

FacultyLine

Office of the University Faculty, 138 Fawcett Hall (937) 775-2039
Faculty Line #213, January 6, 2012

Happy New Year! Wright State University is buzzing with activity again as we begin our last winter quarter under semesters.

Faculty Reporting Responsibilities – In the aftermath of the scandal embroiling the football program at Penn State University President Obama said “I think it’s a good time for us to do some soul searching – every institution, not just Penn State – about what our priorities are, and making sure that we understand that our first priority is protecting our kids, and we all have a responsibility. We can’t leave it to a system, we can’t leave it to someone else.” In that spirit, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee has met with Dr. Gary Dickstein (Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Director, Community Standards and Student Conduct) and Katie Deedrick (Director, Student Support Services) to evaluate and review the responsibilities of faculty at Wright State in the event that they witness or otherwise become aware of a crime involving one of their students (and, particularly minors). All faculty should know that the very first thing that they should do in such a circumstance is “call the police.”

Dr. Gary Dickstein and Katie Deedrick will make a brief presentation at Monday’s Faculty Senate meeting about what facilities the University has in place to assist students who are victims of crimes and the procedures that are in place to assist faculty with reporting of such incidents. We should all be proud that the University is in the very unusual position of having someone on staff like Katie Deedrick whose first responsibility is to see to the well being of Wright State students who may have been the victim of a crime.

Faculty Handbook Changes – One of the agenda items for Monday’s Faculty Senate meeting will also be consideration of changes to the Faculty Handbook. Most of the proposed changes are fairly trivial and are associated with the transition from quarters to semesters. Some of the changes are more substantive however such as those that pertain to the University’s free speech policies. A 2005 US Supreme Court ruling (Garcetti et al. v. Ceballos; www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/05pdf/04-473.pdf) effectively sets aside Wright State’s long standing practice of encouraging speakers to use the “Speaker’s Corner.” An ad hoc committee of the Faculty Senate worked for most of last year to evaluate the free speech policy that is articulated in our current Faculty Handbook and has provided helpful guidance to the changes that will be considered by the Senate. A complete set of the proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook can be found at www.wright.edu/administration/senate/senage/documents/FacHandbookChanges1-9-12_002.pdf

Student Success – In the last FacultyLine I included some statistics about the different graduation rates of our students with differing incoming high school GPAs and suggested that we needed to challenge ourselves to find ways to better serve incoming students who are not well prepared for college-level studies. Since then quite a bit has happened in that regard. Associate Provost Tom Sudkamp addressed the Faculty Senate at its last meeting of 2011 and the Provost's Office has released a 58 page report (Access, Progress, Success: Recommendations for Increasing Retention and Graduation in the Semester Transition) on that topic. An ad hoc committee of the Faculty Senate has been reviewing that report and the chair of that committee, Dr. Travis Doom, will give a brief summary of recommendations of its own at Monday's Faculty Senate meeting. I am expecting that the February meeting of the Faculty Senate will be the setting for substantive discussions of recommendations ranging from admission requirements and summer bridge programs to freshman seminars and learning communities.

Faculty Governance – I am hoping to be able to attend the quarterly faculty meetings held by each of the colleges during this winter quarter so as to better gauge how faculty feel we can better serve our students. Please look for your Faculty Senators and especially those who represent you on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to provide updates at your College's faculty meetings as well. You will find the current list of Faculty Senators at <http://www.wright.edu/administration/senate/senators/>. Please send any comments, suggestions or concerns about our efforts to "transform the lives of our students and the communities we serve" to them, the Faculty Office (Pam.Zambenini@wright.edu; 775-2039) or directly to me (Dan.Krane@wright.edu; 775-2257).

Upcoming Events – The University Athletics Council will be hosting a pre-game lecture before the Men's basketball game (versus Butler) on Friday night (tonight!) at the Nutter Center. The speaker at the pre-game lecture will be Dr. Liam Anderson from the Department of Political Science and his talk will be "What's Next in Iraq?" The talk will begin at 5:45 PM in the Berry Room (and be over in plenty of time for you to make it to the stands for the game).

The first Faculty Senate meeting of the 2012 will be held on Monday, January 9 at 2:15 PM in E156 of the Student Union. All are very welcome to attend. An agenda for the meeting can be found at:
www.wright.edu/administration/senate/senage/documents/SenAgnJan12.pdf

I hope that everyone is enjoying the start of our last winter quarter!

Dan Krane

Faculty President