Officers’ Musings

1 May 2018

Greetings from your Senate Officers:

We hope you were able to enjoy at least some of the beautiful weather we’ve had the last few days, especially with final exams and grading looming. The Faculty Senate held its ninth and tenth meetings of the year the last two Thursdays, April 17th and 24th. The good news is that it passed a new Biennial Review. The details are, of course, in the new Biennial Review (BR) itself and the related minutes but the upshot is that Senate, the Senate Exec, and FAC all agreed to get rid of the “exceeding expectations” category and remove merit pay from the process. Why? You’ll all remember the survey FAC conducted as part of its charge to review this year’s BR. Most of the concerns expressed had to do with the exceeding expectations category. Not only was “exceeding” difficult to determine, identifying some as such and others as not caused considerable tension among faculty members and the 1/7th system didn’t allow enough of our productive faculty to be recognized. After lengthy discussions of several different drafts, members of FAC, Exec, the taskforce, and Senate arrived at a consensus to take “exceeding” out altogether. It followed then that merit pay would have to be handled differently. Senators agreed with FAC and Exec that merit pay would be best handled by departments for similar reasons, not the least of which was to lengthen its reach. To that end, each department will be allotted an amount of money based on the number of its regular faculty. FAC will be charged next year with developing guidelines but, ultimately, merit pay is now in the departments’ hands. We want to assure all of you that the new BR does NOT affect the PRT guidelines we just wrote and FAC reviewed.

Senate approved three new minors: two, “Design” and “Merchandising,” in the Textiles, Apparel, and Merchandising Department and the “Financial Services Selling Minor” in the Scott College of Business.

Congratulations to Dean Nesli Alp of the College of Technology! We will see her on campus in her new role August 1. The search for a new dean of the Graduate School is in its final phases and the search for a new Vice-Provost of Enrollment Management is underway with candidates on campus before the semester is out.

Provost Licari is enthused about the possibilities the Enrollment Management/Academic Affairs merger offers, especially with regard to recruitment. Students come here, he said, because of what faculty, programs, and departments have to offer. We should be better able to get those messages out with the new arrangement, advertise, and better track the results.

President Curtis is working tirelessly to promote the good work we’re doing here to the State Legislature. The officers have enjoyed hearing about her experiences in Indianapolis. Her positivity has already had a good effect on the institution as a whole. Yes, we can help Hoosiers re-enter college at any point in their lifetimes, we can educate the next generation so that they enter the workforce prepared, and we can partner with businesses across the state to develop working relationships that benefit our students in the short and long-terms!

The last Senate meeting of the academic year will be held in two days, that’s three in a row, on May 3 in Dede III. The slate for next year’s standing committees will be approved along with other business.

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 2017-2018 and their contact information are:

Chair: Liz Brown, Professor and Chairperson of Mathematics and Computer Science, Liz.Brown@indstate.edu

Vice Chair:  Timothy Hawkins, Professor of History, Timothy.Hawkins@indstate.edu

Secretary: Lisa Phillips, Associate Professor of History, Lisa.Phillips@indstate.edu

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