



## Faculty Senate Office

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**TO:** University Faculty and Members of the University Community

**FROM:** Michael A. Rice  
Chairman, Faculty Senate

**DATE:** September 12, 2006

**SUBJECT:** The Faculty Senate

Welcome to the 2006-2007 academic year. Here is an update on Faculty Senate (FS) related activities that occurred over the summer, a preliminary list of goals of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC), and information on how you can keep informed of FS activities and become more involved in FS decision-making.

Over the summer, the FSEC, Senators and other faculty continued to work on various committees and issues:

- The FSEC met twice to plan Fall FS meetings, to recruit people for service on various committees, and to finalize last year's legislation for inclusion in the University Manual. FSEC members attended a meeting of the Board of Governors for Higher Education (BGHE), as well as the monthly Academic Affairs Committee meetings of the BGHE.
- The FSEC has continued to work with the President and his staff on budget issues for the FY 2008 Budget Request to the BGHE.
- Members of the FSEC have attended initial meetings of the various committees established by the Provost's Office to prepare for the October 21-24, 2007 visit of the Northeastern Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Accreditation Team. Preparations for this accreditation visit will undoubtedly be the most important tasks for the Faculty Senate during this academic year.
- Review the results of the survey of faculty issues prepared and administered cooperatively with Dr. Barbara Costello of the Sociology and Anthropology Department given at the end of the Spring 2006 semester. Copies of the survey results can be viewed at the Faculty Senate Office.

After several discussions and analysis of the faculty survey of issues, the FSEC has identified the following preliminary list of goals for the upcoming academic year. We most heartily welcome your input and suggestions.

- Identify substantive, and possibly unvoiced, faculty concerns.
- Promote greater faculty engagement in development of policies and shared governance at all levels.
- Increase resources for improving classrooms and classroom support services.

- Seek mechanisms to continue to improve funding and resources for the Library.
- Continue to work with the Vice President for Administration and others to improve administrative functions, including clarifying processes, written directions, flowcharts and revising forms in order to improve services and save time and money for the university.
- Monitor adherence to policies and procedures whenever re-organizations and curricular modifications are contemplated.
- Influence the priority of JSPC's budget recommendations for next fiscal cycle.
- Participate as members of the JSPC in continually seeking the best means for implementation of the University's 2006-2009 Strategic Plan.
- Work with Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and the AAUP on the update and improvement of the 35-year old Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) instrument
- Continue taking a role in the design and curricular integration of the BOG-mandated Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Initiative.
- Work with the Provost to align Faculty Senate participation in academic administrator evaluation with the Provost's periodic review prior to contract renewal.
- Continue to work with the administration to enhance and highlight our core Land Grant, Sea Grant and Urban Grant missions of graduate education, research and outreach.
- Improve facilitation of interdisciplinary research endeavors through centers and partnerships, and improved university-wide coordination of research and outreach programs for greater impact and cost-efficiency.
- Continue seeking ways of making graduate student tuition charges on research grants more competitive with those of other universities who either waive tuition of research assistants or reduce out-of-state tuition to in-state levels.

Finally, please consider volunteering your time and expertise by serving on FS committees. After all, most of the work needed to bring the above listed goals to fruition is through the work of the Senate Committees. For information on meeting times, committee reports, legislative action, names of Senators, etc., you can consult the Faculty Senate web site: <http://www.uri.edu/facsen/> or join the Senate listserver: [FACSEN-BUS@PETE.URI.EDU](mailto:FACSEN-BUS@PETE.URI.EDU). Please contact a Senator or any of the following FSEC members to discuss questions, concerns, or suggestions you have regarding issues related to the Faculty Senate or the JSPC.

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Since shared governance on JSPC works better when the Faculty Senate's representatives can respond quickly and within URI and state administrative deadlines, it is vital that you remain informed and that you keep Senators updated regarding matters of interest to faculty and students. *"Faced with apathy, I will take action. Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.... Faced with adversity, I will persevere. I will carry this commitment with me this year."* --W.J. Clinton. 1996, from the Americorps oath.