

Faculty Senate Chair Report to the Faculty
In advance of 11/03/2015 Faculty Meeting
By Ariela Tubert

- We have had two senate meetings since our last faculty meeting. After a very busy September where we completed charges to all 9 standing committees, we continued discussion of some pending issues in these past two meetings. I highlight below a couple of notable issues from those meetings.
- Discussions related to freedom of expression on campus started last year at a faculty meeting and continued in the senate and the Professional Standards Committee, the Student Life Committee, and the Committee on Diversity. In response to the end of year reports from these committees, the senate approved the following charge for the Committee on Diversity:
“Work with the PSC, BHERT, and SLC to identify conflicts, if there are any, between the Faculty Code and the Response Protocol to Incidents of Bias or Hate;”
the following charge for the Professional Standards Committee:
“Work with the COD, BHERT, and SLC to identify conflicts, if there are any, between the Faculty Code and the Response Protocol to Incidents of Bias or Hate;”
and the following charge for the Student Life Committee:
“Work with the PSC, BHERT, and COD to identify conflicts, if there are any, between the Faculty Code and the Response Protocol to Incidents of Bias or Hate.”
- Last year’s senate approved motions requesting that the current senate take action on two issues: i) accessibility in student evaluations and ii) possible bias in student evaluations. The first issue is in response to a request that the senate consider whether to allow extended time to fill out student evaluations for students who receive extended time on exams. The second issue is in response to requests that the senate consider possible biases in student evaluations. After some further discussion, the following charges were approved:
“The Faculty Senate charges the Professional Standards Committee to consider whether students with accessibility hardships might be granted extended time in which to fill out evaluations of courses and instructors.”
“The Faculty Senate charges the Professional Standards to assay studies of biases to which students’ evaluations of teaching are prone and to recommend for faculty those studies, if any, that should inform faculty discussion of biases in students’ evaluations.”
- The senate continued the practice started last year of getting brief reports from faculty representatives to the committees of the Board of Trustees. Among the issues that may be of interest to the faculty was the Board’s discussion and workshop regarding university’s investments in Fossil Fuels. The petition started by a group of students was discussed by members of the Board and I was asked about the faculty’s position on the issue. I believe it would be good for the faculty to discuss this issue in the near future. If any faculty members are

interested in starting such discussion at a senate meeting or at a future faculty meeting, please let me know.

- At the last senate meeting, we heard from faculty representatives to the Faculty Compensation Task Force. They presented a draft of five general unranked principles that are part of the Faculty Compensation Philosophy they have been working on, they will be presenting the more specific Policies at a later time. In addition to the principles, they reported on their work on selecting a peer group for the purpose of faculty salaries and the place of Puget Sound salaries within that group. Members of the Task Force will be presenting at the upcoming faculty meeting on 11/3; they have also sent information by email and requested feedback in various forms. I want to thank the members of the Task Force for all the work they have been doing and to encourage faculty to pay attention to the work of the Task Force and provide feedback in a timely fashion as the Task Force plans to complete their work and submit a report by the end of the semester.
- As always, I encourage your questions about the senate's work and suggestions for issues that you would like the senate to pursue.