impressed with all that the Student Body has accomplished.
- *On Budget 101:* The Budget 101 sessions, coordinated by ECS members, members of the Shared Leadership Steering Committee, and the Provost's Office, were helpful and well-received.
- *On Celebrating Accomplishments to Date:* The UAS has accomplished a great deal this year, completing reviews of the following memos, which have been sent to the Provost: FFPAC Memo on Classroom Issues and Innovations; UAC Memos on Membership and Bylaws; FPPC Memos on Review of SG 3.07F and Review of BOT 4.2.7; EIC Memo on Relationship with AALT; APSC Memos on Microcredential Policies and the Policy on rescheduling Final Exams Due to Weather, etc.; the OEMC and UCC Joint Memo on Certificate Review; OEMC Memos on New Members and Credit Numbers; FSBC Memos on Senior Leadership Pay, Professional Development Funding, and Independent Studies; AFAC Memo on Affiliates on University Committees; GC Memos on Thesis and Dissertation Policy Change; Dismissal Policy Change; Deferral Policy, and Dual Listed Course Policy Change.
- *On Memos that Have Been Discussed at ECS and Need Discussion at UAS:* The following memos have been placed on future UAS agendas by the ECS: APSC Memos on Residency Policy and Undergraduate non-degree 30-credit policy; FPPC Memo on Faculty Rank in Nomenclature Policy, Scholarly/Creative Activity Information, and Designate in Personnel Actions; FSBC Memos on Summer Teaching; Overload Pay; Adjunct Pay, Promotional Increments, and Annual Salary Adjustment.
- *On Memos in the Queue to Be Discussed by ECS:* All of the following memos have been submitted to the ECS queue on February 16, 2026 or later: GC Memos on Program Review Update, Combined Degree Policy Updates, and Professional Learning Credit and APSC Memo on Undergraduate Co-op Full Time Enrollment.
- *On an Update on Lisa Surman, Faculty Governance Assistant:* Lisa Surman is on medical leave. Becki Visser is covering Lisa's faculty governance responsibilities. We keep Lisa in our thoughts and appreciate all she does for faculty governance. Well wishes can be shared via email (surmanl@gvsu.edu). A card was circulated at the UAS meeting for members to sign for Lisa.
- *On the Changes to Retirement Benefits:* As noted last week, on Monday 2/23 VP Shorty emailed the Chair and Vice Chair of UAS that **the deadline for making the decision regarding taking a lump sum or an**

annuity will be extended by five days, as had been requested during the ECS meeting. This is appreciated. VP Shorty also shared in his 2/23 email that an exhaustive list of insurance companies that will bid for the annuity holding will be shared. The list does not guarantee that every company listed will bid on the RFP for Grand Valley and it will be unknown who from the list will be the winning bidder. It is hoped the visibility will help provide the needed information to help with decision-making. VP Shorty has expressed to the UAS Chair a commitment to collaborating with faculty.

- *On the March 20 UAS Agenda Item to Discuss Proposed Bylaws Language: Responsibilities, Rules, and Procedures: Votes of Confidence, Censure, and No Confidence:* This agenda item is *only* about adding responsibilities, rules, and procedures for these types of votes. There is *not* an agenda item regarding *taking* any of these votes.
- *On the Taskforce for the Improvement of ECS/UAS:* After a robust discussion, the ECS voted to form a taskforce to assess the current and ideal structures, roles, and functionality of UAS & ECS and make recommendations, reviewing previous task force reports and recommendations (e.g. SHGR, SLSC, and ESGI) and proposing bylaws language. **Please send nominations for this taskforce, including self-nominations, to Chair Karasinski at karasinc@gvsu.edu by March 20, 2026.**

Provost's Report

- *On Budget Sessions:* Budget 101 had great attendance. Questions have been gathered from these discussions. A discussion on the Blue Dot may be scheduled after Spring Break, as a number of questions centered on this topic. Budget 201 will be interactive. A waitlist has been started, as sessions are full. Faculty who are interested in attending but have not yet registered are encouraged to join the waitlist. If there is sufficient interest, more sessions will be added after Spring Break.

Student Senate Report

- *On the State of the Student Body Address:* The Student Senate delivered the State of the Student Body address, a comprehensive reflection on this year's accomplishments and a forward-looking outline of priorities for the year ahead. They were grateful to see faculty, staff, and students in attendance and appreciate the continued engagement across governance spaces.
- *On the Black History Month Showcase:* Student Senate hosted a Black History Month Showcase in partnership with the Black Student Union. The event was well attended and provided an important space to celebrate culture, leadership, and community.
- *On Meet your Future Profession:* The Meet Your Future Profession event, held in collaboration with the College of Health Professions, welcomed more than 60 students who connected with over a dozen professionals across diverse career paths within health fields. The program directly responded to student interest in clearer post-graduation pathways.
- *On the Letters to Legislators Initiative:* The Student Senate Letters to Legislators initiative generated approximately 70 individualized messages to state senators and representatives. They have begun receiving responses and engagement from legislative offices. While the impact of advocacy work is often gradual, this effort reflects a coordinated and informed student voice in conversations surrounding higher education funding.
- *On Student Senate Elections:* Petitioning to be on the ballot closed Friday February 27 at 5:00 p.m. They are excited as they prepare to transition leadership and ensure continuity in our work.
- *On Day of Giving:* Student Senate will support the University's Day of Giving.
- *On Multicultural Night:* Student Senate will host the second annual Multicultural Night.

New Business

- *On the Vote to Support the Recommendation of the PhD in Computing Proposal:* Pursuant to SG 2.2.1.2, Friday February 27, 2026, the University Academic Senate (UAS) met to discuss and vote on supporting the proposal for the PhD in Computing. UAS members reviewed the SAIL proposal in its entirety, including the decisions made at the prior levels of review, prior to the meeting. The proposal authors provided in advance a copy of a slide deck and a frequently asked questions document. A robust discussion was held. Points in favor of the proposal included the potential for increased opportunities for students, including interprofessional opportunities for students from other Colleges. It was noted that this program aligns with the community goal of Grand Rapids becoming a technological hub. It is preferred that GVSU, rather than another university, be the university to support Grand Rapids in these endeavors. It was

expressed that the PhD program could help strengthen partnerships in the community. Those in favor of the PhD program felt that the timing built on the research momentum of the College of Computing faculty, the strong leadership in the College, and aligned with student and donor interest. The work that the College of Computing put into the proposal and their openness to innovation was appreciated. Points against the proposal centered largely on financial risk, faculty workload and equity, institutional identity, and the proposal and process. It was noted that significant resources would be needed for the program, and there were concerns about resources being taken away from other units. The need for library resources was raised. Starting a costly program during a time of less state and federal funding was thought to not be ideal. There were concerns about long-term sustainability of the program, including concerns about recruitment, particularly of international students. Faculty workload equity was another concern, including ensuring that affiliate faculty are not overburdened, along with a worry that faculty who mentor doctoral students could be valued above faculty who focus on undergraduate teaching and mentorship. This relates to the concerns about institutional identity. The University's reputation for teaching undergraduate students is valued by many faculty, and there is a concern that a PhD program could shift the focus from undergraduates and teaching to doctoral students and research. Faculty also may no longer be eligible for grant funding that is given to undergraduate-serving institutions. Finally, there were concerns regarding clarity of the budget and a feeling that the decision-making process was rushed. Some faculty noted that, although they did not feel ready to support this proposal at this time, they may be open to considering it in the future. A vote was taken and the results were 19 in support of the proposal and 30 against, with 2 abstentions.