Dear Colleagues,

As we begin a new academic year, I am delighted to welcome you back to the U—or to welcome you for the first time. I hope that your summer was energizing and enjoyable, and that it also set the stage for the many possibilities that a new semester always brings.

Your elected Senate officers—Jo Nel Newman, Helen Bramlett, and I—look forward to working with you to further the University’s mission to “transform lives through education, research, innovation, and service.” Our culture is one that warmly embraces diversity in all of its various forms, not least of which is the diversity of opinions. We encourage you to attend Senate meetings, which are open to all faculty, and to share your voice on issues that you feel are important.

The dates and locations of Senate meetings and the list of elected Senators for each School or College are posted on the Senate website at https://fs.miami.edu. Our first meeting is Wednesday, August 28 on the Gables Campus.

Your engagement is essential because Senate actions affect nearly all aspects of your life and general welfare at UM. The Senate serves as a legislative body through which the faculty share in institutional governance. This entails working collaboratively with President Julio Frenk, Provost Jeff Duerk, the Deans, administrators, students, and the Board of Trustees. Elected Senators and Senate committee members are involved in activities such as approving changes to the Faculty Manual and other legislation; establishing new departments, centers, degrees, majors, minors, tracks, and programs; developing and approving academic policies; analyzing data trends in admissions, rankings, compensation equity, etc; and providing input on the University budget, including faculty compensation. The Senate also conducts the periodic confidential faculty evaluations of chairs, deans, and the Provost.

Perhaps most significantly, your Senators, the Senate committees, and the Senate leadership work to ensure that the University’s rules are applied fairly and to assist individual faculty members who feel that their rights or interests are being infringed upon.

Thus, it is important to stay informed. Talk to your Senators to find out what issues are being discussed that directly concern faculty. Attend Senate meetings if you are able to do so. Volunteer for Senate committees. Reach out to any of the officers if you have questions that your Senators cannot answer. We also have a listserv for all full-time faculty and administrators to share news and to discuss matters of general interest and importance to the University. You can join this listserv by sending your email request to FacultyListAdministrator@miami.edu from your University e-mail address.

Again, welcome to the start of a new academic year! It is an honor to be part of the U’s outstanding and talented faculty and to serve in the role of Senate Chair. I look forward to seeing you over the next few months.

Cordially,

Linda L. Neider
Chair, Faculty Senate

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