



CASE WESTERN RESERVE  
UNIVERSITY EST. 1826

## October 2017 Faculty Senate Newsletter

**Due to scheduling issues, a Faculty Senate meeting was not held in September, and instead two meetings were held in October. This newsletter combines business conducted during both the October 2<sup>nd</sup> and October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Senate meetings.**

### Of Particular Importance to *All* University Faculty

#### **Finance Committee Recommendations (10/18/17)**

Professor Glenn Starkman, Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, presented a document authored by the Finance Committee, that contained an opinion and observations regarding the university's capital planning budget process. The Finance Committee instructed its chair to present this document to the university's Chief Financial Officer as well as to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. Prof. Starkman also presented to the Executive Committee, recommendations from the Finance Committee that the university's capital planning process should include substantive discussions with the Senate Finance Committee from the outset rather than after decisions have been made. The Committee also recommended that the strategic plan for capital investments be aligned with the academic strategic plan and that greater weight be given to the academic programs. The Finance Committee will be discussing this new process with John Sideras, CFO, as well as the Provost, to determine how best to incorporate the Finance Committee's recommendations. The Executive Committee had voted to seek Senate endorsement of the recommendations but Prof. Starkman said it wasn't necessary since the Finance Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the CFO, and because President Snyder had indicated that there was administrative support for the recommendations.

#### **Deans Not Serving as Chairs of Senate Standing Committees (10/18/17)**

Professor Ken Ledford, chair of the Senate By-Laws Committee, presented proposed language for inclusion in the Senate By-Laws, which provides that deans (whether at the highest level, associate or assistant) may not serve as chairs of Senate standing committees. The Faculty Senate voted to approve the proposed language.

#### **FSCUE Course Evaluation Recommendations (10/18/17)**

Professor Gary Chottiner, chair of FSCUE, presented FSCUE's recommendations on undergraduate course evaluations. Due to a decline in completion rates, changes to the university's undergraduate course evaluation instrument were implemented in 2015 and online evaluations were created to replace paper versions. Since that time, completion rates have declined even further. The average completion rate is approximately 35%. After a review of completion rates from fall 2015 and spring 2016, FSCUE made three separate recommendations:

1. Rather than coercing students to complete course evaluations by withholding grades (as it had previously recommended), FSCUE is recommending that data on completion rates be made

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available to those within the school/departments responsible for the quality of undergraduate teaching. These individuals should be encouraged to discuss the data with the appropriate faculty members.

2. That course evaluations remain open until final grades are due (2 days after final exams end), as opposed to current practice in which they remain open only until the last day of class. The Senate Executive Committee amended this recommendation to provide that course evaluations remain open until 11:59 pm on the last day of final exams, so that faculty could decide not to publish grades until after this time.
3. That course evaluations be better advertised and easier for students, faculty and staff to locate and use.

A member of the Senate suggested that course evaluations be required so that faculty don't have to continually remind their students to complete them. Another member suggested that reminders to complete course evaluations be sent through the Canvas LMS system. Lastly, a member asked whether course evaluations could be made available for classes that are taught on off-cycle schedules. After further discussion the Senate voted to approve all three recommendations.

## Other Items from the Meetings

### **MS in Regenerative Medicine and Entrepreneurship (10/2/17)**

The Faculty Senate voted to approve a proposed MS in Regenerative Medicine and Entrepreneurship program being offered through the School of Medicine's National Center for Regenerative Medicine. The program will train individuals to work in academic, commercial and clinical settings to support biotechnology innovation, business development, compliance and cellular manufacturing activities. This will be the first program of its kind in the US and will be the first Master of Science program at CWRU to collaborate with four schools: the School of Medicine, the School of Engineering, the School of Law, and the Weatherhead School of Management. The Faculty Senate voted to approve the program.

### **Proposed Revisions to the School of Law By-Laws (10/18/17)**

Prof. Ledford presented proposed revisions to the School of Law By-Laws. The revisions are intended to bring the By-Laws into compliance with requirements of the Faculty Handbook. The Senate By-Laws Committee approved the By-Laws revisions, but noted one provision that deviates from traditional practice in other schools. The Law School By-Laws allow candidates for promotion and tenure to have access to de-identified letters of recommendation. Prof. Ledford said that while this practice is not common, the Faculty Handbook does provide schools with latitude in establishing their By-Laws. The Faculty Senate voted to approve the School of Law By-Laws.

### **Enrollment Report (10/2/17)**

Robert McCullough, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment, provided a fall 2017 enrollment report. Changes this year that affected the class include a new SAT with new scoring, earlier availability of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), a changing environment for international recruitment, and the university's decision to change its financial aid policy from need-blind to need-aware. The presentation slides are available on the [Google site](#) and will be posted with the minutes from the meeting on the Faculty Senate website.

### **Benelect/Insurance Updates (10/2/17 and 10/18/17)**

At both October Senate meetings, Carolyn Gregory, Vice President of Human Resources, discussed short and long-term options for reducing health insurance increases for faculty and staff. Presentation

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slides from both meetings are available on the Faculty Senate [Google site](#) and will be posted with the minutes from the meetings on the Senate website.

**International Rankings Consultant (10/18/17)**

Illuminate Consulting Group has been retained to work with a committee of CWRU faculty and staff to determine strategies for increasing the university's international rankings. Dr. Daniel Guhr, managing director, presented preliminary recommendations to the Senate and said that their report will be issued shortly. International rankings have become increasingly important in higher education and CWRU's rankings in the top three agencies have decreased considerably over the past decade or more. International rankings are extremely important when it comes to international research collaboration and the availability of scholarships for students outside of the U.S. If CWRU wants to make a change, it must set goals as it does for its domestic rankings. Dr. Guhr's presentation slides are available on the [Faculty Senate Google site](#) and will be posted with the minutes from the meeting on the Senate website.

*More detailed information on all items included in this newsletter are available in the draft minutes posted on the Google site for the [2017-18 Faculty Senate Meetings](#). Once the minutes have been approved by the Senate, they will be posted on the Faculty Senate website along with all related documents.*