



Faculty Senate Newsletter September 9, 2008

It's great to be back for another academic year!

The University Faculty Senate is a community of scholars engaged in service to promote academic excellence. It is a network of approximately 270 elected or appointed representatives from all colleges and units at Penn State. Our shared governance structure is built on our senators passion and participation. Senators are driven by common sense, sound judgment, honesty, and concern with doing what is right and effective. We have vast and far-reaching expertise to tap from among our faculty, students, staff, and administrators and a range of opportunities for leveraging our collective talents.

A few weeks ago, Senate Council met to develop an agenda for our September meeting that is relevant, engaging, and worthy of a time commitment from our network of representatives. While agenda items are quite different from one another, all fit together to encourage academic excellence. The University Faculty Senate will meet on Tuesday, September 9, 2008, at 1:30 p.m. in 112 Kern Graduate Building. The items below will be considered at the meeting. Thought-provoking, interesting, and intelligent discussions will lead us toward achieving goals that affect the common good.

Kevin Morooney, Vice Provost for Information Technology, will give a special informational report on improving Penn State's computer security and protecting privacy. This multi-phase process will include the scanning of all Penn State computers to locate personally identifiable information, work with users to remove or retain data locally, and provide full-disc encryption to protect laptops that are stolen or lost.

The Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs will sponsor two reports. The first is a forensic discussion of online education concerning courseware and copyright issues. The purpose of this discussion is to educate faculty about intellectual property rights related to their online teaching materials and to facilitate discussion on faculty rights and responsibilities. We have the potential to be one of the leaders in the academy in creating equitable policies and practices on intellectual property that is created in the instructional realm. The second report contains recommendations to ensure that all deans establish policies on promotion procedures for full-time fixed-term faculty and develop guidelines on fixed-term faculty roles in unit governance.

The Senate will discuss a revision to the Senate Bylaws that will allow a voting unit with only one faculty senator to send an alternate if the elected senator is unable to attend a meeting. Because this is a Bylaw revision, the Senate will not vote on this report until October 21. The Undergraduate Education Committee will sponsor a report with a revision to Senate Policy 42-50, Credit by Examination.

The Senate Committee on Intra-University Relations will present an informational report on campus security at all locations.

Three annual reports will be received. The report on high school students enrolled non-degree in credit courses and a report from the Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities. The Joint Committee on Insurance and Benefits report focuses on health plan consolidation, healthcare coverage for faculty/staff/retirees, wellness, long-term care plans, and the dental plan.

Members of the University community are invited to attend this meeting. Any member of the University community not a member of the Senate may request the privilege of the floor on any item of business already before the Senate. Such a request must be made to the Chair, through the Executive Secretary of the Senate, at least four calendar days before the meeting at which the individual wishes to speak.

The *Senate Agenda* will be posted on the Senate Web site one week prior to each Senate meeting. The September 9 Agenda is available at <http://www.senate.psu.edu/agenda/index.html>. Senate meeting minutes (*The Senate Record*) are also available at <http://www.senate.psu.edu/record/index.html> approximately three weeks following the Senate meeting.

For information on submitting major, minor, option, or course proposals, the *Guide to Curricular Procedures* is available at http://www.senate.psu.edu/curriculum_resources/guide/contents.html. The August 26, 2008, Senate Curriculum Report is available at http://www.senate.psu.edu/curriculum_resources/bluesheet/bluex.html.

We encourage you to take part in our system of shared governance. Please continue to provide us feedback by sending comments and suggestions to your elected representatives or Senate officers. We want to ensure that our meetings and reports enhance the academic and intellectual environment.

It is truly an honor to serve you.

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