

Proposed actions, and sequence thereof, upon the death of a member of the Purdue Faculty

Drafted by Neera Jain and Joyce Main

Motivation

Communication of the passing of current Purdue faculty appears to be localized and inconsistent. Cross-college collaborations among faculty are no longer uncommon, and therefore confining communication mechanisms to individual colleges may no longer be appropriate. The Faculty Affairs Committee of the College of Engineering is proposing a set of guidelines that could be adopted university-wide to address this issue. A clear and consistent set of guidelines that are exercised university-side is particularly important and can serve as a resource.

Proposed Process

1. Family notifies deceased faculty member's supervisor (their school/department head)
2. School/Department Head speaks with family and asks the following:
 - a. Does family want to review any communication sent to all university faculty?
We propose that the Associate Provost of Faculty Affairs e-mail all faculty and announce that the individual has passed away. At the family's request, the text of the e-mail can be reviewed/edited/approved by them. For example, if the family wants to provide a link to the public obituary or information about memorial service, that is up to them.
 - b. Does family want to be involved in any celebration of life organized by the deceased faculty member's home school/department?
We propose that the home unit should organize a celebration of the individual's academic contributions (research/teaching/service) to Purdue. The unit is encouraged to coordinate the date and time with the family.
3. School/Department Head takes the following actions ***within 1 week of faculty member's passing:***
 - a. Ask their Business Office Manager to contact SPS and alert them about the passing of the individual;
Business Office Manager should ask whoever managed that faculty member's accounts to contact and notify any listed collaborators.
 - b. Contact Provost's office with draft e-mail (approved by family if requested per 2.a) to be sent to all faculty (this would make it easy for the Provost's office because the Head would have already received family's approval).
 - c. School/Department Head drafts memorial resolution and sends to their Faculty Senate representative.
4. School/Department Head takes following actions ***within 3 weeks of faculty member's passing:***
 - a. If a celebration of life is to be organized, Head identifies 1-2 faculty within their unit to organize it in coordination with the deceased faculty member's graduate students and family.
 - b. Celebration of life is advertised in Purdue Today.