



## Faculty Senate News

### March 9, 2006

A vote to establish a new Faculty Senate standing committee on Educational Equity and Campus Environment and a special informational report on the Senate's role in the addition of "sexual orientation" to the University non-discrimination policy highlight the many reports to be presented at the upcoming March 14<sup>th</sup> University Faculty Senate meeting. Senators and visitors should plan for a 1:30 to 3:30 meeting that will include reports on issues such as the nature of evidence in promotion and tenure decisions, an electronic system for curricular consultation and approval, faculty salaries, and various slates for Senate elections. I encourage all faculty to read the upcoming reports posted in the online Senate Agenda and share responses with your Senate representatives.

President Spanier will also be in attendance to provide comments and stand for questions. If you have questions of keen interest for the president, be sure to contact one of your Senate representatives, so she or he can take this opportunity to have the University President address a specific issue.

Here are a few details on the Senate reports. Senate Council is sponsoring a special informational report on the history of the addition of "sexual orientation" to the University non-discrimination policy (<http://senate.psu.edu/agenda/2005-2006/mar14-06agn/appd.pdf>). The brief history details how a special Senate committee recommended the addition to President Thomas in 1991 in an advisory and consultative report.

If approved, the new Senate Committee on Educational Equity and Campus Environment will increase the deliberation of all Senate committees on matters of diversity and educational equity. The committee will be composed of seven elected Senators, two student Senators, the chairs of the Commission for Women, the Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity, and Commission for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equity, and the Vice Provost for Educational Equity. The committee is charged to integrate issues of diversity and equity within the deliberations of all standing Senate committees (<http://senate.psu.edu/agenda/2005-2006/mar14-06agn/appe.pdf>).

The Senate has developed an electronic curriculum submission process that will facilitate University-wide consultation on course proposals and turn a paper process for submission and review into an electronic one. The Information Technology Services ANGEL group has developed the system and will provide a brief demonstration. We hope that the electronic supports built into the system will generate broader collaboration among faculty teaching in the same discipline across the University as they propose courses and program additions, revisions, or drops. The electronic system will also build a database of curricular information for future reference (<http://senate.psu.edu/agenda/2005-2006/mar14-06agn/appi.pdf>).

The special subcommittee appointed in 2004 by Past Chair Kim Steiner to assess the nature of evidence used in the promotion and tenure process will present an interim report (<http://senate.psu.edu/agenda/2005-2006/mar14-06agn/appj.pdf>). This report details many significant suggestions that may become recommendations in a future promotion and tenure revision by the Faculty Affairs committee. The committee hopes for an excellent response to the suggestions in this report so they can develop revisions to improve the P & T process.

Faculty Benefits will present their annual faculty salary report comparing salaries across campuses and colleges broken down by rank and gender. This report has grown to over fifty tables of data, thus the link to the actual report in the Senate Agenda (<http://senate.psu.edu/agenda/2005-2006/mar14-06agn/appk.pdf>) includes an additional link to a further set of complete data tables (<http://www.senate.psu.edu/agenda/2005-2006/mar14-06agn/salarytables.pdf>.) Senators will have an opportunity to discuss the patterns they find in this data at the Senate meeting, and offer advice as to any focus the University should take to ensure salaries are equitable.

In additional informational reports, Faculty Senate Secretary Dawn Blasko will present a report on the Senate Officers' visits to University Park units this Spring 2006 semester (<http://senate.psu.edu/agenda/2005-2006/mar14-06agn/appl.pdf>). Several informational reports will present candidates for the University Promotion and Tenure Committee, Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee, the Standing Joint Committee on Tenure, the Faculty Advisory Committee to the President, the Secretary of the Senate, and the Chair-Elect of the Senate. Senators will be asked for any additional nominations from the floor before these slates are closed for election. If you wish to nominate a candidate from the floor, please have their approval before the nomination.

The complete agenda for the Senate meeting is posted on the Senate Web site at <http://www.senate.psu.edu/agenda/index.html> and the minutes (*The Senate Record*) will be posted approximately three weeks after the meeting. Members of the University community are invited to attend any Senate meeting and seats are reserved for this purpose. Any member of the University community who is not a member of the Senate may request to speak on any item of business already before the Senate. Requests must be made to the Chair, through the Executive Secretary of the Senate, at least four calendar days before the Senate meeting. Senate meetings may be viewed on Mediasite Live at <http://live.libraries.psu.edu>.

I encourage all University members to be involved in governance issues by attending local unit meetings, by contacting the unit's Senate representatives, and by using the University Faculty Senate Web site at <http://senate.psu.edu/>. Email contacts for officers, committee chairs, and unit representatives are posted on the Web site.

To learn how to submit major, minor, option or course proposals, consult the following: [http://www.senate.psu.edu/curriculum\\_resources/guide/contents.html](http://www.senate.psu.edu/curriculum_resources/guide/contents.html). Senate Curriculum Reports are available at [http://www.senate.psu.edu/curriculum\\_resources/bluesheet/bluex.html](http://www.senate.psu.edu/curriculum_resources/bluesheet/bluex.html).

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