

President's Message
31 October 2011

USU Colleagues,

This has been another tough month with so many important issues affecting University life, the distribution of hang tags and enforcement of new parking policies effective 17 October being foremost among them. Some decisions, such as checking of hang tags at entry to the garage, were made at the last minute and not widely communicated to the USU community, initially leading to confusion and frustration. I am aware that there are some segments of the USU community feeling especially burdened by the new parking restrictions, such as contractors supporting research laboratories and graduate students. The full extent of personal sacrifices and hardship are not yet known and need to be brought to the attention of decision-makers, planners, and managers. Please use the Faculty Senate as a mechanism to do that. The Research Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate has already taken action on behalf of the USU research community by voicing their concerns to President Rice and urging continued advocacy for reasoned approaches to parking in negotiations with NSAB that would support and sustain the robust research enterprise at USU. I feel that University leaders have sought input and been responsive to faculty concerns that have been raised. As the parking situation is fluid and continuing to evolve, the Faculty Senate leadership will remain fully engaged in discussions at many levels.

Of course, SOM curriculum reform is another matter affecting large numbers of faculty, some of whom are being asked to assume extraordinary teaching loads due to MS2 classes under the old curriculum and MS1 integrated modules under the new curriculum. Curriculum reform issues as well as other matters related to budget constraints, hiring and salary freezes and comparability continue to be discussed at Faculty Senate meetings and in respective committee meetings, to which all faculty members are invited.

I am reminded by the email message sent out by CAPT Mark Stephens on the tragic loss of LTC David Cabrera from Family Medicine in Afghanistan that all of what's happening at USU needs to be put into perspective. We need to press forward and do the best we can under some trying circumstances over which we have little or no control as we mourn the loss of one of our own at USU who volunteered to serve and made the ultimate sacrifice.