23 September 2019

Greetings from your Senate Officers:

We hope the first month of the new semester has been productive and successful. As we move deeper into the semester, the work of the University really begins to pick up. The Faculty Senate held its second meeting of the year on September 19. President Curtis will be holding her Fall Address and Reception on Wednesday, October 2 from 3:00-4:30PM in Tilson Auditorium. We encourage all faculty to take advantage of this opportunity to receive updates on several initiatives directly from President Curtis.

The Faculty Senate was also provided an update from Vice President Lisa Spence-Bunnett on the request for proposals process for a new or updated learning management system (LMS). Blackboard is ending support for Blackboard as we know it in the next couple of years and in preparation, the University felt it necessary to move forward with developing a request for proposals steering committee, with both faculty and staff representation, to develop minimal system capabilities for any company who wishes to submit a proposal for review. The Officers and the Executive Committee have strongly advocated that transferability of current content housed on Blackboard be a minimal system capability as to protect the time, energy, and effort of Faculty in course development. As the steering committee begins its work, please look for opportunities to engage in the process.

Last week you should have received an e-mail from Faculty Senate Chairperson, Dr. Chris MacDonald, regarding the Tobacco Free Task Force Report which was sent out in the ISU Today global email. The report can be found here:

<https://www.indstate.edu/sites/default/files/media/president/pdfs/tobacco-free-task-force-report-final1.1.pdf>

The survey to provide feedback about the report can be found here:

[https://indstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\_0qRWvFAGGeaoRGR](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Findstate.qualtrics.com%2Fjfe%2Fform%2FSV_0qRWvFAGGeaoRGR&data=02%7C01%7CKenneth.Games%40indstate.edu%7C552968c498c84f90b85008d73e074666%7C3eeabe396b1c4f95ae682fab18085f8d%7C0%7C0%7C637046073323638487&sdata=MNTJq5UfDgNEFLda109NB8SdgwKVZXl0aWu17KcYMuM%3D&reserved=0)

Please take a few moments to read the report and provide any feedback you may have.

Biennial Review Lessons and Interpretations

The deadline for Faculty to submit their Biennial Review documents was Friday, September 20th. The Senate Officers received several questions and were ask for interpretations on multiple elements of the report. We learned, like any comprehensive review process, that even the best efforts for clarity may lead to questions which require clarification.

A summary of these interpretations are below:

Request for Interpretation #1:

The Biennial Review document specifies that:

*Each faculty member shall prepare an electronic report which documents activities in teaching/librarianship, scholarship/creativity, and service. This report shall not exceed nine (9) pages (min. 10 pt. font) exclusive of their teaching and advising data collected in the Faculty Activities Database, and absent of any links to external documents. Faculty must submit evidence of their teaching effectiveness within the allotted pages, which must include the University-wide student course evaluations for any semesters in which the faculty member is teaching courses.*

However, the Biennial Review Data Sheet, which is the un-editable part of the biennial review report pulls all uploaded course evaluations already, so there is potential reduplication of effort.

Interpretation #1:

The Senate Officers and the Provost confirmed that faculty do not need to reduplicate the work that the FAD is already doing, and they do **not** need to include the course evaluations in their 9 pages (as it is included in the Biennial Review Data Sheet.

Request for Interpretation #2:

The Biennial Review Document specifies that:

*A department’s review criteria should be specific to the goals of the department and associated programs and within university guidelines. No criteria may be used to judge a faculty member’s domain-specific performance unless those criteria have been in place for at least one calendar year prior to the departmental evaluation of materials and were the result of a departmental vote.*

However, several department Biennial Review Guidelines were not approved until after September 20, 2018. This creates potential conflict in the review as the previous Biennial Review Guidelines include a fourth domain of review, administrative duties, which is not part of current University Guidelines.

Interpretation #2:

The Faculty Senate Officers and the Provost have agreed that generally, guidelines passed less than one year before the current Biennial Review submission date (September 20, 2019) are not appropriate to utilize for the current review.  However, the old criteria will not be in alignment with the University document, as administrative assignments have been removed from the university document.  In these situations, a department this may:

1. Use the old criteria, removing any evaluation of administrative assignments, or
2. Get all faculty impacted (those being reviewed and those doing reviews) to sign/affirm an agreement to use the new criteria, and then use those.

As we continue through the current Biennial Review cycle, we will continue to learn and improve our process. If you have questions regarding the Biennial Review process, please reach out to Faculty Senate Chairperson, Dr. Chris MacDonald.

As a reminder, this fall Dr. Carrie Ball stepped into the newly created role of the Indiana State Faculty Ombuds. Her role, in part is to offer a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent environment in which faculty feel comfortable discussing their questions and concerns. For more information on the Office of the Faculty Ombuds and ways to contact Dr. Ball, please go to the Faculty Ombudsperson’s website, <https://www.indstate.edu/faculty-ombudsperson>.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be 17 September 2019.

You can find information about the Faculty Senate, including standing committees, Executive Committee and Senate minutes, meeting schedules, etc. at the Faculty Senate website: <https://www.indstate.edu/services/facsenate>. There is also a Faculty Senate Blackboard Site that all faculty may access. You will find it in your course list as COM-ISUFACULTY: University Faculty.

Your Senate Officers for 2019-2020 and their contact information are:

Chair: Chris MacDonald, Professor and Chairperson Department of Applied Clinical and Educational Sciences, [Chris.MacDonald@indstate.edu](mailto:Chris.MacDonald@indstate.edu)

Vice Chair: Robert Guell, Professor of Economics, [Robert.Guell@indstate.edu](mailto:Robert.Guell@indstate.edu)

Secretary: Kent Games, Associate Professor of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation, [Kenneth.Games@indstate.edu](mailto:Kenneth.Games@indstate.edu)

Please contact one of the Officers or your Senate representative(s) with any questions or concerns.