
Detailed Notes on the ECS Meeting of March 14, 2025

Chair's Report

- *On the SPARCA Forum:* Chair Karasinski attended a discussion on the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan to Augment Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity (SPARCA). A [qualtrics survey on SPARCA](#) is available for faculty who were unable to attend the open fora to provide input.
- *On Meeting with The Change Leaders:* Chair Karasinski met with The Change Leaders, who are the external facilitators hired at the request of the faculty on the COACHE Steering Committee to facilitate discussions around the COACHE results. All UAS members were invited to meet with The Change Leaders. Additional opportunities for faculty to participate in the process will be shared at a later date.
- *On Meeting with the VP for People, Culture, and Equity Robert Shorty:* Chair Karasinski and VP Shorty met to discuss collaboration between his division and UAS. VP Shorty will attend UAS in April to obtain input into the direction for his division.
- *On the Pre-Accelerator Virtual Training:* Chair Karasinski a pre-accelerator virtual training. Chair Karasinski was invited to the AI Accelerator In-Person Workshop on Monday, March 17th, 2025, but was unable to attend due to teaching. The topics of the workshop were design thinking, group collaboration, and improving student retention.

Provost's Report

- *On the COACHE Process:* Conversations around scheduling meetings are on-going.
- *On Strategic Planning:* Academic Affairs continues strategic planning. The Provost's Office is looking for qualitative researchers to analyze qualitative data. *Lakers Ready* has more information.
- *On the Federal Climate:* The Senior Leadership Team is in constant conversation around the federal climate. Government employees have been let go, which may lead to FASFA delays. The Department of Education distributed a list of institutions being investigated. In January, GVSU received notice that we have scholarships that have race based criteria. The University Development Office is working with donors to change this language. Faculty noted appreciation for the University's strategic waiting approach to the changes in the federal landscape.
- *On the Search for the VP Provost for Research:* There is a great pool of candidates.
- *On Questions and Comments from ECS Members:* LIFT data are currently under the Division of Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach. Faculty have expressed concerns about these data being outside of Academic Affairs. Provost Drake and SAVP Aboufadel said that they will look into this.

Student Senate President's Report

- *On Course Marking Bill:* Student senate passed a bill on an optional system to mark a class as low cost or no cost. This will be brought to UAS. Student Senate presented it to the Provost's Cabinet.
- *On Concerns about Admissions:* Students want to be involved in admissions policies.
- *On the Reach Higher Collaborative Leadership Network:* The Reach Higher Collaborative Leadership Network is coming to Student Senate to engage with students around strategic planning.
- *On Student Senate Trip to Washington, D.C.:* Stacie Behler, Vice President & Chief Public Relations and Communications Officer & Secretary to the Board of Trustees, is taking student senators to Washington, D.C. to meet with congressman.
- *On Student Senate Elections:* Student Senate elections are next week.

Old Business

- *On the Review and Discussion on SG 1.02-03 Proposed Committee Indices:* This memo adds an index to SG 1.02-03. The motion to place on the UAS agenda passed unanimously.
- *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:* The charge for this group is to "Collate the information from COACHE, the Admissions Taskforce, the SHGR Taskforce, and previous UAS discussions and individual faculty members and identify actions with timelines we would like to see from the Senior Leadership Team. Bring this information to UAS in April." The following faculty members were appointed to the subgroup: Leifa Mayer (UAS member), Chris Haven (ECS member and SHGR Taskforce member), Mary Bower-Russa (UAS member), Figen Mekik (ECS member, SHGR Taskforce member, and COACHE Steering Committee Member), Bob Hollister (FSBC Chair and SHGR Taskforce member), and Kyle Brink (COACHE Steering Committee Member).

New Business

- *On the Review and Discussion of International Education Committee Letter:* This letter requests the restoration of the funding for faculty-led study abroad experiences that was cut during COVID. The rationale for restoring the funding is the alignment of faculty-led study abroad experiences with the university's mission, vision, and values, the need for funding to promote equity and access, and the return on investment. ECS moved to accept the letter and forward it to the Provost.
- *On the Review and Discussion on the Equity and Inclusion Committee Memo on Academic Impressions:* EIC was charged to "Review Academic Impressions Trainings and make recommendations for people in leadership positions." *Creating Equitable and Inclusive Meetings* is recommended for people in leadership positions, including the follow-up activity of engaging with an accountability partner, to foster a more inclusive work environment for GVSU employees. Additional training for how to create and implement an inclusive learning environment for students is still necessary but was not available in the sample observed at this time. The motion to accept the memo and place on the consent agenda for UAS passed unanimously.
- *On the Review and Discussion on the Equity and Inclusion Committee Memo on Fertility Benefits:* The memo noted that existing literature suggests that fertility benefits are correlated with retention, though evidence is limited in the higher education context. The EIC suggests that ECS take a broader view of these benefits to include other family life options, such as access to childcare and extended paid parental leave, to increase both retention and faculty well-being. The motion to accept the memo and thank the committee for its work passed unanimously.
- *On the Review and Discussion on EIC Memo on Collaboration with VP of People, Equity, and Culture:* EIC was charged to "Collaborate with VP Shorty and his team and develop a relationship to help insure alignment with Academic Affairs and University goals and vision." EIC had a good discussion with VP Shorty at the October 15 EIC meeting, and the EIC Chair met with VP Shorty twice in the Fall semester. EIC had a good discussion with Tiburcio Lince, the new Director of the Multicultural Office at the EIC Meeting on October 29th. Both have open invitations to EIC meetings. ECS members discussed the need to revise the ex-officio membership of EIC to reflect current university structure. The motion to ask EIC to review the committee ex-officio membership and bring it into alignment with the current GVSU structure passed unanimously.
- *On the Review and Discussion of the Shared Governance Review Taskforce (SHGR):* The following recommendations from the SHGR Taskforce were discussed. 1. Select faculty standing governance committees conduct regular university strategic reviews with their relevant VP. 2. Select faculty governance committees will engage directly with the relevant vice president and the provost and chronicle recommendations through memos. The relevant vice president and provost will collaboratively respond to recommendations. Existing committees with relevant VPs or designees: FSBC, FPPC, FFPAC, Campus Life Committee, and EIC. Areas to develop faculty committees to engage more directly with the VP include IT, OMNI, Enrollment Management. 3. All shared governance committees, existing or new, should reflect the faculty composition of the University Academic Senate, have elected faculty representatives, provide release time for chairs and potentially vice-chairs, and include ex-officio representation from the relevant VP and Provost's Office. UAS/ECS should conduct annual formal orientation or mentor for new members of the Senate and explore opening the election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Senate to be done by the full senate.