Dear Colleagues:

Allow me to bring a range of important issues to your attention; all of these have a direct impact on the faculty and you should be apprized of them:

The Next Faculty Senate Meeting
The next meeting of the Senate is February 17 at 3:30 p.m. in the Anheuser Busch Auditorium in the Cook School of Business. (Please note that this represents a change in the meeting place.) At this meeting, the agenda will include reports and/or possible action on the Faculty Manual, plus and minus grades, the appropriate use of technology, the survey on diversity, banner, and the issue of the painting in the atrium of the Business School. All members of the faculty are welcome to come to the Senate meeting.

Budgetary Matters
The Provost has been able to give Academic Deans their budgets for FY05. These will necessitate cutting budgets in strategic kinds of ways. In recent years we have balanced budgets more easily and have not been so negatively impacted as this year. In a recent open forum with the faculty, the Provost emphasized the goal of having the least impact on the faculty as humanly possible. He was asked whether the University were in crisis and answered that we are not. I concur. If we were, we would have a freeze on hiring, salaries would be frozen, and other draconian measures would be in place. As we know, we are feeling the negative impact of a smaller endowment, the need to absorb the SLU2000 programs, and a decrease in the spending rule from the endowment. We are being asked to do more with less, including having fewer support staff. It is my sense that we are attempting to grow ourselves out of this financial dilemma by increasing next year’s freshmen class from 1373 to 1500. This goal is achievable, but it necessitates that faculty throughout the University do all that they can to assist in recruiting and retaining students. In subsequent budget years, we will, in my opinion, be forced to deal with other budgetary matters, and it will be essential that the faculty be at the table to help decide those issues that will determine the future programmatic offerings of the University.

The Faculty Manual
The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate has transmitted to the Provost a refined penultimate draft of the new version of the Faculty Manual. The Senate will hold two open hearings on the Manual; the first will be on February 24 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Main Auditorium in the School of Allied Health; the second open hearing will be held on March 2 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Carlo Auditorium in Tegeler Hall. A number of substantive changes are being recommended in the Manual and I encourage your active participation in these open fora. The text of the Manual will be sent to you electronically next week. This document, in its final form, is the basic contract between the faculty and the University and it does affect you personally. Hence, may I request your active involvement in studying and commenting on the Manual. Dr. Ian Redmount will lead the open hearings and all are invited to attend. It is our goal that the Manual revisions be finalized this year, and the Faculty Senate will vote on the Manual this spring.

A Painting in the Atrium of the Cook School of Business
Faculty have asked that this matter be on the agenda of the Senate meeting, and the Executive Committee has consented. Despite disclaimers to the contrary, any number of faculty and students clearly see a swastika as the central focus of the painting. Their thinking causes them to ask the question: what is this “piece of art” doing hanging in a Catholic, Jesuit university with its firm commitment to social
justice, a core issue in any Jesuit institution? Some think to be silent is to be complicit, and others are genuinely concerned about freedom of expression. If, however, members of the academic community are deeply offended by the appearance of a swastika, despite the artist's intention, in the atrium of the Cook School of Business, does this issue not need to be vetted by the faculty/Senate? I am anticipating a lively discussion and a motion that will deal with the continuing disposition of the painting.

**Appropriate Use Of Technology**
I have placed this item on the agenda as a policy that deals with the appropriate use of technology was developed last academic year and was subsequently approved by the President’s Coordinating Council. This policy has never been discussed in a Senate meeting, and its impact on potentially every faculty member is real. Who owns what on your office desktop? Are letters of recommendation confidential? These kinds of issues will be discussed at the Senate meeting. Dr. Matt Mancini will lead this discussion.

**Plus and Minus Grades**
Our academic committee has been addressing this issue, and the Council of Academic Deans is coming to closure on this topic. We would like you to be informed on this matter and to seek your input as well. Dr. Tim Lomperis will lead this discussion.

**Odds and Ends**
At the Senate meeting we will provide an update for you on the following issues: long term care plan, the Child Care Leave Policy, and the “stopping the clock policy.” Any other new business will be welcome.

If there are ways that any member of the Executive Committee can be of assistance to you, please let us know (Miriam Joseph, John Griesbach, John Slosar, Jeanne Donnelly, Randy Sprague, Carole Needham, and Rick Breslin).

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Breslin, Professor of Leadership and Higher Education
President of the Faculty Senate