The Chair of the Faculty Congress, Dr. Debra Arvanites, gave the following farewell address to the Senate:

Thank you for the opportunity to make a final report on the activities of the third Faculty Congress. It has been my honor and privilege to serve as Faculty Congress Chair for the past two years; and, to be honest, if I hadn’t taken an administrative position within the business school, I would have been interested in continuing as the Faculty Congress Chair.

This year, as usual, the Congress received regular reports from the Academic Policy Committee, the Committee on Faculty and the Budget Committee. Each of those committees reports out to the Senate so I will not repeat their work.

We hosted Jack Johannes in October. Dr. Johannes responded to a number of faculty questions and concerns. Topics included numbers of faculty, sabbatical procedures, summer compensation for program directors, teaching loads, Ph.D. programs, research awards, maternity leave and intellectual climate. Those in attendance appreciated the opportunity to have responses to questions of interest. The minutes from that and all Congress meetings are posted on the Faculty Congress web page.

In March, Father Dobbin attended our meeting and shared some transition thoughts with those attending. He praised the choice of Fr. Donohue to succeed him and answered questions. Also in March, a Committee began work on studying the faculty retirement package and will likely make a recommendation to the administration during the 2006-2007 academic year. The committee members are Roger Van Allen, Burke Ward, Nancy Sharts-Hopko, Gerard Jones, and Michael Hones.

Last month Steve Fugale attended our meeting to answer questions and hear concerns about the University wide laptop initiative for students. There appear to be a few bumps from the perspectives of some faculty but there also appears to be a willingness on the part of the University to hear concerns.

As I near the close of this report, I’d like to acknowledge an opportunity that I count among the top honors in my life. Because of my role as Faculty Congress Chair, I was invited to participate with a Special Committee to the Board regarding the selection of a President to succeed Fr. Dobbin. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve the University through that important work.

The final details for the year will be an organizational meeting on May 4 to formally elect new leadership and a lunch on May 15 to thank the current Congress members and welcome some new members. Fr. Donohue will join us for that lunch.

I leave you with the Faculty Congress being handed to highly capable leadership. I am pleased to announce that Lowell Gustafson has been recommended without opposition to succeed me. Lowell is experienced in governance and will do a fine job.

The Chair thanked Dr. Arvanites for her dedicated service to the Faculty Congress.