Officers’ Musings

16 October 2015

The officers would like to provide you with some important updates from the Faculty Senate meeting yesterday:

• We would like to welcome Malissa Muyumba as the new Temporary Faculty Advocate and thank Michelle Morahn for her service in this role during the past year. In related news, the Senate approved new Handbook language designed to provide our temporary faculty with a greater voice in the selection of their advocate.

• The two constitutional measures sent to you for approval both passed with the required majorities and percentage of the voting membership of the University faculty. The new language regarding the University College passed 299-18, while the change to the term of service for the Executive Committee passed 311-14. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to cast a ballot.

• The Senate considered and passed revisions to Handbook language concerning University-wide Faculty Awards. The approved language allows Senior Instructors to be considered for the Caleb Mills Award. It also allows winners of the Caleb Mills Award and the Faculty Distinguished Service Award to become eligible for these awards again after a period of ten years. Finally, the language describing the composition of award committees has been made more uniform.

• The Senate considered and passed a motion from the Graduate Council to change the due date for nominations for the Theodore Dreiser Distinguished Research/Creativity Award from January 20 to December 1 of each year. Pending approval from the Board of Trustees, this change will become effective next year.

• The Senate also approved revisions to the CAPS manual upon a recommendation from CAAC. The new language adjusts the way in which upper-level FS UDIE and junior composition courses are counted within the 120 credits required for graduation and establishes that programs with more than 71 credits are subject to curricular review. This change of language is long in coming and codifies current practice.

• The College of Arts & Sciences received Senate approval for its Proposal for Guidelines for Awarding BA and BS degrees. This document eliminates the current catalog distinction between the two—twelve credit hours in a single non-native language for the BA—and establishes a process whereby departments choose the degree that best suits their major and receive curricular approval through established college channels.

• Administrative reports provided the following updates: 1. Faculty participation in the It’s On Blue campaign has reached nearly 100%. We would like to thank everyone for taking the time to undergo the training; 2. The Strategic Plan website is up and running. You can access it at http://irt2.indstate.edu/cms/sp16/ The link provides information on the committees and their members, documents and reports, and timelines. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the Provost’s Office. It is important to have as much faculty participation in the process as possible; 3. The Advising Task Force report has been issued and is posted on the University Faculty Blackboard site under “Reports, Documents.” At the heart of the Task Force recommendations is a desire to provide compensation to faculty who engage in this important service. Considering the budgetary constraints on the University, this will be problematic. However, faculty governance has begun to review the report and will actively engage the Administration in the hope that creative and effective solutions can be found.

• Finally, as many of you are aware, at present all searches for faculty lines have been placed on hold by the Administration. The Provost has asked the deans to review their requests, prioritize them, and provide justification for a small number of the most critical lines. The President is hopeful that this review process will result in upwards of 15-20 searches this year. Considering the increasing pressures on faculty workload, the officers intend to work closely with the Administration to ensure that an appropriate balance can be found between budgetary and other constraints on hiring and the realities of a growing university.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact one of your Senate representatives. We appreciate your support of shared governance and look forward to your participation. Enjoy the Homecoming weekend!