

From: David Worthington; Chair, Faculty Priorities and Governance Committee
To: Howard Brooks, Chair of the Faculty
Re: Faculty Priorities and Governance Annual Report

Dear Howard and other readers,

Near the end of the spring 2018 semester, Faculty Priorities and Governance Committee, responding to multiple inquiries into a Presidential no-confidence vote at the May faculty meeting, requested a meeting of select faculty members with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees in order to discuss issues facing the institution. In response, the Board provided guidance on the appropriate procedures and avenues for communicating with the Board. The Board directed the committee to the Board of Trustees's By-Laws, which is not a document with common currency among faculty or with general accessibility to the faculty as is the Faculty Handbook. Without access to the Board of Trustees bylaws, Faculty Priorities and Governance struggled with the question of how to communicate directly with the board. The committee managed to find an old copy of the By-Laws by searching the university archives; thus, now that there is access to these documents, I submit this document as a means of working through designated channels of communication; however, the committee hopes to see those channels expand in the near future.

Please consider this document the required report from Faculty Priorities and Governance for the academic year 2017-18.

Faculty Priorities and Governance met on a twice-monthly basis when classes were in session during the fall and spring semesters. Our work consisted primarily on the following issues:

- Continuing with the work of the previous year's committee on developing Academic Handbook language for the recruitment, review, and retention document that would include faculty participation in the hiring, review, and retention of senior administrators who have academic standing at the university. These would include positions such as the VPAA, Dean of the School of Music, and the VPSAA. Academic Handbook language was, repeatedly revised but we could not come to agreement with the President over content and thus the committee chose to advance only the "recruitment" section of the document to the faculty. "Advance notice" was delivered at the May faculty meeting with a voted scheduled for the September 2018 faculty meeting.
- Continuing with the work of the previous year's committee on developing Academic Handbook language for a confidentiality policy, the committee focused on taking approaches from a 2016 "Policy Memo" and shaping it into draft Handbook language. The draft addresses the range of confidentiality from strict to lesser. Spurred by concerns that faculty committees are limited in their ability to address ongoing issues as committee membership changes, the "lesser confidentiality" policy would allow for communication about non-personnel issues between current and previous committee members who need

information for equitable and thorough decision-making. A proposal was advanced to the President but no agreement about the policy was reached as it is early in the policy development process.

- The committee met regularly with VPAA Anne Harris about ideas and direction for university academic initiatives. These meetings, while not designed to develop policy, struck the committee as productive ways to both recommend and act as a sounding board for the VPAA's concerns.
- As campus tensions rose during the spring semester the committee had additional meetings to discuss how governance could or should respond to student concerns about representation on committees and faculty participation in shared governance.
- Governance was approached by two separate faculty groups for information regarding the appropriate process for introducing a confidence/no-confidence vote regarding the President. Governance recognized that any voting member of the faculty could introduce such a motion, but also sought to better understand the motives for such a vote and to ensure that should faculty make such a motion that it be properly announced with adequate time for deliberation and debate. Governance opted to make an extra-effort to avoid the crisis a no-confidence vote would engender by requesting a meeting with the Board of Trustees. Ultimately, neither group chose to introduce a no-confidence vote during the spring semester.
- Proposals and questions from other campus committees and individuals concerning governance procedures, concerns, or recommendations.

Only one member of the current Priorities and Governance Committee is currently scheduled to remain on the committee for the 2018-19 academic year. The following section articulates concerns about the state of university governance, and areas for attention, that the incoming committee should either know about or address:

- That significant numbers of faculty members have expressed fear of retribution if they disagree with the President.
- That the President uses the strict confidentiality policy as a means to obfuscate and spin interpretations of past meetings and issues. Consequently, continuing to develop a lesser confidentiality policy should be a priority.
- That the President continues to drag out policy implementation by changing positions, raising new objections to items where agreement had been achieved, referencing policies from academic organizations that do not exist, and erroneously asserting other institutions do not have similar policies to those proposed in our draft language.
- That the President, who took office with the benefit of 5 years on campus, failed to significantly address deep issues of diversity and equity that have been articulated by students and staff over the past many years. In short, he has demonstrated no planning to deal with problems that we knew would occur.

- The academic mission of DePauw is unclear. There is a lack of priority/focus on the academic mission of the university and the intensifying emphasis on “other” than academic programs and centers has unbalanced the academic mission.
- It has become apparent that since the overhaul of the structure of faculty governance led to the elimination of the Committee on Administration, several aspects of university finance do not include faculty representation in the decision-making process. Faculty Priorities and Governance needs to address how to restore this representation. Additionally, faculty have raised concerns about transparency in university finances which should be addressed by Faculty Priorities and Governance.