**Priorities and Governance Annual Report 2018/2019—Delivered at Faculty Meeting, May 6, 2019**

**Priorities and Governance** would like to share with you our annual report. It itemizes issues and topics that next year’s Priorities and Governance Committee may take up to continue the work.

1. The first one is an important one. We have been charged by various people and entities this year with examining the current university-wide governance structure.
* At the beginning of fall semester, one Priorities and Governance committee member proposed to the committee that it audit governance structure in view of equity and diversity.
* Two students from the Association of African American Students (AAAS) met with us to discuss the Power, Privilege, and Diversity Committee, and we informed them that a PPD committee as such doesn’t exist. Instead, as we explained, the Course and Calendar Oversight Committee decides which courses count as PPD courses. The Course and Calendar Oversight Committee has one student representative. We also informed AAAS representatives about the ongoing faculty development workshops addressing PPD issues, like the one in the fall of 2018. We are currently working on a formal response to AAAS to encourage future communication.
* President McCoy has asked us repeatedly to examine our governance structure in view of its representational function. The Board of Trustees, he maintains, wants a more concrete sense about who is speaking for whom and when.
* Lastly, Rebecca Schindler and Pam Propsom charged the Faculty Priority and Governance Committee in a Spring faculty meeting. Their charge was motivated by the campus climate survey that shows a clear disparity between male faculty members and female faculty members responses.

There is much work to be done in doing justice to all of the inquiries and charges concerning our governance structure. After much deliberation, the current Priorities and Governance committee feels confident, however, **that the current governance structure needs no dismantling or major change**s. That is not to say that there aren’t improvements and possibilities that would fortify its purpose and service to all. We suggest, for example, that next year’s Priorities and Governance committee continue to discuss our governance structure in regard to the role of women and/or faculty of color, which means, asking, among other things, whether, and if so, in what ways, institutional racism is perpetuated by the committee structure.

We are currently not in favor of forming either a Senate or a permanent and separate superstructure committee that is tasked with speaking **on all issues as representatives of the faculty**, **thus sidestepping the work and authority of individual committees.** We trust that the committees, as they stand, continue to take their charge and purview seriously. To fortify the current governance structure, we would, however, like to propose that committees must practice **more rigorous transparency** in reporting to the faculty at faculty meetings and through additional channels. **Transparency is not simply a best practice but an essential practice if committees are to speak to the Administration, Board of Trustees, to faculty, and to each other about decisions, policies, and agendas.** This transparency is particularly important when committees are asked for input on significant measures like the recent austerity measures. This does not lessen the power of committees or slow things down. What it does do is to encourage vigorous debate if and when the issue is important, and if it is not, the committee will simply move forward.

**We are hoping that next year’s Priorities and Governance committee will move from a bi-weekly meeting schedule to a weekly one**. There are many agenda items that have been lingering for some time, items seeking a solution. With the trust that committees at DePauw work with and for the faculty, we propose that the following items be pursued by next year’s Priorities and Governance Committee:

1. Faculty Review of Administrators: we have met with President McCoy more than once on this issue and it remains a difficult one. The most challenging issue has been in regard to the review of the office of the president, although we seem closer to an agreement with regard to the review of other administrators.

2. Review of the “confidentiality policy” that allows administrators to withhold information. This has a close connection to our above stated goal of strengthening communication between committees and faculty.

3. Cultivating regular channels of communication with the Board of Trustees. This is a topic we have been discussing this semester. VPAA Harris has invited chairs and members of university committees to the May 8 and 9 Board of Trustees meeting as faculty representatives. The Board of Trustees committees and university committees are aligned as follows:

**The Board’s Academic Affairs Committee** is linked WITH

**Strategic Planning Committee** faculty members

Chair of the **Curriculum Committee**

Chair of **Faculty Development Committee**

Chair of **Priorities and Governance Committee**

**The Board’s Student Life and Enrollment Management Committee** is linked WITH

Chair of the **Student Academic Life Committee** of the faculty

Chair of the **Admissions Subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee**

**The Board’s Diversity and Inclusion Continuing Committee** is linked with the

Interim Director of the **Center for Diversity and Inclusion**

**The Board’s Buildings and Grounds Committee** is linked WITH

**Faculty Sustainability Coordinator**

4. Priorities and Governance Committee might consider next year whether the above pairings are ideal, in particular given the fact that not all of the positions are elected.

5. The Governance committee might also consider whether SPC faculty members should be directly elected or be drawn from members of Governance or drawn from a variety of committees or some other options.

6. This pertains to the question how faculty members are selected for compensated service positions? There are currently a variety of mechanisms, from open calls to individual appointments under various criteria. Is a unified equitable and consistent mechanism for applying and selecting possible? We suggest that next year’s committee take up this question.

Priorities and Governance invites you to direct any concerns or agenda items or responses to the annual report to the Priorities and Governance Committee. Thank you.

**ADDENDUM**

**Priorities and Governance Committee**

*Function*. This committee oversees the faculty governance system and meets regularly to engage in or delegate strategic planning matters for the faculty. The committee regularly considers how to balance major faculty conversations and other faculty business over the course of the academic year. Additionally, this committee serves as a convenient venue for committees to share information and concerns. **The Faculty Priorities and Governance Committee decides how the faculty should address issues that do not clearly fall within the purview of existing committees or whose impact would overlap the charge of multiple committees.** The committee will assist the administration in directing its inquiries and requests for input to the appropriate faculty committee and, where necessary, in balancing faculty service and interest. The Faculty Priorities and Governance Committee makes faculty service assignments to Standing Appointed and Ad hoc Committees in consultation with the Core Faculty Committees.

The following Standing Appointed Committees report to the Faculty Priorities and Governance Committee: None.

The following Ad hoc Committees report to the Faculty Priorities and Governance Committee: Hartman Center Committee, Nature Park Committee and Arts Advisory Committee.

A member of the Faculty Priorities and Governance Committee should be assigned as a liaison to each Standing Appointed Committee and Ad hoc Committee when formed.