

MEMORANDUM

TO Fort Wayne Senate
FROM: Jeffrey Nowak, Executive Committee Chair
DATE: 03/20/2026
SUBJ: Policy Guidelines for Memorial Resolutions

WHEREAS, the Executive Committee is empowered by the Constitution (Section III.C.3.a.iii.) to suggest procedures related to “the efficient conduct of items of business on the [Senate] agenda”; and

WHEREAS, memorial resolutions for departed members of the university community are specifically mentioned in the Bylaws (Section I.A.3.5.5.); and

WHEREAS, these resolutions have been a regular part of Senate agendas since at least the early 1980s; and

WHEREAS, memorial resolutions are an important means by which faculty, administrators and staff can reflect on individuals who are no longer with us; and

WHEREAS, despite these facts, there appear to be no guidelines in place for composing, submitting or presenting these resolutions; and

WHEREAS, in recent years there have arisen some questions about how the procedures related to memorial resolutions should operate, but there was no handy document to consult for answers to those questions; and

WHEREAS, various iterations of the Executive Committee have intermittently considered the need for a policy document on memorial resolutions;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Senate adopts the following set of guidelines for memorial resolutions.

Guidelines for Memorial Resolutions in the Purdue Fort Wayne Senate

Overview: The death of a current or former colleague can be difficult for the individuals who knew that person, and for many decades the university Senate has provided an outlet for honoring their life: the memorial resolution. Given the emotions surrounding the passing of a colleague, it is probably wise for the Senate to have a set of dispassionate recommendations and policies in place to guide individuals who are tasked with writing and presenting memorial resolutions to the Senate. Although the Executive Committee is tasked with implementing these policies, the Committee will display maximum flexibility and discretion in doing so with the aim of supporting their colleagues during a clearly difficult time.

Eligibility: Any member of the Teaching Faculty who was employed at PFW or one of its earlier incarnations and any member of its administration who served in the Senate is automatically eligible for commemoration in a memorial resolution. Staff members who served in the Senate as representatives and those who served the Senate as Secretary or Clerk are also automatically eligible for commemoration. Other individuals associated with the university may also be remembered in a memorial resolution, but any exceptions to the above policies should be guided by the individuals' relationship to the Faculty Senate. There is no requirement that anyone be commemorated in a memorial resolution.

Resolution Contents: Memorial resolutions should be long enough to honor the person being remembered but also concise enough to encapsulate their lives and relationship to the university. These goals can probably be accomplished in roughly one single-spaced page (approximately 400 to 700 words). Writers of memorial resolutions are strongly encouraged to discuss their contents with family members and colleagues of the deceased individual in order to adequately capture their subject. The Executive Committee may also be consulted concerning questions about the contents of resolutions.

Resolution Composition: A former colleague of the deceased individual or an appropriate administrator (e.g., the current department chair) should write the memorial resolution. If that person's department is no longer in existence, then a member of its successor department or a closely related entity should take on this task. Timeliness is an important factor here as well; memorial resolutions should be prepared for presentation within six months of the individual's death if at all practicable. All memorial resolutions should be sent to the Executive Committee as soon as they are ready for inclusion in the Senate's agenda.

Resolution Presentation: The chair of the former individual's department, or someone who knew the individual well, should read the resolution on the floor of the Senate. The Executive

Committee shall provide speaking privileges for anyone who needs them. Once the reading of the memorial resolution is complete, the Presiding Officer will lead the Senate in a moment of silence dedicated to the memory of the deceased individual.

Please do not hesitate to consult with the members of the Executive Committee if there are any questions or concerns about the contents of this document.