Senate E-newsletter

Discover the University Senate

Notes from the May Senate Meeting

At the May 6, 2015 Annual Transition Meeting of the Senate, the Senate conducted special elections for the 2015-2016 **Senate Chair-Elect**, the **Senate Executive Committee (SEC)**, the **Committee on Committees**, the **Athletic Council**, the **Council of University System Faculty (CUSF)**, and the **Campus Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC)**. **Election results** have been posted on the Senate website. After the special elections, Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel,

Michael Poterala, provided a Special Order. Poterala gave an enlightening presentation entitled, "**Free Speech vs. Actionable Conduct: An Introduction**." Poterala then answered questions from Senators, and he welcomed members of the Senate and the campus community to feel free to contact his office with any questions or requests for advice. During New Business, a Senator re-introduced a resolution opposing the sale of alcohol during athletic events. After much discussion and debate from the floor, the Senate voted against the resolution.

The Senate is one of the **largest and most influential governing bodies** *on campus.*

University Senate = Shared Governance. *Faculty, staff, students, and administrators work together to better our University.*

The Senate debates and votes on policy-related issues and other governing aspects of the University. The Senate **directly advises the University President.**

"Serving on the Student Conduct Committee has been such a rewarding experience. The ability for a survivor to represent young women and young survivors in a political setting is both rare and vital, and I am honored to have been given this opportunity. I have been impressed by the dedication and earnest commitment of the staff to changing University policy for the benefit of the students, and I hope to see our work make a real difference to this community."

– Rachel Patterson, Undergraduate Student Conduct Committee Member

From the Past Chair

The past year of Senate work has been marked by the passage of a significant number of policy recommendations. I am extremely grateful to the members of our standing and special committees for their diligence in creating the reports that came to the full Senate for debate, as well as to our Senators for their thoroughness in discussing and voting on them.

We began this productive year in September with the adoption of new Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) guidelines that resulted from the excellent work of a Joint Provost/Senate APT Guidelines Task Force. The group, chaired by Brad Hatfield, created recommendations that included new highlights for considering entrepreneurship and collaboration in faculty promotion. These will guide our faculty in their career advancement in the coming years and places our University ahead of many others in the University System of Maryland (USM).

Another major accomplishment was the passage of a new University of Maryland Plan of Organization for Shared Governance. The Plan of Organization Review Committee, chaired by Charles Wellford, worked for a year and a half to create a new document to lead our shared governance process for the next decade. Its passage was followed by a campus-wide referendum that saw passage by all three segments of our population—faculty, staff, and students. Its signing by President Loh was then followed by approval of new Senate Bylaws to provide the framework for our future operations.

Other significant pieces that were moved through the Senate included a review of the Interim University of Maryland Sexual Misconduct Policy, revision of the Hazing Policy, changes to the Code of Academic Integrity, and a review of Mid-Semester and Early Warning Grades policies and procedures.

An area of concentration that was especially gratifying was the Senate action on issues related our Professional Track (PTK) Faculty. The designation of these important members of our University community was changed from Non-Tenure Track to more fully denote their importance. This was followed by the Clarification of University APT Policy Regarding Emeritus Status for Research Faculty. Then the Senate addressed UM Guidelines for Appointment, Evaluation, and Promotion of Professional Track Faculty to complete the enhancement package to create a more valued environment and provide guidance for their career enhancement.

The Programs, Curricula, and Courses (PCC) Committee once again engaged in a great deal of work for the Senate with recommendations for establishing new programs across a suite of disciplines. Representative of this breadth were the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Information Science and a new area of concentration in Music Education for the Ph.D. in Music. The Master of Public Health program was enhanced through the establishment of concentrations in Health Equity and Health Policy Analysis and Evaluation in our School of Public Health.

The IT Council received Senate approval to add a new User Experience Working Group to advise them on how the products developed for campus are actually being used in the everyday lives of our employees and student. This will provide useful feedback to the IT units.

Shared governance on our campus works well and is the result of the outstanding work provided by the faculty, staff, and students who take the time to serve on our committees and participate in Senate meetings. They take the time to hear, debate, amend and vote on the wide variety of policy and program issues that come before us. I have been proud to have been part of the team that worked together this year for the betterment of our University of Maryland community. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as Chair.

Donald Webster
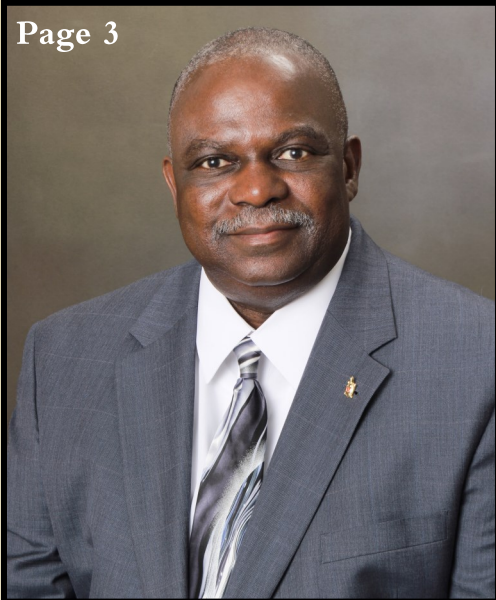
Welcome from the Chair

As Chair-Elect, I spent the year meeting with individual faculty, staff, and students to get their perspectives on shared governance at the University and their opinions regarding the Senate. Additionally, I met with all fifteen Deans of the Colleges and Schools, as well as the Vice Presidents, the Provost, and shortly after becoming Senate Chair, I met with the President.

Without hesitation, everyone readily complimented and acknowledged the critically important and exceptional quality of work the Senate does. During this past year, the Senate has either addressed or is currently reviewing such complex issues as promotion guidelines for Professional Track Faculty, review of the interim Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures, review of the University Plan of Organization for Shared Governance, revision of the Senate Bylaws, discussion on civility in the workplace, review of faculty leave policies, and much more. The work we do is important, and we do it well.

That said, there are always areas of opportunity for improvement, and we must acknowledge, embrace, and work together to address them. Specifically, a common theme I observed was a sense of disenfranchisement. The feeling is that the voices of faculty, staff, and students are not always heard and that they have no impact. Whether this is a reality or perception, or a combination of both, is not really for me to say, but I can say that communication appears to be the underlying issue. My job as Chair of the Senate is to acknowledge these issues and work with the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) and the administration to identify problems and opportunities and actively address them.

Over the course of the summer, the Senate leadership and I will work with the administration to improve communication. The SEC will also stay active and discuss the feedback I received during my tour as Chair-Elect and use that feedback to improve our effectiveness where possible. We will report our findings and efforts to you when the Senate reconvenes. We will work to take advantage of opportunities to enhance communications.

The University Senate has an important role in shared governance, but we are not, however, structured like the U.S. Senate. For example, we do not have the legitimate power to override a decision. The power we do have, however, is one of influence through our advisory role to the administration. Shared governance does not mean shared management. Our responsibility is to provide input and feedback to help the administrators of this institution move it closer to a top 10 public institution. It is by working together, discussing complex issues, and helping President Loh, the Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors and Chairs make tough decisions that we will achieve the goal of becoming an even greater institution. Communication is absolutely essential for shared governance to be effective.

I leave you with this statement from the Preamble of the Plan of Organization: A guiding principle of sound governance among people of reason and goodwill is a mutual regard for one another. Such regard is manifested in the sharing of information and advice among the administrators of the University, representatives of the campus community, and the campus community as a whole on all matters of mutual concern. In this spirit, the campus community, through its elected representatives, shall advise, consult with, and make recommendations to the administrators of the University. University administrators, in turn, shall respond to such consultations and keep the campus community informed of the condition of the institution and the welfare of its members.

It is with this spirit that we, as representatives of the larger community, will do our part to work collaboratively with the administration, helping to move the University forward toward realizing the greatness that is the University of Maryland.

Willie Brown

Submit a Proposal to the Senate

Current Senate Legislation:

Policies and Procedures Governing Preferred/Primary Names and Sex/Gender Markers in University Databases
Senate Document 14-15-03

Public Access Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Program
Senate Document 14-15-05

Review of Interim University of Maryland Policy and Procedures Concerning Credit for Prior Learning
Senate Document 14-15-18

Revision of the University of Maryland Undergraduate Student Grievance Procedure
Senate Document 14-15-22

Review of Faculty Leave Policies
Senate Document 14-15-31

Click on any legislation item above for more details. To view all Senate Legislation: **Click Here**

Any member of the campus community may submit a proposal to the University Senate to review University policies★ and procedures or to suggest the creation and establishment of new ones.

To submit an idea or proposal to the Senate, click on a link below to download a blank proposal form in Word or as a PDF.

Proposal Form (Word Version)
Proposal Form (PDF Version)
Sample Proposal

★ A manual of current University policies can be found here: http://www.president.umd.edu/policies

Contact Us

Senate Office
1100 Marie Mount Hall
College Park, Maryland 20742-7541

301-405-5805 (Tel)
301-405-5749 (Fax)