

Note from UFC Chair Ankit Srivastava to Senate Members

I wanted to send a short note to the Senate, both as the UFC chair and as a Senate member who has listened to the Senate sessions and voted on some of the resolutions. I would have said these in the session myself but I have a meeting conflict.

First, I want to emphasize what I also said in the last UFC meeting - the RIF has been a shock and a source of grief and uncertainty to both the RIFed faculty and those who remain, myself included. The Senate was appropriately called at a singularly disruptive time at IIT, and it has been an important venue where the faculty of the university have come together and provided their opinions, just as delineated by the Handbook. The Senate has passed resolutions on a very wide range of topics. These include no confidence; shared governance and accreditation compliance; disclosure of exigency and UFC data collection on termination criteria; AAUP guidelines and severance protections for separated faculty; emeritus status and recall rights for RIFed faculty; student success and well-being; protection of academic programs and accreditation; the IO Psychology program's relocation; and data collection on financial management practices. In my opinion, it is time for the Senate to consider coming to a close and I say this with humility and as a colleague, fully understanding that the UFC has no power over the Senate. I have several reasons for saying so.

1. The UFC is in the process of reconstituting. It can take up some of the concerns raised as its committees spin up and through its governance mechanisms.
2. As the Senate passes more resolutions, there is risk of drift. While the Senate is free to and tasked with providing opinions on all matters, those opinions which drift further from the original reason for convening the Senate likely dilute the power of this body.
3. Of late, the tenor of communications that the Senate officers, Daniel and Zach, have been receiving has become increasingly abrasive. They do not deserve it. They had nothing to do with the RIF and they have gone above and beyond in convening and managing this body and in trying to provide a voice to all senate members.

The continuation of the Senate does not come without costs and these costs are not merely inconveniences. The costs are in the form of the considerable work that Daniel and Zach put in, in preparing for and running these meetings, and now in processing increasing anger and abuse directed at them. The costs potentially are also in the future credibility of the Senate.

Ankit Srivastava