

Dan Luchtel, Chair
University of Washington Faculty Senate
Remarks at May 22, 2008 Faculty Senate Meeting

As is noted on the agenda, these are the 'farewell remarks' of the Chair. If so, my response is, 'but I just got here.' The year has gone by very fast, with some goals accomplished and others not. As Gail Stygall pointed out at the end of last year, unexpected events may drive a Senate Chair as much as a planned agenda for the year. I would also agree with Ross Heath who stated in his farewell remarks that it is almost impossible for a Senate Chair to have much impact during a 1-year term. Nevertheless, I found that being Chair of the Faculty Senate was and is a rewarding experience.

Certainly one of the most enjoyable aspects of the job are the people I worked with in the Senate office on a day-to-day basis. First and foremost were David Lovell, Vice Chair of the Senate, Gerry Philipsen, Secretary of the Faculty, Gail Stygall, Chair of the Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting, and JW Harrington, the Faculty Legislative Rep. They were wonderful colleagues who saved me from many mistakes although I still found a way to do so. I would also like to thank the Chairs of the Faculty Councils and their members, where the real work of the Senate is done. I would also like to thank the efforts of the Group Reps. And of course the entire operation of the Faculty Senate would be dead in the water without the very competent and cheerful support of our staff, Nancy Bradshaw, assistant to the chair; Susan Folk, Assistant to the Secretary of the Faculty, and Melissa Kane, Council Support Specialist.

Several pieces of legislation were passed, including Class A legislation defining procedures for removal of Faculty Senate Officers and the Secretary of the Faculty. Later today we will be considering Class B legislation on Undergraduate Cross-Campus Enrollment Policy. In addition, several Class C resolutions, including selection of a faculty member on the Board of Regents, fostering multi-unit interdisciplinary research, and environmental stewardship were approved over the course of the past year.

Other achievements included conducting the first election of the Secretary of the Faculty instead of this position being a Presidential appointment; a resolution to install seatbelts in University-operated vans; the preparation of 2 documents to aid faculty in navigating a dispute resolution; and the formation of an *ad hoc* Senate Committee on Academic Quality and Rigor to review academic standards applied to courses. Led by the Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting, the Senate made an enormous effort to understand the budget and the budgetary process. As Gail Stygall will report, we did so with mixed success. We were mindful of the necessity of trying to build in safeguards to protect the university budget in times of financial difficulty at the state level. Also, led by Paul Hopkins, a member of the SCPB, we worked through a model of redistribution of internal funds generated from retirements to fund salary increases. Now we need both courage and administrative support to implement it.

I am hopeful that work we began on the definition and development of three issues will continue next year: 1) revision of the RCEP process (Re-organization, Consolidation and Elimination of Programs); 2) restructuring the senate; and 3) possible formation of a College of the Environment.

The second and third of these issues are on the today's agenda for further discussion. Provost Wise will lead a discussion on the College of the Environment and Gerry Philipsen will do likewise for the senate restructuring issue.

" would also like to add a few comments about the College of the Environment. At last week's Board of Regents meeting, the Provost provided a 'Draft Proposal to the UW Board of Regents to Establish a College of the Environment at the University of Washington.' This 65-page document is a business case, which the Regents requested, to describe how the proposed college might work. The Senate leadership strongly encouraged the Provost to make this document widely available to the faculty so that they might read it to better understand what is being proposed. This proposal is now available on the web by going to the UW's home page, search on 'College of the Environment'.

Unfortunately, some faculty have taken this document as meaning this is a 'done deal'. Let me assure you that this is not a done deal. The Provost expects that there will be much discussion over the next year about this proposal; furthermore, a more in-depth internal document of the academic goals of the College will be developed over the coming months. And if this proposal does move forward, the Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting will be conducting a rigorous RCEP review.

So I would ask the faculty to read the 'Draft Proposal' with an open mind. Out of curiosity, I did do a word check for the word 'proposed' in this document. There were sixty hits, almost one per page. So I think this is a proposal, not a done deal.

Finally, I would like to thank the President and Provost for their help and advice over the past year. We experienced a rough patch here and there but overall, I think we were able to establish a good working relationship. And I thank you for recognizing the importance of shared governance.

Earlier this month, Professor Emeritus Harold Amoss of Urban Planning died. He served as Chair of the Faculty Senate in 1979-1980. Nancy Bradshaw provided me with a copy of his farewell remarks that he delivered to the Senate on June 6, 1980. He began by saying, 'It hardly seems worthwhile simply to review the Senate's accomplishments this academic year, now nearly over, because most items on the list would be the same from year to year.' I read several other farewell addresses by more recent Chairs of the Faculty Senate and this is true. Common themes do emerge. Budgetary and salary issues are nearly always mentioned. As Chairman Amoss phrased it, 'The Senate was at its best when it made recommendations on a faculty salary plan.' A critical but unanswered question was, 'Who is making the critical decisions, particularly those relating to the allocation of resources that are getting very scarce?' We would also like to know not only who, but how these decisions are made; that is, how priorities are established. He also asked, 'why not include a professor on our Board of Regents?' And finally, 'the Faculty Councils have all performed well' and the success of the Senate office depended on the excellent work of its staff. All still true today.

And so it goes—the work of the Senate. In any one particular year, the advance seems relatively small. But I have tried to emphasize that our efforts 'add value to the system.' Over the years, I think the record shows that the work of the Senate has resulted in significant improvements in the lot of the faculty and has helped to more clearly define the lasting core values of the University. In any case, we should note, as Ross Heath did in his farewell remarks, that 'from a historical viewpoint, the only well-archived records of the internal workings of the University are those of the Senate and its councils. Thus, if the worst should ever happen, our version of history will likely be the one that prevails!'

Thank you. That ends my remarks.