

THE SENATOR
The University Senate Newsletter
September, 2009

University Senate or Faculty Senate?

The Senate at Wake Forest is unusual in that it is a university senate as opposed to a faculty senate. Administrators from the level of vice-president and above are voting members of the Senate. The Senate also has staff representation. At most universities, the senate consists of only elected faculty members, or of faculty members plus the university president, provost and CFO as non-voting ex-officio members.

This year we will consider whether the Wake Forest University Senate should convert to a faculty senate. How would this change the function of the Senate? The Senate is a consultative and advisory body which functions in oversight of matters that affect the University as a whole. An important role of the Senate in the university is to facilitate communication between the faculties and the administration. This would not change.

So why make the change? For years the staff on the Reynolda Campus has been working to establish its own governing body. The Staff Advisory Council has written by-laws which are awaiting administrative approval and it will soon be will be an independently functioning body with its own committee structure. Communication between the senate and administration has been strengthened by the formation of the Provost's Planning Committee, which consists of members of the Senate Executive Committee and committee chairs, and meets monthly with the Provost. Additionally, annual reports are now given to the Senate by each of the deans.

A faculty senate provides an independent faculty voice which can speak to the administration on behalf of the faculty. Through such independence, faculty governance is strengthened. Recommendations and resolutions from the senate reflect the will of the faculty. It remains important, however, that a faculty senate have a direct line of communication to the president and the provost, and through them, to other administration officials. A Wake Forest faculty senate would maintain this important connection.

We want to hear from you!

What do you think of the concept of a faculty senate?

This year, as it revises its outdated by-laws, the Senate will be looking at not only its composition, but also its structure and function. What do you believe should be the role of the Senate in the University? Is there something that you believe that the Senate should be doing that it is not? Are there any specific issues you would like to see the Senate take up this year?

Please e-mail any of the officers (listed below) and let us know what you think!

The 2009-2010 officers of the Senate are:

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|--|
| President | Carole Browne | browne@wfu.edu |
| Past-President | Derrick Boone | Derrick.Boone@mba.wfu.edu |
| Vice-President | Ed Haponik | ehaponik@wfubmc.edu |
| Secretary (spring) | Jane Albrecht | albrecht@wfu.edu |
| Acting Secretary (fall) | Judy Kem | kem@wfu.edu |
| Representative at Large | Ellen Miller | millerer@wfu.edu |

The chairs of the Senate committees are:

| | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Univ. Integration | Ken Middaugh | ken.middaugh@mba.wfu.edu |
| Resources | James Cotter | cotterjf@wfu.edu |
| Fringe Benefits | Anne Boyle | boyle@wfu.edu |
| Senior Univ. Appointments | Brad Jones | jonesbt@wfu.edu |

For a complete listing of members of the Senate, visit the Senate web site at (<http://groups.wfu.edu/senate/>).

Senate meetings are open to the entire University. The schedule of meetings for 2009-2010 is September 23, October 21, November 18, February 3, March 3 and April 1. All meetings will be held at 4 pm in DeTamble Auditorium in Tribble Hall. Each year the Senate sponsors presentations to the entire faculty and staff by President Hatch, Provost Tiefenthaler, and Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Nancy Suttentfield. The dates of these presentations will be posted on the Senate web site.

Recent Activities

In response to a request by the Provost, one of the top priorities for the **Senate Executive Committee** last year was revision of the **Reynolda Campus Faculty Handbook**. The Handbook, available online at the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs website, was 143 pages long, and in places, outdated and repetitive. It was appropriate for this review to be placed in the hands of the University Senate, since the Handbook contains chapters that are relevant to the campus as a whole, as well as chapters focused on each of the academic units on the Reynolda Campus. The revisions involved some reorganization, providing links to original sources of material available elsewhere, and clarification when necessary. The revised Handbook will be reviewed by the Deans this month, who then may bring it to their faculties for comments, and if necessary, further revision.

The Senate **Fringe Benefits Committee** has worked actively for a number of years towards the establishment of a Wake Forest **child care facility**. However the administration feels that, in light of the recent economic downturn, this cannot be a priority at this time. The committee also worked to promote the establishment of a **parental leave policy**, first promoted by the Wake

Forest Women's Forum, in place of the existing maternal leave policy. The new policy went into effect at the beginning of this semester. The new policies can be found at http://provost.wfu.edu/121.157.2/Parental_Leave_for_Faculty and <http://www.wfu.edu/search/?cx=015585440025783393418%3Apuaf24vyryy&q=parental+leave+staff&sa=Search&cof=FORID%3A11#1044>

Working with the Provost's Office, the Senate was involved in the initiative to conduct a **staff campus climate survey**, which was carried out in the spring. A report on the results of the survey will be made to the Senate this fall. The Senate also worked to support the establishment of an independent **Staff Advisory Council**. The SAC has prepared by-laws which are awaiting approval by the administration, and should be an independent, self-governing committee sometime this semester.

Last year, deans of each of the academic units of the University made presentations to the Senate, followed by a question and answer period. Each gave updates on new programs and initiatives, and the financial status of their school in the uncertain economic climate. The Senate also sponsored presentations to the entire Reynolda Campus faculty and staff on the "state of the university". These presentations were well attended and provided considerable useful information to the campus community.

FYI

The Wake Forest University Senate belongs to a national organization of 56 faculty senates from NCAA Division 1A (FBS) schools known as the **Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA)**. COIA was formed in 2002 by faculty governance bodies of the Big 10 schools, who then put out a national call for the faculty governance bodies from other division IA schools to join. The other ACC schools that belong to COIA are Clemson, Duke, Florida State, and North Carolina.

The aims of COIA are to serve as a faculty voice on issues related to intercollegiate sports, offer proposals for best practices for faculty governance of athletics, work to ensure that college sports be integrated into the overall academic mission of universities, and promote comprehensive reform of intercollegiate sports. Each member of COIA selects an individual who serves as the representative of the institution to the organization. At the present time the representative to COIA is Carole Browne, who also serves on the COIA Steering Committee and as a Co-chair of the organization.

Since its formation, COIA has released a number of white papers detailing what they believe are necessary and achievable reforms. These reports can be seen at the **COIA website**: <http://coia.comm.psu.edu/http>. At the present time, COIA is working with the Curley Center for Sports Journalism at Penn State University to develop a rating system which will rate institutions on the integration of athletics into the academic mission of the institution, based on a self-evaluation survey.

The COIA reports detailing best practices for faculty governance of athletics have been reviewed by the College Committee on Athletics. In response, the Committee has requested additional information from the Department of Athletics on student admissions and academic progress, and agreed that the Director of Athletics and Chair of the Committee on Athletics would make annual reports to the University Senate.

At its February meeting, it was suggested that the Senate review and discuss the best practices outlined in the COIA reports, which it will do this year.