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## Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability: An Editorial by Provost Fatma Mili



**Provost Fatma Mili:** Fatma is the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. Fatma is also a Professor of Computer Science in the Seymour and Esther Padnos College of Engineering and Computing (PCEC). [Fatma shared her thoughts on the theme of the 2022-2023 UAS Newsletter through this editorial.](#) This is what she had to say.

The theme of this newsletter, Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability, is important, fitting, and timely. It is at the same time a reaffirmation of the character of GVSU, and a call for increased focused attention towards equity and sustainability.

The themes of equity and sustainability are interwoven in GVSU's genesis, development, and future. The idea of GVSU was sparked by a congressional report that documented that young people in Southwest Michigan had lower access to higher education and suggested the

need for a local 4-year college. Grand Rapids Economist William Seidman rallied the community to realize this goal of bringing quality education to all Western Michigan youth. GVSU was born to address inequity.

GVSU successive presidents have, each in their own way, shown foresight and commitment to these two values. Our first president, Dr. James Zumberge was a geologist who led several expeditions to Antarctica. He contributed to the understanding of climate change. To honor his legacy, Cape Zumberge and Zumberge Coast were named after him. Our former president, Dr. Tom Haas is a chemist who was solicited for his expertise to shape the cleanup of the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the second biggest spill in human history. President Mantella brings renewed energy and urgency to equity. She gave it a prominent place in our strategic plan and in all of our actions. She also led the way on sustainability by being one of the early signatories of the Presidents' [Climate Leadership Commitments](#) pledging to "explore bold and innovative solutions and to lead in climate action and sustainable solutions."

GVSU is also surrounded and supported by a community that is deeply committed to creating an equitable and sustainable society. The [Padnos](#) have been national leaders in their work to reducing waste and modeling the use of renewable energy in their business and in

## UAS/ECS Members 2022-2023:

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Mingyu Wu

their partnerships with GVSU. The [Huntings](#) have been very deliberate in making Steelcase an environmentally conscious business and in supporting high risk high return research at GVSU mostly around the protection and restoration of the area's water sources. The Anis Water Resource Institute is named after [Robert B. Annis](#), another GVSU friend whose life and work epitomize the values of access to education in all of its forms, and honoring our environment by discovering and protecting it.

Faculty and staff at GVSU continue to cultivate these values in their work and in the culture they create. GVSU continues to be assessed as a gold performer by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. Year after year GVSU receives the highest possible number of points in both research and education thanks to the wealth of a depth and breadth of educational and engagement programs around sustainability in almost every college and every discipline ranging from biology, geology, geography, and health to cite a few.

The theme of equity and sustainability is also a call to recognize the growing urgency and the systemic nature of these two challenges. In a recent keynote address Janet Napolitano, former Secretary for Homeland Security, and former President of the UC system, qualified these problems as "frog in a boiling pan" problems. Like the frog in the warming water, we can be lulled into ignoring the change until it is too late. Napolitano called for universities to take the lead to address these problems because they are uniquely equipped to do so. Universities have the intellectual capacity and combined expertise; they have the temperament to think long term; they have the vocation to be the risk takers and social innovators; and they are often fueled by the passion and expectations of their students. She concluded with the call to all of us: "let's not let the frog boil, and let's not pass this problem to our children." Let's "prove to be better ancestors", as stated by Bryan Alexander in his book [Universities on Fire](#). I look forward to reading your thoughts and working with you all on this.

## Other Contributions from the Provost Office

[Ed Aboufadel](#): Ed is Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost and ex-officio member of ECS and UAS. Ed's faculty rank is Professor of Mathematics in the Department of Mathematics of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). [Ed shared his thoughts on the theme of the 2022-2023 UAS Newsletter by focusing on what he captioned, "GVSU wasn't a COVID-free bubble. We're not a bias-free bubble, either".](#) This is what Ed had to say.



This winter I have been thinking about the boundaries between the university and the rest of the world when it comes to equity. What has been on my mind starts with our 2020-22 experience with COVID.

As most know, I was a member of GVSU's Virus Action Team. As I look back over the heart of the pandemic, I think we can divide our experiences with COVID into the "Before Omicron" period through about Thanksgiving 2021 and then the "Omicron"-dominant era of today. During the first period, COVID numbers waxed and waned, following a path that often diverged with what was happening in the broader communities of Kent and Ottawa

counties. For instance, we had an early surge in August 2020 that was not in sync with the broader communities, and we also had quieter times when COVID was worse elsewhere. The complexity of bringing thousands of students together combined with our testing, masking, isolation/quarantine, ventilation, cleaning, and social distancing efforts led to this dynamic. Another factor was that the GV community had a higher level of vaccination than in the counties, even before our vaccination mandate.

Once the Omicron era began though, COVID trajectories on campus started to strongly

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Patricia Thomas

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resemble what was happening in the region and the state. Most likely this was due to the transmissibility of Omicron and the challenge of maintaining the controls and operations that we had in place during 2020-21. Today, the best way to evaluate COVID risks at GVSU is to [monitor what is happening statewide via wastewater testing](#).

What does this have to do with being ready for equity? Recently, I attended the 2023 American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Washington, DC, and one of the sessions was called “The Science of Implicit Bias”. Among the speakers at that session, Mahzarin Banaji (Harvard University) is well-known as the co-developer of the [Implicit Association Test](#), an online survey that seeks to measure implicit biases. (Her lab defines this as “culturally learned associations that may conflict with our consciously held beliefs”.) The test has been available since 1998, and today there are 25 years of [publicly-available data](#) that can be analyzed.

Our students, faculty, and staff bring their implicit biases with them to campus, and I suspect that campus-wide testing for implicit bias would reveal measures that would be comparable to general statewide and regional results. Just like COVID. And it is probably not an overstatement to say that we live in a pandemic of implicit bias. Being “ready for equity” sometimes feels like a hopeless task.

All in not lost, though; we have agency to address something this important, and progress can be made. As a university community, we can come to understand how to [disrupt the impacts of implicit bias](#), as we disrupted the impacts of COVID. We can learn how to reduce the ways that our biases influence outcomes. And there are tools such as the wonderful [Outsmarting Implicit Bias](#) site, which has modules such as “Debias the Classroom” and “Changes in Bias Across America: An Explorable Map”. That latter includes a demonstration that over the past generation, measures of implicit anti-gay attitudes have declined nationwide. (Recent [explicit](#) expressions of this bias is another story.)

In the end, we could not be a sanctuary from COVID, and I don’t believe we can be a sanctuary from implicit bias, either. But as an educational community, we can learn to “outsmart” it and to track developments over time.

**Lisa Surman:** Lisa is the Faculty Governance Assistant in the Office of the Provost. [Lisa shared her thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to her.](#) This is what Lisa had to say.



Watching new students arrive in the fall always brings me joy; whether it’s seeing the excitement on their faces as they recognize friends on campus, or the bewildered look as they navigate the buildings to find their class. The winter semester brings joy of a different kind as I see students returning their books or buying their cap and gown for commencement.

These two distinct occasions in the semesters make me wonder about the time (years) in between. It’s not just academic performance or grades that keep the students here. There is something more. Something intangible. They want to belong. To be part of the Laker family. We must be prepared to meet their needs – whether it is their first day on campus – or their last. To be Laker Ready for Equity and Sustainability we must

collectively share the best that Grand Valley has to offer so all feel included and have a space to share, learn and grow.



## Faculty and Student Senate President Respond to the Call for Contribution in the 2022-2023 Senate Newsletter: Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability

One of the core values of GVSU is the use of a student-centric philosophy as the guiding principle in which decisions are made short-term and long-term. The theme of our 2023 UAS Newsletter is Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability. What does it mean to be Lakers Ready? To me, being Lakers Ready in 2023 and beyond entails a paradigm shift in which we redesign and reimagine the tools we have at our disposal in assessing our students and learners. In their book, titled, "[Hacking Deficit Thinking](#)", nationally certified school psychologists Byron McClure and Kelsie Reed demonstrated how we can be Lakers Ready by shifting our focus from student blame to a focus on student strengths. But how can this be done? As educators, faculty and staff, we have to reflect on the role we play in the education of our students and whether our actions (for example teaching practices) contribute to some of the broader structural inequities. Ultimately, our goal should be to help all our students reach their highest potential, and to create a sense of belonging for all our students and learners in our Laker community.

Taking into consideration current and historical perspectives, equity is generally considered as the fair distribution of opportunities, resources, and power. In our context, equity is viewed both as an outcome and a process. In her writings, [Gabriela Alcalde](#), Executive Director of the [Elmina B. Foundation](#), says, "equity is about justice and fairness and about how power operates within a particular society or institution". What a beautiful definition. Even better, she went ahead and challenged organizations on how to approach equity by saying, "If the term equity is to retain the integrity inherent in its meaning, then organizations need to ground their claims of working toward equity in changes to their structures, practices, policies, and leadership models".

Sustainability as a concept is more nuanced and should be viewed through a lens that acknowledges the full environmental, and socio-economic dimensions of the term. Equity and sustainability are intricately linked terms.

As a student-centric institution, we hold ourselves accountable for the role we play in helping our students navigate their educational journey at GV. The recruitment and retention of new and returning Lakers, respectively, is everyone's job. Collectively, faculty, staff and students play a role in creating a sense of belonging that makes a new Laker or returning Laker want to come to GV and stay at GV. The Division of Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach assesses the students in the recruitment process. Faculty, staff, and students involved in First Year Advising and Registration (FYAR) help new students register for classes and serve as resource for the initial orientation. During follow-up orientation, and transitions, everyone is involved in helping in the "onboarding" of new Lakers. Being Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability means we take a comprehensive approach, through fair access to resources, opportunities, accountability, and intentionality to improve livability and viability within our GV community.

What kinds of strategic steps can we take to scale advising and retention efforts at each of the colleges to university-wide student success strategy that is aligned with our strategic goals on retention, completion, and equity? That is a good question I pose to invite us all for reflection and dialogue. We have created sustainability by developing a campus-wide student success network focused on sharing best practices on retention and creating a sense of belonging. We can improve on this based on lessons learned and be Laker Ready.

To help faculty in formulating their articles, the following prompts were shared: (1) When we say we are "Lakers Ready", what does that mean to you? (2) With the changing demographics in admissions and as we seek new learners, what are some of the resources



you think will be needed to help us all be ready for the new learners? (3) What does equity mean to you and in the context of the GV community? (4) How do we integrate equity into sustainability plans through an inclusive process? (5) Are the equity goals we have set as an institution to address the needs of marginalized members (broadly defined) of our GV community working? (6) Based on question 5, what equity goals are working very well and what equity goals need more work? (7) Based on question 5, what equity goals are missing?

**Yatin Bhagwat:** Yatin is a Professor of Finance in the Seidman College of Business. Yatin is also a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. [Yatin shared his thoughts on the theme of the 2022-2023 UAS Newsletter by focusing on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to him.](#) This is what Yatin had to say.



Lakers are being prepared to adopt diversity and equity-based practices formally across curricula at the university and informally by institutions in the community. The General Education program, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies, and College of Education and Community Innovation are some of the key promoters of sustainability-based initiatives. Lately

Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) framework designed by regulators is being embedded in ways to generate value for all stakeholders in business. Curricula in business schools are being redesigned to meet these new challenges. Business majors are made to understand the importance of equity and diversity.

Grand Valley State University actively promotes and sponsors events in civic organizations in the region. The Political Science Department takes active part in the promotion of Great Decisions Series held by the World Affairs Council of West Michigan. Experts are invited to speak to community members that include Lakers – students and professors on diverse topics such as Climate Change, Energy, Human Migrations, and Economic Sanctions. These lectures evince interest among the broader Lakers community.

Chiaroscuro International Film series began in 2006 and is excellent evidence of the keen interest among Lakers in the Department of Visual and Media Arts in promoting world cultures and diversity on a screen covering diverse themes as Borders, Journeys, Togetherness, Then and Now, and many more. The well curated Art Galleries across campuses attract attention from visitors as they appreciate the work of local, national, and international artists.

Lakers are being prepared to change the equity and sustainability equations in the world. As they learn to be agents of change, they must be willing to face the brunt and as they become aware of the challenges they learn the virtues of fortitude, resilience, and temperance. These qualities then enable them to sustain and conquer the vulnerabilities resulting from weaknesses e.g., from debt and feeling of deprivation. Lakers are tied by the paradoxical chain of Hope. Those who are tied by the chain of Hope are on the move and sustain themselves. Lakers learn to practice sustainability by moving across campuses using a public mode of transportation – Laker Line.

**Barb Hoogenboom & Cara Cadena:** Barb is a Professor of Physical Therapy in the College of Health Professions (CHP). Barb is also the Chair of the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) for 2022-2023. Cara is a faculty in the University Libraries and Head of Collections and Digital Scholarship. Cara is also a member of UCC for 2022-2023. [Barb and Cara shared their thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to them.](#) This is what they had to say.

Lakers Ready means.....ensuring that GVSU provides high quality, adaptable, and excellent curriculum to support student learning.



As new graduate and undergraduate learners from all walks of life and widely variant experiences arrive at GVSU, we, as a community, must be prepared with clear curriculum resources to support their journey. These include having an array of contemporary programs (Majors, Minors, Certificates, and Badges) and robust course offerings to address the needs of our learners and the needs of society. Students must be able to chart a path to meet their educational goals. Providing clear expectations for learners regarding their responsibilities related to courses and degrees is paramount to success at GVSU.

The University Curriculum Committee (UCC) takes seriously its role in guiding and directing curricular processes, when provided with proposals from faculty. With contributions from elected representatives from each of the colleges, the UCC assesses the value, institutional alignment, and consistency with university standards of a variety of proposals. Related to course proposals we seek clarity and conciseness, alongside alignment of the Course Descriptions, Learning Objectives, Topics, and Methods of Evaluation, included in the Syllabus of Record. With Program Proposals we evaluate the program in its entirety and ensure that catalog copy is clear and will effectively guide students. As any



new curriculum or curricular changes are proposed, the UCC reviews each proposal through a student-centric lens by asking “*does this make sense for students, are the expectations clear*”? We also consider “*how does/will this benefit students*”? We strive for clarity in expectations, outcomes, and program offerings so that students know what they can expect from their academic experience, while keeping the excellence and integrity of a Grand Valley education at the forefront.

With the changing demographics in admissions, the UCC has seen a lot of change in course offerings (topics, delivery/format, combined degrees, stackable credentials, etc). The addition of various hybrid and online courses support traditional and returning/adult learners providing accessibility, flexibility, and choice, while retaining the high academic standards for which Grand Valley is known.

The UCC is intentional about building in efficiencies and changing our approaches to reviews in order to evolve our process. We have created subgroups to update and create documents that outline our approaches to this work in order to find consistency and expediency in the process. We are updating SAIL forms to align with new course offerings and adding clear expectations for proposers. We are talking with everyone involved with the



curriculum to make them aware of these changes and to build consensus around the process.

Believing curriculum to be an ever-changing landscape, we seek to be responsive, supportive, and nimble in our work to best support our community and ensure students are “Laker Ready”.

**Rachel Campbell:** Rachel is a Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). Rachel is also a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. [Rachel shared her thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to her.](#) This is what she had to say.

Despite the multitude of prompts like this one that I ask my students to reflect on each week, sitting down in front of my computer to respond to these

words made me freeze. Where do I start? Who am I to be answering this question? What if I do it “wrong”? A type of stress I had not experienced in a long time hit me. The sense of being unsure about my voice. Nervous that I didn’t know enough to contribute. After resisting the idea of typing the prompt into ChatGPT, it occurred to me that I felt what many of my students, particularly those new to college, must feel in the face of new assignments and expectations. As an instructor, I know that learning requires us to experience discomfort. It requires us to try, fail, and try again. This push to grow is something I emphasize as an instructor, as I am sure we all do. We want to see our students develop a growth mindset — a mindset curious about understanding and improving our shared world. In my own life, however, I often forget to embrace the learner mindset because doing new things is uncomfortable and difficult. But it is this embrace of discomfort, struggle, and taking risks that, I believe, is the crux of being “Lakers Ready.”

In the first Lakers Ready newsletter, sent by the Office of the Provost on August 8, 2022, Provost Mili draws attention to the understanding of ready “both as an adjective, ‘we are ready’ and as a verb, ‘we are constantly readying ourselves’.” It is this second part that I would argue is most in need of our attention. The idea of “ready” as a verb, as a practice. In my mind, when we say, “Lakers Ready,” we are making a call for all Lakers to practice readiness: to experiment, create, play, fail, and learn. Our students, our staff, our faculty, our institution, and indeed higher education itself are facing critical challenges that require us to think ahead and be ready to shift. Further, I would suggest that our shared goals of equity and sustainability are only possible with an embrace of adapting and learning. If there is a commitment to equity, beyond lip service and marketing tactics, we Lakers need to challenge the status quo. Readiness demands a recognition of the many challenges and privileges that we all have in our lives, be we faculty, students, staff, or alumni. To practice readiness, we must consider the financial realities, the polarized political world, and the inequities embedded in our systems of health, education, and criminal justice. We need to acknowledge, not decry, the factors that limit our ability to be present and ready, such as the dopamine spike we get from social media apps. Practicing readiness requires honesty and transparency about the hurdles that we are each facing.

Readiness also means there is a need to dissect our assumptions of success for students and ourselves. What are we readying our student Lakers for by prioritizing four-year completion rates? What are we readying our faculty for if concerns about unequal workloads are not addressed? A practice of readiness demands empathy and attention to addressing the systemic factors that impact the lives of our students, our colleagues, and ourselves. If we are truly committed to being ready for ALL Lakers it means returning to learning. To trying new things that may be unpopular. To re-considering practices that have been taken for granted. It means asking hard questions about what we can and are willing to do to be “Lakers Ready.”



**Elizabeth Flandreau & Kim McKee:** Elizabeth is an Associate Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychology of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CHP). Elizabeth is also a Co-Chair of the Laker Impression of Faculty Teaching Management Committee (LIFT-MC) for 2022-2023. Kim is a faculty member and Department Chair in the Integrative, Religious, and Intercultural Studies Department of the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies (BCOIS). Kim is also a Co-Chair of the Laker Impression of Faculty Teaching Management Committee (LIFT-MC) for 2022-2023. [Elizabeth and Kim shared their thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to them.](#) This is what they had to say.

Creating a Lakers Ready environment requires a willingness to change material conditions through actions that are bold and responsive rather than reactive. The first step in creating a Lakers Ready learning environment is to ensure that students are set



up for success. A Lakers Ready environment couples an emphasis on high impact practices and success in the classroom with minimizing food insecurity, prioritizing textbook affordability, and recognizing students' responsibilities outside the University. Lakers Ready students know that GVSU cares not only about their academic achievements but also their mental health and physical wellness.

Given the scope of the Lakers Impressions of Faculty Teaching Management Committee (LIFT-MC) that we co-chair, we believe a Lakers Ready GVSU understands that students' impressions of classroom teaching are impacted by their overall experience at the university. Any given instructor or course, no matter how high quality, cannot singularly provide everything students need for success. A Lakers Ready learning environment is much more than individual courses, which is why we need avenues to collect student impressions of advising, academic support systems, and support for basic needs, mental health, and overall wellness. A comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to or detract from our students' ability to reach their academic goals can be used by departments, colleges, and



the university to enact meaningful change to ensure that our students have a positive impression of their education throughout their time at GVSU.

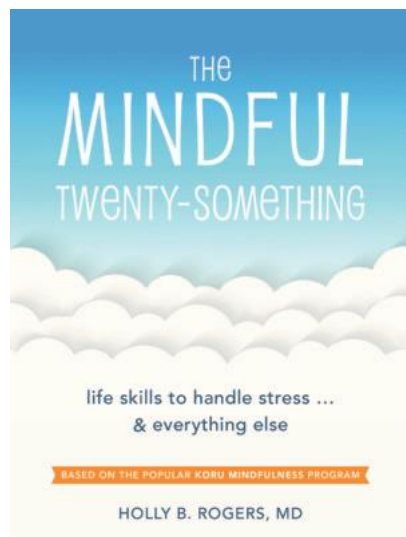
To be successful in demonstrating our holistic commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging (DEI-AB) our focus is incorporating student feedback in a way that best supports students, faculty, and the university through a lens of DEI-AB. Decades

of literature reveal that end of term student evaluations of teaching are rife with bias in quantitative and qualitative responses that mirror the ways explicit and implicit bias manifests itself in society-at-large. Though rare, overt racism, misogyny, homophobia, and other forms of bigotry exist in student comments, creating a hostile environment for marginalized faculty. (Please see previous reports from the LIFT-MC and other shared governance committees charged with exploring bias in student evaluations.) Student perceptions of teaching do not measure teaching quality or effectiveness. Rather, student responses on these surveys vary based on demographic traits of students and faculty and are influenced by myriad other factors unrelated to learning outcomes or quality of instruction. The validity of this tool is further eroded by low response rates. Continuing to use these surveys as a proxy for teaching effectiveness can perpetuate and exacerbate the inequities experienced by underrepresented faculty.

LIFT-MC recommends forging a new path in the ways we collect and use student feedback data prioritizing evidence-based strategies that support our DEI-AB goals. To make meaningful change based on constructive student feedback requires much more comprehensive information on student impressions of their teaching and learning

environment. A Lakers Ready GVSU requires a shared understanding between faculty and students about the purpose for soliciting student feedback and how faculty will incorporate the constructive feedback in future iterations of their teaching. True equity necessitates embracing bold change and new ideas as we walk the talk of DEI-AB.

**Karen Gipson:** Karen is a Professor of Physics in the Physics Department of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). [Karen shared her thoughts on the theme of the 2022-2023 UAS Newsletter by focusing on what she captioned, "Mindfulness as a College Success Tool"](#). This is what Karen had to say.



The 2022-23 academic year saw the roll-out of a



new course intended to support student success, improve student retention, and enhance student awareness of equity issues - *IDS 105: Mindfulness as a College Success Tool*. This one-credit course provides students with a variety of tools to improve skills such as time management, learning course material, ameliorating stress, and handling difficulties. Mindfulness practices are also well-documented in the literature to enhance self-awareness and compassion for self and others, which are intimately connected with advancing equity.

Professors Karen Gipson (physics and integrative studies) and Heather Wallace (public health) have been collaborating since 2019 to create this course, which meets for 90 minutes per week for the first 8 weeks of the semester, with each class meeting consisting of a combination of lecture, experiential practice, and discussion. Skills and practices based on an evidence-based mindfulness training program called “Koru Mindfulness” are included, along with a variety of other practices and assignments designed to foster student development. The Koru curriculum was selected as the backbone of this course for a variety of reasons: it was specifically developed for emerging adults, the teacher training is geared towards university faculty and staff, and it is more trauma-sensitive than many other mindfulness training programs. Pilot offerings for the two previous years (IDS 180, taught by Gipson) were extremely well-received, and IDS 105 was approved as a regular course offering in January 2022, after which time Gipson and Wallace obtained internal funding through an FTLC Teaching Innovation Grant and the Brooks College Dean’s Office to allow 13 additional faculty and staff members with experience in mindfulness to take the formal Koru teacher training from the Center for Koru Mindfulness in Summer 2022, in order to offer as many sections of IDS 105 as possible in 2022-23.

The diverse cohort of IDS 105 instructors includes faculty and staff across campus; in addition to Gipson and Wallace, who were already certified in the Koru program, the following 11 faculty/staff completed Koru teacher training in Summer 2022 and taught IDS 105 in the 2022-23 academic year: Gwenden Dueker (PSY), David Eick (MLL), Takeelia Garrett (Student Ombuds), Ehren Kuzekov (Study Abroad), Ronald Loeffler (PHI), Amy Masko (ENG), Martina Reinhold (PAS), Jiyeon Suh (MTH), Anal Shah (VMA), Kathryn Stieler (MTD), Maureen Wolverson (IRIS). Two additional faculty/staff members - Tom Pentecost (CHM) and Jill Wolfe (veterans office) are scheduled to take Koru teacher training in Summer 2023, completing the first cohort.

Although it is too early to objectively assess whether taking this course improves retention, student response to the course has been overwhelmingly positive, based on both LIFT results and reflective essays that students submit as their final assignment. Representative student comments are below, roughly organized into categories of supporting educational progress, supporting student well-being, supporting personal growth, as well as holistic comments that can’t be categorized but demonstrate the remarkable impact of this course.

#### Supporting educational progress:

- *This course helped me have better organizational skills.*
- *This course made me think outside the box about how to approach assignments.*
- *It helped me gain focus and think more clearly in other classes.*
- *This class helped me calm down before I take tests.*
- *It helped me with time management; it helps me focus on what needs to be done first.*
- *It taught me a different way to think about life that is very important to my education.*

#### Supporting student well-being:

- *I loved learning about my mind and how to deal with my anxiety and stress.*
- *It taught me to think more about how my mind and body are related and why I need to take care of both, but especially my mind.*
- *Treating everyday tasks mindfully has helped to reduce my stress about simple things in life and has also helped me become a more productive person.*
- *The strategies that I have learned allow me to handle myself in high stress situations.*
- *I gained the ability to manage stress through mindfulness and active listening.*

#### Supporting personal growth:

- *It taught me ways to be more aware of myself and others and taught me a lot about myself that I didn't know.*
- *It made me reflect on myself and how I lead my life.*
- *It stretched my thinking, in a good way. It helped me find my inner self and improve myself.*
- *It helped expand my thinking of the world and how to not take everything to heart.*
- *This class stretched my thinking by teaching me to be more aware of myself, the ways in which I communicate with others and the way I interact with stressors.*
- *This class showed me many different ways to be a better student, friend, and person.*

#### Holistic comments:

- *This is the most valuable class I have taken in college, and by far most influential in my everyday life. It has helped me grow as a person including equipping me to handling challenges better, enjoy moments more, and worry less.*
- *This course was hands-down the most useful course I've taken.*
- *This class should be required for all college students.*
- *Every skill we learned was helpful to someone in the class, and we each had a major takeaway even though they were different ones.*
- *I will use a lot of the life skills from this class in the future.*
- *This is my last semester at GVSU and this class has been my favorite class that I have taken. I think every student should take this course as it promotes well-being, social-emotional learning, and academic success. I wish to have taken this class sooner, although I am thankful to have learned the mindful practices before entering into the workforce. I feel more resilient and ready for what is to come my way.*

Assessment of the impact on course instructors has also been extremely positive, and some cohort members (Suh, Garrett) have offered the four-week Koru course to faculty and staff via Sprout, with similarly positive feedback. Sprout courses are also expected to continue in future.

**Susan Harrington:** Sue is an Associate Professor of Nursing in the Kirkhof College of Nursing (KCON). Sue is also a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. [Sue shared her thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to her](#). This is what Sue had to say.



Lakers Ready is a term that refers to a set of values shared by a community that has engaged in the experience of Grand Valley State University. The shared values of this community include inquiry, inclusiveness and equity, innovation, and integrity. Equity refers to fairness and justice and is fundamental to achieving sustainability. Community is referred to as these collective attributes and by the strengths that unite them.

At the Kirkhof College of Nursing we believe nursing is not only a profession, but a series of exceptional learning experiences and partnerships introduced in an educational platform. Through these endeavors, we become Laker Ready premiere nurses. Every one of the five semesters in this curriculum is charged with enhancing collaborative

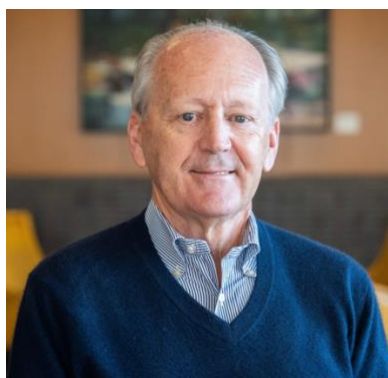
teamwork with peers, faculty, health team members and community. We scaffold and integrate concepts of care, compassion, and veracity in each of our five semesters. We embed our experiences in the lives of our neighbors and friends in a variety of contexts and integrations of equitable interactions.

Our students, dependent on the skills learned and competencies achieved, participate in numerous agencies, facilities, endeavors to promote inclusive sustainability in health and wellness. These undertakings include activities that range from working with Habitat for Humanity, Mom's Bloom, Mary Free Bed at Home, Red Project, The Other Way, PACE, Salvation Army, Exodus, Hospice and Home Care visits, and many more.

We recently resumed our overseas trips to the villages in Ghana, doing everything from BP screening to immunizations and prenatal education. Here they participate in holistic public health nursing in the local traditions of this country.

Our students are exposed to the needs of many marginalized populations in a variety of populations and geographic areas. The diversity of the events and missions offer our students a unique diversity of community-based learning. By keeping the student ratio 1:8, our students are embedded into to milieu. By incorporating these perspectives and events into our clinicals, we add an element of sustainability and equity to the profession of nursing and education for our students.

**Raymond Higbea:** Raymond is a Professor in the School of Public, Nonprofit, Health, Hospitality, and Tourism Management of the College of Education and Community Innovation (CECI). Raymond is also a Chair of the Academic Policies and Standards Committee (APSC) for 2022-2023. [Raymond shared his thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to him.](#) This is what Raymond had to say.



The APSC is contributing to Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability by getting Ready for Lakers through removal of administrative barriers and provision of policy clarity. APSC provided strength and clarity to the Academic Freedom policy through a policy preamble adding university support for faculty academic freedom and clarity about faculty limiting classroom activities to activities germane to their discipline. The Program Scholarships policy is a new policy that provides communication clarity among academic units, student financial aid, and development and thus removes an access barrier for students to department focused scholarships. Revisions to the Summer Academic Review, Repeat Course, Academic Standing, Academic Grievances, and Withdrawal Deadline policies are all student focused revisions that remove administrative barriers, increase student autonomy, and increase academic equity. APSC also provided a prior learning waiver for KCON allowing them to remove an administrative barrier for RN to BSN future Lakers and allow KCON to be more competitive in the RN to BSN market. The removal of barriers and increase in clarity has been and will continue to be a major focus of APSC as we continue to make GVSU ready for Lakers. APSC will continue to seek out to increase equity at GVSU by removal of administrative barriers and addition of clarity to GVSU academic policies.

**Robert Hollister:** Bob is a Professor of Biology in the Department of Biology of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). Bob is also the Chair of the Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) for 2022-2023. [Bob shared his thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to him.](#) This is what Bob had to say.







Being “Lakers Ready” to me means we are actively engaged in making GVSU a better place to learn and work. As faculty members we have all had challenges engaging students in new media (especially on-line) and in new ways. We are the face of the university, every student interacts with faculty, while not every student engages in other university activities. Thus, it is critical that we work to foster a sense of belonging, growth, and achievement in our classrooms which will translate into long-term success. This past year has seen a change in student demographics that has been anticipated for several years but is now happening. I am encouraged to see that our student body is the most diverse in GVSU history. We must work together to assure that all students have the resources available to be successful. Maintaining and enhancing our short-term retention and

longer-term graduation rates are among the best ways to assure the long-term success of GVSU.

As a faculty member, the past several years have also introduced a new level of engagement (or lack of engagement) that has resulted in a significant change in how I teach. I have struggled to find the right balance of challenging enough to foster deeper understanding without losing engagement for a significant component of the student population. I have shifted toward lots of small assignments and low stakes quizzes and moved my exams to on-line. These changes made it much easier to keep a pulse on the engagement of students and identify issues early. I am constantly making adjustments to better engage all students in my classes.

As a biologist, the past several years have been especially reflective and I struggle to teach core concepts within the bigger context of belief in science and safety measures that balance economies and the health of our communities (especially vulnerable populations). It is easier to become cynical and much more challenging to engage in a way that is factual without lecturing. Discussions on current issues, including the spread of COVID, Climate Change, and Sustainability (to name only a few) are often bloated with political nonsense that make it difficult to have a conversation based on facts that does not appear to pick sides. As a faculty member I strive to stimulate critical thinking as a type of vaccine against disinformation.

As a member of faculty governance, the past several years have been challenging as we engage with a new group of administrators. I try to foster engagement in ways that have worked well in the past. I truly believe that decisions based on consensus, while slower, are better.

After teaching for more than two decades, you would think I would have figured out how to be a great professor by now; yet, for me being “Laker Ready” does not mean I already know, instead being “Laker Ready” means I am up to the challenge of adjusting to the changes in society and changes in our student body. And one final note, addressing the challenges of today are too often overwhelming and can quickly lead to burn-out; thus, it is critical to also focus on my own wellbeing and making contributions to our laker community that are truly sustainable.



**Courtney Karasinski:** Courtney is an Associate Professor of Communications Sciences & Disorders of the College of Health Professions (CHP). Courtney is also the Vice Chair of ECS/UAS for 2022-2023. [Courtney shared her thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to her.](#) This is what Courtney had to say.



Educational equity is essential if our programs are to be sustainable. Two aspects of my work that are particularly dear to my heart are 1) the use of open educational resources (OER) or zero-cost materials (ZCM), and 2) teaching future speech-language pathologists the importance of valuing communication differences.

The use of open educational resources (OER) and zero-cost materials (ZCM) helps to facilitate educational equity. Textbooks are expensive; as a result, some students do not purchase them. If students of greater financial means are the only ones who are able to purchase their required

books, they will have an advantage over those who do not have the funds for books. This creates a systemic barrier to education.

The inability to access information *in general* creates a systemic barrier to acquiring knowledge. As noted by Sir Francis Bacon, “knowledge is power.” Israelmore Ayivor added that (capitalization as written by Ayivor), “Knowledge is Power, Power provides Information; Information leads to Education, Education breeds Wisdom; Wisdom is Liberation. People are not liberated because of lack of knowledge.” As educators, we must ensure that knowledge is accessible to *all* in order to empower all learners, especially those who have been historically marginalized.

GVSU’s support for OER is one important step toward *equitable empowerment*. This support has facilitated my development of an OER to use in place of a textbook in one of my classes. I have encouraged my speech-language pathology students to share this resource with clinical preceptors, parents of children with or without communication disorders, friends in speech-language pathology, interprofessional colleagues, and anyone else who is interested in the topic of language disorders in school-aged children, so that the knowledge of pediatric language disorders is not limited to only those who can afford to obtain it. Similarly, I have published my research in peer-reviewed journals that are open access, or have an open access option, since access to current research should not be limited to only those who are affiliated with organizations that have subscriptions to journals or databases. Often, speech-language pathologists working in areas with a high proportion of individuals who have historically marginalized identities have particularly low budgets available for the purchase of journal subscriptions. It is important that all who need help with effective communication or swallowing are served by speech-language pathologists who are up to date on evidence-based practice. Open-access journals “level the playing field,” so that all speech-language pathologists can access the most current evidence so that they are able to provide the best healthcare or education to those they serve.

The availability of OER to increase access to knowledge is an important step, but it is not enough, to facilitate sustainability and equity in education. If our university is to be sustainable, we must ensure that we are engaging our learners in meaningful ways to facilitate the development of the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful as they advocate for and adapt to positive changes in the world. We need to be intentional about showing all learners, especially those from groups that may have faced systemic barriers to higher education, that we are committed to helping them succeed. As faculty, it is necessary that we provide meaningful opportunities to engage with the course content so that students are able to understand and apply the information on a deeper level than they would if they simply accessed the materials independently, without thoughtfully designed experiences to critically reflect on it.

My final thoughts on equity and sustainability center on celebrating language differences in individuals from backgrounds that differ from our own. As a speech-language pathologist, one important task my colleagues and I undertake is distinguishing language *differences* due to cultural and linguistic backgrounds from underlying language *disorders* within these differences. In class, we discuss the importance of valuing students' home languages and dialects, and how we need to be advocates for celebrating differences in communication, rather than marginalizing those who communicate differently from the majority culture. We have talked about how language is used differently in different contexts, and have considered together the idea that, for learners across all levels, it is important to allow oral and written language to be in one's home dialect in many contexts. For example, my students' clinical reports should subscribe to the conventions of our field in structure, word choice, and style, to a large extent, to be consistent with the speech-language pathology discourse community. However, discussion board posts and reflections by my students should be written in their preferred dialect so that they can deeply engage with the content without the distraction of needing to use certain language forms in order to conform to a "standard." It is important that students, especially those from historically marginalized discourse communities, are invited to express their authentic selves and not feel a need to "mask" as they are pursuing their purpose.

**Faith Kidd:** Faith is the Student Senate President and a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. Faith is also a Political Science Major/International Business Minor, a Student in the Frederik Meijer Honors College, and a Fellow in the Cook Leadership Academy. [Faith shared her thoughts on what "Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability" means to her by focusing on what she termed "Post-Pandemic Student Government at GVSU"](#). This is what Faith had to say.



The entirety of my university experience was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. I spent my first year of college trapped in a dorm, taking online classes, and wearing an N95 mask when I took my daily stroll to snag takeout from on-campus eateries. My first year of university-level student government occurred on Zoom, I spent my second year of student government masked and socially distanced, and when I took the role of President last spring, I thought that the pandemic was in the past. That was a foolish thought, because the pandemic has impacted everything, and has changed everything. Students are facing economic troubles, students struggle to frequently attend courses, engagement campus-wide is low, and multitasking seems impossible. These struggles have completely changed the landscape of student government. Four years ago, thirteen students would interview for the two remaining positions on our Student Senate body. Now, for the third year in a row, we struggle to exist at 50% of our potential capacity.

As a leader, I believe it is essential to determine what is causing companies and organizations to flounder and make necessary changes, even if that means cutting losses. This year, the Student Senate has made major changes and has sponsored legislation to encourage change campus-wide. The first major change that Student Senate made is discontinuing our work on Battle of the Valleys due to our low participation and lack of student engagement. The second major change has been decreasing the amount of General Assembly meetings, to lower the time commitment required in an attempt to increase accessibility for students. The third major change that Student Senate has made has been providing food to students during our meetings, as they occur during dinner time. The fourth major change that Student Senate has made has been working with a consultant from The Johnson Center to begin the editing and rewriting process for all of our governing documents, including but not limited to: the Student Senate Bylaws, SRC Policies and Procedures, and the Student Senate Constitution. By changing meeting requirements, office hour requirements, and adapting our attendance policy; we can become accessible to more



students. The changes we are making are an attempt to create a sustainable governing structure that will experience success and popularity again.

Aside from internal reorganization, the Student Senate has been pushing hard for an increase in student wages. Legislation has been crafted and passed through the appropriate channels to encourage GVSU to holistically address this problem and increase what they are paying their student workers. In addition to that, legislation has been crafted to increase the stipends of Student Government Leaders. We no longer exist in an economy where students can volunteer for 15 to 20 hours a week and not experience major opportunity costs. With GVSU's current stipend system and median student wage; GVSU students cannot afford rent and groceries each month, let alone tuition and books. If we crave diverse leadership and value inclusion, we must provide incentives and living wages to our student leaders.

I would be lying if I said that this year was not a struggle and that for every step forward there were not three steps back. But I am optimistic that with the changes we have started to make, Student Senate will see prosperous days again. I am optimistic that future leadership will grow and build upon the changes made, I am optimistic that students will engage again, and I am optimistic that in a handful of years, Grand Valley State University's Student Senate will be a flourishing body filled with diverse people from different walks of life.

**Salvador Lopez-Arias:** Sal is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Work of the College of Education and Community Innovation (CECI). Sal is also a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. [Sal shared his thoughts on what "Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability" means to him by focusing on what he captioned, "Musings of a GVSU Community Member"](#). This is what Sal had to say.



I have been in a relationship with GVSU since 1982 in the capacity of: as a high school student; GVSU volunteer; and spending summers and taking classes on campus. Eventually I matriculated for a bachelor's and a master's degree. After several years, I returned for a doctoral internship at the counseling center and after its completion I was hired as a visitor and later in a tenure-track position in 2004. I have several family members who have also obtained a bachelors from Grand Valley State University.

This background information is to highlight my long-standing involvement with Grand Valley State University. Looking at the diversity, inclusivity, and change since the mid-1980s, change has been very slow.

In my undergrad, in the mid 1980s, I only knew five Latinos on campus and the climate was very negative to the point that the Black Student Union had a sit in the Kirkhoff Center to protest these conditions. I did notice a change and begin seeing a slight increase in staff and faculty as I completed my masters in the early 1990s. While pursuing a bachelor's and master's degree in social work, my academic experience was extremely positive as Dean Berkowitz and Dean Mulder were extremely innovative and were ahead of their time. Addressing diversity and inclusion. At that time, I had African-American faculty, and for the first time since moving to the USA a Latino/a instructor. Both Deans were able to recruit diverse faculty because they nurtured local talent. They would recruit community leaders in diverse communities as visitors and affiliates and mentor them into completing a Ph.D. and pursue a tenure track career. They made diversity a priority, they led by example and funding. This trickled down to students and as more faculty of color were hired more students of color were recruited.

Through the years, I have seen change in administration, economic and national changes, politics, and a very slow increase in staff, faculty, and students of color. Although the increase in numbers for diverse students, faculty and staff has been slow, climate studies have shown a slow but consistent improvement. Of course, I want a further change and improvement on our campus climate. However, what I have appreciated during this time at

Grand Valley is the loyalty and general collegiality and support I have seen given by all at all levels. Although there have been bias incidents, in the past, in general people were pleasant and engaging. Everyone went out of their way to help each other. Regardless of interpersonal issues, or even bias, the goal of making GVSU better and meeting student needs was prioritized by everyone. Recently, I had a colleague express how loyal GVSU employees have been, to the point that they bleed GVSU blue! I am so proud of this statement.

It is because of this pride and loyalty and because I care about our GVSU community that to support equity and inclusion I make an appeal to us all. The past several years due to so much change and the required efforts to adjust to Covid, I feel there has been so much disruption that we are losing two essential aspects of inclusivity. These are pleasantness and collegiality. I see many individuals feeling overwhelmed due to continuous staffing changes and positions not being filled. This while many of us have experienced extensive personal loss and professional stress due to Covid. I am also seeing a separation between employees. As we are all trying to navigate the influx of change, we tend to move into silos where we do not communicate within and across units and departments. This has impacted work quality and employee morale. As we continue to improve our climate and our diversity numbers, we do need more faculty and staff to provide support for such improvements, but at the same time are we being supportive and compassionate to each other? Are we taking time to empathize with what others are experiencing? We do need to continue improving our diversity numbers and initiatives and remember that inclusivity means making all feel like they belong. Being compassionate is one of the steps. As, I look to the future I am hopeful, for you see, we are Grand Valley State University.

**Hazel McClure:** Hazel is a faculty member in the University Libraries. Hazel is also a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. [Hazel shared her thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to her.](#) This is what Hazel had to say.

I understand being Laker Ready as being able to meet students where they are – as whole people, with varied and complex inner, emotional, social, and intellectual lives. Our students have faced a variety of challenges and have an array of hopes and dreams for their lives and professions and this world we share. Our shared challenge and opportunity and privilege is to make a space where every individual – student, staff, and faculty member – can contribute to our community using the strengths we as individuals have while recognizing what our colleagues bring to the table while we help students grow toward their future selves. This takes our intellectual resources and expertise, our empathy, self-awareness, intentionality, and time and energy to collaborate and communicate across the campus community.



My role in this community is to be a librarian, where I create (with my colleagues) rich information literacy learning experiences for students – whatever their high school experience or research background. This term “information literacy” means a lot of things to a lot of people (and sounds like a Charlie Brown’s teacher womp-womping away to a lot of others) but when we define it, it’s clear that it’s an essential skill and component of

education; it’s the ability of an individual to approach a situation, whether professional or personal, and gather relevant and reliable information to help interact with that situation – to build a solution to a problem, create a compelling argument, create art, connect with community, choose who to vote for in an election, or to have a rich conversation. And information isn’t always a book or an article in a database (though the libraries’ collection is a great place to start for all kinds of information gathering, of course). Information that inspires us, sustains us, and changes our minds and world comes from a rich ecosystem – we gather information through a wide variety of venues, including through conversation with experts and nonexperts, from podcasts, through personal observation, from scholarly

journals, from newsletters, from tweets, from community activists, from social media, from the news. Navigating information has never been “easy” – but now, in a burgeoning information ecosystem that is rife with misinformation, disinformation, deep fakes, and social media echo chambers, it’s essential – for our disciplines and our future – that we teach students the skills to not only find information but think critically about where their information is coming from, about who we (individually and collectively) confer authority to and why, who benefits from the sale and spread of information, and how information wields influence, empowers some folks, and hurts others.

My colleagues and I work to create library spaces (in person and virtually) that are a hub for information access and an opportunity to learn to navigate the nooks and crannies of our complex collective information landscape; some of us are by students’ sides, helping them with the logistics of how to use libraries or coaching them in the Knowledge Market while they decipher their first peer reviewed article or learn how to use new-to-them software; some of us are working closely with teaching faculty, co-creating learning experiences; some of us are creating materials students can access on the website at 2 am; some of us are driving conversations and action around open access materials and publication models in order to offer quality information freely to more people who need it; some of us are making sure the databases are working, and that the books are on the shelves.

In our instruction program, we’re striving to make our teaching inclusive and accessible. We’re doing this in a variety of ways, including: using Universal Design for Learning to craft experiences that are flexible and allow multiple avenues for students to engage and learn; designing our programmatic assessment tool to include a variety of ability levels and also to acknowledge that there is a powerful emotional component to information use and research; engaging in professional development individually and as a group to help us interrogate and adjust our traditional ways of teaching that uphold privilege for some groups of folks and marginalize others. These efforts are centering learners and letting us meet them where they need us to be and helping them navigate and use information to help them meet their goals.

**Amy McFarland:** Amy is a Director and Associate Professor of Environmental and Sustainability Studies in the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies (BCOIS). Amy is also a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. [Amy shared her thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to her by focusing on what she termed, “GVSU is ready to empower students with many different skill sets in sustainability education”.](#) This is what Amy had to say.

Grand Valley has invested heavily in sustainability education for students and is ready to provide empowered educational experiences for students. Sustainability encompasses a wide number of areas of interest - from climate change, water quality and quantity management, to equitable, responsive food systems, and more. GVSU is prepared to provide students with expertise in all of these areas.



Having received multiple sustainability accolades, students increasingly learn about GVSU by our reputation as a “green university” and come here wanting to study *something* in this area. Having multiple distinct programs that offer a variety of “green education” paths--such as Environmental and Sustainability Studies, Geography and Sustainable Planning, Geology, Natural Resources Management, Biolog makes good on the promise that this is the place to come to study these fields and provides students with choice - choice over how to study the environment and empowers students with different skill sets and strengths to contribute to our collective understanding of the environment, sustainability, and how to improve the current situation.

Kelly Parker, director when the Environmental and



Sustainability Studies major was launched at GVSU, often brings up the shoe store paradox in business: “a lone shoe store in a neighborhood might succeed or fail, depending on how many people in the neighborhood buy that line of shoes. If we open five shoe stores in a neighborhood, though, people come from all over town to shop in the area and all the stores do better.”

Students arrive at GVSU hoping to shop programs, and we are ready to provide them with many options. GVSU has embraced environment and sustainability within the disciplines and through interdisciplinary education in the Brooks College. New sustainability related programs are being developed and existing programs are being revised to more explicitly include sustainability objectives.

Following Provost Mili’s hiring approvals, GVSU recently further invested in sustainability. Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences came together to hire five new experts in the environment and sustainability to join our existing faculty, deepening our ability to serve students. Those searches were successful and a new cohort will be joining us in the Fall.

Additional collaborative investments from faculty and staff across the university to empower students in sustainability by providing high impact educational experiences are underway. The award winning GVSU Sustainable Agriculture Program continues to reach out to faculty across the university to identify ways students in their programs can leverage the resources of our student farm. The Annis Water Resources Institute has collaborated with our regional campus in Traverse City and with faculty in Biology and Environmental and Sustainability Studies to co-develop exciting hands-on opportunities for students on the lake in conjunction with Northern Michigan College in Traverse City. Faculty from different disciplines in the physical and life sciences have invested time to develop a new Environmental Science minor. Faculty from Geography and Sustainable Planning and Natural Resources Management are collaborating to revise the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) certificate to make it more accessible for NRM majors and are considering developing a graduate certificate. Librarians recently obtained and are processing new special collections resources that document the history of land use and development across the state of Michigan in the late 20th century. The Visual and Media Arts department recently invested in sustainability by hiring Kate Levy as the Padnos Artist in Residence, who has worked on projects related to water and environmental justice, providing yet another avenue for students to develop skills directly related to sustainability through an “Art & Activism” special topics course.

It’s an exciting time for faculty, staff, and students interested in the environment and sustainability at GVSU. There are so many opportunities in all of the major academic disciplines - the physical and life sciences, the social sciences, and the arts and humanities. Students can develop expertise and credentials in different aspects of the environment - water, green buildings and infrastructure, climate, food, and more. Students have opportunities to develop technical skills in sustainability and the environment, including GIS, Sustainability Assessment and Reporting, Research Methods, and Project Planning and Management, and Field Data Collection. Students have opportunities to learn about socio-political issues of equity, ethics, and the environment through classes and student organizations. Together, our programs in sustainability and the environment are Reaching Higher to empower students and all learners in the Laker community.

[Figen Mekik](#): Figen is a Professor of Geology in the Department of Geology of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). Figen is also a member of UAS for 2022-2023. [Figen shared her thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to her by focusing on what she termed, “Interdisciplinarity: Bridging Gaps or Blurring Lines”](#). This is what Figen had to say.



One of the great things about working at GV is our ability to approach a subject from diverse lenses of expertise while collaborating toward the common good. An example is **climate** which means different things to different experts, and yet most advocate for mitigating climate change. This creates, of course, an academic paradise for those of the interdisciplinary persuasion (e.g. yours truly), but it also begs the question: is there a fine line between interdisciplinarity being the pillar of intellectual collaboration (see the interrogation of that assumption by Lariviere and Gringas, 2010), and interdisciplinarity creating generalists by blurring lines of expertise (i.e. Wheelahan, 2007; Brooks, 2017)? This is an important distinction as we develop new curriculum addressing climate change and environmental sustainability.

To illustrate the difference, let's use what is perhaps a tired analogy: cars. The car industry requires many specialists: mechanical engineer, car manufacturer, mechanic, car salesman, car insurance agent, and of course the driver – to

name a few. I think most people would agree that a mechanic cannot do the job of a car insurance agent well, and a mechanical engineer cannot sell cars well, except maybe all of these specialists can become good drivers. So, interdisciplinary collaboration is very important for the car industry to thrive, but expertise has its place too. After all, interdisciplinary work is impossible without the core disciplines.

In the same vein, mitigating climate change requires: a climate scientist, an advocate for mitigating climate change, an urban planner, an agricultural planner, a farmer, a climate modeler, an environmental activist, a scientist studying the effects of climate change, an environmental engineer, and a social scientist studying the impacts of climate change on human society – just to name a few. And the good news is: we can develop the resources and faculty expertise at GVSU to produce expert alumni for each of these ten specializations.

The key words in most definitions of interdisciplinarity are “communication” and “integration” (e.g. Nissani, 1995; OECD, 1972 in Lattuca 2003; Porter et al., 2006; Lattuca et al., 2017) which are basic components of bridging gaps among two or more disciplines (Collin, 2009). We can achieve interdisciplinarity in teaching and research at GV by creating and educating specialists who know how to collaborate, integrate, and innovate with other specialized experts.

In the Earth Science world, a climate scientist is one highly trained quantitatively including calculus, linear algebra, and statistics, and grounded in Earth science, atmospheric physics, isotope geochemistry, and you guessed it... carbon. Surely, no one individual can specialize in all that at the PhD level, and that's where the interdisciplinarity of the field comes in. I, for one, am a global carbon cycling and ocean acidification expert. But to be able to generate publishable, meaningful results, I have to work closely with climate modelers and isotope geochemists. So interdisciplinarity reigns supreme in climate science.

Moreover, all well-trained scientists know “settled science” is an oxymoron. Science is self-critical and dynamic, and all scientists have to collaborate across disciplines. So, as we look at assessing and developing curriculum to solve the problems of climate change and environmental sustainability, let's educate our students to **bridge gaps between disciplines rather than blur the lines**. I see that as the only constructive way to tear down silos which are impediments to academic growth.

Disclaimer: These ideas are my own and do not represent those of other faculty, including those in Geology or the Geology department as a whole.

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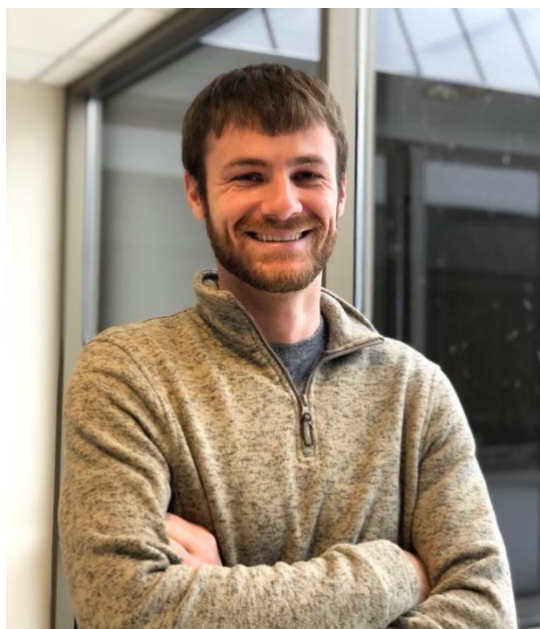
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**Jared Moore:** Jared is an Associate Professor of Computer Science in Seymour and Esther Padnos College of Engineering and Computing (PCEC). Jared is also a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. [Jared shared his thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to him.](#) This is what Jared had to say.



Springtime and renewal are in the air. Warmer days, rain showers, greening grass, and the hissing sound of sprinklers getting turned back on are sure signs that campus is waking up after the winter. GVSU's campus footprint is 1,391 acres. That's over two square miles! The marshes on the southwest corner are alive with native bluebirds and the soon to be arriving swallows. Frogs, geese, and swans will join them, as ice gives way to open water, using the refuge to bring in the next generation. The woodlands leading down to the river hum with rushing water through swollen seasonal creeks. Deer are everywhere taking advantage of the newly emerging vegetation in the early hours before campus awakens.

Our GVSU wild spaces teem with turkey, red wing blackbirds, red tailed hawks, bald eagles, and the elusive owls. Woodpeckers flit from tree to tree finding bugs, building homes, and singing songs. Many more birds and small animals make these spaces their home, seeking refuge in the natural spaces that are quickly becoming an island as development continues to surround campus.

As we move forward with our commitment to sustainability, it is my hope that we will further beautify our campus by planting native. 1,391 acres can be a harbor to nourish and encourage native pollinators, insects, and the variety of life they sustain. Let us commit to avoiding non-native plants, and instead establish a landscape highlighting our local flora.



Native plants are drought tolerant and adapted for the local climate requiring less water and fertilizer. We can transition much of our well-maintained green grass deserts to sustainable native flower beds and swales. Less lawn mowing, fewer chemicals, and more biodiversity will help in building a refuge. Campus can become a living laboratory and example for our community of how a native landscape is sustainable, beautiful, and fosters the natural Michigan ecology.

[Karyn Rabourn](#): Karyn is an Associate Professor and Program Director, M.Ed. in Higher Education Program in the College of Education and Community Innovation (CECI). Karyn is also a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. [Karyn shared her thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to her.](#) This is what Karyn had to say.



When I hear the term ‘Lakers Ready’, I imagine folks preparing for some sort of athletic contest or the start of three-legged race, eager participants lined up, ready to hear ‘Go!’; there is a megaphone, of course.

My thoughts then turn to new and returning students who join our campus each fall. I currently direct the M.Ed. in Higher Education graduate program, which houses a cohort-based model. Each August, our faculty team welcomes new first-year students—the students are excited and nervous—many indicating concerns and questions about whether they are prepared for the year ahead: *Was taking time off between degrees a bad idea? Did my undergraduate experience prepare me to be successful in this program? Can I handle the amount of reading and writing associate with graduate-level coursework?* My colleagues and I work to help students feel confident they *can* do the work, *can* meet elevated standards associated with graduate school, and reassure them that they do not have to do this work on their own. We strive to facilitate a learning environment that empowers students to connect and collaborate actively with their cohort-mates. We hope students will leave orientation knowing they are not alone; they will succeed individually and collectively because they are engaging in this graduate program as a team. We often hear our graduates describe their cohort and relationships with their cohort-mates as integral to their success here at GVSU. These colleagues are a part of their experience here and remain a part of their professional future. I am confident the energy gained from these personal and professional relationships with peer and faculty colleagues supports our students to success, and undoubtedly, *sustains* students through challenging academic, professional, and personal events that occur while enrolled.

When ‘Lakers Ready’ is called, however, it is not just our students who approach the starting line for the race—our faculty arrive there as well. As August approaches, those of us returning to our contracted work may also experience excitement and nervousness for the new academic year. For me, the following questions seem to arise annually: Did I rest enough this summer to engage fully with my students? Did I make enough progress on scholarship to help me continue to engage with this work once teaching commences? Am I ready to take on new service roles with increased time commitments this year? Do I have the support and resources I need to thrive this academic year?

To me, these questions, and specifically the final question, speak to my ability to continue as a productive representative of the Laker community—can my teaching, research, and service as a faculty member at GVSU be *sustained* this year? The M.Ed. in Higher Education program has three full-time faculty—and there has been significant turnover among these faculty since my arrival. In 2017, before my initial contract was renewed, I stepped in to direct our program, mostly by default—of our faculty had departed for a new opportunity and the others’ talents were utilized to chair our academic department. We made ends meet in the classroom with the addition of a (temporary) distinguished faculty member and assistance from several well-respected practitioners in the field. By 2020, after two retirements, I was the most senior member of our team. After chairing two faculty searches, we welcomed two new team members in 2018 and 2020. What do you know, though? These two faculty members departed in 2021 and 2022 (for amazing professional and personal opportunities)! I am grateful for the time with all five of these faculty members—I learned much from each of them.

I will also share; it is extremely challenging to sustain a three-faculty program with a new and/or departing faculty member every year. Staffing courses, assigning advisees, and managing service responsibilities within an ever-changing faculty is difficult. I struggled to have consistency with my own teaching because I often accommodated new hires’ areas of expertise. I took on additional advising and service requirements because I was the faculty member with the most experience with our program curriculum, policies, and practices. As you might imagine, my scholarship suffered because my time was often allocated to managing constant change. I do not write this to complain or prop myself up, nor to share that I did not have assistance from my colleagues, that is not the case.

It is clear to me now; this environment was not sustainable for our program nor was I thriving as a faculty member. Each fall semester, as I approached the starting line, I experienced quite a few anxieties about ushering in new students and faculty and how I would be able to manage my teaching, scholarship, and service. Though I could share with students at orientation I was confident they would be well supported by their colleagues and would be successful because of that collaboration, I did not feel the same level of confidence for my own team.

As I look forward to the fall 2023 semester, however, my confidence has grown. This fall, I will reunite with two colleagues, Dr. Laila McCloud (who joined GVSU in 2021) and (almost Dr.) Paul Bylsma, who is a graduate of our master’s program, former adjunct faculty, current visiting faculty, and new tenure-track faculty member beginning in August.



Conversations this year about the direction of our program have been rich, we are excited about making curricular and programmatic improvements, teaching new courses, and working together on scholarship related to our own teaching and learning. As a result, I have been able to take a step back, ask for and accept help, and be a true member of a team, that at least for the time being, will be around. Students are not the only Lakers who need consistency, supportive teammates, and a working and learning environment that values them as full, whole, humans. I believe our program and faculty are moving towards a more stable and sustainable balance of work and an enthusiastic arrival to the starting line as Lakers ready for the 2023-2024 academic year.

[Laura Schneider](#): Laura is an Associate Professor of Political

Science in the Department of Political Science of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). Laura is also a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. [Laura shared her thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to her.](#) This is what Laura had to say.

Sustainability has been on the United Nations agenda for the past forty plus years, and yet no nation on the planet has successfully achieved sustainability. This fact may be discouraging. But it does beg the question of why? If we use the United Nations 2030 Sustainability Goals as a guide, we see that we cannot, by definition, achieve sustainability without equity. Equity comprises two explicit goals of the 2030 UNGS and is embedded in most of the seventeen goals. Sustainability hinges on equity. And while there is not one reason why sustainability has not been achieved, I don't think anyone would be surprised to hear that the world at home and abroad is not an equitable place.

Race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and other ways we discriminate against people is preventing us from achieving sustainability. One way of addressing inequity this is through education. Access to high quality education for all is essential for sustainability. While education in a traditional K-12 and higher education setting is important, it should not end there. The focus should be on lifelong learning for all. This is precisely what we strive to achieve for all Lakers through their liberal arts education at GVSU.

The liberally educated are more likely to support civil right and civil liberties. Those who take civic oriented courses are more likely to participate in political life. As a member of the Political Science Department, we explore many difficult issues that our nation is facing; many of which are centered on questions of equity. But the only way to have a constructive discussion about difficult topics is to have an equitable representation of all students. This requires creating a classroom environment where all students feel safe to be their authentic selves and engage in challenging conversations. If we are to achieve sustainability, we need a society that embraces equity. To create an equitable society, we need to talk about the role of politics in our struggle for equity. Thus, it is through the political dialogue of my classroom that I contribute to “Lakers Ready for Sustainability and Equity.”

[Anne Sergeant & Jonathan Brignall](#): Anne is a Professor of Accounting in the School of Accounting of the Seidman College of Business (SCB). Jonathan is an Assistant Professor of Accounting in the School of Accounting of the Seidman College of Business (SCB). Anne is also a member of ECS and UAS for 2022-2023. [Anne and Jonathan shared their thoughts on what “Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability” means to them by focusing on what they captioned, “VITA: Tax Assistance Sustaining our Local Community.”](#) This is what Anne and Jonathan had to say.

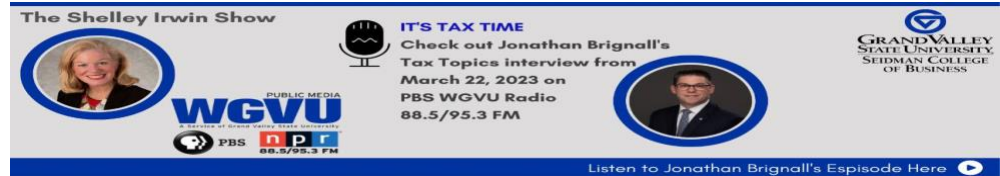
Equity and sustainability are nothing new for Laker Accounting students and faculty. For many years, GVSU School of Accounting has actively participated in Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA). This Internal Revenue Service (IRS) sponsored program supports our local underserved community by offering free tax preparation help. The program is oriented specifically toward assisting individuals making \$60,000 or less, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and those with limited English-speaking who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. The School of Accounting partners with Kent County Tax Credit Coalition (KCTCC) to operate a VITA site at the Seidman building on the Pew Campus. Seidman volunteers are trained using a program provided by the IRS. After being trained, volunteers meet with taxpayers and provide basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing.

#### **Value to the community**

In 2023, VITA scheduled appointments from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Saturdays from February 4 through April 8 at the Seidman College of Business site. Typically, the site serves 250-300 clients a year, generating more than \$200,000 in refunds. Although the primary service is tax preparation, clients also enjoy the ease of filing, as well as confidence of knowing it is done properly. Three clients interviewed all agreed that they were confident their taxes were prepared correctly and appreciated the no-cost and ease of filing. They each intended to come back next year to the Grand Valley site. One woman said she



liked coming to campus and wanted to become more involved with other programs at GVSU.



### Value to the students

Student volunteers receive valuable, hands-on tax preparation experience under the supervision of tax faculty and volunteers who have experience in tax return preparation. Moreover, students get the opportunity of helping a variety of people, many of whom come from backgrounds different from their own. Because student volunteers complete a comprehensive training program, any student interested is eligible to participate, even those with no prior tax preparation experience. This program is valuable and can be life-changing because it gives students exposure

both the procedural aspect of tax practice and to client interactions, neither of which can be easily replicated in the classroom.

One student volunteer is currently interning at a large local corporation in their tax department. She stated that this experience helped her to see how hard some people work. "I was surprised to meet someone working five jobs and I tried to imagine being in their shoes." Two other students commented on how the experience has helped them discern career aspirations. One is eager to be a tax professional and the other learned tax is not for her.

### Conclusion

VITA is a program of Lakers giving back to the local community, especially serving the low-income of Grand Rapids. We believe it prepares student Lakers to be good citizens, as well as supports the community. The program is not limited to accounting faculty and students but welcomes anyone interested in helping others with tax preparation. We would like more faculty and student participation from across our campus community. If you are interested in participating, contact Jonathan Brignall ([brignajo@gvsu.edu](mailto:brignajo@gvsu.edu)). Volunteers are organized and trained in the Fall semester.

**Amy Ferdinandt Stolley:** Amy is an Associate Professor of Writing and Director of the First-Year Writing Program in the Writing Department of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). Amy is also the Chair of the General Education Committee (GEC) for 2022-2023. *Amy shared her thoughts on what "Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability" means to her.* This is what Amy had to say.



In conversations with colleagues who teach first-year students, I often find myself discussing how every new class of students seems completely different from the class that came before. Students are arriving at GVSU with new orientations toward education informed by their experiences with remote learning in high school, not to mention the increased economic, social, and mental health pressures that shape their ability to be intellectually, emotionally, and physically



present in our classes. The level of academic and emotional support our students need from us has grown exponentially.

As I consider the students I've worked with since 2020, I've wondered if being "Lakers Ready" requires us to accept that we'll never truly be ready. The profound political, social, educational, and economic disruptions we have experienced in the last three years has – and continues to – alter our students and us. We see a worsening mental health crisis among young adults and an AI-driven future barreling toward us; it's clear that more change is on the horizon. So many students arrive to us already exhausted as they try to imagine what their future will look like. So many of us are exhausted as we do the same. Is it possible to really be ready amidst this change and fatigue?

Provost Mili mentioned in her inaugural message to the faculty that the "ready" in "Lakers Ready" is both adjective and verb. To become ready, we must adopt a stance of continuous "readying," a way of being that invites us to learn more about our students by reading, conducting our own assessments and scholarship, conversing with colleagues, and most importantly, listening to our students.

I expect we all agree that readying ourselves for our students is an essential, and often enjoyable, part of the job. But we also need to speak clearly and openly about how taxing this work is. Meeting our students where they are requires mental, physical, and emotional labor that remains invisible if it only happens behind our office doors or within our email inboxes. We need to account for this labor in our workload plans and annual reports so that it is made visible to our colleagues, our administrators, and even ourselves. Faculty also need resources (financial and otherwise) and accommodations to our workload; supporting students, while necessary and valuable, cuts into the time and energy we have to remain active scholars and productive participants in shared faculty governance. I am confident that we are all committed to teaching and supporting our students, but we need help to adjust to all the changes we've experienced and ready ourselves for those that will come.

**Laura Stroik:** Laura is an Associate Professor of Biomedical Sciences in the Department of Biomedical Sciences of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Laura is also the Chair of the Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee (FFPAC) for 2022-2023. [Laura shared her thoughts on what "Lakers Ready for Equity and Sustainability" means to her.](#) This is what Laura had to say.

As a member of faculty governance for seven years, and most recently as chair of FFPAC and as a UAS faculty representative on the University Technology Council (UTC), I write here about the need for all of us (faculty and administration alike and in conjunction) to continually reflect on the ways we can sustain a quality education for all our learners. This, of course, is intrinsically linked to sustaining both the facilities and technological support for the faculty that teach them and is particularly true as we seek new types of learners and continue to see changes in our admissions demographics.



Specifically, I would like to remind everyone of the importance of taking ownership in sustaining and continually improving the infrastructure necessary to be "Lakers Ready." This year, FFPAC has had discussions on the environmental sustainability of our current landscaping model, access to power and electricity on campus, and the best ways to fund enhancements of active learning spaces at Grand Valley – many of our discussions are derived from faculty input outside the committee. Please come to your faculty governance bodies with concerns you would like addressed – FFPAC is that body for facilities-related items.

In addition, I think it's important we all make an effort to use the resources immediately available to us. If you have a technological (computer or projector) or facilities (projector screen, temperature, lighting, furniture) issue in class, please

refer to the magnets posted on the whiteboards of each classroom; click on the “Help” icon on the classroom computer desktop; or go to [gvsu.edu/fixit](http://gvsu.edu/fixit) to report the problem. It takes less than a minute!

If we work together and assume a joint responsibility for maintaining our learning spaces, I believe we can create a more sustainable teaching and learning environment for the GV community as a whole.

## Standing Committee Chairs 2022-2023

Most of the work that is done in ECS/UAS comes from the charges that ECS assigns to the Standing Committees (SCs). Each SC is assigned specific charges at the start of the academic year in addition to the regular responsibilities of the SCs as specified in the Shared Governance Policies (SG Policies). As each charge is completed, the SC sends a memo to the Chair of ECS/UAS that becomes a business item for discussion at ECS meetings. Recommendations from ECS are sent to UAS and then to the Provost for approval. The composition of each SC is described in the UAS Bylaws and membership always includes elected college and library representatives, as well as students. The SCs are an important part of our shared governance process. There are twelve SCs and a University Governance Committee (LIFT-MC) that report to ECS/UAS and each of these has a Chair.

COMMITTEE	CHAIR	AFFILIATION
<b>AFAC</b>	Jennifer Cymbola	CLAS
<b>APSC</b>	Raymond Higbea	CECI
<b>EIC</b>	Joel Wendland-Liu	BCOIS
<b>FFPAC</b>	Laura Stroik	CLAS
<b>FPPC</b>	Kurt Ellenberger	BCOIS/HON
<b>FSBC</b>	Bob Hollister	CLAS
<b>FTLCAC</b>	Leanne Kang	CECI
<b>GC</b>	Amy Campbell	CLAS
<b>GEC</b>	Amy Stolley	CLAS
<b>LIFT-MC</b>	Elizabeth Flandreau & Kim McKee	CLAS & BCOIS
<b>OEMC</b>	Bradford Dykes	CLAS
<b>UAC</b>	Julie Henderleiter	CLAS
<b>UCC</b>	Barb Hoogenboom	CHP





## University Academic Senate Report 2022-2023

(Report by Felix N. Ngassa, Chair ECS/UAS, 2022-2023)



The University Academic Senate, UAS, is the highest faculty governance body, which has authority to deal with any academic issue or faculty concern. The *modus operandi* of our shared governance process is such that governance policies are developed collaboratively by the UAS and the Provost. Other policies such as the ones approved by the Board of Trustees (BOT Policies) or the Senior Leadership Team (SLT Policies) complement the shared governance policies. At the level of each College and the University Libraries, there are governing bodies that serve as advisory bodies to the respective Deans. The advisory bodies develop policies, consistent with the policies and guidelines established by the UAS, for their various academic units.

The UAS meets on average once a month during the fall and winter semesters; these meetings are always on Fridays from 3:00-5:00 p.m. The Executive Committee of the Senate, ECS, serves as

the clearing house for matters to be presented to UAS. As a clearing house, ECS discusses matters first and then makes recommendations that become business items for UAS. ECS meets once a week during the fall and winter semesters, and these meetings are on Friday from 3:00-5:00 p.m. All recommendations from faculty governance to the Provost and/or President, come from the UAS or in some cases from the ECS acting on behalf of the UAS. In the 2022-2023 academic year, the ECS met eighteen times, while the UAS met seven times. UAS made several recommendations that the Provost approved. Some of these recommendations are still pending approval. In this report, UAS work in the 2022-2023 academic year has been categorized under the following headings: *Policies/Guidelines, Endorsement/Support, Acceptance of Reports, Appointments, Task Forces, Curriculum/New Programs, and Presentations.*

### I. Policies/Guidelines

All recommended policies, policy changes, and guidelines were initiated by the standing committees of the senate, or directly by ECS/UAS. Policy changes were mostly on the *Shared Governance Policies*. UAS acted on the following policies and made recommendations to the Provost.

*Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee (AFAC) Proposal on Affiliate Faculty Contract Length:* We reviewed a proposal from AFAC requesting that senior affiliates be eligible for contracts of up to six years and to change the senior affiliate promotion increment from \$1000 to \$5000, per the FSBC memo regarding this change. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Academic Policies and Standards Committee (APSC) Proposal on Late Withdrawal Policy:* We reviewed a proposal from APSC regarding Late Withdrawal Policy. The specific APSC



recommendations are the following: Permanently changing the late withdrawal to the Friday of the 11<sup>th</sup> week of the semester; Registrar should make proportionate late withdrawal adjustments for course periods shorter than 15 weeks; Enhance language on the website to include top reasons for withdrawing from courses; Clarifying the submission language at the bottom of the late withdrawal form; Make changes effective immediately for the Winter 2023 semester. Acting on behalf of UAS (per SG 1.01 Section 3.1), ECS supported APSC's recommendation on Late Withdrawal Policy. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and the Registrar has implemented the changes effective immediately.

*Academic Policies and Standards Committee (APSC) Proposal on Academic Freedom:* We reviewed a proposal from APSC regarding Academic Freedom. APSC made a proposal that will result in a change in Board of Trustees Policy (BOT 4.2.2) and Senior Leadership Team Policy (SLT 10.5). In particular, APSC proposed adding the following as the opening statement to BOT 4.2.2 "GVSU recognizes, supports, and defends academic freedom as necessary for preserving our common mission of promoting inquiry and advancing the sum of human knowledge, expression, and understanding." In Section 2, APSC propose replacing "but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to the scope of the course as outlined in the University catalogue description" with "our role as academic professionals is to facilitate a broader understanding of complex issues relative to our disciplines." UAS supported APSC's recommendation to add policy language to BOT 4.2.2 and SLT 10.5. The Provost will present recommended changes to BOT 4.2.2 to the BOT and the changes to SLT 10.5 to the SLT.

*Academic Policies and Standards Committee (APSC) Proposal on Program Scholarships:* For scholarships granted by or in accordance with academic departments, programs and schools, the Development and Financial Aid offices will confer with the affected department, program, or school to clarify or edit criteria before altering requirements for the scholarship. If an academic department, program, or school seeks to change scholarship criteria, that unit should confer with Development and Financial Aid to ensure that the university remains within compliance of the donor's intent. UAS supported APSC's recommendation and the Provost has offered to ensure that this information goes where it belongs.

*Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee (FFPAC) Proposal on Facilities Services Membership:* We reviewed a proposal from FFPAC requesting updates on Facilities Services Membership. FFPAC made a proposal that will result in a change in Shared Governance Policy (SG 1.02.c). Individuals from Facilities Services have worked with FFPAC for many years and Rence Meredith has been attending the meetings, which has worked well. Therefore, FFPAC would like to add a member of Facilities Services as *ex-officio*. The UAS supported FFPAC's recommendation to update Facilities Services Membership. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and the changes to SG 1.02.c are effective immediately.

*Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee (FFPAC) Proposal for Electricity and Power Access in Classrooms:* We reviewed a proposal from FFPAC requesting that the university increase access to electricity and power in classrooms and other study spaces used by students. FFPAC sent a survey about electricity and power access in classroom and received 828 student responses and 234 faculty responses. 37% of students report not being able to complete in-class activities due to being unable to charge their devices. 77.5% reported that they were not satisfied with the ability to charge devices due to outlet availability. Outlet accessibility affects where and how students can study and participate in class. Students alter schedules, seating, and study location arrangements and time on campus based on outlet availability. Facilities can't provide power strips because of tripping hazards. Students with older laptops or cheaper laptops don't stay charged as long, so this is an equity issue. A lot of progress has been made on making charging "bricks" available for check-out as students need them. If students have Pell Grants, they are eligible for \$30 monthly discount on internet services, as well as a one-time \$100 discount towards a computer. The UAS supported FFPAC's recommendation on increasing access to electricity and power access in classrooms. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and will



ensure that Vice President Topic and Vice President Sanial are aware of the faculty's support for increased access to power outlets for students.

*Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC) Proposal on Authorship Guidelines for Collaborative Scholarship:* We reviewed a proposal from FPPC regarding Authorship Guidelines for Collaborative Scholarships. While working on its assigned charge from ECS regarding authorship, FPPC found that the Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence (CSCE) website includes a good guideline for authorship, and they proposed putting what is on the CSCE website on the Office of the Provost website for easier faculty reference. Acting on behalf of UAS (per SG 1.01 Section 3.1), ECS supported FPPC's recommendation on Authorship Guidelines for Collaborative Scholarship. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and the changes are effective immediately.

*Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC) Proposal on FPPC Membership:* We reviewed a proposal from FPPC regarding updates on the membership of FPPC. FPPC made a proposal that will result in a change in Shared Governance Policy (SG 1.02.d). In particular, FPPC proposed allowing the Associate Vice President for Human Resources to designate a representative to serve as *ex-officio*, non-voting member in his stead. The UAS supported FPPC's recommendation to update FPPC Membership. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and the changes to SG 1.02.d are effective immediately.

*Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC) Proposal on Modification to SG 3.07.C:* We reviewed a proposal from FPPC regarding Modification to SG 3.07.C. FPPC made a proposal that will result in a change in Shared Governance Policy (SG 3.07.C) by adding the following language as item #2 on SG 3.07.C "The faculty member may request that unfairly prejudicial comments be redacted. This request is made in writing to the Unit Head. The decision to approve/disapprove the request will be made by the Unit Head, or a standing or ad hoc committee in the unit. This provision is intended to cover offensive, racist, sexist, homophobic, and other personal comments, and is not intended to exclude from the file negative comments directly related to the teaching of the course. A department decision not to remove specific comments may be appealed to the Dean of the College." The UAS supported FPPC's recommendation to modify SG 3.07.C. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC) Proposal on Bias Statements for Students and Faculty:* We reviewed a proposal from FPPC regarding Bias Statements for Students and Faculty. FPPC agreed that there should be a statement directed at students regarding bias, but also thought it would be appropriate to also include a similar statement directed to the faculty. The bias statement to students will be included in the LIFT surveys, while the bias statement to faculty will be included in SG 3.07. The UAS supported FPPC's recommendation on Bias Statements for Students and Faculty. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC) Proposal on Timeline for Promotion:* We reviewed a proposal from FPPC regarding Timeline for Promotion. FPPC proposed that all applications for Tenure/Promotion to Associate Professor are submitted at the start of the winter semester in January, and activities in the fall semester have been completed by the time of the submission. All applications for Full Professor (early or not) are submitted at the start of the fall semester in September, and activities in the fall semester have not been completed by the time of the submission. FPPC's proposal clarifies any confusion on the time period and prevents the "double dipping", which was a concern, by explicitly stating that items included in the Associate Professor application are ineligible for the Full Professor application. The UAS supported FPPC's recommendation on Timeline for Promotion. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Proposal on Adjunct Pay:* We reviewed a proposal from FSBC regarding Adjunct Pay. FSBC made a proposal that will increase the minimum for adjunct pay. Non-tenure track faculty compensation schedule is maintained by HR. In particular, FSBC made the following recommendations: (1) The minimum pay rate for adjunct instructors without a terminal degree be set at \$1,000 per credit hour (up from

\$950 per credit hour); (2) The minimum pay rate for adjunct instructors with a terminal degree be set at \$1,100 per credit hour (up from \$1,050 per credit hour); (3) The minimum pay rate will increase by \$100 for each year of service for up to 5 years; and (4) After 5 years of service individuals may be appointed to become a Senior Adjunct (pursuant to BOT 4.3.1.E). The UAS supported FSBC's recommendation on Adjunct Pay. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.



*Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Proposal on Affiliate Promotional Increment:* We reviewed a proposal from FSBC regarding Affiliate Promotional Increment. FSBC made a proposal that will result in a change in Affiliate Faculty Handbook (AFF 3.01.F). In particular, FSBC made a proposal for the promotional increment for Affiliates to be increased from \$1,000 to \$5,000. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Proposal on Extra Compensation and Independent Studies Compensation:* We reviewed a proposal from FSBC regarding Extra Compensation and Independent Studies Compensation. FSBC made a proposal that will result in a change in Board of Trustees Policy (BOT 4.2.20.3.B). In particular, FSBC made the following recommendations: (1) Faculty who teach courses outside of and in addition to their normal full-time responsibilities shall be paid extra compensation at a minimum of the current Adjunct Instructor minimum; (2) Where a faculty member is responsible for independent study course credits above their standard workload, then their reimbursement per corresponding credit hour shall be one-half the previous year's per credit hour tuition rate for lower division Michigan residents, rounded to the nearest \$50 increment; and (3) Reimbursement for independent study shall be limited to a maximum amount equal to the standard rate of pay for teaching a single three-credit course (per semester). The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Proposal on Update to the Faculty Salary Adjustment Program:* We reviewed a proposal from FSBC regarding Update to the Faculty Salary Adjustment Program. FSBC made a proposal that will result in a change in Shared Governance Policy (SG 3.08). Significant editorial changes were made to SG 3.08 to increase clarity. Some examples of substantive changes recommended include the following: (1) The designation "Salary Increment Fund" which has been used primarily for merit increase be changed to "Merit Fund" and be used exclusively for the Merit Process; (2) Clarifying that all special salary adjustments, including those made by the Office of the Provost, be accompanied by written justification; (3) Promotional increment be increased by \$500 (they have not changed since 2016), and that the dollar amount be increased annually hereafter based on the previous year's increase in salaries (specifically the average Merit Increase); and (4) The annual increase happen without going through faculty governance because an annual increase administered by the Provost will ensure timely adjustments and avoid larger steps that create problems with compression. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Proposal on Update to the Annual Salary Adjustment Request for 2023-2024:* FSBC added more information to the previously submitted annual salary adjustment request. FSBC reminded the administration that all employees sacrificed a salary increase in 2020 and reaffirmed that it is important that employees are paid properly. In particular, FSBC recommends that the Merit Fund be capped at a 3.0% increase and that an additional 2-4% increase be distributed as a flat rate increase administered to all as a component of the Special Salary Adjustment Fund. The UAS supported FSBC's recommendation on Update to the Annual Salary Adjustment Request for 2023-2024. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Proposal on Leadership, Succession Planning, and Membership:* We reviewed a proposal from FSBC requesting that language be added to Shared Governance Policies, SG 1.02.e, to describe the membership, leadership

positions, and succession process for the FSBC. The UAS supported FSBC's recommendation to add policy language to describe the membership, leadership positions and succession process for the FSBC. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and the changes to SG 1.02.e are effective immediately.

*Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Advisory Committee (FTLCAC) Proposal on Relationship between FTLCAC and LIFT-MC:* We reviewed a proposal from FTLCAC regarding the relationship between FTLCAC and LIFT-MC, specifically the role of the LIFT-MC representative. A LIFT-MC liaison on FTLCAC will be selected by the committee. This person will not be the chair or vice chair of FTLCAC. FTLCAC made a proposal that will result in a change in Shared Governance Policy (SG 1.02.h). The UAS supported FTLCAC's recommendation on selecting a liaison to the LIFT-MC from the FTLCAC membership. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Advisory Committee (FTLCAC) Proposal on Leadership and Succession Planning:* We reviewed a proposal from FTLCAC regarding Leadership and Succession Planning. FTLCAC proposed a Chair and Vice Chair structure for continuity and preservation of institutional history. The UAS supported FTLCAC's recommendation to add policy language to describe the leadership positions and succession process for the Pew FTLCAC. The Provost approved UAS recommendation and the changes to Shared Governance Policies, SG 1.02.h, are effective immediately.

*Graduate Council (GC) Proposal on 8-Year Time Limit Policy:* We reviewed a proposal from GC regarding 8-Year Time Limit Policy. GC reviewed how the 8-year time limit policy applies to micro-credentials such as badges and certificates. In particular, GC made the following recommendations: (1) Graduate credits can be counted toward a badge, certificate and/or degree if the credits are successfully completed within a period of 8 consecutive years; and (2) The date of entry into the first graduate course counted towards the badge, certificate and/or degree is considered the starting point of the 8-year period. The policy will be placed in the Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations section of the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog. A verbatim copy of the policy should also be included in the most current Graduate Education Policies & Procedures Manual. The UAS supported GC's recommendation on 8-Year Time Limit Policy. The Provost approved the UAS recommendation and the changes are effective immediately.

*Graduate Council (GC) Proposal on Graduate Remediation Policy:* We reviewed a proposal from GC regarding Graduate Remediation Policy. GC's proposal will bring clarification and structure to the issues surrounding remediation for graduate students since there is lack of consistency across graduate programs in whether remediation is allowed and how it is implemented. The proposed policy will be placed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog within the section titled Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations. The UAS supported GC's recommendation on Graduate Remediation Policy. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Graduate Council (GC) Proposal on Graduate Academic Policy on Transfer Credit:* We reviewed a proposal from GC regarding Graduate Academic Policy on the Transfer of Credit to a Graduate Program Degree, Certificate, or Badge. A student must fulfill all requirements for the degree, certificate, or badge within a period of eight consecutive years. The date of entry into the first graduate course counted towards the degree is viewed as the starting point of the eight-year period. GC maintains that currency in course content and program requirements should also apply credit transferred into GVSU to fulfill the requirements for a degree, certificate, or badge. GC recommendation is to change language from degree to degree, certificate, or badge; and change the number of credits allowed to transfer in to 33% of total credits required. The proposed policy will be placed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog within the section titled Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations. The UAS supported GC's recommendation on Graduate Academic Policy on Transfer Credit. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Graduate Council (GC) Proposal on Graduate Academic Policies for Degrees, Certificates, or Badges:* We reviewed a proposal from GC regarding Graduate Academic Policies for

Degrees, Certificates, or Badges. When many of the Graduate Academic Policies were originally developed and approved by GC and UAS, there were a limited number of graduate certificates, and no graduate badges were available. The new proposal helps to maintain academic integrity and consistency across the various credentials by making graduate academic policies that apply to degrees to be equally applicable to certificates and badges. There are no changes to the intent of the policies but rather GC recommends updating policy language to reflect that it now applies to degrees, certificates, or badges. The proposed policy will be placed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog within the section titled Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations. The UAS supported GC's recommendation on Graduate Academic Policies for Degrees, Certificates, or Badges. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Graduate Council (GC) Proposal on Dual-listed Enrollment Credit at the Graduate Level:* We reviewed a proposal from GC regarding Dual-listed Enrollment Credit at the Graduate Level. The Dual-listed Course Policy provides the parameters for the number of dual-listed course credits that can be applied toward the graduate degree (e.g. masters, specialist, doctorate). The proposed policy change request is to increase the number of dual-listed credits that can count toward the graduate degree from nine (9) to twelve (12). This change will allow for consistency with other policies that address overlap with undergraduate and graduate curriculum issues (e.g. the Dual-level Enrollment Policy and the Combined Degree Program policies). The proposed policy will be placed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog within the section titled Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations. The UAS supported GC's recommendation on Dual-listed Enrollment Credit at the Graduate Level. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Laker Impression of Faculty Teaching Management Committee (LIFT-MC) Proposal on LIFT-MC Membership:* We reviewed a proposal from LIFT-MC regarding updates on the membership of LIFT-MC. LIFT-MC made a proposal that will result in a change in Shared Governance Policy (SG 1.03.B.6). In particular, LIFT-MC proposed to amend the representation of the FTLCAC to move from having the membership include the Chair of FTLCAC to a liaison from FTLCAC, who will operate in an *ex-officio* role. The UAS supported LIFT-MC's recommendation to update LIFT-MC Membership. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Online Education and Microcredential Council (OEMC) Proposal on Membership Change Request:* We reviewed a proposal from OEMC requesting a change in the membership of OEMC, starting with the 2023-2024 academic year. In particular, a budget officer in the Office of the Provost and an administrator from Institutional Marketing have been *ex-officio* members of OEMC. OEMC has found that these individuals do not need to be members of the committee, as they can simply be consulted as needed. The proposal from OEMC will result in a change to Shared Governance Policies that pertain to OEMC, SG 1.02.k. The UAS supported OEMC's recommended revisions to SG 1.02.k. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*University Curriculum Committee (UCC) Proposal on UCC Membership Change Request:* We reviewed a proposal from UCC regarding updates on the membership of UCC. UCC made a proposal that will result in a change in Shared Governance Policy (SG 1.02.j). In particular, UCC proposed to amend the administrative membership of UCC by adding a member from the Registrar's office, who will operate in an *ex-officio* capacity. The UAS supported UCC's recommendation to update UCC Membership. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Proposal to Amend SG 2.05.2:* A proposal was made by the Office of the Provost, supported by the New Program/New Academic Unit Council (NPC), to remove the statement that new minors that consist solely of existing courses can be created by a program change request. According to the current proposal, all new prospectuses for any new program proposal should now go through the NPC so that they can be adequately resourced. The Deans need to review and endorse all new prospectuses before the NPC review. This new process will make the NPC review more successful. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.



## II. Endorsements

Under the responsibilities of the UAS as specified in our *Shared Governance Policies (SG 1.01.2.4)*, UAS may vote to express its endorsement of policies, events, and initiatives that support and advance the university's mission and values. For the winter 2023, UAS endorsed the following initiatives.



*Endorsement of Student Senate Proposal on Student Wages:* Student Senate made a proposal to recompose the student wage classification charge and conducting a labor market analysis to all of the student positions in order to give a fair pay, and to add a taskforce to take care of the logistics. UAS discussed and endorsed the Student Senate proposal on student wages.

*Endorsement of Student Senate Proposal on Credit/No Credit Policy:* Student Senate made a proposal that would move the deadline to choose to take a class for credit/no-credit to the 75% tuition refund deadline. Student Senators met with the APSC chair, who said this would be fine as long as the Registrar has no issues. Student Senators met with the Registrar, who said if the deadline was pushed back there would be more time to process the applications. A question was asked about why not extend the deadline more, the answer was that applications need to be processed by time midterm grades and exams are due. It was noted that credit/no-credit doesn't change the course requirements, and some graduate schools may not look favorably on a lot of credit/no credit courses. It was also noted that students need to pass with a C for credit, not a C-, D+ or D. UAS discussed and endorsed the Student Senate proposal on credit/no credit policy.

*Endorsement of the Final Report and Recommendations of UAS/EIC Involvement with the Teach-In:* Participation from UAS and Student Senate has declined over the years. There is a recommendation to reach out to other groups, such as social justice centers, I & E, and Student Affairs, to join UAS and Student Senate. There is a planning committee, but not a steering committee. There is a need to determine who has the authority to make decisions. The Teach-In is important, the event was created after a bias incident in student housing many years ago; faculty felt it was important. Many do not know this history. UAS will work to increase awareness of the Teach-In. UAS discussed and endorsed the final report and recommendations of UAS/EIC involvement with the Teach-In.

*Endorsement of Faculty Salary and Budget Committee (FSBC) Proposal on Annual Salary Adjustment Request for 2023-2024:* We reviewed a proposal from FSBC requesting the historical CPI plus 1.5% as a minimum standard for salary adjustment increment for 2023-2024. The university has, on average, met this minimum standard over the past decade, but it has not been met the last two years. There are also concerns about the salaries of full professors. If the trend for full professors' salaries at GVSU continues, relative to the mean of the other MI public universities, recommendations will be made. The Provost would like to look at more data than the average, such as looking by discipline. The UAS supported FSBC's recommendation on Annual Salary Adjustment Request for 2023-2024. The Provost's response to the UAS recommendation is still pending.

*Endorsement of the Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. Virtual Commemoration for Winter 2023:* UAS reviewed and discussed the Winter 2023 commemoration for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. UAS unanimously endorsed the Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. commemoration for Winter 2023 and encouraged all faculty to participate in the scheduled events, as they are able. The Provost approved the recommendation from UAS.

*Endorsement of the Provost's Appointed Faculty Representatives to the Online Education and Microcredential Council (OEMC):* Pursuant to SG 1.02.k, UAS discussed and endorsed the Provost's appointed faculty representatives to the OEMC.

*Endorsement of the Year Four Assurance Argument for HLC:* AVP Sean Lancaster shared that our 4-year assurance argument is due to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) in June 2023. Administration is seeking affirmation from ECS/UAS that we want to continue

to be accredited by HLC. The University Assessment Committee (UAC) is helping support AVP Lancaster's efforts. Anyone can come to AVP Lancaster's office to look through the whole document if desired. UAS discussed and endorsed the 4-year assurance argument for HLC.

### **III. Acceptance of Reports**

Under the responsibilities of the UAS as specified in our *Shared Governance Policies (SG 1.01.1.2.4)*, UAS receives proposals initiated by a variety of individuals and groups. The ECS has the authority to act for the UAS within the range of the Senate's responsibilities (*SG 1.01.3.1*).

*Acceptance of the Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee (AFAC) Report on Affiliate Faculty Needs Assessment:* We reviewed the AFAC report on Affiliate Faculty Needs Assessment. AFAC conducted a needs assessment survey of Affiliate Faculty at the end of the 2021-2022 academic year. ECS voted to accept the report and thanked the committee for its work and put this topic on the agenda for the summer retreat.

*Acceptance of the Faculty Facilities Planning Advisory Committee (FFPAC) Report on Wayfinding Issues in Building Interior Spaces:* We reviewed a report from FFPAC regarding Wayfinding Issues in Building Interior Spaces. FFPAC would like to formalize their work on wayfinding and take it on as a formal charge for the next academic year, and also would like to think about what other bodies would be appropriate to take on this issue. ECS thanked FFPAC for their work and will look into this at the retreat as charges are created.

*Acceptance of the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Advisory Committee (FTLCAC) Report on Open Educational Resources/Affordable Course Materials (OER/ACM) Development:* We reviewed a report from the FTLCAC regarding OER/ACM Development. FTLCAC met with Matt Ruen from University Libraries to get an idea of previous efforts. Money to do this from the library is closing, so FTLCAC recommended the following: \$500 summer stipend to adapt a current course to an existing available OER or up to \$2000 summer stipend to write new OER material or a textbook for a course. As part of the proposal, funding could also be divided by a team working on an OER. A portion of the funding could also be applied to the faculty's home unit to support overhead costs of adapting a new OER across multiple sections of a course. These stipends could either be distributed through a new grant type, or as a priority focus for existing grants, such as through Teaching Innovation Grants. The total number of grants offered would be dependent on FTLC budget constraints. The proposal also included recommendation for course releases, but it was discussed that stipend might be more feasible. Christine Rener shared that there is a digital badge being developed for OER use. ECS voted to accept the report and thanked the committee for its work and put this topic on the agenda for the summer retreat.

*Acceptance of the Graduate Council (GC) Report on Graduate Workload Survey:* We reviewed a report from GC regarding Graduate Workload Survey. GC was charged by ECS with reviewing graduate faculty workload as it relates to the significant area of focus and to the contribution of high-quality graduate programs and make recommendations to ECS as appropriate. The policy subcommittee of the GC developed a survey that was test piloted and then disseminated to all graduate faculty at GVSU via anonymous link in Qualtrics. ECS thanked GC for their work and will look into this at the retreat as charges are created.

*Acceptance of the General Education Committee (GEC) Report on Integrating Digital Literacy Skills in the Undergraduate Curriculum:* We reviewed the GEC Report on Integrating Digital Literacy Skills in the Undergraduate Curriculum. GEC explored digital literacy as a skill and defined the skill and 3 learning objectives that faculty could choose to adopt in lieu of another skill. The next step is gathering feedback from faculty on whether faculty are interested in addressing these. GEC is not thinking that their committee will be responsible for digital literacy, they are imagining something co-curricular, such as online modules. It was noted that one of the recommendations is basically CIS 150. GEC stated that they wanted something credit-neutral. CIS 150 could be one way to fulfill the

requirement. There was a comment that if there is a way for student to demonstrate these skills, there can be a focus on those who do not demonstrate them. Another comment was that these seem to encompass technical interactions with the tools, but digital literacy also includes using information in a digital format. The GEC are focused on producing material with digital tools, consuming digital literacy, and developing online persona. The items listed are things students would need to be able to do in order to do the higher-level things we need them to do in general education. There was a comment that FTLC would need to help the faculty assist with answering questions from students. It was suggested that the committee express these in a way that will work as technology changes. Student Senate representatives suggested that during Transitions was a great time for learning for students. ECS voted to accept the report, share with UCC, and put on the agenda for ECS retreat for further discussion.

*Acceptance of the General Education Committee (GEC) Report on the Creation of Subcommittees:* We reviewed a report from GEC regarding the creation of subcommittees of GEC for curriculum and assessment. GEC had been charged with looking at the structure of the committee and considering the creation of subcommittees for curriculum and assessment. After careful consideration, GEC decided to keep the committee structure as it is, as creating subcommittees might lead to unequal workloads among committee members. ECS voted to accept the report and thanked the committee for its work.

*Acceptance of Equity and Inclusion Committee (EIC) Report on Diversity of Faculty, Staff, and Students Across Colleges:* We reviewed the EIC Report on Diversity of Faculty, Staff, and Students Across Colleges. Data suggest that we continue to present ourselves as a predominantly white institution. In 2022, EIC hopes to make specific recommendations on the following: Expand reporting to capture a more diverse picture of disability on campus; Explore more deeply not just gender statistics, but the experiences and workloads to ensure equity in workload distribution for all types of work; Investigation into inclusive best practices with regards to mental health and neurodiversity for personnel actions; Study of workload experiences through a lens of race and gender. UAS accepted the report and thanked EIC for the report.

*Acceptance of the Faculty Personnel Policy Committee (FPPC) Report on Consideration of OER as Advancement of Knowledge or Creative Expression:* We reviewed a report from FPPC in response to a charge from ECS requesting FPPC to consider adding OER to the category of Advancement of Knowledge or Creative Expression. FPPC reviewed this request and decided not to recommend a policy change. It was noted that Shared Governance Policies (or Faculty Handbook) contains examples for each category of scholarship, and faculty could make the case that an OER could fit into a given category, but not all OER will fit the same category. ECS voted unanimously to accept the report and thank the committee for completing its charge.

*Acceptance of Laker Impression of Faculty Teaching Management Committee (LIFT-MC) Report on Bias:* LIFT-MC was charged with looking at the potential for bias in LIFT based on data from other student evaluation of data surveys. The committee examined whether or not questions in LIFT actually correspond to questions of teaching effectiveness and found that they did not. The LIFT-MC will look beyond GVSU data to make specific recommendations to ECS, which will be forwarded to FPPC if supported for the drafting of policy language.

*Acceptance of the Online Education and Microcredential Council (OEMC) Report on Second Year of Two-Year Microcredential Process:* There was discussion on the progress report from OEMC. OEMC was asked if the efficacy of the badge programs has been assessed. It has not, but OEMC could be charged to track this. A question was asked about the division of responsibilities between OEMC and the University Curriculum Committee (UCC). A representative from UCC also sits on OEMC and ensuring that the correct committee(s) review(s) proposals is part of the role of AVP Erica Hamilton in the Provost's Office. Historically, OEMC and UCC have worked well together. UAS voted unanimously to accept the report and

thanked OEMC.

*Acceptance of the University Assessment Committee (UAC) Report on Program Review Reportage:* Assessment is needed for information about student learning and engagement in co-curricular activities. Assessment can provide evidence for the need to request resources to promote student success. HLC requires assessment. UAC is looking at making changes for the following reasons. The current system does have a clear path for retiring things. Externally accredited programs have to duplicate their assessment work with reportage to both GVSU's system and the system of accrediting bodies. UAC wants their feedback to be helpful for programs and want it to be easy for deans, ADs, and co-curricular leads to be able to easily act. UAC proposes a PADC framework for assessment: Plan, Act, Do, Check. This framework allows for a more natural progression than planning everything in advance and encourages responsive reflection. UAS voted unanimously to accept the report and recommendation from UAC.

#### **IV. Appointments**

Under the responsibilities of the ECS as specified in our *Shared Governance Policies* (SG 1.01.3.4), ECS serves as a nominating committee for membership for all committees, task forces, and boards that are elected by the UAS. In addition, according to SG 1.01.3.1, ECS has the authority to act for the UAS within the range of the Senate's responsibilities.

*Appointment of Faculty to the University Technology Council (UTC):* ECS discussed the selection and appointment of faculty representatives to the University Technology Council. "The role of the UTC is to contribute to the technology vision and direction and helps provide assessments of the effectiveness of technology services and systems across the University. It is focused on providing guidance on the overall strategic direction and prioritization of major IT initiatives in support of the University's strategic direction and goals. The Council makes strategic recommendations to the Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Digital Officer and the University's Senior Leadership Team." The following faculty were appointed to represent faculty in the UTC: Beomkyu Choi (CECI); Parag Uma Kosalge (SCB); Laura Stroik (CLAS); Robert Talbert (CLAS); Marie VanderKooi (KCON); Randy Wyble (CHP).

*Appointment of Faculty to the Online Education and Microcredential Council (OEMC):* UAS approved the Provost's appointment of faculty to the OEMC. Kristen Vu from CHP was confirmed as a faculty representative on OEMC.

*Appointment of Faculty Representatives to the Laker Impression of Faculty Teaching Management Committee (LIFT-MC):* At its regular meeting of September 16, 2022, ECS appointed three new faculty to join the two returning faculty to serve in the LIFT-MC for 2022-2023. Because there was a limited number of nominees, only three out of four that were needed, ECS passed a motion to leave a vacant faculty position on the LIFT-MC for the 2022-2023 academic year and reconsider for the 2023-2024 academic year. The three new members appointed for a 3-year term are: Whitt Kilburn (PLS, CLAS); Ji (Miracle) Qi (MGT, SCB); and Wei Sun (ECON, SCB). The returning members of the committee are Elizabeth Flandreau (Co-Chair, PSY, CLAS) and Kimberly McKee (Co-Chair, BCOIS).

#### **V. Task Forces**

When confronted with issues that need focused attention, broad representation and results within a short time frame, ECS/UAS creates task forces to deal with these issues. For the 2022-2023 academic year, there were three task forces: (1) [FACULTY REAPPORTIONMENT ON SENATE \(FARES\)](#) Task Force; (2) [INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS \(INTPIM\)](#) Task Force; and (3) [TEST-OPTIONAL AND HOLISTIC ADMISSION POLICY](#) Task Force.

*FARES Task Force:* The task force was formed with the following roles/charges: Pursuant to the report of the 2021 Affiliate Faculty Representation on Senate (AFFARES) Task Force, formulate one or more proposals for revising Board of Trustees policies defining the



membership of UAS and ECS (BOT 3.1.4.1) in order (i) to provide for the participation of Affiliate Faculty representatives in those bodies and (ii) to address changes in the relative distribution of faculty among the Colleges/Libraries since the 2004 University reorganization that are not reflected in the current number and apportionment of seats on ECS. The task force has submitted its final report to ECS.



**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS (INTPIM) Task Force:** The task force was formed with the following roles/charges: (1) Clarify language on nominal use of university resources and work made for hire; and (2) Make recommendations for specific policy language on instructional materials that FPPC will use to craft policy language. The task force has submitted its final report to ECS.

**TEST-OPTIONAL AND HOLISTIC ADMISSION POLICY Task Force:** At its summer retreat on June 22, 2022, ECS resolved to form a taskforce on "Test Optional and Holistic Admission Policy". ECS was responding to a request from Student Senate in which Student Senate had asked for the current Test Optional Admissions Policy to be extended for 1-2 years. In its deliberation, ECS considered the "big picture" and implications on recruitment, retention, and resources in support of students and faculty. To that end, ECS decided to incorporate Holistic Admission in the discussion and thus created the "Test Optional and Holistic Admission Policy Task Force". In contemplating faculty to invite to join the taskforce, we thought those with experience in First Year Advising and Registration (FYAR) and the Oliver Wilson Scholars (OWS) would make great faculty representatives in the taskforce. ECS also recommended that someone from the Division of Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach serve as ex-officio, as well as AVP Suzanne Benet from the Provost Office. Some of the questions that were asked by ECS regarding a potential paradigm shift in admission requirements include the following: How do we maintain our brand as we expand opportunities for more and diverse learners? What is the algorithm for admission decision? How do admission policies affect the curriculum? How do we match admission policies with resources to set students up for success? In terms of accountability, how would we know if the new policies are working? The task force was formed with the following roles/charges: (1) Engage with members of the Division of Enrollment Development and Educational Outreach to develop shared understanding with faculty and students about admissions standards, processes, and outcomes, including the impact of test-optional admissions decisions; (2) Understand the theory and implementation of holistic admissions at GVSU and its relationship with traditional measures of academic preparation and college readiness; and (3) Report on key findings and make recommendations. The task force has submitted draft recommendations.

## **VI. Curriculum/New Programs**

The Governance Procedure for establishment of a new program involves two stages: (1) The Prospectus for a New Program, and (2) The Proposal for a New Program. The New Program/New Academic Unit Council (SG 1.03.B.13) met and approved the following:

- New Program Prospectus: BS in Arts Industry
- New Program Prospectus: Film & Video Production Minor
- New Program Prospectus: Cyber Operations
- New Program Prospectus: BS in Data Science and Analytics
- New Unit Proposal: School of Interdisciplinary Studies in BCOIS





## VII. Presentations

We continued our senate tradition of inviting different campus authorities to give a presentation followed by discussions on topics that are relevant and of interest to faculty, staff and students. This 2022-2023 academic year, there were presentations and discussions on the following topics.

Presentation Topic	Presenter(s)
Discussion with Employee Ombuds Officer	Elisa Ortega-Schultz
Update on New Recruitment Plan	Mychal Coleman & Chris Grooms
Benefits Update	Tara Bivens & Tammi King
Discussion on GVSU Tuition Models	Samhita Rhodes
Discussion on Institutional Data Management	Vicky Thelen
Title IX Update	Kevin Carmody
Inclusive Approaches to Faculty Mentoring	Christine Rener & Sherril Soman
Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution	Aaron Haight
University Budget	Greg Sanial, Craig Wieschhorster
CSCE Survey on Faculty Research at GVSU	Kristy Dean, Susan Mendoza
Update on IT Initiatives	Milos Topic
Updates on Campus Climate Data	Jesse Bernal
Introduction of New Administrators	Stacie Behler, Kevin Carmody, Jenny Hall-Jones, Steven Hodas, Danny Velez, and Jackie Zhang
Exit Interview from HR	Deb Sanders
International Risk Assessment Committee	Kate Stoetzner
Updates from WGUV	James Rademaker, Aaron Turner
Scholarship System Update	Michelle Rhodes, B. Donta Truss
University Libraries Collection Strategies to RH2025	Annie Belanger, Kristin Meyer
Laker Lines	Lisa Haynes
GVSU Parking	Chris Swank
Downtown Living and Learning Community	Diana Lawson
Active Shooter Response & Campus Safety	Chief Brandon DeHaan
Require Course Materials & Student Success	Cara Cadena, Tony Glaab, Lina Haas, Justin Hahs, Erica Hamilton, Michelle Rhodes
Faculty Involvement in Title IX Assessment	Kevin Carmody
Workday	Belinda Boardman, Josh Marko, Ben Rapin
Vaccination Policy Draft & Immunization Proposal	Ed Aboufadel, Edward Jones II
GVSU Talent Management Initiatives	Mychal Coleman, Lindsey DesArmo
CLAS Voyage	Jenn Drake, Kris Pachla

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