
Detailed Notes on the UAS Meeting September 26, 2025

President's Report

- *On Retention:* Our FTIAC retention increased by 1.4% and our Oliver Wilson Scholars retention increased by 9.2%. The only decrease in our retention rates was for international students, which decreased 15%. Student success has been a focus.
- *On Campus Safety:* Adjustments have been made in Housing and Residence Life, including visitor policies, to address some safety issues that have occurred. A positive is that students have been staying on campus during the weekends, contributing to a vibrant campus.
- *On Shared Leadership:* President Mantella expressed appreciation to the COACHE Steering Committee and UAS members who engaged in the Shared Leadership Workshops during the summer. Communication and engagement will continue.
- *On Good Stewardship:* Each division is engaging in a budget exercise in order to ensure good stewardship of our resources. This exercise is proactive.
- *On Blue Dot:* Blue Dot is an ecosystem, supporting digital literacy and digital fluency. In Allendale, the Kirkhof Center, Louis Armstrong Theatre, and baseball and softball facilities will be improved.
- *On Funding for Higher Education in Michigan:* We are working to articulate our economic impact to policymakers in an effort to facilitate changes to the funding model for higher education in Michigan.
- *On Stability at GVSU:* GVSU has had a lot of continuity, unlike many other institutions. The student to faculty ratio is at its highest in 10 years. We have created two ecosystems: Blue Dot and Omni. We have had athletic success and philanthropic success and have been recognized as a health-promoting institution.

Provost's Report

- *On the Strategic Framework for Academic Affairs:* The Provost expressed appreciation for participation in conversations around the strategic framework for Academic Affairs. Feedback can be provided at <https://www.gvsu.edu/aasf>. Researchers will continue to analyze the data.
- *On the Budget Exercise:* Each University division is reviewing its spending as it relates to alignment with strategic priorities for the FY27 budget. Each division will identify reallocation or cost reduction opportunities equal to 5% its budget. The University priorities are 1) Drive revenue growth, 2) Catalyze new funds and funding sources, 3) Leverage technology and AI to increase efficiency, student acquisition, and enhance learning, 4) Restructure to improve learner journey and faculty/staff engagement in priorities, and 5) Eliminate redundancies and improve efficiency. We are guided by our values. This is challenging but hopeful work.
- *On Shared Leadership:* Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs provided an update on the Shared Leadership process. Shared leadership workshops were held in the summer, and a report was provided by the external facilitators. A [Shared Leadership Steering Committee](#) has been formed, aiming to disseminate the workshop findings, develop and initiate actionable follow-up, establish and oversee working teams, monitor and report team progress, publish a comprehensive progress report by January 31, 2026, and formulate future recommendations by March 31, 2026.

Chair's Report

- *On the Teach-In:* The annual Teach-In will be held on November 12-13. Proposals to present are due October 20 and all faculty are encouraged to present and attend. More information about the Teach-In can be found on the website: <https://www.gvsu.edu/teach-in/>. From the Teach-In website: "*The purpose of Teach-In is for mutual education among students, faculty and staff and is intended to address topics related to inequality and systems of oppression, as well as social justice and liberation. The broad learning objectives of Teach-In: Power, Privilege, and Critical Conversations are to raise awareness, inform, create dialogue, and motivate action. We encourage contributions with an intersectional framework that takes into account the various ways that race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, etc. impact lived experience.*"
- *On Weekly Appointing Officer Calls:* The Chair and Vice Chair of the University Academic Senate have attended the weekly Appointing Officer calls during which information is shared about the federal and state landscapes for higher education. Up-to-date information can be accessed on the [Hub](#), on the website of the People, Equity, and Culture Division.
- *On the Reach Higher Collaborative Leadership Network:* Chair Karasinski, Vice Chair Anne Sergeant are members of the Reach Higher Collaborative Leadership Network, along with many stakeholders throughout the University. Faculty are well-represented, with UAS Leadership and all of the Presidential Fellows attending. The process for developing the next strategic plan has engaged individuals throughout the University and the feedback has been analyzed and has shaped the discussions.

- *On the Enterprise Review Panel:* Chair Karasinski and the members of the New Programs Council (Vice Chair of the University Academic Senate, Chair of the Faculty Salary and Budget Committee, Chair of the University Curriculum Committee, and Chair of the Graduate Council) are members of Enterprise Review Panel, which is being piloted as the proposal for a PhD in Computing is being considered. The aim of the panel is to consider from early in the proposal stage how new programs can be properly resourced. The Enterprise Review Panel is not a voting body, but discusses the needs of potential new programs. More information will be shared about this pilot at a future meeting.
- *On the Budget Representative Group:* Chair Karasinski attended the meeting of the Budget Representative Group, where information about the University budget was shared. The Chair of the Faculty Salary and Budget Committee and two academic deans also are members of this group.
- *On the Next Meeting of the UAS:* The next meeting of the UAS will be held on October 24, rather than on October 31.

Student Senate Report

- *On the SPARK Grant:* Student Senate officially approved the SPARK Grant—Student Programming & Recreation at Kirkhof, which will launch the weekend of September 26th to provide funding to support weekend programming for student organizations.
- *On Strategic Planning:* Student Senate met with Academic Affairs about strategic planning.
- *On Campus Life Night:* Student Senate reported a successful, well-attended Campus Life Night.

New Business

- *On Reach Higher Together:* Laura Aikens, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, and Elizabeth Doyle, Executive Associate for Philanthropic Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives, led an activity for UAS members to provide feedback on the draft versions of the [Reach Higher Together](#) draft commitments. This feedback will be shared at the Reach Higher Collaborative Leadership Network meeting on Friday October 3.
- *On a Potential GVSU Laptop Requirement:* Jared Moore, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies & Outreach for the College of Computing; Eric Bellmore, Director, Academic Research Computing; Michelle Rhodes, Associate Vice President for Financial Aid; and Miloš Topić, Ph.D. Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Digital Officer, presented about a proposed laptop requirement for GVSU students. A laptop requirement would enable students to access financial aid for laptop purchases. A partnership has been developed to provide business-grade laptops to students for \$550, for which they can use financial aid. The presenters addressed questions from UAS members. UAS members expressed support for the program.
- *On the Preliminary Conversation with ECS about the Need, Feasibility, and Next Steps for the Introduction of a PhD Program in the College of Computing:* Dean Kessentini, Erin Carrier, and Rahat Rafiq provided a thorough presentation on the College of Computing's proposal for a PhD program. They shared the input gathered from faculty, the community/industry, and students, and how the proposed PhD program would meet the needs of all three groups. They noted that adding this program would not move GVSU into R2 status. They shared how the program fits into the Academic Affairs strategic priorities and fits with the teacher-scholar model. A robust discussion was held. Support and concerns were expressed. Support centered on the program being desired by the College of Computing faculty and filling a need in the Grand Rapids community as Grand Rapids aims to become a technology hub. Concerns centered on fundamental changes to the identity of Grand Valley, which has focused on the teacher-scholar model for faculty.