
Detailed Notes on the UAS Meeting of February 21, 2025

Chair's Report

- *On the Benefits Committee Meeting:* Chair Karasinski attended the Benefits Committee meeting. Fertility benefits, about which ECS had inquired, are still being discussed but there are no current plans.
- *On Insights and Ideas:* Chair Karasinski attended the Insights and Ideas session, which was an informal gathering bringing together President Mantella, Acting Provost Jennifer Drake, and the campus community to engage in open dialogue. A good discussion was held, and the President, Provost, and VP for People, Culture, and Equity Robert Shorty were open to feedback from faculty. Faculty are encouraged to attend a session this semester. [The schedule and sign-up can be found here.](#)
- *On the Board of Trustees Meeting:* Chair Karasinski attended the BOT meeting. Faculty are encouraged to attend BOT meetings. [BOT schedules, agendas, and minutes can be found here.](#)
- *On the Change Leaders, Inc.:* The Change Leaders, Inc. are an external firm hired at the request of the faculty on the [COACHE Steering Committee](#) and selected by the [GVSU Engagement Co-Design Group](#) to facilitate addressing the concerns identified by the COACHE survey around successful shared governance. UAS members were invited to engage in group or 1:1 interviews with these facilitators. All faculty will have the opportunity to participate in drop-in interviews during the week of March 10-14. A scheduling link for the drop-in interviews will be shared soon.
- *On Spring Break:* Enjoy Spring Break!

Provost's Report

- *On the Board of Trustees Meeting:* Four new programs from the College of Computing were approved. Information about [Blue Dot](#) and the [Strategic Plan to Augment Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity \(SPARCA\)](#) was shared. Questions were raised about how to explain Blue Dot to others. The Provost and ECS Member Dr. Rahat Rafiq shared that Blue Dot is about democratizing technology, and can facilitate digital literacy in faculty, students, businesses, and community members at any level.
- *On the Dear Colleague Letter:* On Friday, February 14, the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), Office of Civil Rights issued a ["Dear Colleague" letter](#), which provides the DOE's current interpretation of the 2023 Supreme Court decision in *Students for Fair Admission (SFFA) v. Harvard*, concluding that federal law prohibits K-12 public schools, colleges, and universities "from using race in decisions pertaining to admissions, hiring, promotion, compensation, financial aid, scholarships, prizes, administrative support, discipline, housing, graduation ceremonies, and all other aspects of student, academic, and campus life." We are reviewing the letter to determine any potential impacts on our policies, programs, and practices here at Grand Valley State University. As President Mantella shared, we are committed to providing clear and timely updates as we navigate this evolving landscape. [Please continue to check here for the latest information and resources.](#)
- *On Omni:* Questions were raised by ECS members about the progress of Omni. Provost Drake referred members to President Mantella's email, which provided information about the progress of Omni, and shared that Omni has expanded non-credit bearing offerings and relationships across the state with community college partners. The Provost is focusing on collaboration between Omni and Academic Affairs. It was suggested that ECS might ask for an Omni update at the ECS summer retreat.

Student Senate President's Report

- *On Digital Identification:* The Student Senate passed their bill on digital student IDs.

Old Business

- *On Appointments to the Centers Evaluation Committee:* Chair Karasinski will connect with others on campus to elicit nominees.
- *On Appointments to the University Technology Council:* Appointments were made to the University Technology Council. [Membership can be viewed here.](#)
- *On Appointments to the Multi-Year Taskforce on Teaching Evaluations (MYTTE):* Appointments were made to the MYTTE taskforce. Charges will be given in stages. Stage One Charges include 1. Synthesize the entirety of the materials concerning Evaluation of Teaching found in the Faculty Handbook, on the Provost's Website, and in UAS documents, including those materials that have been recommended by FPPC and not yet approved; 2. Assess the consistency of the aforementioned materials and consider them in light of current research; 3. Identify the current practices within each College for the evaluation of teaching; 4. Provide preliminary guidance on the next steps for establishing consistent and clear policies and practices for evaluation of teaching; 5. Confer regularly with Provost's Cabinet, and 6. Submit a report to ECS due by the end of the Fall 2025 semester. Upon completion of these charges, next steps will be determined.

New Business

- *On the Review and Discussion of the Student Media Advisory Board Operating Procedures:* Proposed changes to the Student Media Advisory Board Operating Procedures were discussed, led by Dr. Len O'Kelly. These changes were made to move the board to an academic unit in order to protect student voice. ECS supported the proposed changes but suggested that the official Board of Trustees (BOT) policy language be simpler to avoid needing to obtain BOT approval for small changes. ECS also requested a clearer process for selecting faculty representatives. The proposal was sent back for requested changes, with appreciation for the work that had been done.
- *On the Review and Discussion of the Shared Governance Review Taskforce (SHGR):* SHGR Taskforce Chair Raymond Higbea shared the discussions the SHGR Taskforce have been having. The taskforce has considered at least five models for restructuring. It was decided that the taskforce will share a variety of models with ECS and elicit feedback from ECS. The relation between the work of SHGR and the COACHE process was also discussed. The importance of collaboration between the two related processes was discussed. The facilitators assisting with the COACHE process are meeting with the SHGR taskforce.
- *On the Discussion on the Creation of a Subgroup to Determine Action Items and Next Steps Related to the Concerns Identified in the COACHE Survey and Subsequent Discussions:* A discussion of individuals to include was begun, but it was decided to finish the discussion at the next ECS meeting.