

FACULTY FOCUS

BETSY BOYD



For the first time, a College of Agriculture professor holds the top faculty leadership role in the University. Plant science professor Elizabeth “Betsy” Boyd was elected chair of the Academic Senate in May. The Academic Senate is a representative body that enables faculty, staff, and students, through shared governance, to participate and provide recommendations on the University’s direction.

What makes Boyd’s term as Academic Senate Chair even more unique is that, at 37 years old, she became one of the youngest senate chairs in campus history. Boyd was first elected to represent the College of Agriculture on the Academic Senate in 2010 and became Chair of its Educational Policies and Procedures Committee (EPPC) three years later. In that role, she navigated some challenging issues, including the development of a comprehensive Executive Memorandum on Academic Program Discontinuation.

“That was a difficult time for the faculty, students, and administrators who were effected, and tensions were high. I had some amazingly helpful mentors, and my goal was to remain impartial and allow all voices to be heard.”

Boyd’s skill in navigating tough issues made her a clear successor when former chair Paula Selvester’s term ended in May 2015.

“I believe strongly in the model of shared governance. It is an integral component to fulfilling the ultimate mission of the University, which is to serve our students and community,” Boyd said. “I’d like to see staff and students have more of a role in the process, too. We have some tough issues ahead of us this year, but I’m really excited about the opportunity to help the stakeholders in our campus community have a voice, to let them know their voice is heard, and that it is essential to our campus.”

Boyd is trained as an entomologist and weed scientist. She also is a farmer and a licensed pest control advisor. She teaches economic entomology, weed science, plant protection materials, and integrated pest management. ■