



18. January 2018

Report to the Board of Trustees, Clemson University
Faculty Senate President:
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February 2018 Report: Progress on transparency, collaborations and networking, and professional development in Faculty Senate

The **July 2017 report** summarized how the professional development of our students and the knowledge economy of South Carolina are impacted by the engagement of all members of the Clemson University Family in shared governance. In the **October report**, the ‘Lead Senators project’ in Faculty Senate and an update on the shared governance website were described as our efforts to improve transparency and cultivate having ‘seats and voices at the table’ to provide input, thereby improving focus on teaching, research and service through knowledge that local and global issues are being addressed. In **this report**, the following three points are briefly discussed:

- 1) Transparency in Faculty Senate: Shared Governance website, Committee structure and operations tools
- 2) Networks linking University-wide, College-level, and Departmental problem-solving and collaborations
- 3) ‘We are all champions’: thoughtful, open discourse at Clemson University serves our students, our disciplines, and the public

Transparency in Faculty Senate: Shared Governance website and tools

In the 2017-18 Faculty Manual published in August, many committees were moved from the Manual and placed into an online ‘Shared Governance’ portal. This was the result of an intensive effort during the 2016-17 senate term. This effort involved scrutiny of each committee listed within the Faculty Manual to determine the appropriateness of being within the manual versus being more accessible and nimble through an online system. While this sounds like a simple mechanical move,

the most important impact of this move is that it substantially improves transparency of University-wide participation and efforts supporting Clemson University activities. This transparency makes committees more efficient and communicates how we all work together (students, staff, faculty and in some cases stakeholders) to achieve goals, build excellence in specific areas with tangible outcomes, and address important short and long-term issues and projects. Since the October report, this Shared Governance website ([link below](#)) has been a gateway for improving communication and networks across the University for academic curricula, research support, communications, and infrastructure. The Shared Governance resource provides the agility and transparency that we need to succeed and promotes efficiency and engagement while facilitating access to representation, participation and ideas by our diverse community.

Update on the “Lead Senators Project”: networks linking University-wide, College-level, and Departmental problem-solving and collaborations

As described in the October 2017 report, Faculty Senate launched a ‘Lead Senators Project’ during summer 2017. The primary goal of this project is monthly pointed discussions of issues and communication networks across Colleges and Units through Lead Senators that represent each College and the Library. These discussions have brought up important items and experiences that Lead Senators often bring back to their college senators and Deans, as well as other colleagues, faculty and staff across campus. We have been reviewing the roles of Lead Senators ([link below](#)) and are amending this list together (goal is 10. April 2018). This project will then move into a new phase where, upon evaluation of effectiveness, scope and scale, professional development resources for Lead Senators and the rest of the Executive-Advisory Committee (including officers and committee chairs) will be explored. The purpose of these resources will be to provide tools for faculty participating at this level to gain the most professionally that they can from their efforts as well as help Faculty Senate’s effort to recruit and retain more diverse senators while improving effectiveness of networks linking departmental-College-University communications and problem-solving.

‘We are all champions’: thoughtful, open discourse in Academia at Clemson University serves our students, our disciplines, and the public

(adapted from the Faculty Senate President report presented in the combined General Faculty-Faculty Senate meeting held December 2017)

The word ‘championship’ was first used in 1791, before Clemson University and Land Grant Universities existed. As faculty, we sometimes need to remind ourselves and each other that what we do makes us champions.

We are champions of our disciplines, our students, and the Academy.

Among many things, we champion:

- student learning, engagement, and professional development
- disciplinary research, scholarship, participation, collaboration & communication
- local and global issues that tap into our areas of expertise
- the drive to contribute a lifetime of service to our fields, our students, and society

This is a long list, longer within each of us than could ever possibly fit on a page. How do we balance and sustain this championship?

We participate—in our classrooms, research spaces, at conference and coffee tables; We communicate—with each other, others in our fields, the University community, and society; We cultivate, and keep nimble our shared governance tools and networks; We encourage the best within ourselves and each other

Perhaps most importantly, as champions we must keep our hearts and minds agile, aware and open through civil discourse and never stop respectfully challenging each other to question, doubt, convince, think, and work together to overcome the small and large hurdles we face and address head-on the very important problems of today and the future.

Sincerely,

Resources:

Clemson University Faculty Senate website (includes new newsletter and reports):

<https://www.clemson.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-senate/index.html>

Clemson University Shared Governance website:

<https://www.clemson.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-senate/shared-governance/>

Lead Senators responsibilities (listed below Senators list):

<http://www.clemson.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-senate/documents/responsibilities.pdf>