

3-21-2012

Resolution 20120321

Faculty Senate

Resolutions

Resolution 20120321: Opposing the CAC's Request to Name Members to University Committees

Faculty Senate Executive Board

Whereas the College Advisory Council of the College of Arts and Science has introduced a proposal to the AAUP Bargaining Council to change the way faculty are appointed to some university committees. The proposal asks that whenever a representative to a university committee is to be appointed to a position reserved for a particular college that the faculty council of the respective college make that appointment rather than the Senate. (The term "college" will refer to the five colleges as well as the library for the rest of this resolution.)

Whereas for more than thirty years the Faculty Council/Senate has been contractually mandated to appoint faculty members to all university committees unless otherwise expressly noted by the Contract, and

Whereas at several times during those years the administration has claimed that they received "input" from committees because they included faculty members, though those members were not named by the Senate, resulting in grievances filed through the AAUP, and

Whereas the need for such grievances now rarely arise because the Senate president regularly receives requests for the creation of committees and for appointments to committees from all levels of the administration, and

Whereas on some committees positions are reserved for faculty from particular colleges not so the appointees can "represent" their college, but rather to ensure a breadth of experience and knowledge on those committees, and

Whereas allowing the college councils to approve university committee members rather than the Senate would have several deleterious effects including:

- A weakened Senate: Lessening the power of the Senate by weakening the strength and value of the Senate in the eyes of the administration.
- An increased number of grievances: The administration would then need to contact six different representative bodies to obtain committee appointments, greatly increasing the probability of miscommunication leading to possible grievances.
- A less informed appointment process: Senate members are better acquainted than their college council colleagues with the workings of university committees because they regularly receive reports from them. This familiarity informs the Senate's votes as to which committee candidates would best serve on behalf of the faculty on the committees. The proposed change would yield a less informed appointment process.
- Less cross-college interaction: When the Senate is discussing candidates for committee positions it is very often the case that senators from departments or colleges other than the candidates' will speak on behalf of the candidates. Senators may have served on a committee with a candidate, or have developed a program or co-taught a course with

them. This knowledge is particularly valuable in placing someone on a university level committee where the candidate will have to represent *all* faculty, not just those of their college. This cross-college knowledge would be lost if appointments were made by the college councils.

- Duplication of effort: The responsibility of determining which committee positions are open, and of advertising and making assignments to those positions is currently centralized in the Senate. This results in a significant amount of work (*many* hours) that would now be duplicated across every college.

Whereas the CAC proposal presupposes two misconceptions as its basis:

1. 1) It assumes that committee members act to support or advocate for their own college over the needs of other colleges. Our experience has been that in every case the faculty representatives have been primarily interested in advocating for the *whole* faculty and our students and not for the interests of their own colleges. The benefit of multi-college membership on a committee is the diversity of viewpoints rather than somehow ensuring that resources are divided equitably among the colleges.
2. 2) It assumes that senators, when making appointments to positions reserved for colleges other than their own are not working for what is best for those other colleges. On the contrary, in all votes senators aim to choose the candidate they think will best represent the whole faculty, in the context of that candidate's background.

Therefore be it resolved that the Faculty Senate calls upon the AAUP Bargaining Council not to adopt the CAC proposal. Moreover the Senate strongly encourages the college councils to nominate candidates for any committee position keeping in mind that such an endorsement would significantly improve a candidate's election prospects within the Senate.