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Proposed changes to Article IV of the Faculty Handbook

Submitted by Fred Mynard

1/29/2013

Motion:

We move that the following changes to Article IV of the faculty Handbook be adopted:

The last sentence “The chair shall be a senator elected by the voting members of the committee.” shall be deleted in sections 10, 13, 16, 26, 30.

The last sentence “The committee shall be chaired by the senator appointed by the Senate Executive Committee.” shall be deleted in sections 20, 22, 24, 28.

SECTION 2 shall now read as follows:

The Elections Committee shall be chaired by the Senate Librarian. All other standing committees (The Graduate, Undergraduate, Academic Standards, Faculty Welfare, Faculty Development, Research, Service, Library, General Education and Core Curriculum Committees) are chaired by a member elected by the voting members of the committee for a renewable one-year term. Ad-hoc committee chairs shall be appointed by the Senate Executive Committee.

Rationale:

The current wording of Section 2 is as follows (Article IV starts page 38):
Both standing and ad hoc committees shall be chaired by senators. The Faculty Development, Research, and Service Committees and the Library Committee shall be chaired by the senator appointed by the Senate executive Committee. The Election Committee shall be chaired by the Senate Librarian. The Graduate, Undergraduate, Academic Standards, and Faculty Welfare Committees shall be chaired by a senator on the committee elected by the voting members of the committee.

Ad-hoc committee chairs shall be appointed by the Senate Executive Committee

We propose to remove the requirement that standing committees be chaired by a senator, in order to let committee members elect their chair, regardless of his/her status relative to the senate. In recent years, it has often proved difficult to find a senator willing to chair a standing committee. At times a member of the committee who is not part of the senate would have been willing to serve.

Once this requirement is lifted, it is only logical that the committees whose chairs are currently appointed by the SEC also elect their chairs from now on.

This motion is submitted on behalf of the Senate Executive Committee.

Response:

2/20/2013: the faculty senate approved this motion unanimously, after the friendly amendment changing "are chaired by a member elected by the voting members of the committee" into "are chaired by a voting member elected by the voting members of the committee"

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Goran Lesaja (COSM) read the motion (see link above) and moved its approval. Its central import is to have members of all Senate standing committees elect their chairs. The rationales are to have better shared governance via chairs the committee members consider best for the job rather than someone appointed whose credentials might be little more than being a Senator.

Maggie LaMontagne (COE) asked whether elected chairs who are not
Senators will be required to come to Senate meetings in order to report. Lesaja said, “Exactly.”

Marc Cyr (CLASS) noted that a number of years ago, the SEC realized that there was a loophole in the election rules for some of the committees: The framers of the Senate bylaws had wanted the chairs of large committees to be members appointed by the SEC, but the rule was worded so that any Senator, whether in a Faculty seat or a Senate seat, could be elected. The SEC left the loophole there because it opened up the pool of people eligible. He supported this motion because it too opens up that pool.

Janice Steirn (CLASS) also supported the motion largely for that reason. She had been appointed chair of a committee about whose work she knew nothing, while others on the committee were both better qualified and more willing to serve in that position.

Rob Yarbrough (COSM) asked if this would allow the election of a non-voting member to chair.

(Secretary’s Note: The tape is mostly inaudible at this point, but my notes indicate that non-voting members are ineligible. Moderator Mynard asked Parliamentarian Bob Cook for comments.) Cook noted further needed changes to allow non-Senatorial faculty committee members to be elected chair. He said these changes could be made at the next Senate meeting if the motion now on the floor were approved.

The motion was Approved.