Faculty Senate Survey of April 2011

Total Respondents: 75/174
Response Rate: 43%

Possible Responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Don’t Know

Questions:

1. Provides an effective forum for controversial issues
2. Is regarded by the campus as dealing with crucial issues
3. Attracts both junior and senior faculty who are esteemed as academic leaders
4. Is represented in other key governance groups
5. Is consulted by the administration on the creation of all non-senate committees
6. Advertises meetings and activities in advance
7. Widely publishes records of actions
8. Specifies in its Charter/By-laws areas where senate decisions are determinative, co-
determinative, or advisory
9. Grounds its practices in parliamentary procedure and endorsed principles of governance
10. Defends the core values of academic freedom
11. Determines curriculum
12. Is seen as an agent for necessary institutional change

Ranking*  Question #

1 6 (86%)
2 7 (71%)
3 10 (69%)
4 11 (67%)
5 2, 3, & 9 (66%)
6 1 (65%)
7 4 & 12 (62%)
8 8 (37%)
9 5 (31%)

*Based on adding “Strongly Agree” and “Agree”

High Negative Rating**

Ranking  Question #

1 12 (23%)
2 3 (18%)
3 1, & 7 (17.5%)
**Based on adding “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree”
High “Don’t Know” response

#8 (61%)
#5 (58%)
#9 (31%)
#4 (30%)

“Strongly Agree” High: #10 (27%)

“Strongly Disagree High: #12 (8%)

Comments (in order of presentation):

1. I sincerely apologize for being critical. I have been here for three years and I have not heard much ado about anything with regards to the Faculty Senate except for the fact that people are required to refer to people as senator, and that some people talk way too long and get very little productivity to show for their energies. I do not know what praise to attribute to the senate, and I don't generally hear dialogue about the actions take in senate. I look forward to hearing positive things in the future, and I appreciate your actions to judge the effectiveness of the institution.

2. Election system needs to be improved. Nothing but a popularity contest. Large divisions have advantage over smaller ones. Senators should be elected based on equal representation by division and reflect both junior and senior faculty. This system is more like the House of Representatives than the Senate.

3. Leeward CC administrations have always respected and looked to the faculty senates of the past for participation in all important college decisions.

4. Good job everyone!!

5. The Senate could be more visible by publicizing its meeting schedule and agenda for all faculty. Also, while the minutes are posted on Laulima, most faculty don't know this. Lastly, I don't think most faculty would know how to bring a concern or issue to the attention of the Senate or even an individual Senator.

7. Meetings are advertised in advance, but the issues covered at the meetings often are not.

8. Not having served on the Faculty Senate or attended any meeting I am not very familiar with what the Faculty Senate actually does. I have searched at times for a website that might have information about the Faculty Senate and find outdated or no information. It would be good to make sure that all faculty are informed about what the agenda is, the minutes, and the decisions that are made.
9. Faculty Senate should be comprised of more campus leaders such as Division Chairs, Unit Heads, and senior faculty. The current Faculty Senate is comprised of too many junior, non-tenured faculty.

10. Senators need to take what they learn and do back to their divisions, or the Senate needs to share with the campus in a more high profile manner.

11. More senior faculty should be encouraged to run for Faculty Senate.

12. Faculty Senate deals with many of the minor issues, but is not seen as a major force in the major governance issues. The administration decides what the Faculty Senate should and should not know and do.

13. In difficult times economically, academically the Faculty Senate is doing the best job possible given the limitations placed on it by the corporatization of the University & political pressures placed on it by the powers that be.

14. The curriculum committee should be concerned more with the substance of the proposal than the format.

15. Am new to this campus and have had limited interaction with this group. I do know who my department rep is.

### Strengths

When the two categories of “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” are combined, several main strengths emerge. When comparing with a similar survey completed in the Spring 2009 (49 respondents), improvement can be seen in the perception of the Senate as dealing with crucial issues (55% in ’09/66% in ’11); as being determinative in curriculum matters (58%/69%); and especially regarding advertising meetings and activities in advance (60%/86%). This last indicates that efforts since the last survey to keep faculty informed of Senate activities have been successful. The respondents also see the Senate as defending the core values of academic freedom, with this question (#10) receiving the highest percentage of “Strongly Agree” responses (27%) of any question.

### Weaknesses

There were no categories receiving higher than a 23% negative response (when combining “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree”), though it should be of concern that nearly a quarter of respondents do not see the Senate as an agent for necessary institutional change. Looking at the “Don’t Know” responses, we might also be concerned that 61% do not know what the purpose of Senate decision is as specified in the Charter/Bylaws; and, we should be especially concerned that 58% do not know if the Senate is consulted by the administration on the creation of all non-Senate committees.
Evaluation of Comments
The comments are so varied that we must be cautious in how much weight to give them; and yet, a couple themes do emerge. First, while faculty are receiving some information regarding senate agenda and actions, it is insufficient for some faculty to have more than a cursory understanding. Another common theme concerns the composition of the Senate, whether there should be revisions to the at-large nature of the Senate, and the perceived lack of senior faculty representation on the Senate. There is also a question regarding the importance of the Senate to campus governance.

Proposed Responses
The following are a few of the possible responses to improve the effectiveness of the Faculty Senate:

• Renewed emphasis on providing Senate agenda and highlighting key issues to faculty-at-large prior to Senate meetings;
• Update regularly the Senate’s website on the emedia server—key ongoing issues, latest motions, latest appointments, etc.
• Initiate a regular process whereby Senators brief faculty in their units of recent Senate actions;
• The Senate Executive Committee should make increased efforts to ensure that the Senate is informed of all non-Senate committees that have or are proposed to have faculty representation. Where appropriate the Senate should be involved in such appointments;
• Initiate a faculty-wide discussion about the Senate composition, with a goal to either reaffirm the present electoral system or consider amending the Charter/Bylaws.