Dear Colleagues:

The Faculty Senate meeting scheduled for April 26 at 3:30 p.m. in Rooms 112-113 in the Learning Resource Center on the Health Science Campus has vitally important agenda items that will impact every single member of the faculty. For instance, the Faculty Senate, on behalf of the entire faculty, will vote to approve a significantly revised version of the Faculty Manual. The precise motion that will come before the Senate is: “The Executive Committee unanimously recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the adoption of the Saint Louis University Faculty Manual Revision 6, in its entirety, to replace the existing Faculty Manual. This action is taken on the understanding that the Faculty Senate’s approval is conditional on the Board of Trustees’ like approval of Draft Revision 6 in its entirety and without material change (as determined by the Executive Committee).”

May I remind you that the full faculty has received electronically draft versions of the Manual with the request to comment; all suggestions have been considered. There have been four open hearings on the Manual and all recommendations for additions, deletions, and emendations have been duly considered by your revision/negotiating team. We have had many meetings with the administration and through a series of “gives and takes” we have arrived at Version 6 on which the Senate will vote. Given that the proposed Manual is a negotiated document, the Executive Committee of the Senate will present it to the Senate for an “up or down” vote. It is our belief that the faculty have had ample opportunity to comment and that Version 6 reflects a consensus document that will serve the faculty well for some years to come.

A note of thanks to the Governance Committee of the Faculty Senate is in order, with special thanks to its chair, Ian Redmount. The negotiating team composed of John Slosar, Ian Redmount, Miriam Joseph, John Griesbach, and Rick Breslin have done yeoman work in bringing the Manual to closure. This could not have happened without the close working relationship with Provost Weixlmann. It is also important to note that Miriam Joseph kept track of the proposed changes and produced the drafts of the Manual that were so readable in their side-by-side presentation; we are in Miriam’s debt!

We will be electing some new members of the Senate’s Executive Committee at the Senate meeting. This is an important election as the Executive Committee will plan an even more significant role in Shared Governance by virtue of the new Faculty Manual. One member of the EC not standing for reelection is Carol Needham who will be on sabbatical next year; she and her contributions will be missed.

There are other serious matters awaiting our attention/action. For example: for several months we have been collaborating with the administration in developing a revised version of the SLU Information Technology Appropriate Use Policy. After multiple meetings and various draft versions of this document we are prepared to recommend Senate approval. The motion to approve will read: “The Executive Committee unanimously recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the adoption of the draft of the Saint Louis University Information Technology Appropriate Use Policy dated April 14, 2005, in its entirety, to replace the existing Appropriate Use Policy. This action is taken on the understanding that the Faculty Senate’s approval is conditional on the President of the University’s like approval of the draft of April 14, 2005, in its entirety and without material change (as determined by the Executive Committee).” Special thanks are due to Roger Goldman, Matthew Mancini, John Griesbach, Ellen Watson, and Austin Winkleman for their hard work in bringing this document to its present form!
The Academic Affairs Committee has been hard at work dealing with such weighty matters as academic integrity and achieving academic excellence at Saint Louis University. Both of these issues will come before the Senate next Tuesday afternoon accompanied by a series of action steps called for by the Committee. The Executive Committee will be asked to shepherd these matters with the administration during the summer months. In my estimation, both of these matters are of moment and they deserve our serious attention. The issues of cheating and plagiarism will not go away without our collective efforts being focused on these concerns; and, as long as they go unchecked, they remain a blight on our academic community.

The Compensation Committee will report out a series of issues dealing with compensation and benefits. The Committee will ask the Executive Committee to work with the administration to ensure that specifics are considered in future fiscal years. It strikes me that we need to pay special attention to salaries as we are falling farther and farther behind peer institutions. In the long run we need to put in place a plan for dealing with these shortfalls. We should not be tens of thousands below our counterparts at sister institutions in salaries at the various professorial levels.

The University Medical Group’s budget will be presented to the Senate and interested faculty on May 3rd at the LRC at 3:30 p.m. All are invited.

At the Senate meeting on April 26 there is the passing of the leadership baton of the Senate to John Griesbach of the Law School. John has been an exceptional member of the Executive Committee and will do a superb job as our new President. It is my sincerest hope that you will offer John your full support so that, together, we can continue to advance the common cause of our University and to continue the advances we are making in achieving bona fide Shared Governance.

In closing this communication, let me indicate that it has been a privilege and an honor to represent the faculty of our fine institution. Thank you for the opportunity to do so!

Respectfully submitted:
Rick Breslin, Ph.D., Professor and President of the Faculty Senate