

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
2020-2021 Faculty Governance Committee

MINUTES OF MEETING DATE: Apr. 28, 2021 (final meeting of 2020–21)

PRESIDING: Jeff Popke

REGULAR MEMBERS (X IN ATTENDANCE):

Stacey Altman X, Cynthia Deale X, Michael Duffy X, Edwin Gomez X,
Jay Newhard X, Jeff Popke X, Anne Ticknor X, David Wilson-Okamura X

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS (X IN ATTENDANCE):

Crystal Chambers, Rep. of Chancellor X; Grant Hayes, Acting Provost / VCAA X;
Purificación Martínez, Chair of the Faculty X; Aundrea Oliver, Rep of Faculty Senate
X; Mark Stacy, VCHS ; Mike Van Scott, Interim VCREDE

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Rachel Baker; Linda Ingalls for Office of the Provost; Wendy Sergeant, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Personnel and Resource Administration

I. Call to Order, 3:02 pm

II. Minutes

The minutes of Apr. 14, 2021 were approved.

III. Continuing Business

Popke reported that the faculty senate has approved the committee's recommendations on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and fixed-term (FT) faculty members in the Faculty Manual (FM), Part VIII.

Prior to the meeting, the by-laws subcommittee (Duffy, Martínez, Popke, Ticknor) circulated a package of proposed changes to the faculty constitution and by-laws.

An accompanying document summarized the key changes as follows:

Constitution

Article II, Section 1 – New definition of General Faculty (compare current Section II)

Article II, Section 2 – New distinction between General Faculty and Voting General Faculty

Article II, Section 4 – New definition of quorum (compare Section II)

Article III, Section 3 – Membership increased (currently 52 – 58)

Article III, Section 3 – Apportionment greatly simplified (compare Section VI)

Article III, Section 4 – Number of alternates up to the units (currently equal to delegation)

Article III, Section 5 – Method of election devolved to the units (compare Section VI and VII)

Article III, Section 6 – Deadline for elections moved to March (currently February)

Article III, Sections 7 and 8 – Term limits and partial terms clarified

Article III, Section 10 – VC Student Affairs added as ex-officio

Article VII, Section 5 – New section on electronic meetings

By-Laws

There has been significant reorganization of the By-Laws to improve the logical flow

Article X, Sections 2 and 3 – Moved from Constitution to By-Laws (compare Sections XII and XIII of Constitution)

Article XI, Section 1 – Clarification of committee types (Compare Section IV of current By-laws)

Article XI, Section 7 – New section

Popke provided background: before her retirement as faculty secretary, Lori Lee compiled a list of potential issues and redundancies. While drafting improvements, the subcommittee compared our procedures with those of our peer institutions and other UNC schools.

CONSTITUTION

Definition of the general faculty and voting faculty

Chambers suggested double-checking the new definition against the recently-amended list of faculty titles in FM, Part VIII.

Wilson-Okamura: the definition of general faculty should be broad, because academic freedom depends on belonging to that group; a narrower definition is appropriate for voting faculty.

Responding to a query from Wilson-Okamura, Sergeant explained that “permanent employee,” used in the definition of voting faculty, refers to benefit and payment status, and does not exclude fixed-term faculty members.

Definition of faculty quorum

Popke explained: the current definition of quorum for the faculty is a simple majority. At present, this would require assembling ~~around~~ [1,019]2,500 faculty members. [The correct number, from the current ECU Fact Book, was supplied by Van Scott after the meeting.]

The new definition merely requires reasonable advance notice, or 125 members with short notice.

Organization of faculty senate

Chambers queried the term “media” as a description of the senate’s role in collaborating with the administration.

Popke suggested “fora” instead.

Size of the faculty senate

Popke commentd: the size of the senate has not kept up with the size of the faculty, although ECU’s senate is already one of the largest in the system.

Method of apportioning senators to units

Popke: the current formula is complicated, with several provisos; under this proposal, the formula would be a simple ratio, based on the number of faculty members in a unit.

Chambers noted: Brody School of Medicine (BSOM) has more faculty members than Harriot College of Arts and Sciences (HCAS), which would give it more senators.

Popke: however, there is a cap of 15% for any one electoral unit.

Oliver added: BSOM has trouble filling the senate seats it already has.

Wilson-Okamura suggested, to general approval: we should specify that each unit will get at least one senator (which the existing formula guarantees).

Method of electing senators and alternates

Popke: the existing rules are cumbersome and not uniformly observed; instead, we propose leaving both procedures for units to decide. The senate will propose a model, which units can adopt as-is; or units can propose their own procedures, which will have to be approved by a senate committee.

Wilson-Okamura added: the existing rules are especially taxing in large departments.

Term limits

Popke explained: the proposal streamlines the definition of term limits and specifies term limit for replacements.

Ex officio membership

Popke noted: in order to coordinate the senate’s work with Student Affairs, this proposal adds the vice-chancellor for student affairs to the list of ex officio senate members.

Popke asked: currently the provost appoints one academic dean to be an ex officio member of the faculty senate; should the chancellor make this appointment instead?

Hayes, Chambers, Sergeant argued against this proposal: the provost works more closely with the deans.

Ingalls observed: a chancellor might be more likely to appoint a health sciences dean, but there is nothing to prevent a provost from doing the same. Or the academic council could make the appointment.

Altman commented: health sciences chairs have sometimes been frustrated by lack of access to the provost.

The committee decided to leave this appointment in the hands of the provost.

Functions of the faculty senate

Chambers queried the sentence “In exercising its function the Faculty Senate shall establish whatever procedures are necessary.”

Wilson-Okamura defended the usefulness of such a broad statement. It saves verbiage here, and allows for circumstances we can’t foresee.

“Acts or decisions of the Faculty Senate shall be considered approved unless vetoed within thirty days of the action by the Chancellor...or unless the Chancellor notifies the Chair of the Faculty in writing that the proposal has been forwarded to the Board of Trustees or to the Board of Governors.”

Popke noted: this isn’t new. In practice, there’s no way to enforce it, but the principle is worth stating.

Ingalls asked: should we specify thirty *working* days?

Popke, Wilson-Okamura, Duffy opined in favor of thirty *calendar* days, as being approximately one month.

Officers

Chambers, who has served as vice-chair of the faculty, observed: new officers have a lot to learn in a short time. Do we want to stagger elections so that the whole cabinet doesn’t change at once?

Popke didn’t address the suggestion directly, but noted that most other UNC schools elect their faculty chair for a term of two years. Some schools also have a chair-elect position to ease the transition.

Popke, Martínez, and Wilson-Okamura: in practice, most of our chairs *do* serve for two years. Occasionally, when we

needed a change sooner, our system allows for that, without the trauma of a recall.

Sergeant asked: should we specify “permanent” as a qualification for officers? (Cf. the discussion of general and voting faculty earlier.) It’s possible to be full-time but not “permanent.”

Chambers: FT faculty members are excluded from serving as chair or vice-chair, but not secretary.

BY-LAWS

Operation of the Faculty Senate

Popke: the existing by-laws specify the agenda procedure in detail; instead, we propose leaving the specifics to the senate’s agenda committee.

Committees

Popke clarified that the Committee on Committees merely recommends creation and dissolution of committees; only the senate can actually make and dissolve them.

Martínez reported that the trustees have recently approved the appellate committee structure that we recommended two years ago. Chambers added: we are still waiting on legal review.

Chambers remarked: there don’t seem to be term limits for the agenda committee and committee on committees. Should there be?

Wilson-Okamura argued in favor of limits: the same logic that applies to other senate committees applies here as well. We need continuity and institutional memory, but turnover is healthy too.

Martínez suggested, to general approval, limiting terms on these two committees to six consecutive years. (Membership on other senate committees is limited to two consecutive terms of three years each.)

Wilson-Okamura suggested, to general approval, that annual committee reports should “outline” rather than “detail” committee activities.

Wilson-Okamura moved to accept the subcommittee’s recommendations with the changes suggested above. Carried.

Changes to the constitution will go to the general faculty for approval at convocation in August.

Duffy volunteered to draft the committee’s annual report.

Items suggested for new business next year.

Chambers: we need to revisit the recruitment effect of making all new library hires fixed-term.

Chambers: do we need a policy for bullying, harassment of non-protected classes?

Wilson-Okamura: currently, the FM places a hard limit on service as a fraction of faculty members' annual evaluation. The university would benefit from a policy that more closely matches duties with aptitudes, especially post-tenure.

Popke invited members to email Duffy with additional items, which will go in the committee's annual report.

The committee thanked outgoing member Popke for his leadership as chair during the past two years, and for personally drafting many of the committee's recommendations.

IV. Adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted, David Wilson-Okamura