NOTICE TO MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE FROM THE OFFICERS OF THE SENATE

Proposed changes to the Senate bylaws were approved by both Faculty Assembly and Senate Council at the Feb. 18 and Feb. 26 meetings as well as the June 3 and June 11 meetings respectively. Please visit the Senate website at http://univsenate.pitt.edu to view the bylaws in their entirety. If you have any questions or if you wish to receive a hard copy of the Senate Bylaws, please contact Lori Molinaro, director, Office of the University Senate, at 412/624-6505. The substantive changes and rationale are:

Article IV. Section 4. Meetings and Reports:
Standing and Special Committees of the Senate shall meet regularly and report to the Faculty Assembly and Senate Council on matters in areas of their responsibility. They shall provide the Senate Office with the minutes (including the attendance lists) of their meetings, as well as with the dates and brief agendas of their forthcoming meetings. When a Committee meets in Executive Session, a statement of any decision reached and its supporting reasons must be provided to the Senate Office. Five members shall constitute a quorum. In order to obtain the greatest possible representation of all voting members, when deemed appropriate and desirable by the chair, any vote of the committee may be held by electronic means.

Rationale: In our electronic age, along with the fact that Senate Elections are done electronically, it makes sense to allow committees, if they so choose, to vote via electronic means.

Article IV. Section 9. Chair and Secretary:
(a) The voting members of each Standing Committee shall elect the Committee Chair and Secretary for terms of office of one year. The Chair shall be an elected faculty member; the Secretary may be either an elected or pro tem faculty member of the Committee. Co-chairs may be elected at the Committee’s discretion. Terms shall run July 1 through June 30. The sitting Committee Chair will organize the election of a new Chairman and Secretary at a meeting or, if necessary, by electronic means (email, video conference, etc.) before July 1. The immediate past chair shall, for the first four months of the new term year, be a non-voting member ex officio of the Committee (unless the Chair continues to hold membership on the Committee).

(b) Chairs of Standing Committees also serve as Ex Officio voting members of Faculty Assembly. (See Article II. Section 2.(b).)

Rationale: This allows the committee five weeks to elect a chair; previously the dates were June 1-May 31. This ensures a chairman and secretary are in place at the conclusion of that term.

NOTE: These changes will become affective 45 days after this announcement unless the Senate Office receives a petition signed by at least 50 members of the Senate requesting a vote of the full membership. If you are not in agreement with the recommended changes you are encouraged to submit a petition to the Senate Office as outlined in Article VIII amendments.

We hope you will use this opportunity to learn more about the University Senate by viewing other sections of the Senate website as well.

Professor Michael B. Spring
President, University Senate