University Academic Senate Mid-Year Report for Fall 2021
(Chair, University Academic Senate, Felix Ngassa)

The University Academic Senate, UAS, is the highest faculty governance body, which has authority to deal with any academic issue or faculty concern. The *modus operandi* of our shared governance process is such that governance policies are developed collaboratively by the UAS and the Provost. Other policies such as the ones approved by the Board of Trustees (BOT Policies) or the Senior Leadership Team (SLT Policies) complement the shared governance policies. At the level of each College and the University Libraries, there are governing bodies that serve as advisory bodies to the respective Deans. The advisory bodies develop policies, consistent with the policies and guidelines established by the UAS, for their various academic units.

The UAS meets on average once a month during the fall and winter semesters; these meetings are always on Fridays from 3:00-5:00 p.m. The Executive Committee of the Senate, ECS, serves as the clearing house for matters to be presented to UAS. As a clearing house, ECS discusses matters first and then makes recommendations that become business items for UAS. ECS meets once a week during the fall and winter semesters, and these meetings are on Fridays from 3:00-5:00 p.m. All recommendations from faculty governance to the Provost and/or President, come from the UAS or in some cases from the ECS acting on behalf of the UAS. In the fall of 2021, the ECS met ten times, while the UAS met four times. UAS made several recommendations that the Provost approved. Some of these recommendations are still pending approval. In this report, UAS work in the fall 2021 has been categorized under the following headings: *Policies/Guidelines, Endorsement, Acceptance of Reports, Appointments, Task Forces,* and *Presentations.*

I.   Policies/Guidelines

All recommended policies, policy changes, and guidelines were initiated by the standing committees of the senate, or directly by ECS/UAS. Policy changes were mostly on the *Shared Governance Policies*. UAS acted on the following policies and made recommendations to the Provost.

Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee (AFAC) Proposal on Evaluation Procedures: We reviewed a proposal from AFAC for Affiliate Faculty Evaluation Procedures, which will stand alone within policies pertaining to Affiliate faculty only (AFF 3.01). In the proposal, AFAC recommended revising some of the current language and recommendations posted on the Provost's website for Affiliate faculty evaluations during annual review, contract renewal, and promotion to Senior Affiliate faculty status. Of note, the proposal will continue to leave discretion to colleges and units to use their current procedures for annual review and contract renewal, so long as these receive prior approval from the Provost's office. AFAC's proposal was reviewed by University Counsel and the Provost Office. The UAS supported AFAC's proposal and the Provost approved UAS recommendation. The new policy will be added to S*hared Governance* (SG) policies with an AFF designation; it will also curate with the *Affiliate Faculty Handbook* under the "Affiliate Faculty Responsibilities and Workload" section on the *University Policies* website. These changes will be effective with the Fall 2022 semester.

Affiliate Faculty Representation on Senate (AFFARES) Task Force Proposal on Affiliate Faculty Representation in ECS and SG & BOT Policies Change: We reviewed a proposal from the AFFARES Task Force requesting amendments to the UAS Bylaws that would extend to the chair of the Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee (AFAC) a standing invitation to ECS meetings. The proposal will result in appropriate language change in the following Shared Governance (SG) Policies: SG 1.01.7.2, SG 1.01.8.2.1, and SG 1.01.8.3. In addition, there is a request to temporarily amend BOT 3.1.4.1 to reserve two seats on ECS for the College of Education and Community Innovation (CECI). The Provost's decision on UAS recommendation is still pending.

Academic Policies and Standards Committee (APSC) Proposal on Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Policy for Undergraduate: APSC was charged with evaluating pilot programs of prior learning credit toward developing a university-wide policy for undergraduates. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is used to describe the process of evaluating learning gained outside the college classroom. We reviewed a proposal from APSC requesting the adoption of a PLA policy as the overarching undergraduate university level policy. In addition, APSC proposed that the processes to implement the policy will be determined by the administration group that will be housing the policy at a later date. The proposed policy is meant to be in addition to the current Credit by Exam that covers AP, IB, CLEP, and DSST exams. The UAS supported APSC's recommendation for the PLA policy. The Provost approved UAS recommendation. These changes are effective immediately and are to be published in the *University Catalog*.

Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee (FFPAC) Proposal for Electricity and Power Access in Classrooms: We reviewed a proposal from FFPAC requesting increased outlet availability for several buildings; low-tech solutions such as power strips, extension cords, and hubs in some priority areas; and calling on the Academic Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC), Information Technology (IT), and Facilities to use their expertise to determine and implement solutions. The UAS supported FFPAC's recommendation on Electricity and Power Access in Classrooms. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and will ensure that Vice President Topic and Vice President Sanial are aware of the faculty's support for increased access to power outlets for students.

Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee (FFPAC) Proposal for Sanitary Product Accessibility in Restrooms: We reviewed a proposal from FFPAC requesting Sanitary Product Accessibility in Restrooms, in support of the Student Senate effort to provide access to sanitary products in restrooms. The UAS supported FFPAC's recommendation on Sanitary Product Accessibility in Restrooms. The implementation of FFPAC's recommendation will be by Facilities Services, which is under the jurisdiction of the Vice President of Business and Finance. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and will ensure that Vice President Sanial is aware of the faculty's support for the availability of sanitary products in restrooms across multiple campuses.

Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee (FFPAC) Proposal for Active Learning Spaces: We reviewed a proposal from FFPAC regarding Active Learning Spaces (ALSs). FFPAC's working definition of ALSs are learning spaces (physical and virtual) designed to facilitate active student engagement and collaborative learning, featuring flexible layouts and integrated technologies. Spaces include classrooms, offices, and other physical and virtual locations designed to facilitate active student learning environments. The UAS supported FFPAC's recommendation on Active Learning Spaces. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and encouraged FFPAC to continue working with FTLCAC and other associated committees and task forces on the use of Active Learning Spaces.

Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC) Proposal on Leadership and Succession Planning: We reviewed a proposal from FPPC requesting revisions and additions to the UAS bylaws to include additional language and clarity regarding leadership, describing the FPPC leadership positions and, specifically, articulating a succession process. The proposal from FPPC will result in a change to Shared Governance Policies that pertain to FPPC, SG 1.02.d, by adding language on Leadership and Succession Planning. The UAS supported FPPC's recommended revisions to SG 1.02.d. The Provost's decision on UAS recommendation is still pending.

Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC) Support of the Parental Leave Policy Proposal: We reviewed a proposal from the administration on Parental Leave Policy. The proposal was unanimously supported by FPPC. In supporting the proposed policy, FPPC expressed its gratitude for the benefits the new policy will provide to GVSU faculty. The new policy will result in amendment to the following

policies: Shared Governance Policies, SG 5.02, and Senior Leadership Team Policies, SLT 4.1. The UAS supported FPPC's recommendation. The new policy has already been approved by the President and will be effective on January 1, 2022.

Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Proposal on University Policies Language on Pay Equity: We reviewed a proposal from FSBC requesting that language be added to Shared Governance Policies, SG 3.08, to formalize the standing practice of a member of Human Resources examining the distribution of salaries in a unit. Other minor changes were requested to make SG 3.08 more current with the merger of CCPS and COE, adding equity in the guidelines for increments section, and requiring that the annual salary letter be provided and not mailed. The Provost's decision on UAS recommendation is still pending.

Graduate Council (GC) Proposal on Dual Level Enrollment Policy: We reviewed a proposal from the GC requesting modifications to the Dual Level Enrollment Policy. GC's request is based on questions received from Graduate Program Directors regarding the consistency with existing, similar policies. GC recommended the following modifications to the Dual Level Enrollment Policy: (1) Graduate credits can be counted toward a degree and/or credential (e.g. badge or certificate); (2) Up to 12 graduate credits can be counted toward a future graduate degree. The proposal from the GC will result in a change to Handbook/Catalog Language in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog within the section titled Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations. The UAS supported GC's recommendation to revise the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog within the section titled Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations, with the new Dual Level Enrollment Policy. In addition, a verbatim copy of the policy should be included in the most current Graduate Education Policies & Procedures Manual. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and the changes to the Handbook/Catalog Language are effective immediately. These changes are to be published in the Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations section of the *University Catalog* as well as the Graduate Education Policies and Procedures Manual.

Graduate Council (GC) Proposal for Changes to the Policy for Transfer of Credit to a Graduate Program: We reviewed a proposal from the GC requesting changes to the policy for transfer of credit to a graduate program. GC's request is based on the regulatory information from the Department of Education (DOE), which makes no distinction between regionally and nationally accredited institutions, but rather only makes a distinction between institutional accreditation and programmatic accreditation. Therefore, GC is recommending that the Transfer of Credit to a Graduate Program policy be changed to reflect the DOE regulatory change. The proposal from the GC will result in a change to Handbook/Catalog Language in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog within the section titled Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations. The UAS supported GC's recommendation to revise the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog within the section titled Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and the changes to the Handbook/Catalog Language are effective immediately.

Online Education and Microcredential Council (OEMC) Proposal to Increase Council Membership: We reviewed a proposal from OEMC requesting a change in the number of faculty who can serve on the OEMC, starting with the 2021-2022 academic year. In particular, the OEMC requested that the current number range, 3-5 faculty should change to 5-8 faculty members who can be appointed to serve in the council. The rationale for OEMC's request is based on increased workload and faculty representation. The proposal from OEMC will result in a change to Shared Governance Policies that pertain to OEMC, SG 1.02.k. The UAS supported OEMC's recommended revisions to SG 1.02.k. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and the changes to SG 1.02.k are effective immediately.

Online Education and Microcredential Council (OEMC) Proposal on Leadership and Succession Planning: We reviewed a proposal from OEMC requesting revisions and additions to the UAS bylaws to

include additional language and clarity regarding leadership, describing the OEMC leadership positions and, specifically, articulating a succession process. The proposal from OEMC will result in a change to Shared Governance Policies that pertain to OEMC, SG 1.02.k, by adding language on Leadership and Succession Planning. The UAS supported OEMC's recommended revisions to SG 1.02.k. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and the changes to SG 1.02.k are effective immediately.

University Academic Senate (UAS) Proposal on Faculty Activity Plan and Faculty Activity Report Designations: At its regular meeting of December 3, 2021, the UAS passed a motion to change the designation of Faculty Activity Plan to Faculty Workload Plan with acronym FWP, and to change the designation of Faculty Activity Report to Faculty Workload Report with acronym FWR. The proposed changes will modify language in the following Shared Governance Policies: SG 3.02.A and SG 3.02.B. The Provost's decision on UAS recommendation is still pending.

II.   Endorsements
Under the responsibilities of the UAS as specified in our *Shared Governance Policies* (*SG 1.01.2.4*), UAS may vote to express its endorsement of policies, events, and initiatives that support and advance the university's mission and values. For the fall 2021, UAS endorsed the following initiatives.

Endorsement of Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Proposal on Annual Salary Adjustment Request for 2022-2023: We reviewed a proposal from FSBC requesting the historical CPI plus 1.5% as a minimum standard for salary adjustment increment for 2022-2023. The university has, on average, met this minimum standard over the past decade. The UAS supported FSBC's recommendation on Annual Salary Adjustment Request for 2022-2023. The Provost's decision on UAS recommendation is still pending.

Endorsement of Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Proposal on Allocation of Federal Funds: We reviewed a proposal from FSBC requesting that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) seek input from a wide range of perspectives and create a transparent process to determine how best to utilize federal funds to address budget shortfalls while preserving our core functions and best positioning the university for the future. The UAS supported FSBC's recommendation on Allocation of Federal Funds. The Provost's decision on UAS recommendation is still pending.

Endorsement of the Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. Virtual Commemoration for Winter 2022: UAS reviewed and discussed the Winter 2022 virtual commemoration for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. UAS unanimously endorsed the Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. virtual commemoration for Winter 2022 and encouraged all faculty to participate in the scheduled events, as they are able. The Provost's decision on UAS recommendation is still pending.

Endorsement of the Provost's Appointed Faculty Representatives to the Online Education and Microcredential Council (OEMC): Pursuant to SG 1.02.k, UAS discussed and endorsed the Provost's appointed faculty representatives to the OEMC.

III.   Acceptance of Reports
Under the responsibilities of the UAS as specified in our *Shared Governance Policies* (*SG 1.01.1.2.4*), UAS receives proposals initiated by a variety of individuals and groups. The ECS has the authority to act for the UAS within the range of the Senate's responsibilities (*SG 1.01.3.1*).

Acceptance of Equity and Inclusion Committee (EIC) Report on Diversity of Faculty, Staff, and Students Across Colleges: ECS reviewed the EIC Report on Diversity of Faculty, Staff, and Students Across

Colleges. Data suggest that we continue to present ourselves as a predominantly white institution. The report explored issues around student evaluations of teaching and how persons of color experience personnel actions. EIC hopes to make specific recommendations on improving the learning and teaching process at the university and equitable treatment.

Acceptance of the Equity in Personnel Processes (EPP) Task Force Report: ECS reviewed the EPP Task Force Report. The Equity in Personnel Processes Task Force provided a report as a result of a charge initiated in May 2021. The report offers several recommendations with regard to mitigating bias in LIFT evaluations. The report also notes that there is guidance forthcoming from the American Council on Education that may provide some important policy language with regard to increasing equity in personnel processes.

Acceptance of the Graduation Honors Policy Proposal Report: ECS reviewed the GVSU Graduation Honors Policy Proposal from the Registrar's Office. The requested effective date of change is August 1, 2022 (to be included in the 2022-2023 catalog), which would then be in effect for students graduating in Fall 2022, Winter 2023, and Spring/Summer 2023. The GPA for graduating with honors changes annually, based on the previous year's graduating class, which is confusing for students. GVSU's cutoffs are higher than those of other MI publics. ECS made a motion to charge the Academic Policies and Standards Committee (APSC) to craft a policy language for the GVSU Graduation Honors Policy.

Acceptance of the Active Learning Classroom Task Force Report: ECS reviewed the Active Learning Classroom Task Force Report. The Active Learning Classroom Task Force, which was convened by the VP of IT and included faculty representation, provided a report. ECS discussed the report, and noted that the faculty role in designing pedagogical spaces must be at the forefront of these discussions. There may be some conflation of terminology, with "active learning" being used in the report to describe spaces in which delivery can be simultaneously face-to-face and online, aka "dual-delivery". Multiple standing committees have a role in discussions of active-learning and dual-delivery. FFPAC plans to address active learning spaces, and OEMC plans to be part of discussions of high-flex delivery, including types of professional development needed, and whether this type of teaching/learning counts as online or hybrid. The report was forwarded to FFPAC.

Acceptance of the Peer Review Pilot Update Report from the Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC): FPPC's Peer Review Process of faculty teaching was approved by ECS in 2018, but FPPC has not been able to find individuals or units willing to participate in a pilot. Former Provost Cimitile was a strong advocate for a consistent peer-review process. HLC noted in our accreditation visit that we need consistency across campus. ECS shared some strategies for a way forward with FPPC.

Acceptance of the ECS Title IX Task Force Report: ECS supported the recommendations made by the taskforce and acted pursuant to SG 1.01.3.2. A memo was sent to the President and the Provost. The reply from the President was shared with faculty and is available on the Faculty Governance website.

Acceptance of the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Advisory Committee (FTLCAC) LMS Selection Feedback Survey Findings Report: A slight preference for Canvas was revealed in the faculty survey, which is consistent with the results of the previous survey. Student Senate also prefers Canvas. Discussion revealed that inclusivity issues have been noted in Blackboard, these are present in Canvas as well. Both support textbook and online homework managers equivalently. The contract with Blackboard ends in June 2024, there will be a transition to the new LMS (Blackboard Ultra or Canvas) over the next three years. Typically, a decision would have been made by last spring; IT has a short timeline for implementation. There does not appear to be a discernable difference in the learning environment between the two LMSs. Some accredited programs use accreditation tools that are built into Blackboard, Canvas does not have a comparable tool. Other institutions that have accredited programs and use Canvas

are more technologically advanced than GVSU. Many institutions, including high schools, are using Canvas, so using Canvas may be easier for students who are familiar with it; however, many community colleges use Blackboard. Canvas collects a lot of data about individuals in courses, which is great for educational research, but is it "unnecessary surveillance"?

Acceptance of the Equity and Inclusion Committee (EIC) Report on Prioritizing the Equity in Personnel Processes (EPP) Task Force Recommendations for 2021-2022 Academic Year: ECS reviewed the EIC report. Considering changing use of LIFT scores to *formative,* rather than in personnel decisions and annual salary adjustments. Regardless of what happens with LIFT scores, the Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC) peer-review of teaching process is moving forward, as it was approved last academic year. Using the peer-review process outlined by FFPC will increase the rigor of the faculty review process over using LIFT data, which is both invalid and biased. If this change is made, communication with and input from all stakeholders will be important. Students will need to know that their voice still will be heard and their input considered relative to faculty teaching. The report was forwarded to FPPC.

IV.   Appointments
Under the responsibilities of the ECS as specified in our *Shared Governance Policies* (SG 1.01.3.4), ECS serves as a nominating committee for membership for all committees, task forces, and boards that are elected by the UAS. In addition, according to SG 1.01.3.1, ECS has the authority to act for the UAS within the range of the Senate's responsibilities.

Appointment of Faculty to the Online Education and Microcredential Council (OEMC): UAS approved the Provost's appointment of faculty to the OEMC. The following faculty were appointed to a two-year term: Krista Benson (BCOIS); and Rick Geisel (CECI). The following faculty were appointed to a one-year term: Denise Goerisch (BCOIS) and Alisha Karabinus (CLAS).

Appointment of Additional Faculty Representatives to the Steering Team of Reach Higher 2025: Following the non-endorsement of the RH2025 strategic plan during the October 1 UAS meeting, there was a recommendation to increase the number of faculty representatives in the Steering Committee of RH2025. After a call for nominations from the faculty at large, the following nominees were selected by ECS: Ana Gonzalez (SCB); Amy McFarland (BCOIS); Paul Murphy (CLAS); and Joel Wendland-Liu (BCOIS). The other faculty representatives in the Steering Committee of RH2025, who were appointed in the 2020-2021 academic year, are the following: Majd Al-Mallah (CLAS); Courtney Karasinski (CHP); Jared Moore (PCEC); and Lisa Perhamus (COE).

V.   Task Forces
When confronted with issues that need focused attention, broad representation and results within a short time frame, ECS/UAS creates task forces to deal with these issues. For the fall 2021, there were three task forces: (1) AFFILIATE FACULTY REPRESENTATION ON SENATE (AFFARES) Task Force; (2) EQUITY IN PERSONNEL PROCESSES (EPP) Task Force; and (3) ECS TITLE IX Task Force.

AFFARES Task Force: The task force was formed with the following roles/charges: (1) Consider the request of the Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee (AFAC, SG 1.03.B.2) for representation on ECS and UAS, as stated in its memo of February 12, 2021; (2) Make recommendations for revisions of BOT policies defining the membership of ECS and UAS (BOT 3.1.4.1) in view of any decisions reached on the request from AFAC; and (3) Make recommendations for revisions of BOT policies defining the membership of ECS and UAS (BOT 3.1.4.1) in view of the merger of CCPS and COE into the College of Education and Community Innovation (CECI).

EQUITY IN PERSONNEL PROCESSES (EPP) Task Force: The task force was formed with the following roles/charges: (1) Explore bias in teaching evaluations as it relates to gender, race, ethnicity,

etc.; (2) Make recommendations to mitigate issues of bias in teaching evaluations; and (3) Make recommendations for specific policy language that FPPC will use to craft policy language.

ECS TITLE IX Task Force: In response to faculty concerns regarding some allegations in the Title IX Office, and the desire for transparency, the ECS Title IX Task Force was created. The task force was charged with identifying a series of recommendations to help ensure a safe campus and working environment, which is necessary to achieve our core academic mission.

VI.   Presentations

We continued our senate tradition of inviting different campus authorities to give a presentation followed by discussions on topics that are relevant and of interest to faculty, staff and students. This fall 2021, there were presentations and discussions on the following topics.

Presentation Topic	Presenter(s)
Discussion with Employee Ombuds Officer	Elisa Salazar
Benefits Update	Tara Bivens, Mychal Coleman, Nick Ekstrom
GVSU Graduation Honors Policy	Suzeanne Benet & Pam Wells
Update from the VAT	Ed Aboufadel & VAT Faculty Representatives
Strategic Planning: Reach Higher 2025	Tara Bivens, Mark Schaub, Janet Winter
Discussions on Title IX Process	Jesse Bernal & Pat Smith
Discussion on Student Mental Health Services	Bonnie Dykstra
Introduction of Administrators	Laura Aikens, Emil Delgado, Kara Van Dam