



NEWS & NOTES

April 2, 2021

This newsletter contains a brief summary of the proceedings of the Faculty Senate Meeting held on **April 2, 2021**. As a reminder, faculty can view the full details of Senate meetings by reviewing the minutes found on the Faculty Senate Website. faculty.senate.lehigh.edu/meeting-minutes

Second Reading

- R&P 1.3.2.2 GRC Ex Officio Members - Passed by Faculty Senate
- Proposal to remove harassment policy from the appendix of R&P - Passed by Faculty Senate

Motions

- May and August 2021 Graduation Motions - both were passed by Faculty Senate

Goals/proposed agenda items for the Senate Retreat on May 13

- Preparing Senate Handbook
- Identify priorities for AY 2021-22 (e.g. DEI efforts, faculty service; impacts of COVID on faculty; meet with incoming President) Faculty input is welcome!
- Ideas for 2021-22 University meeting (faculty input is welcome here too!)

New Business

- Concern about wellness fee being assessed on grad students.

Update on University Budget

- Enrollment and undergraduate tuition this year was relatively healthy, with a surplus on that, but a deficit for grad tuition and revenue. Summer revenue was up a lot. Gifts were down, as were revenues from dining and housing.
- Expenses down in general - salaries/wages, benefits, travel/entertainment, meals/food services, facilities and maintenance.
- Government transfers (stimulus) allowed university to make the \$2K payment to staff and faculty
- Some of the stimulus money is being held by the Provost for strategic use. There will be a process for deciding how that will be spent; the senate EC will inquire about how faculty will be involved.
- Enrollment for fall 2021 is looking OK, although the situation is fluid.
- Some delays in capital construction projects, but after delays of mostly 6-12 months, things are moving ahead, with the expansion of the UC delayed by a year.
- Gifts/pledges generally match commitments in terms of fundraising, although gifts to endowment will benefit more in long-term than present.
- Next year's budget seems to include a \$200/year "wellness fee" that is intended for the campus wellness center to pay for additional services related to COVID-19. That is assessed on both undergrads and grad students
- The "merit" pool salary increase rate is 2% for both overall raises and special merit. It turns out that is almost precisely equal to inflation, so what we have is a merit-allocated cost-of-living increase
- There was a discussion about the retirement benefit suspension. Faculty being paid on a 12-month basis and those being paid on a 9-month basis will end up with the same total amount of withheld benefits (retirement benefits will be restored as of July 1, 2021 for faculty being paid over 12 months). The budget office will provide a chart to help illustrate this. There was also a question about how this worked for people whose benefits are being paid from external grants. The expectation is that benefits from grants will be adjusted at the same time (this will be confirmed with the administration).

Last Faculty Senate Meeting Date for Spring 2021:

Friday, May 7, 2021