

**COS Faculty Meeting Minutes**  
September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 12-1pm

Attendance List in Appendix A  
Meeting recording info sent via email

1. Call to order: 12:02 pm EDT
2. Approval of minutes from August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021
  - 2.1. Motion to approve: Greta Ann Herin; Seconded: Anthony Falsetti; Approved by voice and reactions on Zoom
3. Announcements
  - 3.1. Science Connect dates in September
    - (Tuesday 9/14 Fairfax already happened)
    - Thursday, 9/16, 11:30am to 1:30 pm, SciTech
  - 3.2. State of the College Address
    - Wed 9/29, 2-3:30 pm, Fairfax (outdoor amphitheatre) and Zoom
  - 3.3. Future COS Faculty Meetings in Fall 2021
    - 10/20 and 11/10, 12-1pm
    - Still on Zoom for the fall, possibly hybrid in the spring
  - 3.4. Coded Bias Screening and Discussion
    - 10/13, 7-9pm, JC Cinema and Zoom
  - 3.5. President Washington to visit COS
    - 11/4, 2-3 pm, TBA
  - 3.6. Picture a Scientist Screening and Filmmaker Discussion
    - 11/4, 7-9pm, JC Cinema
  - 3.7. Announcement from Jason Kinser (Instructional Continuity Working Group)
    - Rumors about a Thanksgiving pivot are incorrect. There are no such plans.
4. Report from and Q&A with the Dean, Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm
  - 4.1. Given the alarmingly high percentage of the faculty that expressed concerns regarding their low compensation, what are concrete steps and timeline that the university/college is planning for the next five years to solve this issue?
    - Equity-based adjustments have started and will be continuing
    - Plan is to raise the lowest salaries as much as possible, which triggers a chain reaction for other salaries. Now some newly hired asst professors have higher salaries than existing ones, and so equity will result in raising existing salaries too.
    - Equity raises based on comparisons with other universities
    - Compression raises sometime in the fall (exact time TBA)
    - Merit pool increase without a percentage attached to it (because percentages propagate inequities)
  - 4.2. Chat: Greta Ann Herin: How do we know if we are chosen for a raise?
    - Everyone is getting a raise
    - Algorithm will incorporate feedback from faculty survey about which factors are important

4.3. Chat: Dale Pokorski: Are they considering this for staff also? It's getting very hard to hire replacements for staff, especially IT staff when they leave.

- Yes, staff are included. Details tbd.

4.4. What is the exact process that GMU is following for students who are still unvaccinated (without exemptions)? What email/notification is sent to these students? What does a hold prevent a student from doing?

- From Rebecca Jones:

- Mason has always had a vaccination policy and that now covers COVID vaccinations.
- As of 8/27, 96% of students had complied with uploading vaccine records, exemption rates are 2% for faculty and students
- Mason requires surveillance testing for on-campus students
- Mason = 0.5% positive test rate
- Mason = 38,000 students, 77 active student cases (vs. UVA, 25,000 students, 142 active)
- From Jason Kinser: Responses indicate that most non-compliant people are having issues in uploading their data, and absence of data does not mean they are unvaccinated. Disciplinary action is on the horizon, but I haven't heard a schedule on that.

- From Fernando:

- Students without exemption may not register in spring semester, and grades for fall may be held
- Lance Liotta: Consistently less than 0.5% positive tests in our lab. This is a success, not a burden, and everyone is contributing to this success. Data from immunosuppressed vaccinated individuals will be useful in the future.

4.5. Mason faculty handbook now permits term faculty to pursue study leave. When will COS open an application for this opportunity? What will be the criteria? When will be the submission deadline?

- College is rolling out immediately.
- Criteria will be similar to study leave for TT faculty.
- COS is prepared to put out a call immediately, with details on deadlines and process.

4.6. What is the status of the STEM Accelerator? Will there be a leader appointed? I'd love to see the the STEM Accelerator be as effective as possible since I think it is a great resource for incoming and current students.

- Top priority, met with STEM Accelerator faculty.
- Next stage needs a re-envisioning. Need to work with Accelerator faculty and other stakeholders across the university.
- Averse to interim appointments in general, but open to the possibility if people really want it.

4.7. Will COS consider trying any newly developed advanced virtual office/conference software like Gather.town, Horizon Workrooms? I think teleworking will be a trend in the future.

- Teleworking is here to stay in some form.

- Open to considering ideas. Share your ideas!
  - Need support for students, and also support for faculty to use them effectively.
  - Chat: Dale Pokorski: Please remember all software used by students must be approved by the ASRB. <https://its.gmu.edu/working-with-its/asrb/> Please plan ahead if you plan to use technology tools in spring. The ASRB is a slow process.
- 4.8. If faculty want to teach spring courses in a different format, how do they go about requesting a change?
- For fall, we had a 75% in-person target, and COS was originally short of this target, but made it up to the 75%. But this wasn't the best approach – the best approach is to consider what's best for each offering. I'll fight this battle for COS at the university level, not to have a forced target.
  - Barring major shifts in university policy, no more changes for fall. Planning is starting now for spring.
- 4.9. Dale Scott Rothman: For my F2F course, I'm offering Zoom and recording it for students who are sick. Do we need to do that formally?
- Rebecca Jones: As long as 50%+ of scheduled time is in person, it's still a formally F2F class, and no change is required. Change is required if you go to 100% online, or almost all online.
  - Chat; Tim Leslie: The registrar is pretty clear - you should be offering the course as listed in the catalog, with the finesse Rebecca listed
  - Chat: Jason Kinser: We can NOT force students to change modality. Tribid models are OK because they give the students the choice.
5. Nominations Committee, Special Election for Chair Pro Tem, Nirmal J. Ghimire
- 5.1. Submit nominations (or self-nominations) by September 30 to [nghimire@gmu.edu](mailto:nghimire@gmu.edu)
6. Report from Executive Committee, Rebecca Jones
- 6.1. Faculty Handbook on Academic Integrity
- Guidelines for COS faculty on honor code issues, cheating, and alternate assessment
7. Discussion: Faculty representation on COS Space and Budget Committees, Rebecca Jones
- 7.1. Planning and Budget Committee
- Led by Chief Budget Officer (when position is filled)
  - Advisory role to dean on COS budget processes and resource allocations
  - Department chairs, Appointed faculty, administrators
- 7.2. Space Committee
- Led by Carrie McVicker, Pat Gillevet
  - Respond to short-term request for space and long-term plans
  - Dept chairs, administrators
- 7.3. Should we have elected faculty on these committees too?
- Tim Leslie: Executive Committee can do this
  - Monique van Hoek: Agree. Faculty with particular interests can be appointed.

- Rebecca Jones: There is one elected position on Exec Comm, and the rest are appointed by departments.
- Suzanne Slayden: Ideally EC members are elected by departments, not appointed by chairs. Does dean approve of having elected reps? (Rebecca Jones: yes)
- Pat Gillevet: EC members can distribute info to all the departments.
- Tim Leslie: Can't always assume that EC members are reporting to their depts
- Rebecca Jones: If we add elected positions, they can share directly with us at faculty meetings. Elected reps can speak as a faculty member, rather than as appointee of chair or chair themselves who might have competing interests.
- Greta Ann Herin (chat): I'd rather have a seat at the table than just hear what happened.
- Fatah Kashanchi (chat): we need elected faculties, not appointed by chairs. This brings better flow of information and transparency.
- Tim Leslie: Either we should trust the EC to do their job, or reformulate the EC to be elected, rather than dismissing this existing body and finding more people to do things.
- Greta Ann Herin: I came from a place where the faculty had a hand in everything and had a lot of power. Tradeoffs of power vs. burden.
- Tracy Mason (chat): Clarifying question, is the need for broader faculty representation or a need for more frequent, transparent comms? (Rebecca Jones: both)
- Pat Gillevet: Space is a major issue. More communication would be useful. (Rebecca: Can we get you on the agenda for the October meeting? Pat: yes)
- Barney Bishop (chat): Kylene Kehn-Hall was serving on the COS space committee up until she left for VT
- Joel Schnur: I was on the space committee. If you want to do anything in a large organization, you need delegation, but transparent policies need to be in place.
- Pat Gillevet: Research subcommittee at VPR level is setting policies for how much space is available based on research level. Centralized process. There is space that isn't being used, especially at S&T campus.

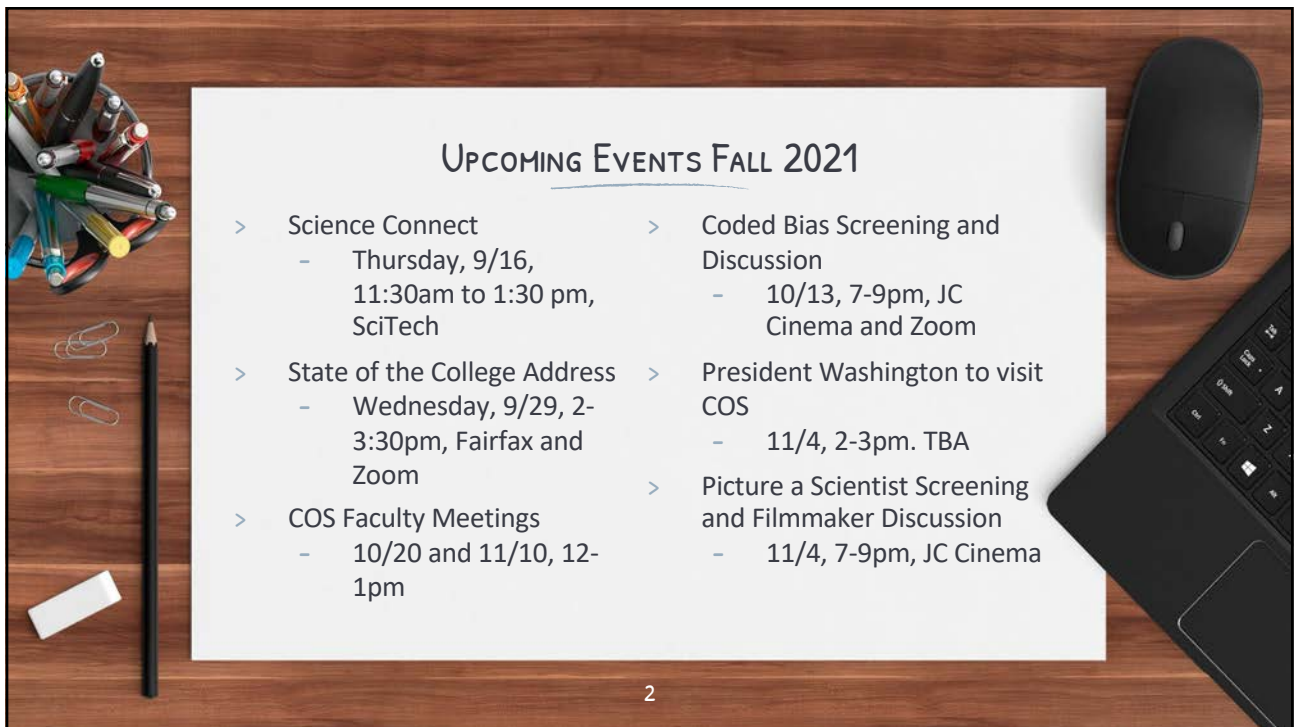
8. Adjournment: 1:01 pm

## Appendix A

Al Aguirre	Farhang Alem	Maction Komwa (MK)
Alessandra Luchini	Fatah Kashanchi (Gwen Cox)	Mariaelena Pierobon
Alexandra Materson	Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm	Mary Ellen OToole
Aman Ullah	Georgia A Williams	Matt Rice (GMU)
Amanda Haymond	Gerald Weatherspoon	michael summers
Andre Z Clayborne	Geraldine Grant	Mikell Paige
Andrea Weeks	Greta Ann (GA) Herin (Greta Ann Herin)	Monique van Hoek
Andreas Züfle	Hamdi Kavak	Natalie J Burls
ANikoi	Hao Jing	Neil Epstein
Anthony Falsetti	Igor I Mazin	Nirmal Ghimire
Arie Croitoru	Iosif Vaisman	Olga Gkountouna
Audrey G Kelaher	Jason Kinser	Padhu Seshaiyer
Barney Bishop	Jie Zhang	Patrali Banerjee
Ben Dreyfus	Joel Schnur	Patrick Gillevet
Benoit Van Aken	John Qu	Paul So
BH Baek	Jules Goldspiel	Pritha Roy
Bill Kennedy	Julia Nord	Rebecca M Jones
Brett Froelich	Karen Akerlof	Ron S Mahabir
Chris Lockhart	Kathleen's iPhone	Ruixin Yang
Christine Rosenfeld	Kelly Knight	Saleet Jafri
Cing-Dao Kan	Kenneth W Foreman	Suzanne Slayden
Dale Scott Rothman	Keziah Hernandez	Taylor Anderson
David Wong	Lance Liotta	Thomas Lovejoy
Diego Valderrama	Lee Solomon	Tim Leslie
Dmitri Klimov	Ling Ren	Tracy Mason
Dale Pokorski	Liping Di	Virginia Espina
Ernie Barreto	Lorelei Crerar	Xiaoyan Tan
Estela Blaisten	Lori Mandable	Younsung Kim
Fadi Tahan		Ziheng Sun



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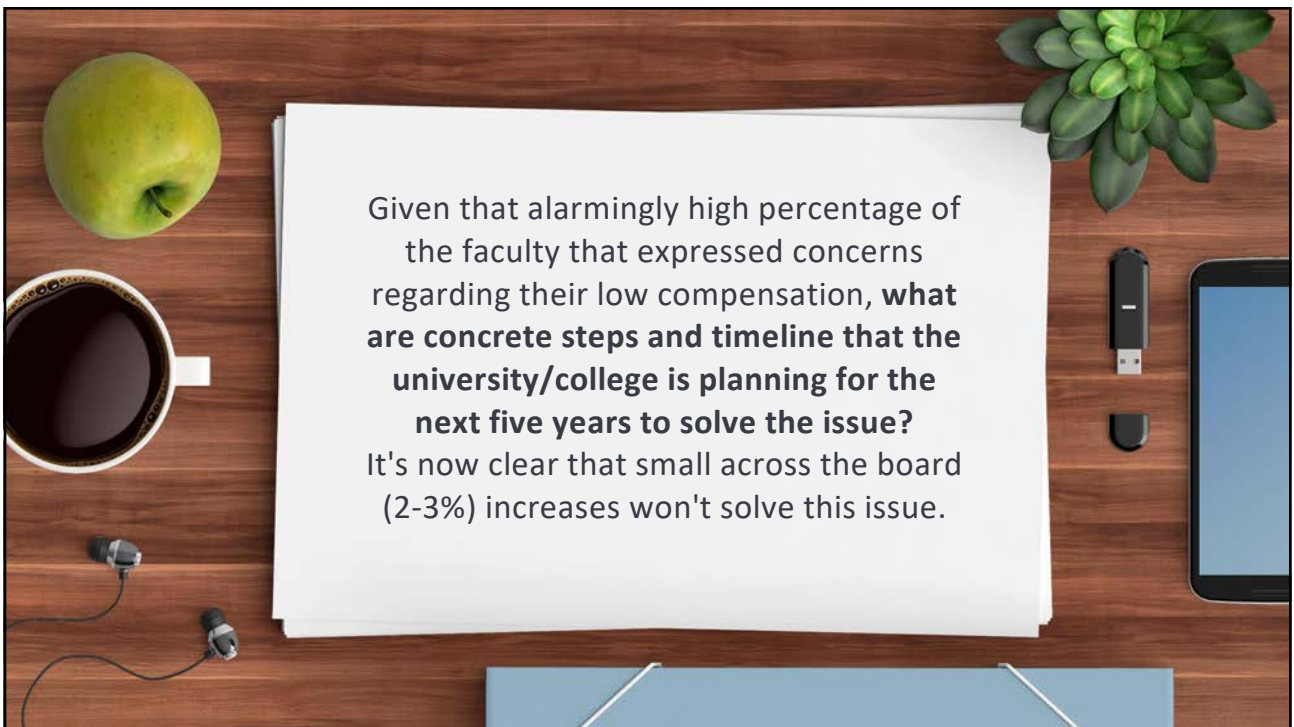


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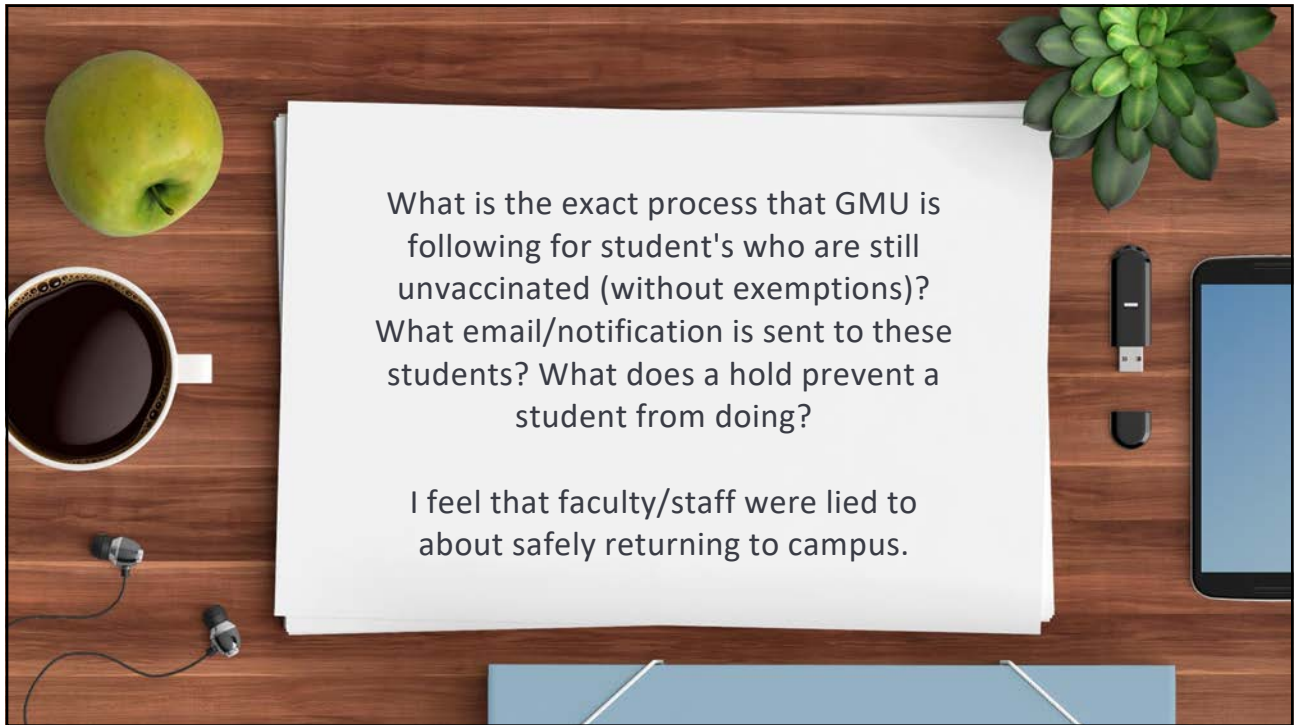
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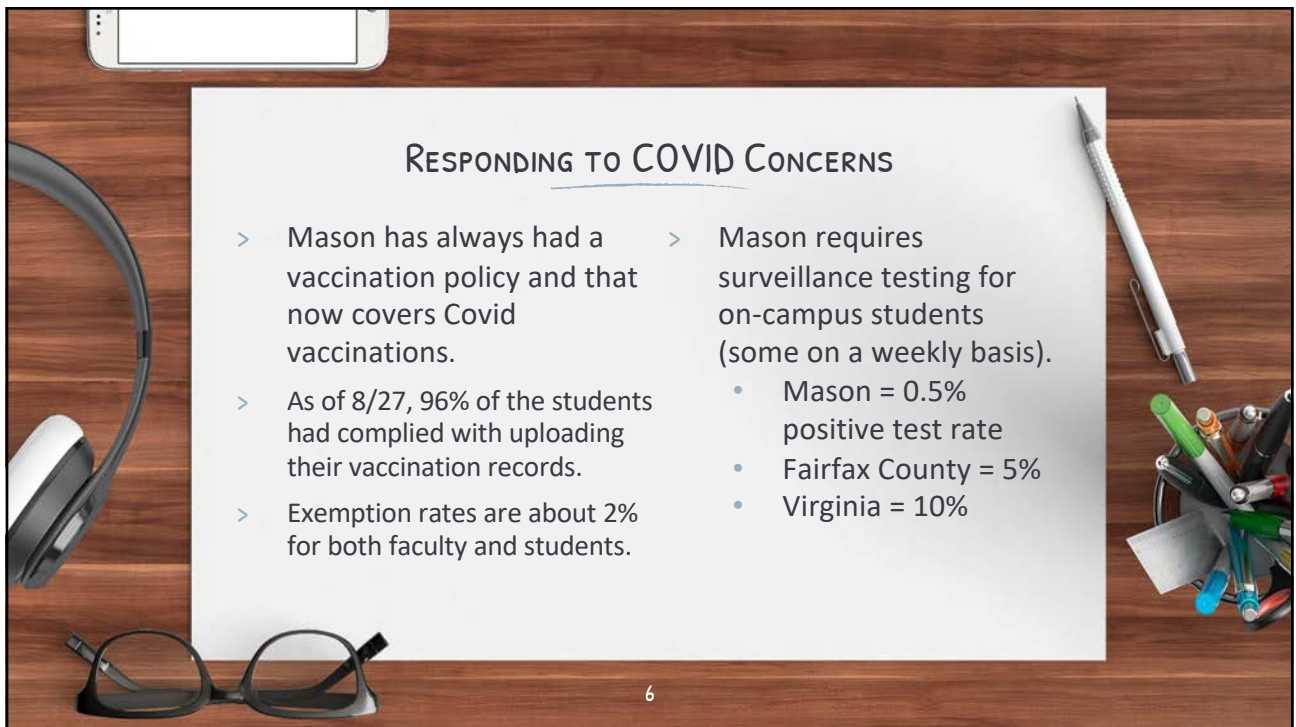
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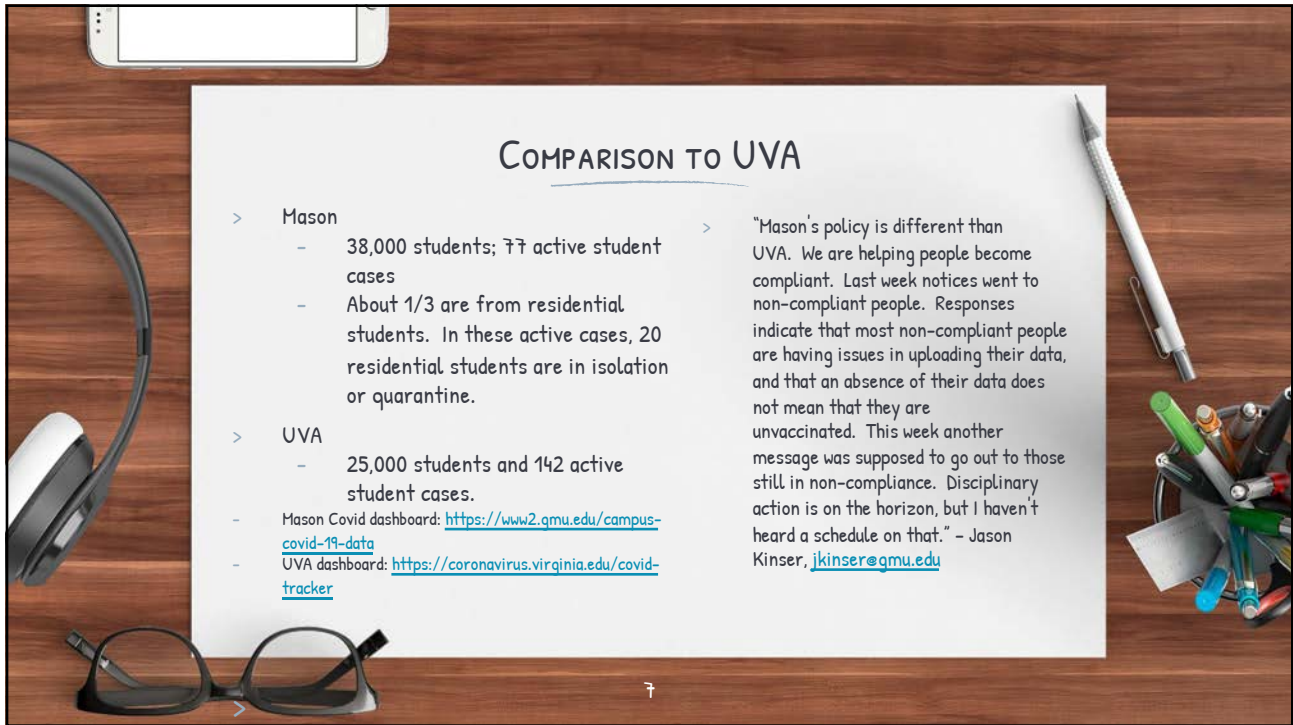


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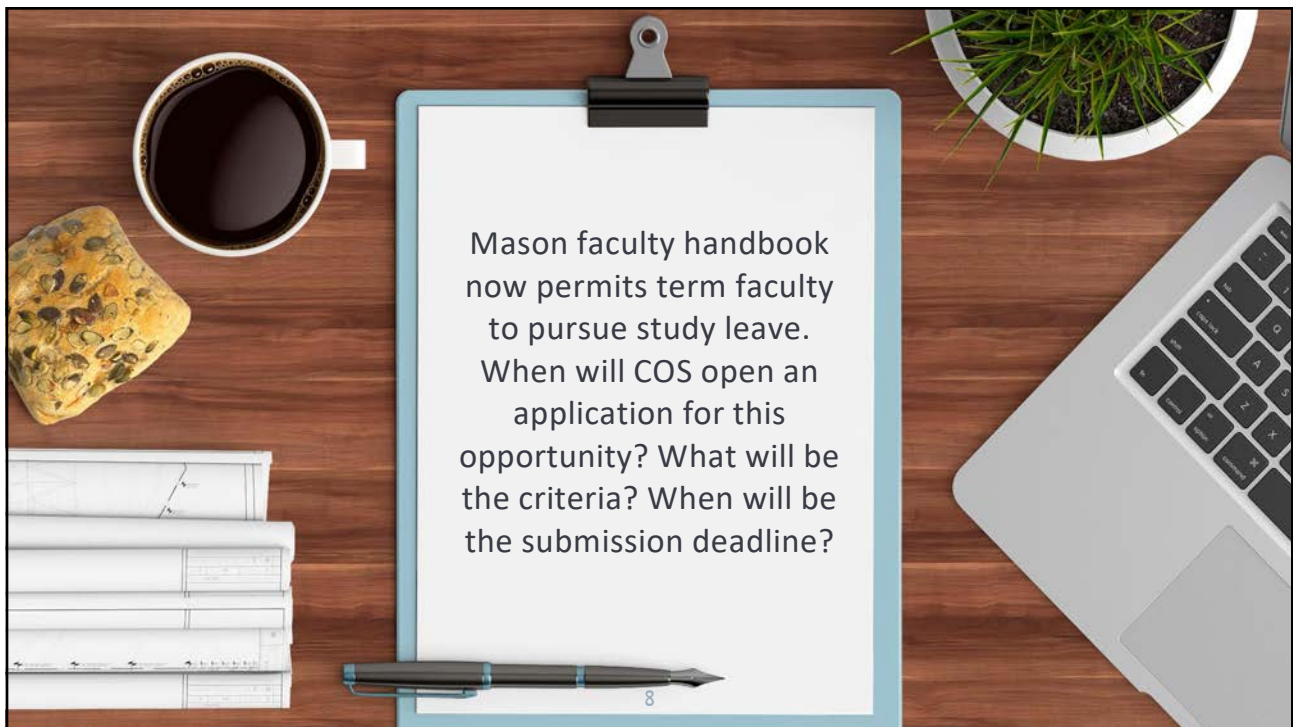




### COMPARISON TO UVA

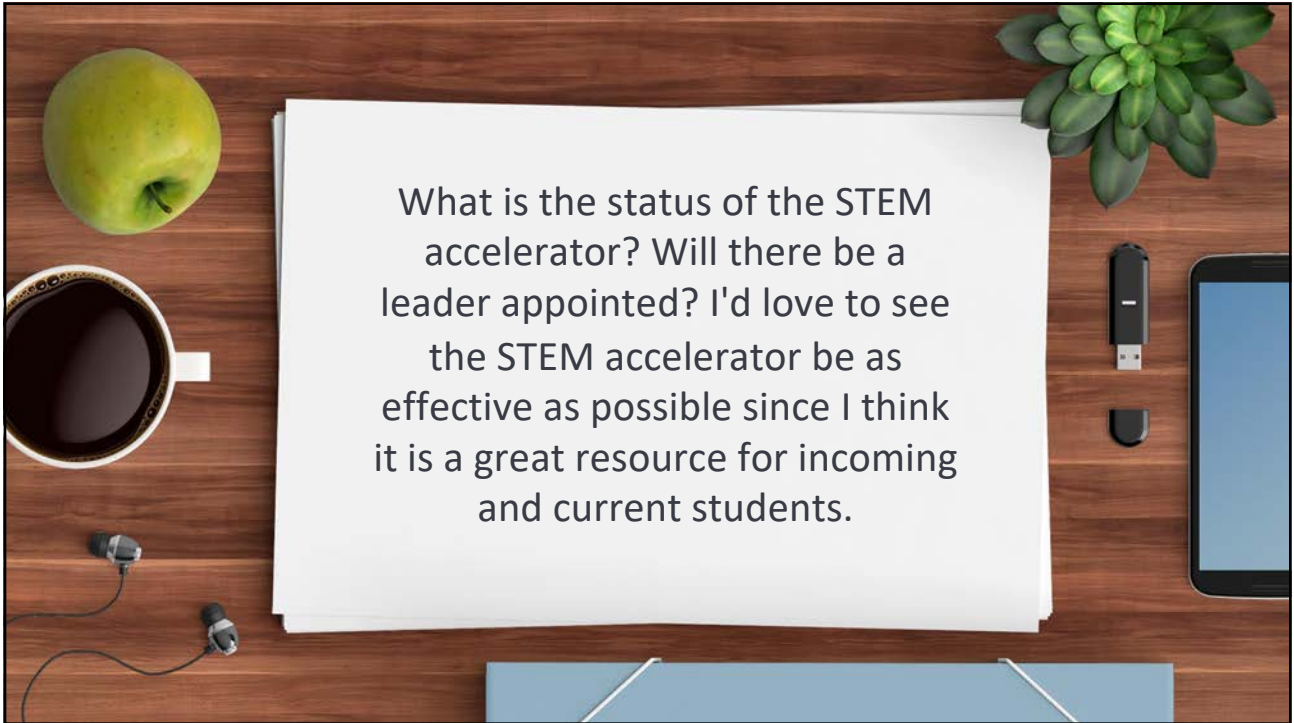
- > Mason
  - 38,000 students; 77 active student cases
  - About 1/3 are from residential students. In these active cases, 20 residential students are in isolation or quarantine.
- > UVA
  - 25,000 students and 142 active student cases.
  - Mason Covid dashboard: <https://www2.gmu.edu/campus-covid-19-data>
  - UVA dashboard: <https://coronavirus.virginia.edu/covid-tracker>
- > "Mason's policy is different than UVA. We are helping people become compliant. Last week notices went to non-compliant people. Responses indicate that most non-compliant people are having issues in uploading their data, and that an absence of their data does not mean that they are unvaccinated. This week another message was supposed to go out to those still in non-compliance. Disciplinary action is on the horizon, but I haven't heard a schedule on that." - Jason Kinser, [jkinser@gmu.edu](mailto:jkinser@gmu.edu)

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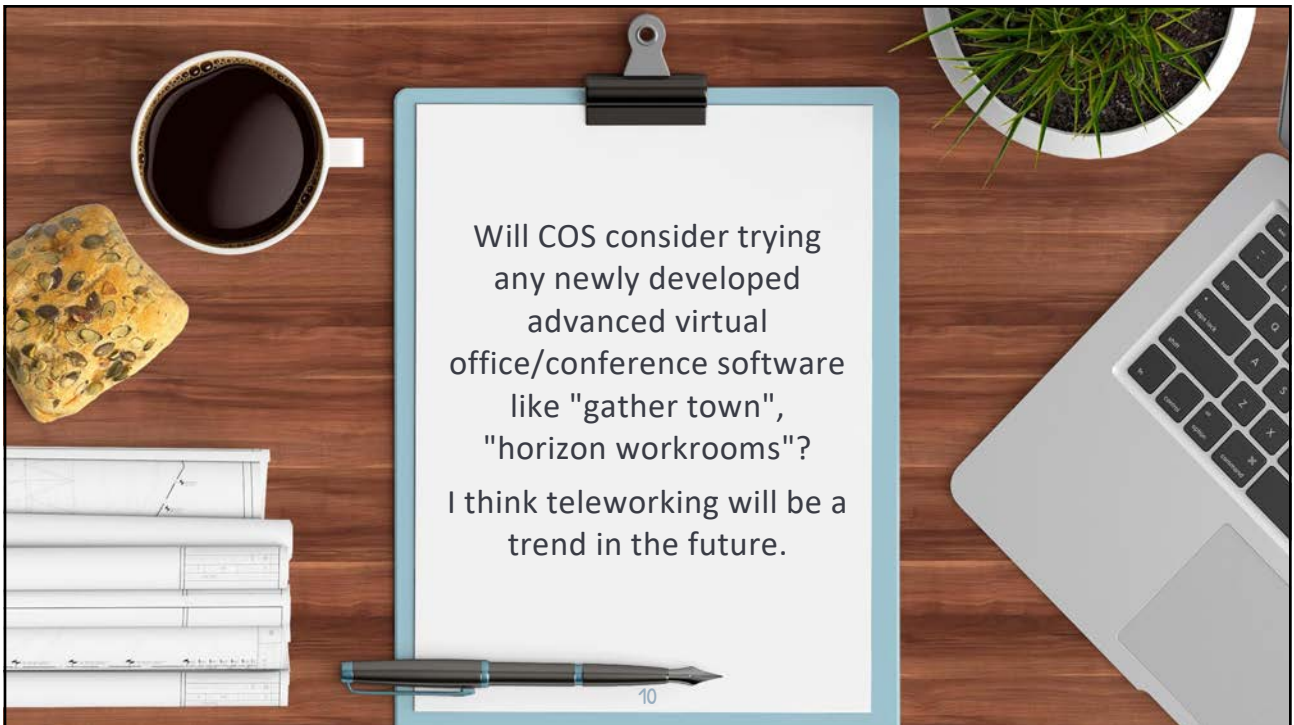


Mason faculty handbook now permits term faculty to pursue study leave. When will COS open an application for this opportunity? What will be the criteria? When will be the submission deadline?

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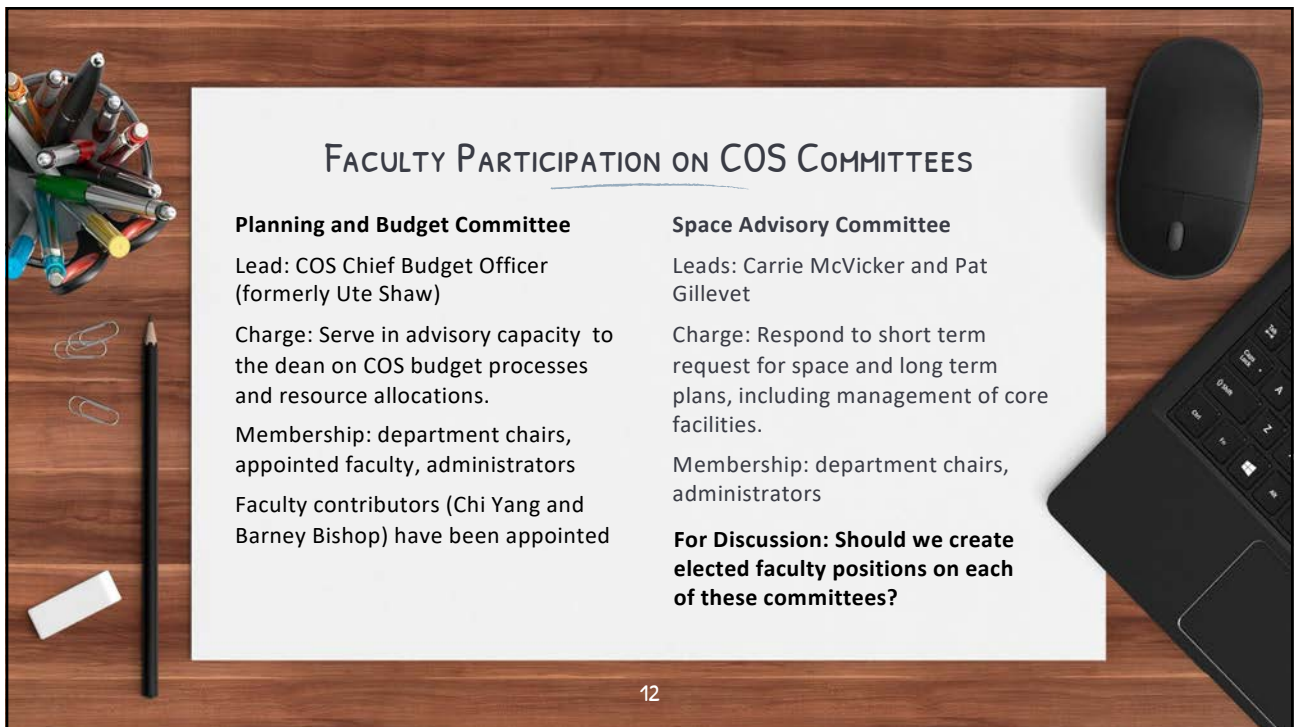
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**What questions would you like the Dean to answer during our next COS faculty**

**DEAN's RESPONSE, 9-15-21**

**Faculty Compensation**

Given that alarmingly high percentage of the faculty expressed their concerns regarding their low compensation, what are concrete steps and timeline that the university/college planning for the next five years to solve the issue? It's now clear that 2-3% increases won't solve this issue.

We are working on this issue in stages, depending on availability of resources, but progress has been made. Before the faculty-wide raises we did recently, the college had already invested over \$200K of permanent dollars towards equity issues. There are plans for additional increases this fall such as a compression adjustment and another faculty-wide percentage raise.

When will we see changes to faculty compensation? How will increases happen?

See my answer above.

Why are 9 month Faculty not being compensated for their work in Fall, especially those in critical administrative positions

I am going to need more detail to this question, as I am not sure I understand it.

Will you be raising the pay floor for adjunct instructors in COS? People are leaving for universities with higher pay and tuition waivers for dependents. We need to keep good people!!

Yes, I agree. I need to look into whether there are onstraints (like state-imposed) on salary for adjuncts. I am fully supportive of an increase to a market-value rate.

**Hiring and COS changes**

How were new Faculty hires allocated to departments this year? What was the process?

The process followed was open and transparent, carried out through the budget committee, and based on departmental requests.

What is the status of the STEM accelerator? Will there be a leader appointed? I'd love to see the STEM accelerator be as effective as possible since I think it is a great resource for incoming and current students.

Yes, there will be a leadership transition in the STEM Accelerator. This will be preceded with a re-envisioning exercise to develop a strategy for growth and sustainability of this great program.

We are starting to get information about new positions to be advertised this academic year. Is there any more information about plans for future years?

The process for future years has not started at this time.

**COVID Concerns**

How can a faculty member request to teach online in Spring?

There will be a process similar to the one we followed for Fall 2021. In this process, we will ask departments to send us a list of classes to be taught in the different formats (F2F, hybrid etc). The university has not yet defined a "target" like it was done for Fall 2021 (75 percent of classes with some form of F2F component).

What is the exact process that GMU is following for student's who are still unvaccinated (without exemptions)? What does a hold prevent a student from performing? What email/notification is sent to these students? I feel that faculty/staff were lied to about safely returning to campus.

The current process is that students who do not follow the vaccination mandate are not allowed to register for Spring 2022, and will not receive grades for Fall 2021. Also, please look at message from Pres Washington (Sep 8).

Faculty and staff were sent critical information after classes already started via email from Provost. The information even stated that these aspects should be included in course syllabi. Why weren't faculty/staff given this information in a timely manner? Are we all supposed to redo every syllabi because this information was late? We need better communication of critical information?

I agree. I am teaching a class this semester, and included some information in my syllabus that I am happy to share.

**Other Questions**

Will COS consider trying any newly developed advanced virtual office/conference software like "gather town", "horizon workrooms"? I think teleworking will be a trend in the future.

I agree, and am open to ideas like this. The key here is to find better ways not only to sustain our current enrollment, but to grow it. Personally, I think online and teleworking are here to stay; we just need to find ways to implement.

Mason faculty handbook now permits term faculty to pursue study leave. When will the first COS application period open? What will be criteria? When will submission deadline be? Thank you very much for this opportunity!

I am going to have to get back to you on this one.

Very recently, the Purchasing Office denied my request to acquire a software because some of the Terms of Agreement were found to be not acceptable to the Office. I then came to learn that this is not an uncommon occurrence throughout COS, forcing some faculty members to use their own personal funds to purchase software for projects. In my case, this is not really an option because the software is rather expensive. As this incident really hampered my participation in a multi-state project, I would like to ask which steps could be taken by COS to provide more support to faculty in their interactions with the Purchasing Office. Thanks!

Without knowing more details about this specific case, my suggestion is to pursue a discussion with Purchasing, supported by our College staff (POC is Pat Gillevet), to resolve this issue.

Can you talk about how you see advancing the biomedical sciences in COS this year? What areas are you excited about?

I am excited about the renewed momentum towards a medical school, about the re-envisioning of the area of infectious diseases, and about our continued success in proteomics and cancer-related research.

What do we do or plan to do to increase the outside visibility of GMU and COS GMU?

We are already doing several things, like launching of a fundraising campaign specific for the college, plus engaging with the outside in a number of ways (outreach, engagement with the public and private sectors, STEM-focused efforts). And of course, our research.