Office of the Faculty Senate, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Secretary's Notes
6 September 2016

The 760th meeting of the Faculty Senate will feature a manageable agenda beginning with
the Chancellor’s “state of the campus” address before taking up items of organizing and
regular business.

Address by Chancellor Subbaswamy

I anticipate that we will hear about the budget situation, which remains clouded as you
know from communications sent out in July and ongoing news coverage of the general
trends in state revenues, but also about the good things happening on campus, including
various initiatives to improve intellectual and other parts of undergraduate life, the new
buildings coming into service, and ongoing faculty and staff hiring. As always, there will be
an opportunity to ask questions.

Announcements and Question Period

Many people will have announcements, including introductions of new people who took up
significant administrative positions over the summer.

We will also have the general question period.

Elections

Section 3-5-1 of the Bylaws specifies that the Rules Committee consists of four ex-officio
members (the Presiding Officer, the Secretary, the Delegate to the Board of Trustees, and
the Associate Delegate to the Board of Trustees) and five at-large members. Because it
further provides that “No at-large member shall serve more than three consecutive years
on the Rules Committee,” and both Steve Brewer and Nancy Cohen completed three years
of service over the summer, we need to elect two at-large members. This was announced,
as required, last May. Any elected senator is eligible for election to the Rules Committee.

Section 3-5-2 provides that, at the first meeting each year, the Senate will also elect a chair
of the Rules Committee from among the five at-large members. A Yêmisi Jimoh has
indicated that other obligations will prevent her from continuing to serve as chair, though
she will continue as an at-large member of the Rules Committee. Obviously the Senate
needs to know who are the five at-large members before it can elect a chair, and this is the
order of elections prescribed in Section 3-5-2.
As noted on the agenda distributed last week, the Rules Committee decided to use a somewhat different election procedure this year. All nominations will be made from the floor. The agenda did include a notation that potential nominees would be identified in these notes and the following potential nominees have emerged:

- Marinos Vouvakis (Electrical and Computer Engineering)
- Bruce Baird (Asian Languages and Literatures)

Their emergence does not preclude other nominations.

Steve and Nancy provided excellent service on the Rules Committee, carefully considering matters before it and bringing their various research, teaching, organizational, and general life experience to bear in cogent questions and helpful comments. As you know, Nancy was a key member of the Joint Task Force on Strategic Oversight from the start as one of its co-chairs, and the Rules Committee has benefitted from the bird’s eye view of what is going on that this work gave her. Steve offered the perspective of non-tenure track faculty member plus considerable expertise in everything related to computerized information and communications technology. The Senate will continue to benefit from this expertise since he will remain active on the Information and Communication Technology Council. Check out his mini computer museum on the third floor of Morrill IV – which is the southernmost portion of Morrill – where he has an interesting display of successive generations of computers and peripherals.

Yemişisi served as chair during a challenging year, as the Joint Task Forces on Strategic Oversight and on Resource Allocation completed their work and positioned the campus for new, more open and intentional, modes of planning and making budget decisions. She was also called upon to provide leadership in the Chancellor’s series of open forums on diversity and inclusion, discussions with the SGA about those issues, and on other occasions. She brought an aware and judicious perspective to all of these activities.

**Bylaw Changes**

Changing the Bylaws requires that the proposed amendments be read at three meetings, with the vote on whether to adopt being taken at the third meeting.

The currently-proposed changes are (yet again) inspired by a change of administrator title. In line with practice around the country, the position formerly called “Director of Libraries” has been re-named “Dean of Libraries.” This means we need to substitute the new title for the old in several places, as indicated in the document you received last week.

**Annual Report**

In recent years, we drifted away from the requirement that Faculty Senate Councils and Committees provide the Senate with a report on their activities during any given academic year by the following September 1st. The Rules Committee believes we need to get back on track, and accordingly reminded Council and Committee chairs of their obligation over the summer. It being summer, the Rules Committee also indicated that it did not expect all reports by September 1. In any event, the Senate would not be able to receive all the
reports at the same meeting unless it agreed to forego any opportunity for questions and discussion. I doubt that it would agree to any such thing, and that is good. Additionally, some Councils are not in a good position to report by September 1st because they lack all the information they need in April. So the Senate will continue showing patience and understanding with Councils or Committees needing additional time. There will be a number of reports coming this fall, beginning at this meeting with the Research Library Council.

**Senate Confirmation of Rules Committee Actions taken over the summer**

Section 6-3-1 of the Bylaws, in subparagraph 1, provides that the Rules Committee may “When necessary, appropriate and expedient, act for the Faculty Senate in routine matters (such as course approvals recommended by the Academic Matters Council or Graduate Council) during the summer months and January break, provided that any such actions shall be reported and confirmed at the first regular meeting of the Faculty Senate following such action by the Rules Committee.” The Rules Committee used this authority twice over the summer, to approve revisions to the Bachelor of Science program in Civil and Environmental Engineering that involve reconfiguring their IE requirement, and to approve a Real Estate Certificate to be offered by the Isenberg School. This is aligned with some of the state requirements for licensure as a real estate broker.

**Old Business: Amendment to the Nominating Committee Report**

The Nominating Committee makes it main report in late spring each year, proposing faculty members to fill Council and Committee seats about to become vacant. Life is less neat than organizational schemes; often it is necessary to make additional changes later. We deal with them through amendments to the main report, as we will be doing on Thursday.

**Welcome to new Senators**

Four new elected Senators join us this term. They come from a wide array of disciplines, use a range of research techniques, and pursue inquiry in several subjects. Each will add to our existing mix of perspectives, reinforcing our collective ability to take a broad view as we engaged in shared governance of the campus.

Gonen Dori-Hacohen (Communication, SBS) pursued graduate work at the University of Haifa and UCLA, and is a specialist in how discourses are affected by use of interactive media such as talk radio, call-in shows, and Internet discussion forums.

Amanda Marcotte (Student Development, Education) pursued graduate work here at UMass Amherst, and is particularly interested in areas of developing better help for students in academic and behavioral areas, more effective reading instruction, and assessment.
Jon Olsen (History, HFA) did graduate work at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, and specializes in post-1945 German history (both East and West), memory, and historical consciousness.

Traci Parker (Afro-American Studies, HFA) pursued graduate work at the University of Chicago, and examining how efforts to integrate the workforce and customer mix in American department stores fed into the broader civil rights and black freedom movements of the mid-20th century.

MJ Peterson
Secretary