

Faculty Senate Annual Report 2007-2008

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The Faculty Senate is empowered by its Constitution to be the primary body through which faculty participate in shared governance at the University of Denver. The Senate is composed of approximately 55 faculty members who are elected to represent the academic units of the University. The Senate's meetings are held monthly throughout the academic year. The minutes of Senate meetings are available on the [Faculty Senate](#) website.

This report briefly summarizes the work of the Faculty Senate during the 2007-2008 academic year. It covers the usual Senate business, Senate initiatives, and a few suggested priorities for 2008-09.

Usual Business

Each year the Senate evaluates sabbatical applications, PROF (Professional Research Opportunities for Faculty) and Faculty Research Fund (FRF) grant proposals, and nominations for Faculty Awards. We help coordinate the John Evans Professorship selection process and the Administrator Evaluation process. We schedule Chancellor Roundtables that provide an opportunity for the entire faculty to ask questions of the Chancellor. We publish the *Faculty Forum* weblog.

Sabbatical Applications: The sabbatical subcommittee of the Personnel Committee received 47 applications. All of the requests were approved.

PROF: The PROF pool for this year was \$300,000. Last summer and fall Senate representatives, in collaboration with Vice Provost of Graduate Studies and Research Jim Moran, evaluated the PROF review process. This year's process featured three proposal review groups: (1) natural sciences/engineering, (2) arts/humanities, and (3) social sciences/professional schools. Each group provided written comments on proposals and explained how they came to consensus regarding the ranking of proposals. The Senate President-Elect (Michael Levine-Clark) and the Chair of the Academic Planning Committee (Sandy Eaton) represented the Senate on the second-level review of the PROF proposals and were pleased with the revised process.

FRF: The FRF pool for the year was \$60,000. Proposals were reviewed by the Academic Planning Committee in fall and winter quarters. Of the 58 proposals received, 23 were funded for awards totaling \$58,840.

Faculty Awards:

The faculty awards subcommittee of the Personnel Committee recommended the following colleagues for their outstanding contributions to the research and teaching mission of the university. They will be honored at the 2008 Fall Convocation:

University Lecturer: [Jack Donnelly](#) (GSIS).

Distinguished Scholar: [Micheline Ishay](#) (GSIS).

Distinguished Teacher: [Susan Sadler](#) (Biological Sciences).

United Methodist Church Scholar-Teacher of Year: [Danny McIntosh](#) (Psychology).

At the October 19, 2007 senate meeting a motion was made to rename the Adjunct Faculty Teaching Award the [Ruth Murray Underhill Teaching Award](#). The old title did not do justice to the variety of part-time teaching that occurs on campus. The renamed award more appropriately honors the contributions of adjunct faculty. The motion carried unanimously. The recipient of the award in 2007-08 is Michelle Meyer, Daniels College of Business.

John Evans Professorship: Upon consultation with Ricardo Iznaola (Music), this year's chair of the Evans Professor selection committee, we yielded to that committee full responsibility for coordinating the Evans Professor selection process. We established an [Evans Professors](#) portfolio site to facilitate the review of future nominations. [Barry Hughes](#) of GSIS was selected as the 2007-08 Evans Professor.

Administrator Emeritus Nominations: During the year we received two nominations for Dean Emeritus: Bruce Hutton in DCB and Ed Dauer in Law. We approved both unanimously.

Faculty Forum: The *Faculty Forum* weblog was removed from DU Portfolio Community in fall 2007 in order to make it more accessible and conducive to the sharing of reader views. Over the course of the year we posted articles and invited commentary relating to research and scholarship, undergraduate learning outcomes, textbook prices, faculty salaries, and general education review.

Administrator Evaluations: The Senate Executive Committee supported the President's proposal that we suspend administrator evaluations for this academic year. The reasons are: (1) changes in the Office of Assessment that disrupted this year's planning of the process, (2) the number of dean positions currently in transition, (3) the historically low faculty response rate to the survey, (4) last year's almost non-existent response from untenured faculty, (5) continuing concerns about the confidentiality of the process and utility of the results, and (6) a sense that the survey questions may not address the most important aspects of an administrator's job given changes in the nature of higher education. The Senate would like to work with the academic deans and other administrators in the upcoming year to create a better survey instrument. We might want to develop different questions for top administrators, deans, and chairs. We'd like to consider ways to improve the faculty response rate, including taking a critical look at survey mechanics. We will also consider an every-other-year model for doing the evaluations.

Administrator evaluations for past years are accessible via a link on the Faculty Senate [homepage](#). Type in the user name "faculty" and the password "adminevals".

Other Business

At the September and October 2007 meetings the Senate discussed the new [University Mission and Goals](#) document produced by last year's [UPAC](#) (University Planning Advisory Council) process. A motion to approve the document carried 41 in favor, 4 opposed, no abstentions.

The November 16, 2007 Senate meeting featured an extensive discussion of the Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work Task Force Report. The minutes of the discussion can be found at <http://www.du.edu/facsen/minutes.html>. Other commentaries are at <http://130.253.4.214/index.php/category/rscw-task-force-report/>.

Senate Initiatives

In winter 2008 the Academic Planning Committee and the Personnel Committee began working with Web Designers in UTS to design and implement an updating of the [Research and Innovation](#) component of the DU web site. The motivation here is to better communicate and promote the research, scholarship, and creative work that is occurring on campus to the wider world. The web design work will continue into the 2008-09 academic year.

We continued exploring [Tuition Exchange](#) as a faculty and staff benefit that might also serve as a faculty and staff recruitment/retention tool. A Senate-initiated task force was convened last summer to spearhead the effort. The task force includes Susan Korach (College of Education), Scott Phillips (Sociology and Criminology), Paul Sutton (Geography), Diane Waldman (Mass Communications and Journalism Studies), and Margaret Whitt (English). Sibson, a private consulting firm in Boston, conducted a free cost-benefit analysis using a survey of current DU tuition benefit users. The Sibson report is available upon request of the Senate president. The task force is considering how next to proceed in light of the Sibson report. The task force has developed its own survey—intended to go to all DU faculty and staff—in order to gauge the overall level of interest in a tuition exchange benefit. This survey will likely be distributed early in the 2008-09 academic year.

On May 9, 2008 we passed a resolution modifying the [Sabbatical Leave Policy](#) to clarify that faculty in the Clinical Professorial Series (as defined by the APT document) are eligible for sabbatical leaves. Clinical faculty in some units have been receiving sabbaticals for years, so this modification merely aligns policy with past and current practice. The resolution carried by 25 votes in favor, none opposed, and 8 abstentions. The guidelines have been modified by adding the four words indicated in bold below:

All tenured members of the faculty with a minimum of six academic years full time and continuous service immediately preceding the sabbatical leave year at the University of Denver are eligible for the program. University service as a full-time tenure track instructor counts in determining eligibility. In computing the six academic years of continuous service, time spent in official leave of absence granted by the University will not be counted, but time both before and after such leave will be counted.

*At the discretion of the appropriate Dean, faculty with the rank of Lecturer or Senior Lecturer and faculty in the Library Professorial Series **and Clinical Professorial Series** (as defined in the Faculty Personnel Guidelines Relating to Appointment, Promotion and Tenure) with a minimum of six academic years full time and continuous service immediately preceding the sabbatical leave year at the University of Denver may be eligible for the program.*

The Senate Personnel Committee reviewed and revised a draft **Faculty Grievance Policy** that our campus [AAUP](#) (American Association of University Professors) chapter generated in the summer of 2007. The senate president made a presentation to the academic deans in February 2008 explaining the rationale for the policy. The deans subsequently submitted written comments about the draft. A new draft (number 8 in what has been a year-long process of reading and critique) incorporating the deans comments has been produced by a subcommittee of the AAUP chapter. It will be returned to the deans for additional review before cycling back to the senate Personnel Committee. We hope to have ratification of this policy in fall 2008.

The Senate Student Relations Committee was active throughout the year working with undergraduate and graduate student leaders and Student Life representatives. Given some uncertainty about the services provided by the [University Writing and Research Center](#), director Eliana Schonberg was invited to speak to the Senate on February 8. Committee concerns about academic advising and faculty accountability inspired Jo Calhoun, Associate Provost for Student Life, to prioritize a new advising survey. The committee worked with University Chaplain Gary Brower to consider some campus climate issues for graduate students, and also identified a number of challenges confronting diversity initiatives on campus. These challenges were presented at the Diversity Summit by committee chair Bonnie Clark.

In 2007-2008 the Senate sponsored a couple of academic events that we hope will become traditions. The **IDEA (Interdisciplinary Exchanges in Action) Lunch** is an effort to bring together faculty collaborating on teaching and research to talk about the process. Paul Sutton (Geography) reports on the [first IDEA Lunch](#) in the *Faculty Forum*. We also sponsored a lunchtime faculty panel for the 7th annual [Diversity Summit](#) that addressed the challenges of incorporating Inclusive Excellence in the classroom. We will be posting panel comments from Geoffrey Bateman (Writing Program), Bonnie Clark (Anthropology), Tiffani Lennon (Women's College), Debora Ortega (GSSW), and Kate Willink (Human Communication Studies) in the *Faculty Forum*.

In fall 2008 we will also publish a special print edition of the *Forum* featuring contributions from a particularly compelling Diversity Summit session entitled "Greater Expectations, Hopes, and Fears: Junior Faculty & the Pedagogical Experience of Promoting Inclusive Excellence while Black & Brown." This session featured the work of DU faculty members Michele Hanna (GSSW), Malaika McKee-Culpepper (College of Education), Lisa Martinez (Sociology and Criminology), Maria del Carmen Salazar (College of Education), and Frank Tuitt (College of Education).

We continued partnering with the Provost's Office and the Office of Graduate Studies and Research to provide a quarterly **Faculty Club**. The purpose is both business and pleasure: a one hour Q&A with the Provost, followed by a happy hour. We'll add some ceremony here-and-

there; for example, we'll use the fall 2008 Faculty Club to honor newly tenured and promoted faculty on campus. We're grateful to Provost Kvistad and Vice Provost Moran and their staffs for making the Faculty Clubs happen.

Priorities for 2008-09

The new Senate president, Michael Levine-Clark (Penrose Library) assumes the duties on May 30, 2008. Some suggested priorities for next year include:

- Work with top administrators, deans, and chairs to develop new questions for the Administrator Evaluations.
- Finalize and ratify a Faculty Grievance Policy.
- Continue exploration of Tuition Exchange now that we know the cost of the benefit and something of the level of faculty/staff interest.
- Consider the issue of grade inflation.
- Adopt a resolution encouraging DU faculty to voluntarily comply with the [College Textbook Law](#).

The Senate is always willing to entertain suggestions from faculty about other things that we can do.