

Governance Council

Thursday, April 28, 2011

10:30 PM

UNH 105

Susanna Fessler, Chair

Minutes

Present: Liang Chu, Nicholas Fahrenkopf, Susanna Fessler, Reed Hoyt, Danielle Leonard, John Pipkin, Donna Scanlon, John Schmidt, Joette Stefl-Mabry, Daniel White

The meeting convened at 10:32 am.

CHAIR'S REPORT BY SUSANNA FESSLER

Chair Fessler reported that the at-large elections were completed and the new senators have been added to the council rosters. There have been other updates to the rosters to correct spelling errors and for reassignments to accommodate preferences when possible. The information will be presented to the Senate at its May 9 meeting for approval. During the weeks of May 2 and 9, the councils will meet to elect their chairs. After that point, the 2011-12 chairs, in coordination with the Senate Secretary, will be responsible for making potential changes in their rosters, pending Senate approval in September. Chair Fessler restated her request for volunteers to assist with the council organizational meetings and said that if someone besides herself was in charge of a meeting, she would provide instructions for facilitating the meetings.

Chair Fessler informed GOV that electronic voting has raised some questions about how the results are reported, which currently shows the number of votes cast by the categories of eligible voters. The Chair received a comment from an individual who believed the results should be reported as a total number instead of separate categories which are not be relevant to the final vote. GOV discussed this and thought knowing the number of votes cast by each group might be useful information for GOV but probably should not be reported when the results are sent to the voting faculty. The Chair said she has also considered how electronic voting has changed the process and has not found any language that addresses it in *Robert Rules of Order*. She said GOV may want to consider articulating the parameters for electronic voting and adding language to the Charter next year.

The last SEC meeting is scheduled for May 2 and the last Senate meeting is the following Monday on May 9. This results in missing the ten day buffer for forwarding valid legislation to the Senate as required by the Charter. Chair Fessler said that the SEC had discussed the situation by e-mail, and concluded that the SEC will go ahead and meet on May 2 but that a 2/3 majority vote from the Senate will be required on 5/9 to introduce each agenda item to the Senate. Chair Fessler said if the 2/3 is not obtained, then the Senate Chair has the authority to call another session of the Senate. This could make it difficult to obtain a quorum after commencement which would push legislation back until

September. The Chair said in developing the meeting schedule for next year, steps will be taken to avoid such an incident.

GOV has one more meeting scheduled for May 12. The Chair will decide over the next few weeks if there will be sufficient need to meet.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary Leonard informed GOV that the certification process was difficult due to illness during that time and she was afraid there might be some misunderstandings in the delay. She described the certification process which took about six hours to complete but felt it would take less time next year.

The Secretary has been working on the SEC and Senate meeting schedule for next year to ensure that the ten day period that Chair Fessler had cited in her report would not present a problem next year. A draft of the schedule will go out to the Senate officers in the near future.

Secretary Leonard said the changes in the council rosters will be presented to the Senate, most likely after the councils elect their chairs. The selection of chairs does not need to be approved by the Senate but changes in council memberships will need Senate approval. Senator White asked if it would be more logical to have the senate give full approval of the councils after all of the changes have been made. Secretary Leonard responded that the Senate has already been notified that changes would occur after the at large election. Council changes are likely to come up at nearly every Senate meeting since changes occur frequently. Senator White said this a crucial period and in some instances a member has been removed from a council, but if they are added after the elections, their right to run for chair has been eliminated. Secretary Leonard said the possibility exists that no one from the current membership is elected chair and someone could be elected outside of that council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of April 14 were approved with minor changes.

OLD BUSINESS:

Academic Units:¹

Chair Fessler referred to the email discussions concerning the topic and said it would be useful to have a definition of a unit but she was not sanguine about finding it easily. The litmus test is in populating CPCA which has to have an even spread across all disciplines. She discussed a suggestion that would limit one person from each area within CAS (Natural Science, Social Science, Humanities/Arts), plus limit councils to one person from all other schools. As an example, having one person from the arts on CPCA does not work for that council. All of the professional schools are either natural or social

¹ Appended to these minutes are two documents on council seat distribution circulated by e-mail on this topic, one by the Chair and one by N. Fahrenkopf.

sciences and the Humanities would be underrepresented. Chair Fessler opened the topic for discussion.

Senator Schmidt said he believed the term “unit” was used to honor an area rather than define it. He said we could have a resolution to give it definition for purposes of populating councils. But in a university that is morphing, the term is a moving target and seems impossible to define. He said a resolution could be developed that would maintain a sense of fairness in terms of the councils.

Senator White said he had no desire to provide over representation for any given area but the dilemma started this year when there happened to be more council chairs from CNSE than anyone expected. He said people in CNSE recognize the importance of Senate service to develop relationships. He pointed out that only 47% of those from CNSE who signed on to participate, eight in total, were placed on a council. There are seats to be filled but he felt CNSE was being pushed aside. Chair Fessler pointed out that subcommittees still need to be populated so there will be other service opportunities available. Senator Pipkin referred to other opportunities for serving such as running conference and internship program and serving on departmental committees.

GOV Members discussed some of the complexities in defining units. Senator Stefl-Mabry discussed her area in College of Computing and Information which has two distinct populations in Computer Science and Information Studies. She felt these would fall into the area of social science but wasn't sure that CCI would agree with that definition. Senator White discussed the breakdown at the Nano College which has three hard science units, student affairs and nanoeconomics. He believed that people from these areas could serve together on the same council. He also pointed to the number of professional staff not represented by a school or college, about 40% of the voting faculty, and they need to be defined as well. It was suggested that for Senate purposes, a memorandum might be issued as a practical matter that the Senate will proceed as if departments are units.

Chair Fessler suggested that formalizing the document she compiled defining the methodology used in populating the councils might be helpful.² She said her document treated each school as a unit with the exception of CAS. Secretary Leonard also pointed out that the methodology placed senators first.

Senator White said that left a lot of slots open and people were removed from councils who should have served their second year, the logic being that the first year a member is learning what's going on and the 2nd year they have a better understanding of how the council functions. He said this makes the Senate run less efficiently by not allowing people to continue and has left some people very dissatisfied that they have not been allowed to continue. He thought the discussion should be continued on the Senate floor so that people know their service on a council next year will not continue. Secretary Leonard said she believed Chair Fessler had presented fairly and accurately at the last Senate meeting that people would be bumped and the Senate realized this when they voted. Chair Fessler said that she anticipated that everyone who is starting in 2011-12 can expect to continue 2012-13. Senator White said as a matter of courtesy those who did not know they would get bumped need to be informed and that the process was a difficult one. GOV members agreed that people who were expecting to continue should be informed that they won't but also inform them they can participate on sub-committees.

² That document is also appended to these minutes. It was not available at the GOV meeting, but might be helpful in understanding the discussion above.

GOV continued with a discussion concerning part-time senators who are not considered voting faculty but have voting rights at Senate meetings. GOV agreed they should have the right to vote but it needs clarification in the Charter. Chair Fessler said this would be a discussion to carry over to next year and suggested some of the potential changes to the Charter be bundled since they can take an extra four weeks from the time they are introduced to the time they are voted on.

Chair Fessler made an addendum to the Chairs report. She said a shared drive has been set up to maintain Senate documents in a central location so they can be kept up to date and eliminate duplicates of documents as well.

Senator White thanked everyone who was able to attend and said he appreciated the conversation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:44 am.

Respectfully submitted by
Gail Cameron, Recorder

Methodology of Senate Council and Standing Committee placement (in order):

1. All **Senators** get placed first, if at all possible.
 - a. Placement follows first, second, and third choice (as possible)
 - b. If no preference was stated, the default preference for continuing senators is what they did last year
 - c. If new senators do not state a preference, they get what they get
 - d. Within those parameters, rank is followed (top to bottom); in other words, full professors are placed first, assoc. professors second, etc.
 - e. No two senators from the same unit are on the same council
 - f. Continuing requests (i.e., people who wanted to continue on the same Council as in 2010-11) were prioritized UNLESS they violated any of the composition rules (such as mentioned above)
2. Full professors and librarians who are NOT senators are placed
 - a. Placement follows first, second, and third choice (as possible)
 - b. No two people from the same unit are on the same council
 - c. Continuing requests (i.e., people who wanted to continue on the same Council as in 2010-11) were prioritized UNLESS they violated any of the composition rules (such as mentioned above)
3. Associate Professors and librarians who are NOT senators are placed
 - a. Placement follows first, second, and third choice (as possible)
 - b. No two people from the same unit are on the same council
 - c. Continuing requests (i.e., people who wanted to continue on the same Council as in 2010-11) were prioritized UNLESS they violated any of the composition rules (such as mentioned above)
4. Assistant Professors and librarians who are NOT senators are placed
 - a. Placement follows first, second, and third choice (as possible)
 - b. No two people from the same unit are on the same council
 - c. Continuing requests (i.e., people who wanted to continue on the same Council as in 2010-11) were prioritized UNLESS they violated any of the composition rules (such as mentioned above)
5. Professional Faculty who are NOT senators are placed
 - a. Placement follows first, second, and third choice (as possible)
 - b. No two people from the same unit are on the same council
 - c. Continuing requests (i.e., people who wanted to continue on the same Council as in 2010-11) were prioritized UNLESS they violated any of the composition rules (such as mentioned above)

Notes:

- Some people asked for placements that were impossible. For example, one Assistant Professor had CERS as a first choice. In this case, the first choice was ignored.

- Some councils' composition requires a spread from across disciplines; sometimes this requirement overrode other priorities. CPCA and GOV are good examples.
- CAFFECOR's chair must be a continuing member, therefore it is important to have more than one continuing member on that committee. This consideration overrode other priorities.
- Cells that are shaded indicate positions that can be filled, but do not necessarily need to be filled
- Composition for each council is input in the right-hand cell as a comment (to the right of each council name)

UAlbany Senate 2011-12 (compiled by S. Fessler)						
School	# Voting Faculty	Senators	Percentage of the Senate	Council Members	Percentage of the Councils	Ratio
CAS	402	21	47.7%	48	50.0%	1.05
ROCK	73	4	9.1%	4	4.2%	0.46
CNSE	64	3	6.8%	11	11.5%	1.68
SOE	62	3	6.8%	4	4.2%	0.61
LIB	57	3	6.8%	9	9.4%	1.38
SOB	56	3	6.8%	5	5.2%	0.76
SPH	53	3	6.8%	6	6.3%	0.92
SSW	30	2	4.5%	3	3.1%	0.69
CCI	28	1	2.3%	3	3.1%	1.38
SCJ	19	1	2.3%	3	3.1%	1.38
TOTAL	844	44		96		
UAlbany Senate 2010-11						
CAS		22	50.0%	50	45%	0.91
ROCK		3	6.8%	3	3%	0.40
CNSE		3	6.8%	22	20%	2.93
SOE		3	6.8%	5	5%	0.67
LIB		3	6.8%	11	10%	1.47
SOB		3	6.8%	3	3%	0.40
SPH		3	6.8%	6	5%	0.80
SSW		2	4.5%	4	4%	0.80
CCI		1	2.3%	3	3%	1.20
SCJ		1	2.3%	3	3%	1.20
Total		44		110		