



## The Senate Newsletter

September 9, 2004

Welcome back to the start of another academic year. University Faculty Senate activities will officially begin with next week's meeting, but the other officers and I have been busy through the summer with committee charges and other matters. My goal for this year has been to make the fullest possible use of the legislative and advisory/consultative authority of the Senate by engaging our committees in issues that are important to the faculty and the welfare of the University. Through the course of the year I will describe here some of those activities as they are taken up by standing committees, a special committee that I am appointing, and a joint Senate/Administration committee that will soon be appointed by the Provost and me.

The University Faculty Senate is the voice of the faculty in virtually all administrative matters of the University but especially those that pertain to our academic mission, the particular area in which the Senate has legislative authority. Please let us hear from you about problems that cannot be solved through unit-level channels or University-wide concerns that require attention. My email address is [steiner@psu.edu](mailto:steiner@psu.edu).

The first meeting of the Senate for this academic year will take place on Tuesday, September 14, 2004 at 1:30 p.m. in 112 Kern Building. The Senate welcomes visitors to all of its meetings, and a greeter in the rear of the room will direct you to a seating area that is reserved for this purpose. I highly recommend that every person who has not been a member of the Senate should find an occasion to attend a Senate meeting. An investment of just a couple of hours will yield a useful, first-hand understanding of this important University institution. Our other meetings this year will be held on Oct. 26, Dec. 7, Feb. 1, Mar. 15, and Apr. 26. All are scheduled at the same time and place (1:30 in 112 Kern) except that the October meeting will be held at the Penn State Harrisburg campus.

The agenda for each meeting is posted on the Senate's Web site <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/agendax.html> one week prior to the meeting. Senate meeting minutes (*The Senate Record*) are also posted on the Senate Web site at the URL <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/recordx.html> approximately three weeks following the meeting. The following are among the topics on next week's agenda:

- *Remarks by President Spanier* followed by questions from Senators.
- *A revision to Senate Policy 42-98 on awarding university credit for certain courses taken in the Armed Services* (legislative).
- *A revision to Senate Policy 56-70 that would extend leave-of-absence policy to College of Medicine students* (legislative).
- *A revision to Senate Standing Rules that would stipulate that faculty members of the Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities be tenured* (legislative).
- *The annual report of the Senate Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities*

- *The annual report of the Senate Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics* (informational). This report summarizes statistics on the eligibility of our student athletes and provides several indices of their academic performance compared with students at other institutions.
- *The annual report of the Joint Committee on Insurance and Benefits* (informational). Recent and proposed changes in health care coverage are discussed.
- *A report by Eva Pell, Dean of the Graduate School, sponsored by the Committee on Research, on "Global Outsourcing, Research, and Graduate Education."*
- *A report on "Managing Classroom Disruption" from the Committee on Student Life* (informational).

**Current Business (a snippet):** At its meeting next Tuesday morning, the Committee on Undergraduate Education will be considering final reports from three special committees, one on implementation of the First Year Seminar requirement, one on proposed changes to BA degree requirements, and one on how the GHA requirement is being satisfied in practice. Expect to see legislation and other Senate floor action on these items beginning probably in October. If you have comments on these topics, direct them to the committee chair, Art Miller ([acm1@psu.edu](mailto:acm1@psu.edu)).

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