Office of the Faculty Senate, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Secretary's Notes
10 November 2015

The agenda for the November 12th meeting may look scanty compared to those of the September and October meetings, but we have work to do and need to meet as scheduled despite the ceremony in Boston noted below.

Inauguration Ceremonies in Boston

Several senior administrators – the Chancellor, the Provost, and most of the Vice Chancellors, will not be present at our meeting because they will be in Boston for ceremonies marking Marty Meehan's formal inauguration as President of the University of Massachusetts System. Senator Yemisi Jimoh, chair of the Rules Committee, will be representing the Faculty Senate at the ceremony. Senator Jim Rinderle, a member of the Rules Committee, will substitute for her at our meeting.

President Meehan made brief visits to all five campuses of the system on Monday. He will have been on campus again early Thursday morning to participate in an event included in his calendar of inauguration week activities. Specifically he will have welcomed participants to a system-wide workshop, organized by Senator Susan Whitbourne in her capacity as Director of the Office of National Scholarship Advising, intended to help the campuses provide more effective advising to undergraduates seeking to compete for Truman, Goldwater, Fulbright, Boren, Marshall, Rhodes and other scholarships awarded through nationwide competitions.

Presentation

We will be hearing from Professor Dan Gerber, chair of the Council on Public Engagement and Outreach, who wants to discuss ideas for future activity in that sphere.

Reports

The Faculty Senate will also receive the annual report of the Council on Public Engagement and Outreach.

Announcements and Questions

Though announcements may well be less numerous than usual, we will have the usual opportunity for questions, and any questions raised that do not receive an answer that day will be in the minutes.
Changes to the By-Laws

This meeting will feature the second reading of proposed changes to the by-laws. As you know, Senators may offer motions to amend as well. The Rules Committee, acting in accordance with a proposal from the Athletic Council, will be offering an amendment to Section 5-4-2, which defines the membership of the Athletic Council. The proposal is to include the Faculty Senate representative to the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) as an ex officio member of that Council. The COIA is an initiative of Faculty Senates at many of the Division I schools playing in the FBS football conferences which seek to develop a stronger coordination and expression of faculty opinion on the many issues facing the NCAA these days. We are a relative newcomer – it has been active for about 12 years while we joined in 2013 – but participation has helped us gain better understanding of the complex issues arising in the current world of high level intercollegiate sports.

Consent Agendas: Course Changes and Program Changes

As always, any Senator may request that an item on a consent agenda be separated out for separate discussion and consideration. It would be helpful if anyone seeking a separate discussion notifies the Senate Office in advance.

As you can see from the length of consent agendas, the first one covering courses and the second one covering programs, Councils and Committees have been working hard. They deserve our thanks for their diligence and energy in helping the Faculty Senate fulfill the duties entailed in the faculty’s possession of primary responsibility in the areas of academics under our scheme of shared governance of the campus.

MJ Peterson