Officers’ Musings

27 March 2018

Greetings from your Senate Officers:

We hope you had a relaxing Spring Break, despite the weather. The Faculty Senate held its eighth meeting of the year last Thursday, March 22nd. Senators approved changes to the University’s IT policies, section 932 of the University Handbook. They provide us with much needed guidance as we all try and keep our data secure while, thanks to the good work of our Senators, keeping our intellectual property rights intact. We now have a new Middle School Math Teaching major and students will be able to fulfill their Foundational Studies’ Global Perspectives and Cultural Diversity requirement by taking language courses (see the Exec and Senate minutes and Curriculog for the details).

Part of the Senate’s job is to review the Biennial Review process during the years it is conducted.  The Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) spent a great deal of time with the feedback you all provided and incorporated a number of changes to a revised document that was then presented to Senate for discussion.  Senators expressed a variety of opinions about the Biennial Review, everything from it has proven to be a useful process to why do we need it at all.  The bottom line is we have to have some version of faculty evaluation.  A taskforce made up of FAC and Exec members is working with the Provost to build on the FAC proposal and draft a document that best addresses our collective concerns.  It will go to the full Senate in April.

Provost Licari responded to the Faculty Employee Benefits Committee’s (FEBC) proposal that we be paid for directing theses and dissertations (599/699/799) by arguing that, of course, directing theses, projects, and dissertations is a tremendous amount of work but that being paid piecemeal will de-professionalize the faculty. Instead, the Provost is working on a new staffing model that will better recognize graduate work and make additional staffing needs clear. He believes it is better to adequately staff departments for the students we are enrolling. The Provost also responded to temporary faculty members’ and FEBC’s suggestion that parking fees be eliminated for part-time faculty. He said there are already structures in place to mitigate costs for faculty who do not teach the whole year or who teach in the evenings.

President Curtis has been hard at work in Indianapolis and Washington DC singing ISU’s praises. She related several positive encounters with Indiana state legislators, members of Congress, and ISU alumni, all of whom are well aware of the good work going on here. We are all looking forward to President Curtis’s upcoming inauguration during which the new documentary about Eva Kor will be aired.

The next Senate meeting will be held on April 19th in Dede III. Biennial Review will likely be the main topic of discussion.

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.