

SD 22-10

***THE UNIVERSITY SENATE'S RIGHT TO DIRECT
COMMUNICATION WITH THE FACULTY***

FOR DISCUSSION - 11/21/22

Alice Pawley, Engineering Education*
Susan South, Psychological Sciences
Anish Vanaik, Honors College



Context

- The Senate passed important legislation expanding student rights and changing the calendar in the 2021-22 Senate year
 - MEAPS
 - Quiet Period
 - Winter Term

Context

- In EPC, discussion occurred around whose responsibility it was to let faculty know in good time to revise their course designs.
 - Office of VPTL were not going to communicate this until just before Fall term.
- Could Senate email faculty directly about legislation passed?
 - Miscommunication between VP for Faculty Affairs and co-sponsor implied VPFA would not support.
 - Opened door to exploring under what conditions Senate leadership could email faculty directly.
 - Document was introduced in FAC, but missed deadline for vote in October meeting. Next meeting is in December. Intend to work to secure FAC vote in favor.

Proposal

Statement of principle, and specific ask to IT

- University Senate Chair, Secretary of Faculties, Sergeant at Arms should have right to email faculty directly without needing prior approval by Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.

Rationale

AAUP statement on Academic Freedom and Electronic Communications:

"[S]enate officers and other faculty representatives engaged in institutional governance activities should have free and unfettered access to university-controlled lists of faculty members they represent, and all faculty members should be able to comment electronically on governance issues without restriction or fear of disciplinary action."

Rationale

- MAPSAC, CSSAC, PSG, PGSG can all email their constituents directly.
- Purdue-Fort Wayne and Purdue-Northwest faculty senate leadership can email their faculty directly.
- VPFA should not have potential to refuse to Senate leadership requests to email the West Lafayette faculty.
 - VPFA has been delegated responsibility to administratively oversee faculty listservs (VII.A.4, VII.B.8)
 - Repeated requests to Office of General Counsel (9/12, 9/19, 9/30, 10/7, 11/4) have not yielded evidence that proposal violates these policies.
 - While current VPFA is potentially supportive of certain access, this right should not be dependent on the opinion of the person occupying the position.

How does this affect senators communicating with their constituents?

- Senators still need to frequently communicate directly with their constituents.
- We imagine this right will be sparsely used in normal times.
- The Senate could internally sort out how often Senate leadership would email faculty directly.

Please send questions, revisions by January 3 to

apawley@purdue.edu

Vote anticipated January 22