Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to end this fall with a report regarding the many accomplishments of the Governance System during fall semester, and would like to thank everyone who has helped to make the Governance System successful. Together we have addressed a great many issues including strategic planning, assessment, the format of the next official catalog (i.e. electronic), dismissal and termination policies, criminal background checks, and committee revisions, to mention just some of the more prominent issues. These achievements could not have occurred without the dedication and commitment of so many people, including those on the Faculty Senate, the Executive Committee, the Senate’s committees, both standing and ad hoc (e.g. strategic planning working groups), and those serving as chairs. These groups have been assisted by the Chancellor and the Administration, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and many staff members including, but by no means limited to, Valerie Malzacher, Joan Kratt, Melissa Barbey, and Deb Toftness, who have built and maintained the Senate and Strategic Planning Web sites, helped provide notices required under the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law, and much more.

At the Senate’s last meeting on Dec. 20, recommendations from the Calendar and Academic Programs and Policy committees to change the class schedule from 55 to 50 minutes were introduced. After extensive discussion including both senators and guests, the motion passed 16-3-0. The implementation date has not yet been finalized, but information regarding this shall
be conveyed as soon as final decisions are reached. The Senate also revised the process for granting Exemplary Service Awards in a unanimous vote. The main changes are that previous award recipients will not automatically be granted a permanent base addition but can be considered, along with others, for awards that will be made during spring semester; awards will be a minimum of $3,000 and will be applied towards base salaries; the process to make awards will parallel the merit process with recommendations from departments to deans to the chancellor; and although the chancellor will take into account departmental and college affiliations, funds will be awarded primarily based upon exceptional performance.

There was also a discussion about the future of ROTC at UWRF. It is very likely that the Army will introduce a proposal sometime early during spring semester to bring ROTC to campus. You might have noticed that some students on campus are already in ROTC, but they are enrolled through a program administered through the UW-Stevens Point and the UW-Stout. Any proposal to bring ROTC to the UWRF will be sent through the governance processes (e.g. Faculty Senate and Student Senate), and any minors, courses, and other academic aspects of the program would also be sent through the appropriate governance processes. The remainder of the Senate’s new business was postponed until its next meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 16, at 3:15 p.m. in Room 334 of the new University Center.

Between the semesters work will continue on a number of important issues. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will meet to discuss the task charters submitted by our working groups, and the Prioritization Group will continue work on a draft of priorities. The goal is to complete work on these issues before the end of January, send them to the Faculty Senate for consideration, and to begin implementation of some strategic planning tasks as early as February.

The ITS redesign team is working on a draft of a policy covering information security, usage, collection, and access issues and is seeking general faculty input. Before January 4, please access the draft document on the Senate’s website and convey your comments to daniel.vandeyacht@uwrf.edu. Look for “ITS Draft Policies” on the left side of the page.

By early January, the entire Senate’s meeting schedule for spring semester will be posted onto its website, and committee meetings will be posted by late January. For more information about these and other Senate matters, visit http://www.uwrf.edu/faculty_senate.

I sincerely hope that you have an opportunity between the semesters to spend time with friends and family, and to recharge your batteries for spring semester.

Happy holidays and best wishes!

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There are no meetings scheduled for the week of Dec. 25.