



Faculty SENATE Newsletter

Oct. 2003

What is the Role of this Newsletter?

by Candace White,
Faculty Senate President-Elect

A dilemma that faces organizations, including the Faculty Senate, is how to get information to constituents in this age of information overload.

Ironically, the more communication channels available to us, the harder it is to cut through the clutter. Nevertheless, we presume that just because we've written it, the message will be received. But communication is a receiver phenomenon; it's not about us.

A decade or so ago, before we all spent half our day using various forms of electronic communication, we checked our mailboxes and spent a few minutes sorting through our printed mail. Since we didn't have scores of emails waiting for us, we had time to pour a cup of coffee and read things such as the Faculty Senate Newsletter. Before the senate web page, the newsletter was our primary source of information about the senate.

Today, this is how it works – Beauvais sends news and important information to Bob Glenn who posts it to the Faculty Senate web site. Bob is quick. If a committee sends minutes or revises its list of members or whatever, it is on the web site by the end of the day.

But old habits die hard. We've always had a Faculty Senate newsletter. Just because it is no longer the best way to disseminate information isn't a good enough reason to get rid of it, is it? Last year we acknowledged that electronic dissemination was faster and cheaper, and began publishing the newsletter in the form that you received this one. We notify you by email that the newsletter has been published, you link to the pdf file, presumably read

it, and can even print your own copy if you wish.

But is this communication form still necessary, or are we just unable to break old habits or think of a better way to get the news to you? If you read the September newsletter, the messages in it were important, but they had already been disseminated in other forms by the time you received the newsletter. Why did we send you a newsletter anyway? Because, well, because, umm...Oh yeah, because we're suppose to send out a Faculty Senate newsletter according to our bylaws.

I am currently working on several "newsletter" articles. One is based on an interview with Jim Moran about faculty participation in the SACS accreditation. The other is about implementing the new general education courses, particularly courses with the new oral designation.

We are trying to decide the best way to deliver these stories to you. They are important, and my fear is that if they get buried in the newsletter, they may never be received.

In the next few weeks we send you an electronic (how else?) communication survey. We will use an alternative way to "post" a resolution (watch for it) and we will continue to use the caucuses to facilitate two-way communication.

The problem we face is how to communicate effectively when we are bombarded by electronic messages. How do we balance providing you as much information as possible (and necessary) without driving you crazy? One thing that would help us decide is feedback from the "readers." If you took the time to open this newsletter and have actually gotten down this far, please do this: Send me an email (white@utk.edu) and let me know that you read the newsletter. And feel free to offer suggestions for future issues of the newsletter.



Candace White

PLEASE POST THIS RESOLUTION NEAR YOUR MAILBOXES
TO ENCOURAGE FACULTY RESPONSE BY VOTING BELOW

Proposed Resolution for the November 17th, 2003 UTK Faculty Senate Meeting

WHEREAS, nicotine is highly addictive; and

WHEREAS, the Surgeon General of the United States has warned that smoking causes lung cancer, heart disease, emphysema, and may complicate pregnancy; and

WHEREAS, world wide smoking causes four million unnecessary deaths per year, and 11,000 deaths every day; and

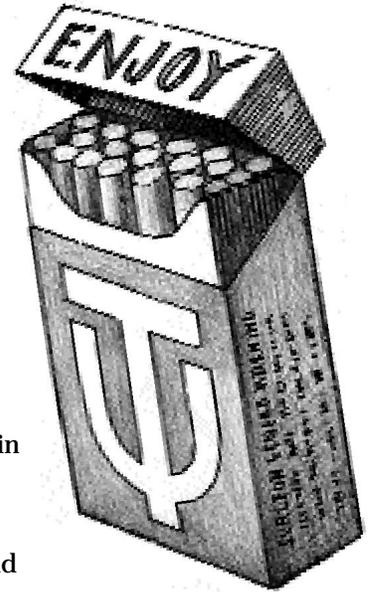
WHEREAS, there are over 400,000 smoking-attributable deaths in the United States per year; and

WHEREAS, the annual smoking related health care cost in the United States is \$80 billion; and

WHEREAS, behavioral research is beginning to explain how social influences, such as observing adults or other peers smoking, affect whether adolescents begin to smoke cigarettes; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Agency has concluded that secondhand smoke causes lung cancer in adults; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the University of Tennessee will no longer sell cigarettes or other tobacco products on its Knoxville campus.



I SUPPORT
THIS RESOLUTION

I OPPOSE
THIS RESOLUTION

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