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. Although the past year has been filled with unprecedented challenges due to the pandemic, we are finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel and are ready to embrace the new realities ahead. As we move forward to craft a new educational future, there is an even greater need for faculty to have a collective voice at the table of governance.

Your specific role in the governance process at the University of Miami is delineated within the Faculty Manual, which incorporates the Faculty Handbook. The Manual may be found on our website: https://fs.miami.edu/faculty-manual/index.html. The various documents within, set forth your rights and obligations and are a crucial part of your contract with the University.

Active engagement, your voice, and your wisdom is essential to the ongoing work of the Faculty Senate. The Senate is the legislative body through which the faculty shares in institutional governance. In this role, Senate members must approve changes in the Faculty Manual and other legislation, and concur in the establishment of new schools, departments, centers, institutes, programs, degrees, majors, minors and tracks. Through your Faculty Senate, and its standing committees, faculty participate in such matters as the establishment of academic policies, the standards for faculty compensation and University budgets, and the review of chairs, deans, and the Provost.

Senate committees are strongly committed to ensuring that all constituents of our community are treated with respect and dignity in an environment in which equity prevails. Thus, several Senate committees participate in the adjudication process on issues related to rank, salary, and conditions of employment; tenure decisions; and allegations of unprofessional conduct.

The faculty within each school or college elects its own senators for terms of three years. In addition to me, the current annually elected officers are JoNel Newman (First Vice Chair, from the Law School) and Helen Bramlett, (Second Vice Chair, from the Miller School of Medicine).

Our Senate culture is one that actively 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 UNIVERSITY 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 26 conducted through Zoom.

Please reach out to me or the Senate officers if you have any questions. 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 a member of the faculty at the University of Miami and to serve you in the role of Senate Chair.

Cordially,

Linda L. Neider
Chair, Faculty Senate

LLN/ll