

**BOARD OF VISITORS
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

**Meeting of
May 6, 2021
MINUTES**

MEETING NOTE: Due to safety concerns associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, and in accordance with provisions in the 2020 Commonwealth Budget Bill General Provisions: § 4-0.01.g.1, the February 25, 2021 meeting of the Board of Visitors of George Mason University was held through electronic means. Board members and university leadership met via Zoom videoconference. The session was streamed live via webcast for public viewing at <https://gmutv.gmu.edu/live-broadcast/>. An online form was posted on the Board of Visitors webpage (<https://bov.gmu.edu/>) to accept written public comments and registrations for oral public comments. Fifty-one written comments and two oral comment registrations were received through the form for the full board. The full video recording of the meeting may be accessed at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8440856/video/545172092>.

PRESENT: Rector James Hazel, Vice Rector Horace Blackman; Secretary Simmi Bhuller; Visitors Anjan Chimaladinne, Tom Davis, Mehmood Kazmi, Ignacia Moreno, Carolyn Moss, Nancy Prowitt, Paul Reagan, Edward Rice, Denise Turner Roth, and Robert Witeck.

ABSENT: Visitors Wendy Marquez and Jon Peterson.

ALSO PRESENT: Lauren Reuscher, Staff Liaison; Shannon Davis, Faculty Representative; Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Incoming Faculty Representative; Shelby Adams, Student Representative; Lilianna Deveneau, Student Representative; Natalia Kanos, Incoming Student Representative, Gregory Washington, President; Ken Walsh, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff; Mark Ginsberg, Provost and Executive Vice President; Carol Kissal, Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance; Brian Walther, University Counsel; Julie Zobel, Associate Vice President of Safety, Emergency, & Enterprise Risk Management; Lisa Park, Executive Director, Student Health Services; Sarah Hanbury, Secretary pro tem; David Zeglen, Mason Student; Shauna Rigaud, Mason Student; Traci Kendall, Executive Director, Community and Local Govt Relations; Dr. Robyn Mehlenbeck, Director for George Mason University's Center for Psychological Services; Senator George Barker, Senate of Virginia; Delegate David Bulova, Virginia House of Delegates; Rob Stalzer, Connecting Fairfax City for All; Julie Shedd, Connecting Fairfax City for All; Elizabeth Lodal, EduTutorVA; and Margi Vanderhye, EduTutorVA.

I. Call to Order

Rector Hazel called the meeting to order at 1:55 p.m.

II. Public Comment

Fifty-one written comments and two oral comment registrations were received for the full board. Written comments were provided to the board prior to the meeting (**ATTACHMENT 1**). Rector noted that the student representatives are invited to speak after the two registrants who signed up to provide oral comments. Mason students, David Zeglen, Shauna Rigaud and Lilianna Deveneau voiced their opposition to the increase in graduate tuition and fees for all students. To view their full comments, please refer to the meeting video recording on the BOV website. Rector Hazel thanked the speakers for their comments.

III. Recognitions

A. Appreciation Plaque Presentation to Outgoing Student Representatives

Rector Hazel recognized the 2020-2021 student representatives to the board, Shelby Adams and Lilianna Deveneau. He offered for Shelby Adams to provide remarks and introduce her

successor. Ms. Adams thanked the board for providing a platform to advocate for students and she noted this is an experience she will never forget. Ms. Adams introduced Natalia Kanos, her successor as student body president. Ms. Kanos thanked the board for having her and noted she is double majoring in Government and International Politics, and Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Ms. Deveneau thanked the board for their leadership and added that her experience has been phenomenal. Ms. Deveneau introduced her successor Steven Zhou, noting he is a wonderful advocate. Mr. Zhou had a previous engagement and was unable to attend this meeting.

Rector Hazel thanked Shelby and Lilianna.

B. Appreciation Plaque Presentation to Outgoing Faculty Representative

Rector Hazel recognized the faculty representative to the board, Dr. Shannon Davis. Rector Hazel praised Dr. Davis for her commitment, integrity, knowledge, passion for students, fellow faculty and George Mason University which has been recognized by the board. Rector Hazel continued to note that the board could not have had a better partner in the presidential search with Dr. Davis providing exceptional leadership of the faculty.

Dr. Davis began by introducing her successor, Melissa Broeckelman-Post. She noted that Dr. Broeckelman-Post is an Associate Professor of Communication and a Senior Scholar in the Center for Advancement of Well-Being at Mason. Dr. Davis continued to note Dr. Broeckelman-Post's many accomplishments such as each year she is responsible for recruiting, training, and supervising a staff of 40 to 60 instructors to teach 3,500 to 4,000 undergraduate students per year in these courses and that she will receive the Presidential Medal for Faculty Excellence in Teaching next fall. Dr. Davis concluded by thanking the board for their continued support, noting it was an honor to serve on the presidential search for a public university and that she is looking forward to watching from afar in her role at Mason Korea next year.

Rector Hazel wished Dr. Davis the best of luck and noted the board is looking forward to working with Dr. Broeckelman-Post.

C. Appreciation Plaque Presentation to Outgoing Staff Liaison

Rector Hazel recognized the first staff liaison to the board, Lauren Reuscher. He noted that it was her idea to add a staff seat similar to what the faculty has. He continued to note that Ms. Reuscher represented the staff during the presidential search. Rector Hazel finished by stating the board enjoyed having her represent the staff and that she will be missed.

Ms. Reuscher noted that it has been an honor and a privilege serving as the staff liaison to the board and thanked everyone for being so welcoming. She informed the board that her successor would be determined in June, they will start their term on July 1, and her term will continue until June 30.

D. Recognition of Truman, Udall, and Goldwater Scholars

Rector Hazel introduced Dr. LaNitra Berger Senior Director, Office of Fellowships, Honors College to present this years' student scholars. Dr. Berger highlighted the following items (ATTACHMENT 2):

- The Office of Fellowships aims to raise the academic profile of Mason and its students by encouraging talented undergraduate students to explore fellowship opportunities and resources available to advance their academic and professional goals. The Office of Fellowships is committed to inclusive excellence practices and specifically seeks to mentor underrepresented students. The Office of Fellowships provides a supportive and friendly environment for students with a strong focus on mentoring and cultivating academic excellence.
- Since 2010, the Office of Fellowships has helped students secure more than \$2.1 million in external funding for research, education abroad, graduate school and public service.
- Awards
 - The Boren Award is funded by the US Department of Defense. It supports long-term study abroad of critical languages outside of Western Europe for undergraduate (Scholarship) and graduate students (Fellowship). The following students are this year's recipients:
 - Scholarship - Alexis Massenburg, Senegal
 - Fellowship - Marguerite Franklin, Japan
 - Reyhan Koyash, Turkey
 - The Critical Language Scholarship is funded by the US Department of State. Critical Language Scholarships are fully funded, intensive, short-term study abroad programs for the study of critical languages. The following students are this year's recipients:
 - Nathan Danielson, Indonesian
 - Brigid Gill, Arabic
 - Abigail (Abby) Hawkins, Arabic
 - Daniela Martinez, Chinese
 - Reyhan Koyash, Turkish
 - The Fulbright US Student Program is the nation's flagship cultural exchange program, celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and is funded by the US Department of State. This year's recipient is Moni Islam who will study Archaeology at Durham University in the UK. Dr. Berger noted the importance of this award, because each university only offers one UK award. The fact that Mason has a student who won a UK Fulbright is a big deal that the Office of Fellowships is very proud of.
 - The Goldwater Scholarship is the nation's highest honor for undergraduates who are aspiring to research careers in STEM fields and is funded by the US federal government. Jackie Luu is this year's recipient for Wildlife Conservation and Wildlife Endocrinology.
 - The NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program provides full funding for graduate study in STEM and social science fields for students demonstrating the potential to make a broader impact on society through their work. The following are this year's recipients and are either current Mason students or Mason alums who have taken their award to study at other institutions. The following students are this year's recipients:
 - Natasha Maria Latouf, George Mason University, Physics & Astronomy – Astronomy & Astrophysics
 - Doreen Joseph, University of California, Davis, Computer Security & Privacy

- Elizabeth Ankrah, University of California, Irvine, Human Computer Interaction
- Abbas Idris, University of Pennsylvania, Bioengineering

E. Recognition of Early Identification (EIP) Graduating Students

Rector Hazel noted the tradition of recognizing Mason's Early Identification Program and its students. Rector Hazel reported that the names of the graduates and the history of this program were provided in the board materials for this meeting. A video honoring the graduating class was provided from Khaseem Davis, Director of the EIP Program. The video was played for the board. The EIP Program video is viewable through the meeting video recording on the BOV website. Following the video, Rector Hazel congratulated the EIP students.

F. Jack Wood Awards Presentation

Rector Hazel recognized the 2021 Jack Wood Awardees by noting the stories for each recipient in their respective categories were provided in the board materials for this meeting. Rector Hazel introduced Traci Kendall, Executive Director, Community and Local Government Relations to present this year's Jack Wood Awards. Ms. Kendall highlighted the following items:

- This is the eighth year of the Jack Wood Award program.
- The history of Jack Wood Award was given along with information regarding the design of the award itself which is available in the board materials.
- Ms. Kendall provided congratulatory remarks for the following receipts of the five awarded categories:
 - Faculty/Staff Category
 - Dr. Robyn Mehlenbeck, Director for George Mason University's Center for Psychological Services, who accepted her award live.
 - Business/Non-Profit Category
 - Professor Jim Carroll, Founder of Jazz Studies at Mason, accepted the award on behalf of Jazz4Justice. Professor Carroll was unable to accept the award live.
 - Government Category
 - Virginia General Assembly, Senator George Barker and Delegate David Bulova accepted their award live. Rector Hazel thanked both gentlemen on behalf of the board for their support.
 - Partnership Category
 - Rob Stalzer, Fairfax City Manager and Part-time Professor, Schar School of Policy and Government and Julie Shedd, Associate Dean, Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution accepted their award live. Ms. Kendall also recognized additional team members Lesley Abashian, Susan Gray, Melanie Crowder, and Adina Freedman. On behalf of the Fairfax Mayor, City Council and the city of Fairfax community Rob Stalzer thanked the program for recognizing this partnership.
 - Specialty Award for Innovation Category
 - Elizabeth Lodal and Margi Vanderhye accepted the award live on behalf of EduTutorVA. EduTutorVA Founders Kris Amundson, Shirley Bloomquist, Cathy Colglazier, and Eleanor Saslaw were also recognized. Elizabeth Lodal thanked George Mason and

Northern Virginia Community College students who are tutoring and noted they are very grateful for the award.

Rector Hazel congratulated and thanked all of the award recipients on behalf of the board, for their leadership in fostering mutually beneficial relations between Mason and the community.

IV. Approval of the Minutes (ACTION ITEMS)

- A. Full Board Meeting Minutes for February 25, 2021
- B. Full Board Meeting Minutes for April 1, 2021

Rector Hazel asked, if there is no objection to streamline the voting process, that the approval of all action items be held until the end of the meeting and voted on en bloc. There were no objections. He further noted that the Executive Committee Minutes for the February 25, 2021 meeting were included in the board materials for review and that they will be voted on at the next Executive Committee meeting.

V. Rector's Report

- A. Board of Visitors Meeting Schedule for 2021-2022 (**ACTION ITEM**)

Rector Hazel reported the following items:

- Joint Resolution, Faculty & Staff Senate – Dependent Tuition Waiver
 - The joint resolution submitted by the Staff and Faculty Senates on dependent waivers, requesting to create a study for the next year to look at the possibility of providing tuition waivers to the students of faculty or staff who attend Mason has been received and he thanked the faculty and staff for bringing it forward.
- Institute for Digital InnovAtion Update
 - Provided an update on the status of the Arlington campus expansion. A picture of the current state of the demolition of the old Kann's Department Store and the old Mason Law School was shown to depict the current progress of building the Institute for Digital InnovAtion at that location (**ATTACHMENT 3**).
- Mason Medal, Visitor Tom Davis
 - Rector Hazel joined Dr. Washington and Visitor Tom Davis in Horizon Hall to tape the awarding of Visitor Davis' Mason Medal. Rector Hazel informed Visitor Davis during the taping of the 100% support received from the board to honor him with the Mason Medal. Visitor Davis noted that he could not have asked for a better board, that he will treasure the friendships and is thankful for the award.
- COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement Discussion
 - Rector Hazel brought up the topic of the COVID-19 vaccination requirement in Virginia as they pertain to the university communities, not just Mason, but all Virginia universities. Rector Hazel had many conversations after the attorney general's opinion about the vaccine requirement was released. There was support for the idea of having a vaccine requirement but everyone had questions during these conversations. Rector Hazel invited Dr. Washington to provide comments.
 - Dr. Washington began by noting the possibility of a vaccination requirement is a real one. He further reported the following information:
 - Across the country, more than 120 universities have already issued vaccine requirements for students, faculty, and staff.

- Vaccine requirements started in private institutions but have recently expanded to public institutions.
- A vaccination requirement would be accompanied with allowances through waivers for individuals with religious or health reasons that need to opt out. Individuals with a vaccination waiver will be subject to rigorous surveillance testing, likely three times per week.
- Given the latest feedback from the Governor, all masking and social distancing requirements may be released by June. If this ends up being the case, there needs to be a process in place to keep people safe. Dr. Washington opened the floor for comments or questions:
 - Rector Hazel: Mason would have a record on file for vaccinated and non-vaccinated students, so that the population of unvaccinated students would be known, is that correct?
Dr. Washington: Yes, the population of unvaccinated students, staff and faculty would be known.
 - Visitor Moreno: What is the process for a decision and what is the boards' role in that process?
Rector Hazel: Certain items have been delegated to the President such as the safety of the campus per the bylaws. Further legal advice from Brian Walther, University Legal Counsel will be given in closed session toward the end of the meeting.
 - Secretary Bhuller: Will boosters be required throughout the year?
Dr. Washington: Mason will be compliant with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state guidelines. If the CDC or State allows schools to decide, Mason will be on the conservative side and will require the boosters. If the boosters are not available then they cannot be required.
 - Secretary Bhuller: What if you got the vaccine but the booster is not available because it is being rolled out in stages?
Dr. Washington: A waiver could be submitted, while consenting to rigorous testing. The waiver recipient could then be on campus until the booster stockpiles catch up and they are able to get the booster.
 - Visitor Moss: How would proof of vaccination be established as there is not a national nor state registry?
Dr. Washington: A process is being worked through the student health and other health mechanisms on campus, where you can submit your scanned vaccination card as proof. If the national registry for the measles, mumps, rubella registry is modified to include COVID this would be an easier solution because the existing framework is already in place.
 - Visitor Prowitt: Don't all the public schools require for K-12 to show proof of vaccination for measles, mumps and rubella?
Dr. Washington: It is a requirement for Mason students to have those shots on file too.
 - Visitor Reagan: The last line of the attorney general's opinion says that public university should be prepared to make

accommodation for people who have a valid medical or religious objection. Do we know what that would look like from a practical standing? Does Mason have to do anything affirmatively to accommodate, other than fill out the form?

Dr. Washington: There will be a form that is filled out stating your objection, based on the given standards. Once submitted it will be kept on file. Those submitting a waiver will be subject to rigorous testing. Those who have received the vaccine will probably be tested once every other week. Those who have not been vaccinated will probably be tested three times a week.

- Dr. Julie Zobel, Associate Vice President, Safety, Emergency, and Enterprise Risk Management: This is a very complex situation. Operationalizing it, whichever direction Mason goes, poses changes but not insurmountable challenges. With regard to testing, doing increased testing of those not vaccinated is where public health seems to be going. Masking would be in that same category. More stringent health requirements need to be put in place for those that are not vaccinated versus those that are. However, this would pose challenges with equity and compliance which are still being worked through. The outbreak mitigation and management team have been deliberating through these issues and working with other schools in Virginia to make sure that they are staying ahead of the information and science, so that they can put forth a good recommendation.
- Visitor Moss: Do Mason international students have access to the vaccine in their own countries and can they get vaccinated at Mason if not?

Dr. Washington: If an international student has not been vaccinated or they have received a vaccine that the CDC does not recognize, Mason will be able to vaccinate them.

- Visitor Chimaladinne: Noted his son and his son's friends were attending college in the fall and that mandated vaccines were a factor in their decision of which college to attend.
- Visitor Rice: Since Mason has the ability to vaccinate, is it legal to not accept students who are not vaccinated? He is concerned this will fall under duress.

Brian Walter, University Legal Counsel, Response:

Recommended discussing this question in closed session under the code for legal advice.

- Dr. Shannon Davis: Wanted to bring forward the question again about what the attorney general said about potentially requiring the vaccine for in-person class attendance for students. There was also a set of conversations about faculty and staff as there is not a requirement for them. As the faculty senate chair, she solicited comments across campus from the faculty on this issue. Overall, the faculty is in support for a vaccination mandate for both students and faculty as long as there is an accommodation for medical or religious reasons.

- Visitor Davis: Vaccines have only been given temporary status and are not in the affirmative status from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). He suggested factoring in this information when making the decision.
- Vice Rector Blackman: Noted his question is probably a discussion for closed session, what kind of liability would Mason take on if non-vaccinated students are granted a waiver and even with increased testing if there is an outbreak on campus?
Brian Walther: Agreed that that was a topic for closed session.
- Visitor Moreno: Wanted to discuss more in depth about the waivers in closed session.
- Visitor Roth: What will happen if a student simply decides against receiving the vaccine not due to a health or religious reason?
Dr. Washington: They will not be allowed to come to campus but would still be able to take online courses.

VI. President's Report

Dr. Washington highlighted the following from his report:

- Thriving through our major crises.
 - Mason managed the pandemic well this year.
 - Mason is still the largest and most diverse four-year institution in Virginia.
 - There were no staff layoffs or furloughs.
 - Mason has the best research expenditures ever.
- There were cumulative higher-education job losses from February through December 2020.
 - He displayed a graphic that showed the estimated number of workers employed by institutions of higher education that were lost during the pandemic which was significant. This was to highlight that employment losses did not occur at Mason and that the university thrived during this time which is a testament to the faculty and staff.
- 2020-21 Presidential Goals
 - Ten of his presidential goals are complete.
- Keeping Mason safe to learn, live and work.
 - There has been a total of 380 cases of COVID-19 since the campus reopening in January; 126 of those cases occurred in the residence halls.
 - Mason has delivered more than 70,000 vaccines since January which is a testament to the Mason's staff.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
 - The Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence (ARIE) Task Force has submitted their first 15 recommendations.
 - Inclusive excellence plans have been produced in every academic school and college on campus which are near to being rolled out.
 - Mason was recognized as one of 10 universities bucking the downward trend of black student enrollment and graduation in a recent report from Eduventures Research.
 - Mason was named the top Virginia school for diversity in the College Factual rankings.

- Mason is one of 10 institutions in the country that received a perfect score on the Athletic Equality Index, a measurement of LGBTQ inclusion policies and practices in collegiate athletic spaces.
- Mason Impacting the World
 - Tom Lovejoy is Mason's First National Academy of Science member.
 - Ed Maibach, director of Mason's Center for Climate Change Communication ranked 7th in the world for climate science and 3rd in the US.
 - Cynthia Lum and Dave Wilson, both Professors of Criminology, Law and Society, have been named Fellows of their society.
- What's Next?
 - A combination of in person, virtual and hybrid instruction for the fall. The actual structure for this plan is still being worked on.
 - Strategic planning will start in earnest this summer.
 - Will move forward with the Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence plan this year.
 - Retain & attract talent. Mason faces challenges retaining faculty talent. An initiative has been developed to retain talent among faculty and staff.
 - Looking to update and modernize Mason's research infrastructure.

VII. Proposed Revisions to the Faculty Senate Charter (ACTION ITEM)

On behalf of the faculty, Dr. Washington presented the proposed amendments to the Faculty Senate Charter by introducing Dr. Shannon Davis, Faculty Senate Chair, to speak to the specifics of those amendments. Dr. Davis highlighted the following items:

- The Faculty Senate Charter has not been amended since 2000. This is the first opportunity the Faculty Senate, in consultation with and in support of the general faculty have chosen to move forward in making changes.
- The original charter and the proposed charter were included in the board materials.
- The chair of the faculty at any non-US space campus has a new nonvoting member to currently include the faculty at the Mason Korea campus.
- The charter update allows the Senate to be larger if needed. The size of the Senate will be moved out of the charter and into the bylaws so they do not have to have 10% of the faculty voting together to make that change, which is the current requirement in the charter.
- Includes voting rights for those faculty who heretofore have not had an opportunity to have a voting member on the Faculty Senate. This allows faculty members from INTO Mason, SMSC and other places within the University, who are not currently housed inside an academic unit such as a school or college, to be incorporated into a newly formed "independent academic unit". The independent academic unit will have a voting bloc of, at minimum, one voting member.

Dr. Davis opened the floor for questions from the board and thanked Dr. Washington for bringing forward this proposal on behalf of the general faculty, per the charter. There were no questions from the board.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. Academic Programs, Diversity and University Community Committee

Secretary Bhuller delivered the APDUC Committee report by highlighting the following areas:

- A general overview of recent and planned activities including an update on the summer semester and vaccination plans for faculty, staff, contractors and students.

- Plans for the fall semester were outlined regarding student support, housing, and an update on admissions and anticipated enrollment.
 - The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) approved the reorganization of the Volgenau School of Engineering into the newly formed College of Engineering and Computing and approved forming the new School of Computing as a component of the reorganized college.
 - Mark Ginsberg, Provost and Executive Vice President announced that there will be a study in response to a joint resolution from the Faculty and Staff Senates, which requested a study be undertaken to evaluate the feasibility clause and steps needed to offer a tuition waiver as a benefit to Mason employees. The Provost also provided information regarding recent academic program rankings, reported on both appointments of Vice President of Research and Economic Development and on recent honors received by members of the faculty.
 - Brian Walther, University Counsel and Janette Muir, Associate Provost of Academic Initiatives and Services presented a proposal for the Creation of the Mason Korea Industry-Academic Cooperation Foundation.
 - Shannon Davis, Faculty Senate Chair outlined the Proposed Changes to the Faculty Senate Charter and Faculty Senate Handbook.
 - Danielle Gilson, Director of Employee Relations, Human Resources/Payroll outlined the Proposed Revisions to the Administrative/Professional Faculty Handbook.
 - Germaine Louis, Dean, College of Health and Human Services provided an overview of the college and the planned transition to becoming the College of Public Health, as well as the national accreditation. She highlighted the college's response to the COVID pandemic over the last year.
1. New Business (**ACTION ITEMS**)
 - a. Mason Korea Industry-Academic Cooperation Foundation
 - b. Proposed Revisions to the Faculty Handbook
 - c. Proposed Revisions to the Administrative/Professional Faculty Handbook
 2. Program Actions (**ACTION ITEMS**)
 - a. New Programs
 - i. BA International Security and Law
 - ii. MS Business Analytics
 - iii. MS Marketing
 - b. Program Closure
 - i. MA in Transportation Policy, Operations and Logistics
 3. Faculty Actions (**ACTION ITEMS**)
 - a. Promotion and/or Tenure
 - b. Conferral of Emeritus/Emerita Status
 - c. Election of New Tenured Faculty

Secretary Bhuller **MOVED** to approve the following **ACTIONS ITEMS** en bloc as they are provided in the meeting materials:

- Mason Korea Industry-Academic Cooperation Foundation Resolution
- Proposed Revisions to the Faculty Senate Charter
- Proposed Revisions to the Faculty Handbook
- Proposed Revisions to the Administrative/Professional Faculty Handbook
- New Program: BA International Security and Law

- New Program: MS Business Analytics
- New Program: MS Marketing
- Program Closure: MA in Transportation Policy, Operations and Logistics
- Faculty Action: Awarding of Promotions and/or Tenure
- Faculty Action: Conferral of Emeritus/Emerita Status
- Faculty Action: Election of New Tenured Faculty

The motion was **SECONDED** by Visitor Rice.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

Yes – 12

Absent – 4 – Visitors Kazmi, Marquez, Peterson and Roth. Visitor Roth experienced technical difficulties.

B. Finance and Land Use Committee

Visitor Reagan delivered the Finance and Land Use Committee report by highlighting the following areas:

- FY 2021 Q3 Financial Report and Yearend Forecast.
 - Carol Kissal, Senior Vice President of Administration and Finance, and her team briefed the committee on the FY 2021 Q3 financial report and yearend forecast. Overall the forecast is slightly improved from the Q2 forecast that was shared with the board in February.
 - Total revenues are forecasted to improve by \$5 million. This is due to the accelerating student financial aid awards to the higher education emergency relief passed by the Congress in December.
 - More student funds are expected to be received from the American Rescue plan that was passed in March.
 - Under the third quarter financial report, total expenses are forecasted slightly lower at than in the February report.
 - Increased expenses for scholarships and fellowships were offset by slower spending across several other categories.
- The committee approved all three action items on their agenda: FY 2022 University Operating Budget, Two-Year Capital Plan and the Fairfax Washington Gas Easement:
 - FY 2022 University Operating Budget
 - It was proposed to increase the room and board rate by \$540. This reflects an increase of 5% for housing and 3.7% for dining meal plans.
 - Due to the economic challenges, undergraduate tuition rates will not increase at this time which includes in-state and out-of-state enrollments.
 - Due to the increased demand, for graduate, professional and law programs the recommended tuition increase is \$441. This increase will assist with providing additional graduate stipends in postdoctoral scholarships.
 - Graduate students are eligible for the student relief payments authorized by Congress last year and again in March, as part of the American Rescue Plan.

- The FY 2022 mandatory student fee recommendation is an increase of 3%. The proposed 3% increase, which is approximately \$105, excluding law students, will provide the University with an additional \$3.3 million in student revenue. Ms. Kissal and her team walked through a number of enhancements to the undergraduate and graduate student experience that will be financed with this increased student fee.
- Two-Year Capital Plan
 - This includes the final phase to improve the telecom network infrastructure, multiyear planning study for the College of Engineering and Computing and the College of Science.
 - The study will include phasing strategies to address relocation of undergraduate programs from SciTech to Fairfax, replacement of the David King and Planetary Halls, and current and future CEC and COS space needs as determined by the master plan.
 - A student innovation factory building, which is an industrial building to house student project space as required by CEC and COS for capstone course work, student competition project work, and other large student projects.
 - Implementation of phase two of the engineering and science building as part of the planned relocation of undergraduate academic space from SciTech to Fairfax.
- Fairfax Washington Gas Easement
 - Washington Gas, by way of the Peterson Companies, has requested an easement of 75 square feet to attach a gas line adjacent to Roberts Road. This easement will allow for the connection of a new housing development to the existing gas infrastructure.
 - The easement does not provide benefits to the Commonwealth of Virginia and the University is required to receive remuneration for the land-use. It was determined \$2,000 would fully compensate George Mason University for this land-use and the developer has agreed to the amount.

1. Financial Matters (**ACTION ITEM**)

- a. FY 2022 University Operating Budget, Tuition and Fees

2. Capital Matters (**ACTION ITEMS**)

- a. Two-Year Capital Plan Approval
- b. Approval of Fairfax Washington Gas Easement

C. Research Committee

Vice Rector Blackman delivered the Research Committee report, which did not have any action items. He briefed the board on three presentations that came before the committee:

1. Research Progress for Academic Year 2020-2021, Dr. Aurali Dade
 - Highlighted the impactful work and provided recognition for several principal investigators who received awards in support of their research.
 - Dr. Andre Marshall's appointment as the Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Economic Impact will take effect July 1, 2021.
2. Arlington Research and Innovation Demonstration Space, Dr. Liza Wilson Durant

Provided an update regarding the Arlington Research Innovation Demonstration Space. She highlighted the purpose of the building and the ways it will engage not only Mason staff and students, but industry partners as well in a collaborative environment. This will create a culture of innovation and lead to a positive impact for the entire community.

3. COVID-19 Vaccination Research and Mason's Vaccination Efforts, Dr. Julie Zobel, Dr. Caroline Sutter, and Dr. Rebecca Sutter

They highlighted the multiple clinics Mason has hosted for students, faculty, staff and the local community including a number of underserved community members. Currently there are vaccine services operating at EagleBank Arena and mobile vaccine clinics. To date, Mason has vaccinated over 7,000 people through these different facilities. The many local partners and volunteers that help make this happen were thanked.

Vice Rector Blackman concluded by thanking Dr. Aurali Dade for her service as the Interim Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Economic Impact and the many accomplishments she has achieved over the past year.

D. Audit, Compliance, & Risk Committee

Visitor Rice delivered the Audit, Compliance, & Risk Committee report by highlighting the following areas:

- Research Update
 - The Committee met with Mason's Interim Vice President for Research, Innovation, and Economic Impact, Aurali Dade, to discuss management strategies for addressing risks associated with Mason's research enterprise and its future growth. Dr. Dade discussed Mason's competitiveness in research, particularly in the Washington, DC region where there are three more-established R-1 institutions with larger research portfolios, as well as other institutions such as National Defense University. Dr. Dade also described the nature of research compliance requirements, which have become more complex and burdensome as the size and types of Mason's research programs have shifted over the last few years.
- Office of University Audit Summary Report
 - The committee reviewed the Audit and Compliance status reports included in the board materials with Wendy Watkins and Vin Lacovara. The committee recognized the efforts to initiate an institutional compliance program for the university and looks forward to hearing more as the program develops.
- Office of Institutional Compliance Report
 - The Committee met on April 1 to receive the Auditor of Public Accounts report of their examination of Mason's financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2020. The Auditor issued an unmodified opinion concluding the statements present Mason's financial position fairly.
 - The auditor issued a separate Internal Controls and Compliance Report covering internal controls over financial reporting. These procedures also included testing to support single audits of the commonwealth's compliance with requirements applicable to programs related to federal research and

development grants, federal CARES Act, Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds, and student financial aid. While the auditor's procedures did not identify any material weaknesses, four findings were reported: three related to information technology security and one related to enrollment data reporting. The committee expects management attention to ensure appropriate remediation of these matters.

E. Development Committee

Secretary Bhuller delivered the Development Committee report by highlighting the following areas:

- Military, Veterans, and Families Initiative (MVFI) – Keith Renshaw, Department Chair/Professor, Psychology & Director of Military, Veterans, & Families Initiative and Philippa Moore, Director of Development, University Priorities
 - Their mission is to leverage Mason's strengths as the largest, most diverse public research university in the region in supporting service members, veterans and their families at Mason as well as the broader national capital region, and beyond.
 - Visitors and volunteers can get involved by introducing potential partners to help build Mason's veterans alumni chapter. Student services and training workforce development are needed.
- Accelerate 2022 – Paula Sorrell, Associate Vice President, Office of Research
 - Reported on the Accelerating 2022 Business Competition event scheduled for October 18-20, 2021 at Mason. In partnership with the advancement team, they have identified corporate partners that have invested interest in providing funding for the competition. This international business competition will showcase Northern Virginia as a powerhouse in innovation opportunities and will fuel innovation-based business by showcasing the best and brightest new business concepts to investors.
- GMUF Chair Update – Trishana Bowden, Vice President, Adv and Alumni Relations/President, GMUF
 - The winter report cycle concluded with the full board meeting on March 5, 2021.
 - The trustees approved a resolution to provide a second gift of \$10.5 million to the University in support of the Tech Talent Initiative Program, a gift that is eligible for matching funds from the supporting teams.
 - The Foundation Board of Trustees hosted a virtual winetasting event in April. Several visitors and university leaders attended.
 - The investment committee will review the third quarter investment results from the endowment and restricted portfolios through March 31. The endowment portfolio returned 17.7% compared to the benchmark of 20.4%. The value of the endowment exceeded \$184 million at the end of the quarter. The restricted portfolio returned 1.7%, slightly trailing its benchmark of 2%. The portfolio exceeds budget requirements, which is a positive result.
 - In late March, the investment committee considered four outsourced chief investment officer finalists' presentations and made a final selection for the endowment portfolio. Discussions around transition options are in process

and a recommendation will be presented to the executive committee and then the full board in June.

- The finance committee and real estate committee will hold a joint meeting in late May to review and approve the fiscal year 2022 budget. Revenue projections are positive as they plan for the next year. The full board will approve the final budget in June.
- The nominating and governance committees advanced six candidates for approval pending interviews and the candidates' acceptance of nomination. Interviews are underway with the foundation president and chair.
- University Advancement and Alumni Relations Update – Trishana Bowden, Vice President, Adv and Alumni Relations/President, GMUF
 - As of March 31, Advancement received gifts and commitments totaling \$86.8 million. Overall donors continue to stay ahead of last year's participation rates.
 - Mason's Giving Day on April 8 was the most successful in terms of total fundraising attainment, raising more than \$560,000 from more than 2,700 donors.
 - Presidential roundtables focusing on the Arlington Initiative continue to be hosted, providing the opportunity to engage with industry leaders throughout the region. They plan to shift these roundtables to specific themes to narrow the conversation and focus on high-priority topics supported by the tech talent initiative such as cloud computing, quantum computing and various topics of cybersecurity.
 - The investment team is continuing to engage in conversation with industry leaders and alumni to create strategic innovative funding proposals that unlock TTIP funding.

Vice Rector Blackman **MOVED** to approve the following **ACTION ITEMS** en bloc, as they are provided in the meeting materials:

- Full Board Meeting Minutes for February 25, 2021
- Full Board Meeting Minutes for April 1, 2021
- Board of Visitors Meeting Schedule for 2021-2022
- FY 2022 University Operating Budget, including Tuition and Fee rates (Finance & Land Use Committee)
- Two-Year Capital Plan Approval (Finance & Land Use Committee)
- Approval of Fairfax Washington Gas Easement (Finance & Land Use Committee)

The motion was **SECONDED** by Visitor Moreno. Rector Hazel opened the floor for discussion. No discussion.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

Yes – 12

Absent – 4 – Visitors Iturregui, Marquez, Peterson, Roth. Visitors Iturregui and Roth experienced technical difficulties.

IX. Closed Session

Vice Rector Blackman **MOVED** that the Board go into closed session under the provisions of Section 2.2-3711.A.7, for consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation including briefings on:

Kashdan v. GMU
Agrawal v. GMU
Platt v. GMU and Martin
Ganley and Surber v. GMU et al.
Inko-Tariah v. GMU
Tran v. GMU
Kinuani v. GMU
Alemu v. GMU

and Section 2.2-3711.A.8 for consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice concerning the aforementioned items. The motion was **SECONDED** by Visitor Davis.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

Yes – 13

Absent – 3 – Visitors Marquez, Peterson, Roth. Visitor Roth experienced technical difficulties.

Following closed session, Vice Rector Blackman **MOVED** that the Board go back into public session and further moved that by roll call vote the Board certify that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the Board. Any member of the Board who believes that there was a departure from the requirements as stated above, shall so state prior to the roll call, indicating the substance of the departure that, in his or her judgment, has taken place.

ALL PRESENT MEMBERS RESPONDED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE BY ROLL CALL.

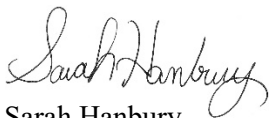
Yes – 12

Absent – 4 – Visitors Davis, Marquez, Peterson, Roth. Visitor Roth experienced technical difficulties.

X. Adjournment

Rector Hazel thanked the board for their questions and participation. He asked that Dr. Washington keep Mason moving in the right direction and to inform the board of any decisions going forward. Rector Hazel stated that the board would support Dr. Washington as he sees fit. The Rector called for any additional business to come before the board. Hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 4:33 p.m.

Prepared by:



Sarah Hanbury
Secretary pro tem

Attachment 1: Public Comment (20 pages)
Attachment 2: Student Scholars Presentation (8 pages)
Attachment 3: Arlington Construction Photo (1 page)

Board of Visitors Electronic Full Board Meeting

May 6, 2021

Written Public Comments

1. Name: Kylie Musolf Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: Hi,

As a PhD candidate at Mason with several more years to go to complete my degree, I cannot condone the decision to raise graduate tuition again this year. Increasing graduate tuition and fees will compel more graduate students to take out additional student loans, further mortgaging their future for an already uncertain economic present.

Additionally, many graduate students have been forced to suspend their research due to COVID, and will have to subsequently delay their research, resulting in additional years of enrollment in their program; years that will require them to take on more debt to complete their degree, now with an added burden of increased tuition and fees.

Finally, we all know that raising tuition does not solve the university's financial issues: the issue is a broken funding model for public universities like GMU. The state has gradually withdrawn funding from public universities, and without a robust progressive taxation system in place for public post-secondary education, tuition and fee increases will only further embolden the BoV to continue to shift the burden onto graduate students. This is an unacceptable position and policy for the BoV to take in response to the irresponsible decision-making of the state, particularly as a governing board for an institution of HIGHER LEARNING.

For these reasons and more, you do not have my support continue to raise tuition for graduate students this year or any year in the future. Do your jobs; please stop preventing us from training to do ours.

Kylie Musolf
PhD Student
Cultural Studies

2. Name: Wanjiku Wainaina Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: An increase in tuition will adversely affect international students' ability to study at Mason. International students already incur the highest rates of tuition, yet their access to alternative income streams and funding is severely limited by their visa status.

Increasing tuition fees will reduce accessibility to graduate school for students who do not access to alternative source of income / financial support.

Increasing tuition will place an increased financial burden to students whose wages remain low while the cost of living is already incredibly high; yet the wages and funding sources remain way below par even for modest living.

3. Name: Anthony Guidone Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: My name is Anthony Guidone and I am the Co-President of the George Mason University History Graduate Student Organization. I strongly oppose raising tuition and fees while the COVID-19 economic downturn is still negatively impacting all those without established careers, particularly students.

4. Name: Chelsea Xu Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: increasing graduate tuition and fees will compel more graduate students to take out additional student loans, further mortgaging their future for an already uncertain economic present.

5. Name: May Santiago **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: I am writing to oppose the tuition/fees increase being proposed. I am a PhD student for Cultural Studies, and I also have been an adjunct for Film and Video Studies since 2018. Thus, I have the unique experience of being an independent professor who went into a doctorate program in order to further the work started in my classes to represent my university, its students, and the work capable of undergraduate and graduate students that makes Mason stand apart.

This tuition increase holds back students who already struggle just to get by in our programs. We have parents, a large number of international students, and I myself decided to go to a doctorate program largely for financial reasons. Putting monetary obstacles onto a thriving student body not only affects them financially, but it weakens our spirit and faith in a university we chose to represent the diverse and important work all of us do across various disciplines. Our priority should be researching and writing to bring our work to its most effective level. Worrying about where another \$500+ is going to go -- often the price of more than half of our rent on already low wages -- presents unneeded barriers to an already precarious situation many of us find ourselves in while doing work that is meant to represent us for the rest of our careers.

Yet, even if the livelihood of the very student body this university is dependent on isn't considered, raising the tuition does nothing to solve the university's financial issues. The larger issue is a broken funding model for public universities like GMU. The state has gradually withdrawn funding from public universities, and without a robust progressive taxation system in place for public post-secondary education, tuition and fee increases will only further embolden the BoV to continue to shift the burden onto graduate students. The students represent the university. We choose this as our home to train and showcase our work. Making us the scapegoat further alienates us from any trust or faith we could have in the administration or board of this university.

Everyone has been affected by COVID, and this is no doubt a difficult decision to make regardless. I ask you to continue to problem-solve without using graduate students as the bearers of a burden that is not theirs to take. Thank you for your time and attention.

6. Name: Lindsay **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: GMU has demonstrated its commitment to faculty well-being and success by providing a one-year extension to tenure-track contracts and third-year renewals. Yet, graduate students have not been extended the same grace. Like faculty, graduate students have also had to contend with the disruptions of the pandemic--as students, to be sure, but also as instructors and researchers. Like faculty, many of us are also parents of small children, or have been asked to serve as caregivers for friends or relatives. To its credit, Mason has responded proactively to the needs of faculty during the pandemic, but the same consideration should be given to graduate students as well.

7. Name: Pavithra Suresh Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: As a graduate student and GTA instructor, I vehemently oppose the tuition and fee increase. Aside from the fact that the tuition and fees were raised as recently as last year, this year has presented uniquely difficult circumstances for all graduate and professional students. Raising tuition for students — who are largely in debt, underemployed, and coping with the debilitating effects of a pandemic and recession — will never solve the existing issues of GMU’s ineffective funding model. The burden of funding should not fall on graduate students, for many of whom research is halted due to the effects of COVID-19, extending their graduate study timeline. Raising tuition further disadvantages students of vulnerable backgrounds, for whom graduate study is increasingly cost-prohibitive; this directly contradicts initiatives to better diversify Mason’s student body and curriculum (the latter of which is regularly designed and taught by graduate students). The only acceptable resolution is a tuition freeze until the effects of the current crisis are mitigated.

8. Name: Luma Mousa Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: Many students will not be able to afford this increase-- especially international students. This increase will drive away new students and cause current students to drop out. We live in very difficult conditions with covid and the last thing a student wants is a tuition increase. I hope the board will consider this decision.

9. Name: Muna Al Taweel Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: An increase in fees would be devastating to many students who are still recovering from the financial impact of the pandemic. This will push many students and their families deeper into debt as they try to keep up with the hardships of the pandemic -- especially for international students, who have been heavily burdened by its financial impact. Moreover, this increase in fees will drive away prospective students from applying. I hope the board will reconsider this decision.

10. Name: Eric Ross Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: 1. Increased tuition fees reduce accessibility: graduate tuition and fee increases have a negative effect on the ability of disadvantaged students to pursue a graduate education. 2. Graduate student debt is already unbearable: increasing graduate tuition and fees will compel more graduate students to take out additional student loans, further mortgaging their future for an already uncertain economic present. 3. Raising tuition does not solve the university's financial issues: the issue is a broken funding model for public universities like GMU. The state has gradually withdrawn funding from public universities, and without a robust progressive taxation system in place for public post-secondary education, tuition and fee increases will only further embolden the BoV to continue to shift the burden onto graduate students. 4. COVID has halted graduate research: many graduate students have been forced to suspend their research due to COVID, and will have to subsequently delay their research, resulting in additional years of enrollment in their program; years that will require them to take on more debt to complete their degree, now with an added burden of increased tuition and fees. 5. Everyone has been affected by COVID: many students, including graduate students, have lost, or had to deal with, sick family members, spouses, or partners during the pandemic--graduate students themselves may have contracted COVID. These difficult situations have frequently impacted graduate students' ability to financially sustain themselves, not just undergraduate students. 6. Graduate students are also parents: many graduate students have children, and have had to deal with managing at-home childcare, which often involves taking extended and unpaid sick leave from their jobs in order to care for their children, and step in as part-time educators.

11. Name: Ayondela McDole Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: Raising graduate tuition during this time is deplorable for the following reasons and many more: 1) Graduate student debt is already unbearable: increasing graduate tuition and fees will compel more graduate students to take out additional student loans, further mortgaging their future for an already uncertain economic present. 2) COVID has halted graduate research: many graduate students have been forced to suspend their research due to COVID, and will have to subsequently delay their research, resulting in additional years of enrollment in their program; years that will require them to take on more debt to complete their degree, now with an added burden of increased tuition and fees. 3) Everyone has been affected by COVID: many students, including graduate students, have lost, or had to deal with, sick family members, spouses, or partners during the pandemic--graduate students themselves may have contracted COVID. These difficult situations have frequently impacted graduate students' ability to financially sustain themselves, not just undergraduate students. 4) Graduate students are also parents: many graduate students have children, and have had to deal with managing at-home childcare, which often involves taking extended and unpaid sick leave from their jobs in order to care for their children, and step in as part-time educators. PLEASE re-consider this rate as graduate students are already under crippling stress and pressure and no doubt many graduate students will have to pause their graduate instruction or leave entirely do this increase.

12. Name: Eric W. Ross Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: I am a 4th-year graduate student at Mason. My University funding will run out at the end of this semester, and I will be finding other sources of income. Most do not cover my tuition. My research has also been sidelined as a result of the COVID pandemic. I have been unable to travel and this has delayed my expected graduation date by at least 6 months. I feel as though raising tuition on grad students during the pandemic is irresponsible when so many of us have been struggling as it is mentally, physically, and financially. Please reconsider.

13. Name: Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: It appears financially unnecessary and thus impossibly cruel to raise tuition for graduate students in the midst of these multiple overlapping crises.

14. Name: Chilan Vu Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: It is completely unnecessary for the school to raise its tuition fee. What's changed that has prompted the need for more money? Students and families are still struggling with loans, and more so with this past year. So why does the school think its appropriate to raise tuition?

15. Name: Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: It appears financially unnecessary and thus impossibly cruel to raise tuition for graduate students in the midst of these multiple overlapping crises.

16. Name: Sarah Weber Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: As a graduate student living paycheck to paycheck on an inadequate GTA stipend, the fees are already financially challenging. Increasing them will make it near impossible for me to pay without additional assistance.

17. Name: Ruiji Mindy Hu Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: As a full time, out-of-state, graduate student, I cannot enjoy campus life when I am having All my class online during pandemic. So lots of increase make no sense to me.

18. Name: Haylie Morrill Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: Raising tuition is absolutely absurd especially when we are in the midst of a pandemic. I understand the need to expand on available programs, however, this school is already fairly expensive in the first place. Additionally, in my year at Mason, I have visited campus maybe 10 times total. I have to pay for parking and I don't even use the things that the student fee is intended for. I'm sure other students are in the same boat. Bottom line is there are already a bunch of ridiculous fees we are charged and increasing them only hinders the morale of your student body.

19. Name: Kim magalona Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: They are already incredibly high and I am doing this degree online. There is no reason to increase tuition and fees when over half of the buildings on campus are not being used. Other campuses are also not being used so there is no need for a tuition increase.

20. Name: Chelsea Gray **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: I do not support the increase in tuition. First, GMU does NOT cover full tuition for GTA/GRAs who are out of state, meaning their cost will increase without a corresponding increase in pay. Second, GMU does not pay competitive wages to GTA/GRAs for an R1 research institute. Pre-Pandemic, I did not feel that GMU had adequately supported graduate students or graduate student research, despite the significant contributions of graduate students to the success and reputation of GMU. During the pandemic, grad student workloads have increased exponentially without an increase in compensation. This is notable as GTAs have been the bedrock of online teaching and have, in many cases, single-handedly ensured undergraduate student retention. Increasing grad student tuition is particularly reprehensible during the pandemic, as many graduate students will be forced to register for an extra 1-2 years due to COVID-19 research-related delays. George Mason loves to tout the research conducted by graduate students, but does not like to adequately fund, support, or protect those graduate students. It is unreasonable to expect graduate students to pay MORE during and following a pandemic in which they were largely forgotten in recovery plans. Finally, GMU is not currently competitive when it comes to attracting graduate students in many fields. GMU initially had its location (close to DC and Richmond), but with the widespread use of Zoom, this location is no longer the attraction it once was. An increase in tuition price, along with non-competitive compensation, poor (inter)national reputation due to several well-publicized scandals, and lack of strong, ethical, supportive campus community, means, as an institution, we will continue to lose the best and brightest researchers, as they turn to more well-run and supportive institutions. I personally know many people who were on the fence about joining GMU and decided against it due to these very concerns. While I understand research and support costs money, I think that there should be a tuition freeze until the university has adequately assess where the current funding is going, in particular funds given to upper administration and upper-level offices that are not providing a strong return on investment. Rather than increase the pay load of the poorest members of the GMU community, upper administrators should be proposing pay cuts of their own, as an act of solidarity for the economic impacts faced by graduate students like us, who may never recover from this (many of us have never recovered from 2008). I think a strong assessment should be made to find out who in upper administrative levels is OVERpaid, rather than putting increased financial pressure on underpaid graduate students.

21. Name: Kaitlin Murphy **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: As a full-time online student, it baffles me how the tuition could be increased when we currently pay an arm and a leg, AND we are expected to purchase tools like SPSS (paid version recommended by professor) or OCAI, and encouraged to go to conferences like SIOP, which the member and student discount still is over \$100. All this, even after there is a "distance learning fee" on my tuition bill. What does this cover if not the tools and resources needed remotely? GMU says it cares about diversity, equity, and inclusion, but this pay raise does not indicate to me that it does. It makes getting a good education increasingly elitist and out of reach for those who do not have the funds or who wish to stay out of debt.

22. Name: Patrick Healey Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: As a graduate student, an increase in tuition and fees would make it more difficult for me to continue attending, with the possible exception of an adjustment for inflation as it pertains to the services that the tuition and fees pay for. I have every confidence that the university will be able to fund the praiseworthy proposed initiatives by reassessing its current budget priorities.

23. Name: David Zeglen Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: This is an unconscionable move on behalf of the BoV to raise tuition and fees on grad students in the midst of a pandemic. Both grad and undergrad students alike have suffered and continue to suffer due to COVID, and it is reprehensible that there is a distinction being made between the two student groups in this way.

24. Name: Dhruv Deepak Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: I understand the rationale for proposing fee/tuition increases, however it would be interesting to review data on previous fee increases and corresponding benefit transferred to students. Additionally, from a personal perspective fees are approaching a stage where they are becoming unmanageable. As an international student, I already face limitations on access to scholarships and financial aid, so tuition increases don't really help me. The other mandatory fees - I'm sorry but everyone has to innovate and work with tightened budgets, passing the buck on to students is not the solution. Very underwhelming and vague proposal, this.

25. Name: Carol Petty Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: As a result of the pandemic, I have incurred multiple new expenses and experienced severe economic hardship. I was laid off in early March, separated from my family for more than 8 months, and had to find new housing (paying all the associated fees: moving costs, airfare, rent deposits, etc.). Last year, we paid the \$450 increase in Graduate Tuition. And, now again, in the midst of multiple economic hardships and disruptions to my life, George Mason's Board of Visitors is attempting to impose yet another tuition increase of \$441 on me and the rest of the Graduate Student body. I'm still working towards the same degree, receiving the same education, and studying at the same university. Yet, over a two-year period my tuition will have increased by \$891. In the BOV's eyes, are Graduate Students not experiencing the same hardships as undergraduate students? I do not have endless amounts of money to pay for my education. To put this in perspective, \$441 is 3/4 the cost of a month's rent for me. And \$891 is 5% of my annual income. This money is significant to the budgets of graduate students. Does this *public* university have any plan to work towards affordable university education? Is the only solution to the current crisis raising tuition on students? These kinds of policy push the crises of the current moment onto the backs of students who are already struggling. How long can my paychecks, credit cards, and student loans keep funding an ostensibly public university? This use of tuition increases as a primary solution will keep exasperating the student debt crisis. The return on my degree will not keep up with perpetual increases in the costs of obtaining that degree. Please reconsider this approach. Surely, the university can spare its graduate students yet another substantial increase in tuition.

26. Name: Terilee Edwards-Hewitt **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: While for undergraduates, there are no tuition increased due to economic challenges. Graduate students, many of whom are now unemployed, underemployed, and also parents or other caregivers, find themselves in economic hardships. A presentation I saw about the increase in student fees emphasized how it will help undergraduate students play video games and get faster internet speeds. This is the least important reason why such improvements should be met. I have no difficulty with wifi when on campus. It seems the fee increases benefit residential undergraduates, but does not help those who don't live on campus or graduate students.

27. Name: **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: Please don't share my name with my comment. I want to say that I am honestly incredibly disappointed to hear about this HUGE increase in tuition. I understand that Mason wants to have more research conducted by faculty and students, but why is this coming out of my pocket? Why doesn't GMU apply for grants to fund work instead of taking the money from a student who works hard to earn the money she gets? I get no financial support at all from my parents--I'm paying for my education and all my other expenses, like rent and electricity, directly out of my own pocket. Because of this increase, I will no longer be able to afford a payment plan and will instead need loans. I really don't want to take out loans but now have to, all because more people are applying for graduate programs now?? So sad. Sorry for the tone, but this is just absolutely ridiculous.

28. Name: Lindsay Smith **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: During a pandemic no less, these tuition increases are not feasible for graduate students. Also, given the differences in pay rate of graduate students across department, this does not seem equitable. Further, the reasoning for increasing tuition fees for graduate students and not undergraduate students is not backed in evidence.

29. Name: Shauna Rigaud **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: I don't think any fees should be increased during this time, even if considered "modest".

30. Name: Emond Dash **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: Any covid reductions? George Washington University reduced tuition by 10% at the start of the pandemic outbreak.

31. Name: Hailey **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: Out of state fees are too expensive. Especially during online learning I feel that I am paying for way more schooling than I am getting.

32. Name: Piper Robinson Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: Tuition is far too expensive as is, especially with our economic state at the moment and how hard it is for young adults to get enough money to even live comfortably. Out of everything, money stresses me out the most and affects me negatively as I am trying to figure out internships/jobs, school work, and scholarships not to mention I don't feel comfortable studying abroad just because of money no matter how much I really desire to. We are here for education, it's our initial reason for applying to college in the first place, the amount of tuition does not affect that but greater tuition harms the amount of students you could have due to many being forced to either go to community college or to the army. If colleges in Europe can have tuition at low costs and successfully have graduating students with low student debt, then why can't we? Why leave all of this on to the students who are just starting to make way into the world when the government should be paying a portion as well given the fact it did in the past? My focus should be on my education and grades, not on whether I can pay the tuition and adding onto my student loans.

33. Name: Victoria Sillo Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: Tuition is already expensive at GMU, especially for out-of-state students like myself. This year many of us have already been paying for services and amenities that were not available to us. Housing rates stayed the same despite having kitchens and other common spaces in the buildings locked and inaccessible to students, and meal plan prices increased despite the dining hall hours of operation being significantly cut down from previous years. To further increase these costs for the next year, while only offering what we can assume will be a return to the 2019 level of offerings, is unfair to students. That would be approximately a \$684 increase, or roughly 5.42% increase, from the published estimated tuition and board price of \$11,946 for undergraduates in 2019-2020 to the published proposed price of \$12,630 for 2021-2022. And unless these price increases will be accompanied by additional amenities for residential students and additional services or options for dining, it is unfair to expect us to pay so much more for exactly what we had in 2019 or less.

34. Name: Noor Rahat Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: As an out of state student, the tuition for undergraduate students is extremely high compared to in state students. Due to the pandemic, classes were online and I still had to pay the same price as an undergraduate student even though my classes were on Zoom rather than the campus. Next semester will be my first time living on campus as a recent transfer student and I'd greatly appreciate it if the tuition price could be equal and lower so both in-state and out of state can have the same benefits.

35. Name: Alexandria Hardin Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: It is appalling and disheartening that the board is even considering increasing the tuition and fees during a pandemic. A pandemic that has impacted every single one of their students negatively. I have yet to see and experience what these increases claim they do. \$400+ increase is an entire paycheck for me. I am working 4 jobs and barely surviving and CAPS had to decline me. Why do they insist on killing their students every year???

36. Name: Saahil Iyer **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: You've got to be kidding me. Thanks for not raising tuition, but screw you for raising everything else. We've BEEN paying full price for classes that were online and unable to access all the services that we should have had access too. This had to have been one of your most profitable semesters in a decade. Don't forget, a lot of our families have been hit hard by covid and it will take a while for everything to even approach normal. So why don't you cut us some slack and don't raise anything. Better yet, do something remotely human and make tuition and fees go DOWN for once in your life.

37. Name: Jessica Dauterive **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: Mason rightly rightly prides itself on the diversity of its student body. The proposed annual increase of \$546 for graduate students does not take into account the diverse lives and needs of the very students the university claims as part of its success. Voting in favor of raising graduate fees will reduce access to graduate education for many and increase the already overwhelming debt graduate students incur. Mason's graduate students are essential contributors to the innovative intellectual community on campus, gain recognition for the university nationally and internationally because of the excellence of their work, and constitute an essential and already-underpaid labor force for the university. Increasing fees for graduate students, especially during a global pandemic that is still creating personal and financial hardships for so many, signals that the university does not recognize or support the needs of Mason's graduate students and undermines the university's commitment to creating a more equitable and inclusive campus environment.

38. Name: Chelsea Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: I oppose raising fees and recommend a tuition freeze. If the university is concerned about money, the least members of the GMU community should not be targeted. Instead, members of the upper administration should sacrifice and offer to reduce paychecks. Alternatively, audits of upper administration offices should be conducted, to ensure that administrators are not overpaid and that we, as a community, are getting a strong return on investment from higher-level administrators. Graduate students are the backbone of the GMU community. They teach a large percentage of classes. It is the research supported by graduate students that bring prestige to GMU. And yet, they have not been adequately supported by the GMU administration during the pandemic. Tuition increases are particularly insidious right now, as many graduate students have to attend an extra 1-2 years due to COVID-19 related research delays.

Raising tuitions also causes the following issues:

1. Increased tuition fees reduce accessibility: graduate tuition and fee increases have a negative effect on the ability of disadvantaged students to pursue a graduate education.
2. Graduate student debt is already unbearable: increasing graduate tuition and fees will compel more graduate students to take out additional student loans, further mortgaging their future for an already uncertain economic present.
3. Raising tuition does not solve the university's financial issues: the issue is a broken funding model for public universities like GMU. The state has gradually withdrawn funding from public universities, and without a robust progressive taxation system in place for public post-secondary education, tuition and fee increases will only further embolden the BoV to continue to shift the burden onto graduate students.
4. COVID has halted graduate research: many graduate students have been forced to suspend their research due to COVID, and will have to subsequently delay their research, resulting in additional years of enrollment in their program; years that will require them to take on more debt to complete their degree, now with an added burden of increased tuition and fees.
5. Everyone has been affected by COVID: many students, including graduate students, have lost, or had to deal with, sick family members, spouses, or partners during the pandemic--graduate students themselves may have contracted COVID. These difficult situations have frequently impacted graduate students' ability to financially sustain themselves, not just undergraduate students.
6. Graduate students are also parents: many graduate students have children, and have had to deal with managing at-home childcare, which often involves taking extended and unpaid sick leave from their jobs in order to care for their children, and step in as part-time educators.

39. Name: Nikita Lad Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: Increasing FY2022 tuition and fees presented by Ms. O'Neal is highly unacceptable to an out of state PhD student like me. The total \$546 increase that would go to "intercollegiate athletics, recreational programs, etc." is bizarre in the times of COVID and even later. COVID has already taken a toll on our research efforts! Paying out of state tuition fees amidst the pandemic and without stipend is affecting graduate students enormously. The thought of further tuition increase at GMU is appalling and I urge the respective authorities to freeze the graduate tuition rates. This would especially help PhD students by providing a peace of mind that they can carry on with their important research without worrying of tuition raises. Moving the university's revenue debt on students who have a family to take care as well as their own studies may deter students from pursuing their post-graduation. Increasing tuition fees in times of crises or when students and their families are trying to recover from this crises along with managing their studies is intolerable.

40. Name: Shawn Smith Mason Affiliation: Student

Comment: I am writing to voice my concern regarding the proposed tuition increase for graduate students. I am already struggling financially while juggling graduate school and raising two children. Below are a number of reasons for why I object to the proposed increases:

1. Increased tuition fees reduce accessibility: graduate tuition and fee increases have a negative effect on the ability of disadvantaged students to pursue a graduate education.
2. Graduate student debt is already unbearable: increasing graduate tuition and fees will compel more graduate students to take out additional student loans, further mortgaging their future for an already uncertain economic present.
3. Raising tuition does not solve the university's financial issues: the issue is a broken funding model for public universities like GMU. The state has gradually withdrawn funding from public universities, and without a robust progressive taxation system in place for public post-secondary education, tuition and fee increases will only further embolden the BoV to continue to shift the burden onto graduate students.
4. COVID has halted graduate research: many graduate students have been forced to suspend their research due to COVID, and will have to subsequently delay their research, resulting in additional years of enrollment in their program; years that will require them to take on more debt to complete their degree, now with an added burden of increased tuition and fees.

*Personally, I have had to completely change my proposed project twice since covid started. I am currently conducting research that has no funding. I am paying for all expenses out of my own savings. I will now have difficulty covering any increases in fees.

5. Everyone has been affected by COVID: many students, including graduate students, have lost, or had to deal with, sick family members, spouses, or partners during the pandemic--graduate students themselves may have contracted COVID. These difficult situations have frequently impacted graduate students' ability to financially sustain themselves, not just undergraduate students.
6. Graduate students are also parents: many graduate students have children, and have had to deal with managing at-home childcare, which often involves taking extended and unpaid sick leave from their jobs in order to care for their children, and step in as part-time educators.

41. Name: Sharrell Hassell-Goodman **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: This written statement is to oppose the graduate student tuition and fee increase. Graduate students are already struggling to secure funding for the current tuition costs with minimal assistantship opportunities or restrictions on assistantships for graduate students to complete the demands of graduate school (assistantship length limits etc.). Further this serves as an additional barrier for historically marginalized students that have already had to navigate an institutional environment not created with them in mind.

Our current economic times are uncertain. Many students have had to manage the additional challenge during this national pandemic, why would we think that NOW is an appropriate time to increase student fees? Student fees were increased three years ago. Which means that as I student I will experience two tuition increases before I graduate. This really sets the tone that George Mason is not concerned about making education affordable, in direct contradiction with our value of inclusivity.

While I understand that the university must bare the burden of a broken funding model that is precarious and constantly in flux, the burden should not be placed on students, in particular graduate students. Graduate students are already a vulnerable student population in terms of exploitation of labor, labor not adequately compensated, and the inability to maintain outside employment in addition to academic demands.

COVID has completely shifted the landscape for graduate students. Many students have not been able to adhere to their academic program schedules as a result of taking on additional responsibilities such as taking care of family. Numerous graduate students are trying to teach their children along with managing their school responsibilities. Additionally the added burden and stress brought on by social distancing expectations and restricted access to older family members has taken a toll. Many students have lost family members as a result of COVID now is not the appropriate time to increase graduate student fees. Increasing tuition at this time would be unconscionable. This statement is to once again oppose the graduate student tuition and fee increase.

****Please excuse any typos as this is written on my cellular device****

42. Name: LeNaya Hezel **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: The raising of graduate tuition fees and no other student population is an inequitable and out of touch with the graduate student experience. The reality is that graduate students are being exploited as underpaid or unpaid employees to meet administrative, teaching, programmatic needs on behalf of the university in their roles as GAs, GRAs, and GPAs while also pursuing their academic goals, and maintaining quality of life in a pandemic. The expectation that the increased are minimal are dehumanizing for a population where there are little to no financial support with the exceptions of financial loans. By raising tuition and fees for graduate students only, you are potentially contributing to the educational loan crisis since increased costs will only burden students today and in the future. Graduate students are being commodified in a way to meet financial shortcomings with no increased return on investment for increased graduate resources to support us academically, physically, emotionally, and professionally. In addition, the fact that other degree type tuition and fees are not being adjusted emphasizes the additional burden that the BOV is placing on the backs of graduate students.

I urge you to reconsider alternative measures to financially make ends meet that does require increasing tuition and fees for graduate students who are already carrying an unreasonable amount of responsibility to keep GMU afloat.

43. Name: Dylan V. Scarton **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: Excerpt from Petition written by Lilianna Deveneau and signed by me and many others:

"The COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating impacts on our society, especially for those most vulnerable. Despite this, George Mason University's budget has remained net positive due to management decisions, support from the Commonwealth, and a 3% increase in graduate student enrollment.

While the Board of Visitors has decided not to raise undergraduate student tuition for academic year because of the economic hardships the pandemic has caused, they have not extended this consideration to the graduate and professional students, who often have less monetary support, despite seeing a huge need.

The Board has, however, proposed a \$441 flat increase for all graduate students to support graduate stipends and doctoral scholarships "due to the increased demand for graduate programs," along with a 5.0% increase in housing and 3.7% raise in dining fees, which would primarily impact undergraduates.

The Board of Visitors and university leadership are well aware of the financial needs of GMU students. Last year the GMU Foundation created a Student Emergency Assistance Fund to help cover students' essential needs. This spring alone, GMU students requested over \$5.6 million in emergency funds from 1,672 students to pay for housing, food, and utilities, with \$1.1 million awarded among 728 students (GMU Student Emergency Fund 2021). Requested funds for 2020 were \$16.1 million from 6,814, with \$5 million awarded to 4,510 students (GMU Student Emergency Fund 2021).

That means more than \$9 million of requested funds by students in dire situations were unfulfilled since the pandemic started, or over 70%.

Students sincerely thank the donors who contributed to fundraising efforts.

Despite this, all Board of Visitors members—with the exception of Visitor Edward Rice—voted in May 2020 to increase graduate student tuition by \$450 for this academic year. They

did so with (Former) Rector Davis's amendments, including a decree that "If additional federal or state funds are received by Mason, priority consideration shall be given to reducing tuition" (BOV May 2020 Meeting Minutes, p. 15).

GMU has received millions in additional aid and expects to receive more. In fact, the university did NOT need to dip into their financial reserves this year as they had originally forecasted. Yet Former Rector Davis's amendment has seemingly been forgotten...

Raising tuition and other fees amidst a pandemic—for the second time—is NOT the way to improve mental health and wellbeing of students, no matter how "moderate"!! These are not MODERATE to us!!

In fact, The American Educational Research Association, The Spencer Foundation, The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), The National Council for Higher Education, The National Science Foundation, New America, and others recommend providing financial support—not creating additional financial burdens (<https://doi.org/10.3102/aera20211>; CGS 2021).

Reports show a mental health crisis among graduate students, and universities "must pay special attention to the needs of graduate students, many of whom face unusual pressure from having to keep up with their work and family obligations while navigating a career. Graduate students are less likely than undergraduates to feel that they have access to mental-health care" (Woolston 2021; see Zaneis and Williams June 2020).

Financial hardships are compounding this year; many graduate, professional, and undergraduate students lost their jobs, as well as many of their parents and partners. In Virginia, unemployment payments were backlogged by more than 80,000 cases, with people waiting for months to receive support and 8,000 still outstanding today. Many of us continue to face food insecurity and an inability to pay for rent and other necessities.

Given the unparalleled amount of financial and emotional strain, we request that no financial increases be made for Academic Year 2021-2022."

44. Name: Anonymous **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: The pandemic has displaced millions of Americans -- now is not the time to increase tuition or fees. Enrollment is at record levels, equity is on the line, why raise tuition now? At most, the Board should consider a cohort model, similar to the UC Regents, where each entering class has a reliable amount throughout their education, rather than wondering if tuition or fees will increase year after year.

45. Name: Esther Namubiru **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: Thank you for the opportunity to voice my comments. The BOV plans to increase graduate students' tuition, yet it knows that graduate students barely have funds for other costs like conferences, research, or their day-to-day living expenses. How are students expected to pay for their studies when they can barely pay for the smaller expenses above?

The BOV knows that graduate students have a lower student retention rate (Strayhorn, 2012) and increasing their tuition is a sure way to chase more of them away. Yet, it still plans to proceed with tuition increase. Rather than increasing the tuition, the BOV needs to look for ways to support these students research at Mason, research which will yield greater monetary rewards in the form of grants for Mason.

Minority graduate students like international students, African American women, and single parents make up an important part of Mason's graduate student population. The research shows that these are the students who will suffer the most when tuition increases occur and thus leave. This means increasing tuition is a sure way to eliminate diversity in Mason's graduate student pool.

BOV, if you know these facts and if you care for the retention, diversity, and success of Mason's graduate students, do not increase the tuition. Get other more creative out-of-the-box ideas to save this important group.

46. Name: Laura Miller **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: Taxing' graduate education at Mason is the end result of adding a \$441 flat fee to graduate tuition. This is a tax because it is being added on to the current tuition rate and being shouldered by the end user, regardless of ability to pay, making this a regressive tax at that. "..., states often use higher education as a flexible budget item because universities can use tuition to offset state funding declines. However, this policy choice transfers the financial burden of higher education to students and their families, which hinders broad access to higher education (Cabera 2015 - <https://cabrerablog.gmu.edu/when-public-funding-of-higher-education-dwindles-where-does-the-money-go/>).

This means reduced access to graduate education by the most unrepresented demographics in state, first generation students and students from families with less economic power than others - no matter their racial or ethnic background.

Raising graduate tuition rates also reduces Mason's ability to attract international students to graduate programs. The policies of the Trump administration coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic have already reduced the number of international students able to attend in-person classes and conduct research at Mason. Piling an additional graduate tuition fee hike on top of the already increased rate international students pay is also likely to reduce their enrollment at Mason, and cause the university to lose out on our share of the approximate \$US 40 billion brought into the US economy by international students annually (NAFSA 2019, <https://www.nafsa.org/about/about-nafsa/new-nafsa-data-despite-stagnant-enrollment>).

You can't get blood from a stone, but this is 'the ask' being placed on individual graduate students by this proposed tuition increase.

47. Name: Esma H. Celebioglu **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: I am a PhD candidate at GMU and I'd like to express my concerns about the decision to be discussed to increase tuition and fees. I believe that this decision will negatively affect all Mason students regardless of their degree levels. Most of us have already been affected by COVID-19 pandemic and we have to deal with the problems caused by the pandemic. Many students, including graduate students, have lost, or had to deal with, sick family members, spouses, or partners during the pandemic--graduate students themselves may have contracted COVID. These difficult situations have already impacted graduate students' ability to financially sustain themselves, not just undergraduate students. Increasing tuition and fees will compel more students to take out additional student loans, further mortgaging their future for an already uncertain economic present. Last year, the BoV passed an earlier tuition and fee increase for graduate students. The issue is a broken funding model for public universities like GMU. The state has gradually withdrawn funding from public universities, and without a robust progressive taxation system in place for public post-secondary education, tuition and fee increases will only further embolden the BoV to continue to shift the burden onto graduate students. This decision will have a negative effect on the ability of disadvantaged students to pursue a graduate education. Thank you.

48. Name: Dianna Belman **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: The pandemic has taken a massive toll on students and their families in many areas of life including financial. This should be reason enough to not to move forward with a tuition increase at this time. It is frankly disrespectful of the horrors that some of us have gone through this past year.

49. Name: David Zeglen **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: Raising graduate tuition and fees reduces accessibility to graduate programs for BIPOCs, working class students, and first-generation students; the very core of student diversity that Mason boasts is it so proud of. If Mason genuinely cares about promoting diversity and inclusion at GMU, then the BoV must not pass an increase in tuition and fees for graduate students, since such increases fly in the face of social justice for many minorities who have been disproportionately impacted by COVID over the past year and forces them to take on additional student debt, while restricting their ability to complete their programs or enter into said programs in the first place.

50. Name: Shauna Rigaud **Mason Affiliation:** Student

Comment: I'm speaking in opposition of this funding increase. Graduate students are already dealing with significant financial burdens from school loans and in this time of COVID. Raising tuition does not solve the university's financial issues, rather masks it, making fee increases the only resolve the university has. The true issue is a broken funding model for public universities like GMU. We need to stop shifting the bill to students and develop a funding model that does not place students in amounting debt, year after year. This is not sustainable.

51. Name: Donna Tanner Fagerholm Mason Affiliation: Alumna

Comment: Good Day Members of the George Mason University Board of Directors, Thank you for this opportunity to speak and for your personal service to George Mason University. My name is Donna Tanner Fagerholm, and I am an alumna of GMU, having received my Master of Education in Educational Leadership in August of 2001. It is a degree that allowed me to serve as an assistant Principal and then principal in Prince William County Public Schools for 14 years. In that capacity I was tasked with not only instructional leadership, but school security and human resource tasks at the school level of hiring, supervising and evaluating. I am also a relative of a GMU Police Department officer. My work and personal experiences, as well as my educational tie to GMU compels me to speak today in order to ensure that you are aware of the current personnel situation in the GMU Police Department. On March 26, 2021, there was a press release by J. Caleb Jones, Esq. which can be viewed at the link below. Mr. Jones is representing 2 GMUPD officers who are alleging retaliation for reporting an incident of excessive force. The court will determine the validity of their allegations. However, I must tell you that because of my personal connection, I know that they are not the only ones who have faced retaliation for whistleblowing. Unless these issues are addressed more litigation is on the way. The GMUPD Leadership has taken actions that in other places of employment would result in disciplinary action or firing. Additionally, the attrition rate of officers should be a clue that all is not well. I would ask that this board require an in depth, impartial, outside investigation of the senior leadership at the GMU Police Department. Recent public events in our society cry out for transparency and fairness. Bringing problems up for correction should not be punished. Thank you for your time and attention to this profoundly serious matter.

Donna Tanner Fagerholm

http://www.fairfaxunderground.com/forum/file.php?2,file=449099,filename=PRESS_RELEASE_-_03.26.2021.pdf

52. Name: MB Mason Affiliation: Staff

Comment: I oppose any increase in graduate student fees for the coming academic year, or even the following year.

Graduate student stipends in many departments - especially the essential but often underfunded fields which encourage critical thinking and support empathy - already leave graduate students living in precarious financial situations.

Consider the fact that some programs' stipends are under 20K, which is barely enough to cover living expenses for Fairfax County, as per MIT's living wage calculator

(<https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/51059>) (NB: While a stipend of 17K/academic year may appear to be above minimum wage for 20hr/week, contracts forbid students from taking on any other work; when therefore considered at 40hr/week it is above the minimum recommended living wage for a single adult with no children of \$19.92).

While I understand that the pandemic has increased financial pressure on the University, it has also increased financial pressure on individuals. One of the strengths of George Mason is the diversity of its student body - graduate and undergraduate - and that diversity is not just in race but also economic background, disability, life stage, country of origin, and more. I would ask the Board to remember that many of our graduate students are not from middle class backgrounds with no dependents, able to rely on family members for financial support when needed. They are single parents, divorced, second career, veterans, people with disabilities, people who are caregivers for high-risk family members including elders as well as children. Increasing the financial burden on our graduate students means facing the possibility that we will lose the diverse students who make Mason strong, and perpetuating barriers to success for marginalized communities.

53. Name: Donna Tanner Fagerholm Mason Affiliation: Alumna

Comment: Good Day Members of the George Mason University Board of Directors, Thank you for this opportunity to speak and for your personal service to George Mason University. My name is Donna Tanner Fagerholm, and I am an alumna of GMU, having received my Master of Education in Educational Leadership in August of 2001. It is a degree that allowed me to serve as an assistant Principal and then principal in Prince William County Public Schools for 14 years. In that capacity I was tasked with not only instructional leadership, but school security and human resource tasks at the school level of hiring, supervising and evaluating. I am also a relative of a GMU Police Department officer. My work and personal experiences, as well as my educational tie to GMU compels me to speak today in order to ensure that you are aware of the current personnel situation in the GMU Police Department. On March 26, 2021, there was a press release by J. Caleb Jones, Esq. I have attached the release. Mr. Jones is representing 2 GMUPD officers who are alleging retaliation for reporting an incident of excessive force. The court will determine the validity of their allegations. However, I must tell you that because of my personal connection, I know that they are not the only ones who have faced retaliation for whistleblowing, and more litigation is on the way. I am aware of personnel actions by the GMUPD Leadership that would have had me relieved of my building keys and walked out to my car to face due process and then firing from my position. Additionally, the attrition rate of officers should be a clue that all is not well.

I would ask that this board require an in depth, impartial, outside investigation of the senior leadership at the GMU Police Department. Recent public events in our society cry out for transparency and fairness. Bringing problems up for correction should not be punished.

Thank you for your time and attention to this profoundly serious matter.

Donna Tanner Fagerholm

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OFFICE OF FELLOWSHIPS

2020 – 2021 AWARD RECIPIENTS

LaNitra M. Berger, Ph.D.

Senior Director of Fellowships

Kristina Medlock

Graduate Professional Assistant

Daniel "DT" Schatten

Personal Statements Specialist

Zachary Barnes

Personal Statement Specialist

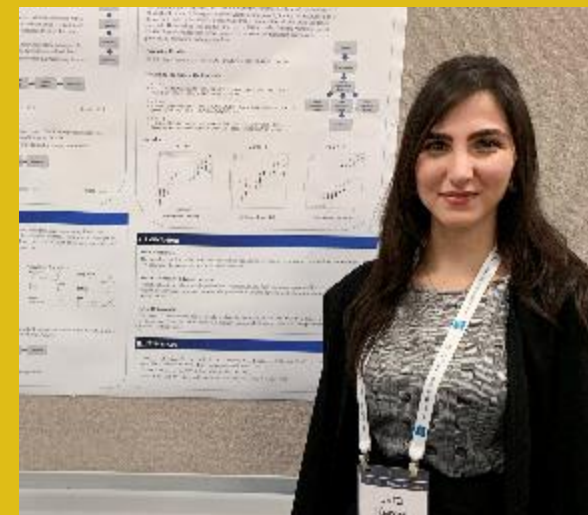
OFFICE OF FELLOWSHIPS

WHAT WE DO

MISSION STATEMENT

The Office of Fellowships aims to raise the academic profile of Mason and its students by encouraging talented undergraduate students to explore fellowship opportunities and resources available to advance their academic and professional goals. The Office is committed to inclusive excellence practices and specifically seeks to mentor underrepresented students. The Office provides a supportive and friendly environment for students with a strong focus on mentoring and cultivating academic excellence.

Since 2010, we have helped students secure more than \$2.1 million in external funding for research, education abroad, graduate school and public service.



OFFICE OF FELLOWSHIPS

BOREN AWARDS

Funded by the US Department of Defense

Supports long-term study abroad of critical languages outside of Western Europe for undergraduate (Scholarship) and graduate students (Fellowship)

Scholarship

- Alexis Massenbourg, Senegal

Fellowship

- Marguerite Franklin, Japan
- Reyhan Koyash, Turkey

OFFICE OF FELLOWSHIPS

CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP

Funded by the US Department of State, Critical Language Scholarships are fully funded, intensive, short-term study abroad programs for the study of critical languages.

- **Nathan Danielson, Indonesian**
- **Brigid Gill, Arabic**
- **Abigail (Abby) Hawkins, Arabic**
- **Daniela Martinez, Chinese**
- **Reyhan Koyash, Turkish**

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FULBRIGHT US STUDENT PROGRAM

The nation's flagship cultural exchange program, celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Funded by the US Department of State.

- **Moni Islam, Archaeology, Durham University, UK**

The UK awards are the oldest and most prestigious part of the Fulbright program. Each university offers only ONE award.

OFFICE OF FELLOWSHIPS

GOLDWATER SCHOLARSHIP

The nation's highest honor for undergraduates who are aspiring to research careers in STEM fields. Funded by the US federal government.

- **Jackie Luu – Wildlife Conservation, Wildlife Endocrinology**

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NSF GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM (GRFP)

Full funding for graduate study in STEM and social science fields for students demonstrating the potential to make a broader impact on society through their work.

- **Natasha Maria Latouf - George Mason University**
Physics & Astronomy – Astronomy & Astrophysics
- **Doreen Joseph – University of California, Davis**
Computer Security & Privacy
- **Elizabeth Ankrah – University of California, Irvine**
Human Computer Interaction
- **Abbas Idris – University of Pennsylvania**
Bioengineering

OFFICE OF FELLOWSHIPS

2020 – 2021 AWARD RECIPIENTS

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF
OUR APPLICANTS AND
AWARDEES!**

