

GENERAL FACULTY MEETING

SEPTEMBER 12, 2016

MITCHELL HALL AUDITORIUM

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM by Faculty Senate President Prasad Dhurjati.

I. Address of the President of the University of Delaware Dennis Assanis

[Video of Meeting Available Here](#)

[Audio of Meeting Available Here](#)

In his first address to the faculty, President Assanis made the following points regarding his observations of where the University of Delaware now stands and what important changes he envisions:

- In terms of the interactions of the Faculty Senate, the Administration, and the Board of Trustees, he acknowledged the development of distrust over the last few years and has as a major goal the building of and strengthening of relationships among the Faculty, Administration and Board of Trustees.
- He stressed the building of academic excellence together. He pointed out the high rating of UD in having a 6-year undergraduate graduation rate of 81%. Our number of PhD student graduated, however was lowest among the top 62 institutions evaluated and second to last in MS students graduated.
- In examining the Strategic Plan of the University, he acknowledged the ambitiousness of the plan, which had five strategic priorities, but estimated that these would require \$2 billion dollars in new spending to accomplish.
- President Assanis outlined five areas of targeted focus:
 1. He noted that we are failing low-income and first generation college students and that we need to develop new mechanisms to help these students succeed.
 2. He stressed the UD needs to build an environment of inclusive excellence through building strength in diversity. He plans to increase the diversity of

UD at all levels including faculty, administration and students, including the building of a multicultural center using an existing facility.

3. He plans to invest in our intellectual and physical capital through investments in faculty cluster-hires and expansion of the tenure-track faculty.
4. He plans the creation of a Graduate College to more effectively coordinate graduate programs and increase the effectiveness and size of UD's graduate programs.
5. He plans to strengthen interdisciplinary and global programs, doubling the percentage of international students attending UD. To help accomplish this, he plans to foster a spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship.

President Assanis again stated that a major priority of his is to increase the trust between the faculty and administration and plans to build bridges, increasing transparency at all levels, including having all Board of Trustee Meetings open to the public.

At this point, President Assanis took questions:

Question 1 (Stuart Kaufman): To focus on the priorities of the strategic plan, what will the focus be on and what will we be doing less of?

President Assanis: The best ideas will win resources and resources will be decreased for mediocrity. There will be roles at all levels to help shape this (Chairs, Deans, Provost).

Question 2 (Danilo Yanich): How do the changes in Article 3 reflect shared governance, when the administration now has the capacity to override any disagreements with the Faculty Senate?

President Assanis: Again, through the building of trust between the Board of Trustees, Administration and Faculty, the role of changes in Article 3 will not come into play.

Question 3 (Steve Hastings): Regarding the contract negotiations, the administration does not appear to be negotiating in good faith. The initial proposal was Draconian in the cutting of retirement benefits to faculty who have served the UD their whole professional lives. What do you plan to do about this?

President Assanis: Although I am not on the negotiating team, my position is that faculty who have been hired under these benefits will see all of these benefits. In the

hiring of new faculty, however, changes in the retirement benefit structure will need to be negotiated. They will be fair and competitive.

Question 4 (John Morgan): Can the President attend all Faculty Senate meetings?

President Assanis: I will try and attend all the meetings that my schedule will allow.

Question 5 (Ismat Shah): Based on the initiatives you have outlined, I do not see a savings of less than the \$2 billion in new spending. Can you tell me what your calculations were on funding your initiatives?

President Assanis: Based on my calculations, it is less, but still requires substantial investment.

There being no further questions, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM in order to proceed with the Regular Faculty Senate Meeting.