



Faculty Senate News

March 4, 2005

Several dozen faculty members and administrators responded to my request in the last Newsletter for comments about mandatory advising for first-year students. Almost everyone thought it was a good idea, but several persons also brought up potential “downside” consequences. I think we should avoid anything that would make it more difficult for students to register for classes, but there is clearly broad support for a system that compels advisor/advisee contact during the first year. I have passed along to the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education a summary of these responses and some supporting materials, and I expect them to take up action on this during the coming months.

As we enter the home stretch on this academic year, I feel very pleased with the breadth and, let’s say, *quality* of issues that have been taken up this year by the Senate’s standing committees and two appointed, *ad hoc* committees. Much of this work will not be completed until next year, but I hope that most of it will be coming to the Senate floor during our last two meetings, in March and April. Certainly, we have a very full agenda for the March meeting, which will occur on Tuesday, March 15, at 1:30 p.m. in 112 Kern Building. The following are among the items on the agenda:

- *Remarks by President Spanier*, followed by questions from Senators.
- *Nominating Committee Reports* (informational), for the 2005-2006 positions of Chair-Elect, Secretary, membership on the Faculty Advisory Committee to the President, and membership on the University P&T Committee and two other extra-senatorial standing committees.
- *Roster of Senators for 2005-2006* (informational), with the names of new, continuing, ex officio, and appointed senators.
- *Report on University Long-Term Borrowing* (informational). Senior Vice-President Gary Schultz will describe the University’s borrowing patterns, debt policy principles, measures of credit ratings, sources of capital funds, and upcoming capital projects.
- *Report on Changes in Outreach* (informational). Vice President Craig Weidemann will describe new outreach initiatives.
- *Summary of Student Petitions by College* (informational). This annual report will provide an overview of the occurrence and disposition of student petitions for exception to University policies.
- *Report on Enrollment and Admissions* (informational). Vice Provost John Romano will describe enrollment and admissions issues facing the University.

- *Report on Senate Scholarship Awards to Undergraduates* (informational), Assistant Vice Provost for Enrollment Management and Student Aid, Anna Griswold, will respond to questions on this overview of the 254 Faculty Senate Scholarship Awards given to undergraduate students during the 2003-2004 year.
- *Travel Task Force Report* (informational). This report describes proposals for significant changes to University policies and procedures for reimbursing travel. Representatives from the administration's Travel Task Force and Technology and Implementation Team will present the report and respond to questions.
- *Faculty Salary Report, 2004-2005* (informational). The Senate Committee on Faculty Benefits will present their annual report on faculty salaries with comparisons among Penn State units and among Penn State and peer institutions.
- *Report on Serials and Scholarly Communication* (informational). Assistant Dean for Collections, Bonnie MacEwan, will report on the rising costs of acquisitions, their effects on the University, and what defensive strategies are being employed by Libraries.
- *Summary of Spring 2005 Visits to University Park Units* (informational). Secretary Blasko will report on the officers' visits to the Colleges of Agricultural Sciences, Arts and Architecture, and Business; School of Information Sciences and Technology; University Libraries; and the Division of Undergraduate Studies.

The complete agenda for the March 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. The March 1, 2005, Senate Curriculum Report is available at http://www.senate.psu.edu/curriculum_resources/bluesheet/bluex.html. Members of the University community are invited to attend the March 15, or any Senate meeting, and we have seats 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.

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

Kim C. Steiner
 Chair, University Faculty Senate
steiner@psu.edu