

**COS Faculty Meeting
Minutes**
January 21, 2021, 3-4pm

1. Call to order
 - 1.1. 3:01 - Rebecca
2. Approval of minutes from Dec 3, 2020
 - 2.1. Motion to approve: Pritha
 - 2.2. Second: Deborah
 - 2.3. Observed unanimous thumbs up for approval.
3. Announcement of COS Undergraduate Research Colloquium
 - 3.1. Will be virtual, April 21st from 1-3pm
 - 3.2. Posters available before then
 - 3.3. Be thinking about your undergraduates submitting digital abstracts and posters
 - 3.4. Cash prizes!
4. Dean's Updates, Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm (Appendix A)
 - 4.1. Things on my mind slide
 - 4.1.1. COVID
 - 4.1.1.1. No single classroom case of COVID transmission last semester
 - 4.1.1.2. New testing system that is quicker (saliva); 10-15k tests/wk
 - 4.1.1.3. Commonwealth of VA has rolled out vaccination process, and priority 1b vaccines being administered now; we are priority 1c as faculty
 - 4.1.1.4. Pushing for on campus vaccination site, and we will be notified if that materializes
 - 4.1.2. Faculty compensation
 - 4.1.2.1. Some adjustments have been made in egregious cases
 - 4.1.2.2. Ongoing
 - 4.1.3. Strategic planning
 - 4.1.3.1. Some departments have done retreats; some working on writing. Will be sharing with COS

- 4.1.3.2. When our budget is more accurate and predictable, will move to getting together for investments and rationale. Faculty input will be important. Transparent and inclusive.
- 4.2. Showed enrollment histograms slide; enrollment is a little lower this past semester, but over entire year we're doing better overall. This impacts our budget allocation, which stayed fairly flat from 20 to 21. This has put brakes on some of our planned investments. "Turning a corner"
- 4.3. Budget update slide
 - 4.3.1. When all is said and done, we might be able to grow a few million and play catchup with expenditures at end of FY21 (about \$4M)
- 4.4. Ongoing investments slide, that are priority and have been done already in FY21
- 4.5. Rebecca: Questions can be posted in the chat
- 4.6. Monique van Hoek Q: Will there be potential a faculty seed grant program this year?
 - 4.6.1. Dean: tentatively yes, that's a great thing we should do, but TBD
- 5. Rebecca: New Job title for Ute Shaw: Chief Business Officer
- 6. Library resources update, Helen McManus (Appendix B)
 - 6.1. Cost of journal subscriptions has soared in the past two decades.
 - 6.2. Library budgets have been flat to declining over that period.
 - 6.3. 30% of budget goes to "large journal bundles"
 - 6.4. Had to enter budget negotiations a year earlier than expected with Elsevier.
 - 6.5. Can announce today: All schools were able to achieve costs savings they need.
 - 6.6. Mason had to unbundle the Freedom Collection with Elsevier. We subscribe to 220 high usage journals, but still deliver access to all Elsevier journals, and instant access with pre-2021 with large journal backfiles and due to open access. Rest of articles without instant access, articles are delivered with inter-library loan in 1-2 days (but in practice can be within 3 hours).
 - 6.7. Expect to take a similar path with our large journal packages if our budget situation doesn't change.
 - 6.8. Universities around US are breaking big deals and transitioning to new ways to delivering access to research.
 - 6.9. Wants to hear from faculty about questions and concerns
 - 6.10. Dann Sklarew Q: Access to textbooks in electronic format? Normally we provide print textbook reserves. A: It's a challenge to get larger standard textbooks electronically, as publishers do not provide library licenses generally. Seeing what they can get for multi-user licenses for electronic journals

- 6.11. Ernie Barreto Q: What are the other large journal packages. A: Elsevier:Freedom Collection, Springer Nature, Wiley: lost open access, but deal held together. Sage, Taylor and Francis. Rebecca Q: Is there a place we can see specifically what journals we lost access to: A: <https://library.gmu.edu/sustainable-collections> <https://library.gmu.edu/sustainable-collections/Elsevier> These changes are all very recent.
- 6.12. Monique van Hoek: Q: Are other libraries debundling. Is there a risk? A: We coordinate with other Virginia universities. Plenty of other universities haven't unbundled yet. We want more reasonable pricing structures. Inter-library loans from around the world help.
- 6.13. Igor Mazin: Q: will the library be continuing supporting publication charges in open access journals? A: yes, we do have a fund for this. If we have a grant, we ask you to use your grant funds. We have spent \$50k/yr on this. Can't increase this budget item at the moment.
- 6.14. Erdal Yigit: Q: Who coordinates the payment of the publication charges? What is the procedure? Rebecca A: Can send personal example of using these funds.
- 6.15. Bill Kennedy: Q: What do you see for 5 years in the future? Where are we headed? A: We can expect to shift evermore to ownership to access upon request if budget trends continue as is. We will still have full access, but no longer one click access. We do have access to data to figure out what journals we retain. We are data crunching at this point to identify the journals we use. We are already at 95% of our budget going to electric resources, and we don't see that going down or changing.

7. ARIE task force update, Gerald Weatherspoon

7.1. Deferred to later meeting (not present)

8. Continuity Group update, Jason Kinser

8.1. Lots of meetings since Jan 1.

8.2. University Life still have a lot of options for students to have a life and fun on campus.

8.3. Tell students about Mason 360

8.4. Piazza is changing its model from free to expensive. Spring 2021 is probably the last semester we will use it. One needs to select the "contribution selected" option for it to work. Plan for it not to exist in fall 2021.

8.4.1. Ben: If we already set it up for our Spring 2021 courses (a few weeks ago), do we need to go back and change anything, or are we set? Jason K: If it's working, don't fix it. If it does turn off on you, Jason Kinser will put you in touch with who can fix it.

8.5. Lots of military people activated last week. Some states activated ROTSE students.

8.6. Mason fund available for students in dire situations. It is zeroed out, and they are getting other income. Students can check with the Stay Mason fund.

- 8.7. Some instructors are moving classes from online to in class this semester. We have to remember there are some students who cannot travel to the US, and MUST be accommodated.
 - 8.8. We are not having a spring break, but there is a movement afoot that we should not have any meetings during the week we would normally hold spring break, and schedule appropriately. There is nothing official yet.
 - 8.8.1. Brenda Tondi: Would have been nice to know about a “spring break” potential BEFORE making up our class schedules. A: Won’t affect classes, just budget and business meetings, not classes.
 - 8.9. Stearn Center available. Massive training not needed anymore.
 - 8.10. Scheduling for fall 2021- plan on keeping reduced capacities for now in classroom sizes, but there is the possibility we will pivot in person.
 - 8.11. Prince William 20% positivity. 15% elsewhere in the area. Rates are still high regionally.
 - 8.12. Mason is not a significant spreader, and Mason personnel testing positive are getting it elsewhere.
 - 8.13. Mason covid health check is main way Mason stays on top of this, and please continue to fill it out every day.
 - 8.14. Other institutions are asking how we did it.
 - 8.15. Mason switchboard getting a lot of calls from people not at their desk. Please use your away message on your phone. May also switch to SoftPhone to switch to calls via Microsoft Teams.
 - 8.16. Igor Mazin Q: We were directed to our county resources for vaccination - there will be no alternative route through GMU, will it? Jason K: will pass along any vaccination information he receives. I understand that the only action for GMU concerning vaccinations deals with our first responders - not faculty.
9. Discussion of fall semester survey results – Rebecca
- 9.1. Shared set of slides (Appendix C)
 - 9.2. Over 200 student responses
 - 9.3. Bill Kennedy Q: What are the % for these participation numbers? A: Not computed yet
 - 9.4. Greta Ann Herin: Wow, so few in person; I was one. A: Yes. Igor Mazin: Me too
 - 9.5. The statistics have not been analyzed yet in the effectiveness teaching methods.
 - 9.6. Teaching methods
 - 9.6.1. Faculty rated teaching methods as more effective than students in general
 - 9.6.2. Teaching methods were generally rated highly overall.

9.6.3. Flipped classes were not judged by students to be as effective as we would think (also, definition of flipped not defined).

9.6.4. Flexible homework deadlines and designated study groups rated higher by students than faculty. Students said it was hard for them to connect with one another.

9.7. Assessment methods

9.7.1. Faculty thought asynchronous tests with increased difficulty was effective, but students did not agree.

9.7.2. Virtual proctoring and live proctoring were judged to be more effective by faculty than by students.

9.7.3. Asynchronous tests with standard difficulty, open book/note tests, and replaced tests with projects judged more favorably by students than faculty.

9.8. What experiments were a success slide

9.8.1. Flipped classroom had a very mixed response – some thought it did work, and some did not. Student data was perceived lower value.

9.8.2. Q: Igor Mazin: What about flipped rooms where students are in addition given written study materials, which should facilitate understanding the prerecorded lectures, or, even, be self-sufficient?

9.9. What experiments failed slide?

9.9.1. Group or team projects were among the methods that went the worst overall. Participation was inconsistent

9.9.2. Breakout room engagement

9.10. Biggest challenges of fall from faculty slide:

9.10.1. Brought up by a lot of faculty: Grading, student engagement, cheating, motivation and anxiety

9.11. Students found most helpful slide?

9.11.1. Recorded lectures made attending classes much easier. 2x speed is common.

9.11.1.1. Greta Ann Herin – I do it myself.

9.11.1.2. Jennifer Salerno: Me too!

9.11.1.3. Brett Froelich: 1.5x is pretty good.

9.11.1.4. More chat on video at slower and faster speeds.

9.11.2. Supportive environment, increased weighting on homework, more small-value quizzes, ...

- 9.12. Students least helpful:
 - 9.12.1. Unclear deadlines and inflexible due dates
 - 9.12.2. Lack of clear explanation
 - 9.12.3. Poor communication from faculty
 - 9.12.3.1. Students want us to get better tablets. For writing
 - 9.12.3.2. Dann Sklarew: Yes on handwriting tablets, please, COS!
 - 9.12.3.3. Greta Ann Herin: guilty of writing with a mouse
 - 9.12.3.4. Deborah Polayes: document camera
 - 9.12.3.5. Kelly knight: Yes! When I switched to using my iPad for a whiteboard with my Apple Pencil it changed my LIFE
 - 9.12.3.6. More chat comments...
 - 9.12.3.7. Igor: I cannot write if I cannot see what I am writing.
 - 9.12.3.8. More chat comments...
 - 9.12.4. Long asynchronous lectures
 - 9.12.5. Finals and projects due at the same time was exhausting
 - 9.12.5.1. Jennifer Salerno: Yes I've been thinking about this during "normal" times. Why do we do this to ourselves?
 - 9.12.6. Exams
 - 9.12.6.1. Timed and no backtracking
 - 9.12.6.2. Respondus Lockdown is the worst tool in assessing student learning
 - 9.12.6.3. Using a webcam for tests; add extra pressure
 - 9.12.6.4. Trying to do synchronous tests – internet or family issues
 - 9.12.6.5. Peter Plavchan: Internet and family interruptions are out of their control
- 9.13. Biggest challenges in fall slide:
 - 9.13.1. Time Management
 - 9.13.2. Staying motivated
 - 9.13.3. Connections: not being able to connect in person with other students for help
 - 9.13.4. Meeting unclear expectations
 - 9.13.5. Consistently having access to internet at specific routine times
- 9.14. What resources would help you be successful?
 - 9.14.1. More synchronous interactions, and more connections – time slots for personal meetings with professor

9.14.2. Open classrooms only for students to talk to one another

9.14.3. Alternative assessments, considerations from professors with assignments

9.15. Shared quotes from students from assessment written in December.

9.16. What can we do in Spring 2021 slide?

9.16.1. Communicate well

9.16.2. Connect with students often

9.16.3. Work to be organized and on time

9.16.4. Remember your students are people

9.16.5. Be flexible and kind

9.16.6. Chat: feedback on playing songs in class; and thank yous from faculty to Rebecca for distilling this information.

10. Adjournment 4:06pm

10.1. Motion to adjourn: Pritha Roy

10.2. Deborah Polayes: second

Dean's Updates

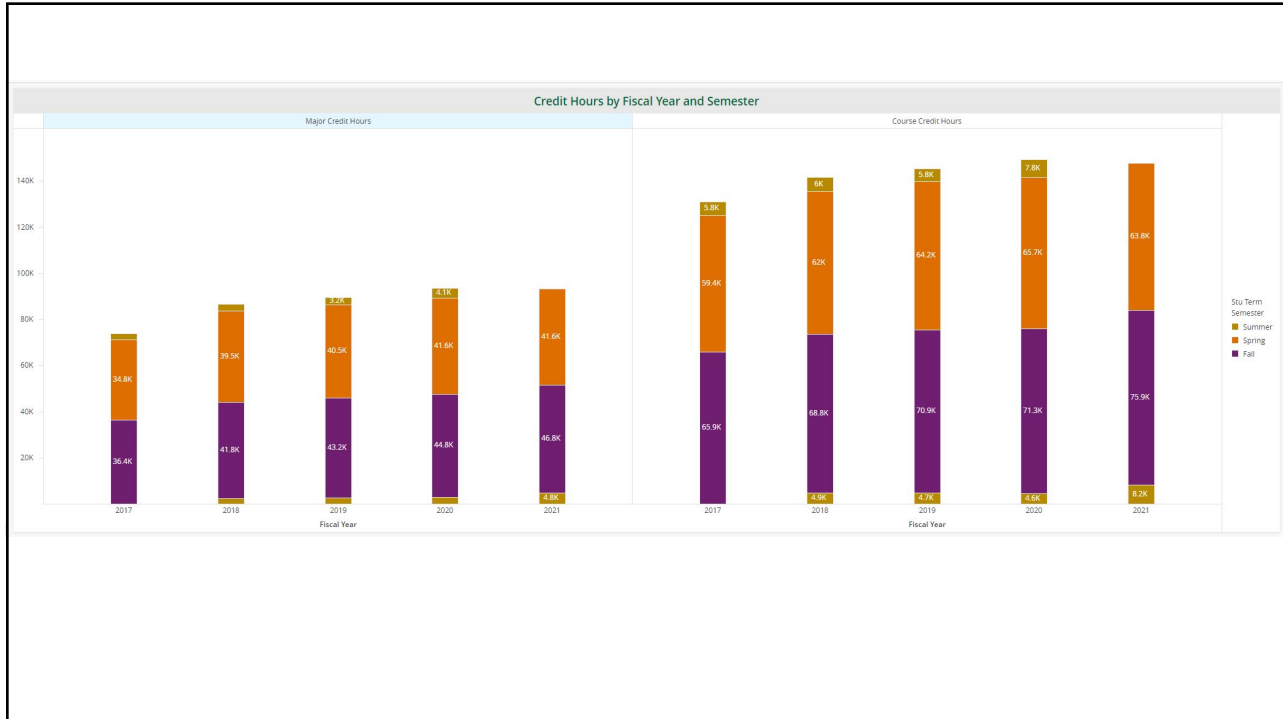
21 January 2021

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Things on my mind

- Navigating the SRTC and transition to post-covid
- Faculty compensation
- Strategic planning (departments)
- Rationale for investments that is open/transparent and inclusive

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Budget Update

FY20 Year End - E&G Permanent Funds	
\$2.5M	FY20 Growth (after Central 20% share) - added to the FY21 Permanent Funds
FY21 E&G Permanent Funds	
\$53.7M	FY21 Expenditure Authority (Permanent Budget)
<\$3.2M>	6% Permanent Cut
\$2.5M	Offset with defunding positions and reduced DE (including Lab Fee Budgets)
<\$0.7M>	Temporary shortage in permanent funds
\$0.1M	0.27% Budget Restore
<\$0.6M>	Permanent Fund Shortage
\$2.1M	FY21 Projected Growth to offset shortage and support strategic investments

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Budget Update (cont)

FY21 E&G One-Time Funds	
\$18.0M	FY20 Fund Balance
<\$1.8M>	10% Cut (not passed on to departments)
16.2M	FY20 Carryforward
<\$0.8M>	IPN (Interdisciplinary Program Neuroscience)
<\$4.3M>	Lab Fee Carryforwards
<\$4.5M>	Faculty Startup
<\$1.5M>	Faculty Seed and Bridge
<\$0.8M>	Sci Tech Rent (paid)
<\$0.3M>	Infrastructure Commitments
\$4.0M	Remaining available 1x Funds for FY21+

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Ongoing Investments

- Faculty Compensation (~200K so far)
- Instructional Research Equipment (~\$1.8M)
- GRA support (1 per dept ~\$700K annually for 2 years)
- COS UG Promise Scholarships (3 students for 4 years)

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