Task Force on Faculty Senate Effectiveness

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- Jan Simek, Interim Chancellor
- Candace White, Task Force Chair, Past Faculty Senate President
Charge

- To examine the strengths, weaknesses and perceptions of the Faculty Senate
- To explore how the senate can work more effectively with campus administration at critical policy intersections
- To recommend strategies for greater efficiency and effectiveness.
Senate Effectiveness Survey

Quantitative Results

(n= 374)

Full results are on Faculty Senate web page.
The Faculty Senate plays a vital role in formulating academic policies.

- 5 (Strongly Agree): 58
- 4: 67
- 3: 73
- 2: 62
- 1 (Strongly Disagree): 25
- N/A: 39

The Undergraduate Council plays a vital role in formulating academic policies.

- 5 (Strongly Agree): 58
- 4: 85
- 3: 84
- 2: 50
- 1 (Strongly Disagree): 43
- N/A: 52

The Graduate Council plays a vital role in formulating academic policies.

- 5 (Strongly Agree): 68
- 4: 102
- 3: 88
- 2: 41
- 1 (Strongly Disagree): 24
- N/A: 47
Actions of the Faculty Senate have an impact on administrative decisions.

The Faculty Senate plays a vital role in formulating policies for allocation of resources for salaries, equity, and merit pay.
The Faculty Senate plays a vital role in formulating policies for allocation of resources for research.

The Faculty Senate plays a vital role in formulating policies for faculty appointment, promotions, and tenure.
How important is it to you to receive information about the Faculty Senate?

I receive sufficient information about issues that are being addressed in the Faculty Senate.
The Faculty Senate gives a voice to faculty concerns.

- Strongly Agree: 5 (104)
- Agree: 4 (79)
- Neutral: 3 (55)
- Disagree: 2 (52)
- Strongly Disagree: 1 (73)
- N/A: 11

The Faculty Senate should be dissolved.

- Strongly Agree: 5 (42)
- Agree: 4 (33)
- Neutral: 3 (57)
- Disagree: 2 (38)
- Strongly Disagree: 1 (189)
- N/A: 11
Qualitative Results

767 open-ended responses
**Effectiveness**
Senate is perceived as weak (powerless, toothless)
Muddled purpose and function
Reactive, rather than proactive

**Committees**
Work independently rather than working together strategically with clear purpose & common goal
Poor continuity of committee work from year to year
Disconnect between senate and Grad. & Undergrad. Councils

**Senators**
Not enough accountability for senators
Insufficient understanding of where senate fits in the structure of governance
Senators have personal agendas

**Senate Service**
Little incentive, rewards or prestige associated with serving in the senate
Not good use of faculty time; competes for time for research and teaching
**Communication**
No clear path for faculty to get issues and concerns to the senate
Problems with caucuses
Senate does not serve the needs of non tenure track faculty

**Culture**
Too many administrators in the senate – it is not a faculty organization
Senate is a paper tiger; lap dog of the administration.
Distrust between faculty and administration in both directions

**Benefits**
Senate involvement helps faculty gain broader perspective about the university
A well-functioning Faculty Senate is important
Senate does important things and has the potential to be a powerful player
• Effectiveness
  • Senate is perceived as weak (powerless, toothless)
  • Muddled purpose and function
  • Reactive, rather than proactive
Challenges

- Optimize delegated authority of the Faculty Senate

- Identify policies in which the senate needs to be involved; set a clear agenda

- Align senate committees with policy intersections and restructure to increase effectiveness

- Clarify role and relationship between Faculty Senate and Graduate and Undergraduate Councils

- Communicate what we do to a broader constituency
Senate Committee Structure
- Align committees with policy intersections
- Let go of committees that have no real purpose or power

Senate Infrastructure
- Communication to all faculty
- Administrative support for routine tasks and continuity

Organizational Culture
- Build trust between faculty and administrators
- Focus on policies rather than react to events
CHANGE
We Need