

FGCU Faculty Senate By-Laws
Proposed Revisions
Leadership Team 2/26/08

The Senate Leadership Team was charged by the entire Faculty Senate on February 15, to review the proposals from the Ad Hoc Team and to make specific recommendations on the proposed By-Laws Amendments. Members of the Leadership Team met on February 26 to review the proposals and the feedback from the Senate and Academic units.

The Leadership Team endorses the following seven changes:

- I. Senate Membership
- II. Mission and Vision
- III. Leadership Replacement
- IV. Faculty Eligibility
- V. Standing Team Facilitator Duties
- VI. Discussion Time Limits
- VII. Faculty Affairs Team

In addition, we are putting one proposal forward that we could not reach consensus on, but felt it was appropriate for the Senate as a whole to vote on it.

- VIII. Leadership Transition

Finally, we agreed to not endorse the following proposed amendments that came forward from the committee:

- Extending Term of Senate Membership
- Senate Officers automatically as Senate Members
- Standing Team Facilitator Term Limit

Parliamentary procedure allows us to put the above eight proposed changes forward from the Leadership Team. We are recommending that these proposals be considered as changes to be voted for or against, requiring 60 % of the membership to vote affirmatively, for a change to the By-Laws to be accepted. We are not recommending that anyone consider motions to amend these proposals at this time. After this much debate, our feeling is that the Senate should vote them up or down as they are.

If any Senator wishes to vote on one of the three proposed amendments that are not put forward by the Leadership Team, that will require a motion and second from the floor.

I. Senate Membership Section 3.02

Background:

Concerns were raised in 2006 that our current formula for determining Senate representation (20% of faculty) would result in a Faculty Senate that was too large to be effective. An ad-hoc team to investigate the issue was formed on September 29, 2006. They reported their review of other SUS Faculty Senate formulas on October 13, 2006. The discussion at that meeting guided the committee toward developing alternative formulas for review. These proposals were presented at the February 2, 2007 Senate Meeting, again in the Fall, and on February 1 and 15. The results of the straw poll indicated a preference for the mixed fixed and proportional model.

Current By-Laws: **Section 3.02 Membership**

“(a) Membership in the Faculty Senate is allocated proportionately to the academic units each Spring, with representatives numbering 20% of the total full-time faculty in the unit as of April 1, rounded to the next highest whole number. New faculty positions beginning the next Fall are counted, if a letter of offer has been accepted by April 1. If, after April 1 and before the beginning of next academic year, a unit has a change of faculty which would alter representation, whether through hiring, resignations, transfers, or retirements, the unit will make a motion at the first Fall Faculty Senate meeting to hold an additional election to adjust representation.”

and

“(c) If the Spring reapportionment causes a unit to increase its membership in the Senate, an election will be held that Spring for the new seat as part of the regular election process; if the Spring reapportionment causes a unit to decrease its membership in the Senate, the appropriate number of expiring Senate seats will not be filled in that election cycle.”

Proposed change: change the entire section to read:

“(a) Membership of the Faculty Senate is allocated as follows:

(i) Each Academic Unit is allocated a minimum of two Senators

(ii) Additional membership will be allocated as follows:

i. On April 1, the total number of full-time faculty employed at the university, and the number of eligible faculty in each academic unit will be determined by the Senate Leadership Team. New faculty positions beginning the next Fall are counted, if a letter of offer has been accepted by April 1.

ii. The number of additional Senators per unit is determined by the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of full-time faculty in the unit}}{\text{Number of full-time faculty at the University}} \quad \times \quad 23$$

iii. The result of the formula is rounded off to the nearest whole number.”

Delete section 3.02(c) and re-letter the remaining subsections

Include the stipulations:

**“These changes are to go into effect April 1 of 2008.”; and
“The procedure for adjusting Senate Membership is left for each
individual unit to determine.”**

Rationale: This proposal considers the results of the straw poll and the feedback to the Leadership Team from individual units. It will result in a Senate of approximately 35 with 1/3 fixed and the other 2/3 proportional. The fixed value of 23 was based on a target of 35, minus the 12 Senators resulting from an allocation of 2 per unit. It allows for growth, as we add more units the ratio of fixed to proportional will shift slightly. It creates a smaller Senate, which the Leadership Team felt might result in better representation for the units.

II. Mission and Vision

Current By-Laws:

Philosophy Statement

Whereas a university's foundation is its faculty, the faculty governance process and structure at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) are grounded in and dedicated to the principles, concepts, and objectives of the university mission. A system of collegial faculty self-governance is necessary to ensure that the rights of faculty are supported and that the responsibilities of faculty in fulfilling the mission of the university are met. Therefore, the Faculty Senate engages in collegial dialog with the President of the Institution, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and others in positions of administrative leadership. Faculty governance at FGCU fosters effective and open communication, instills academic integrity, ensures academic quality, and emphasizes the rights and shared responsibilities of constituents including students, staff, community, faculty, and administration. Fairness, mutual respect, continuous improvement, an informed faculty, and collegial decision-making are the hallmarks of the governance structure.

Purpose

Faculty governance at Florida Gulf Coast University provides a structure and process for the faculty to promote a supportive and quality-oriented learning environment for students, staff, community, faculty, and administration, in furtherance of the mission and guiding principles of the university. The faculty governance structure facilitates faculty input to the complementary administrative units of the FGCU organizational structure. The Faculty Senate is an autonomous body representing the collective opinion of the faculty of the university to the administration and to the community. The faculty governance system at FGCU:

- *defines and promotes the rights and responsibilities of faculty with respect to scholarly activity, mutual respect and tolerance, collegiality, and equity across the academic units of the institution;*
- *provides a process for recommending university policies concerning student, staff, community, faculty, campus, and administrative affairs;*
- *vigorously protects and promotes academic freedom;*
- *coordinates faculty representation on university-wide committees and task forces;*
- *creates and maintains a flexible, collegial, and integrated structure;*
- *promotes the equitable economic welfare of the faculty; and*
- *provides a process for ensuring quality in academic programs.*

The faculty recognizes that as the University develops, the governance structure will evolve, striving for continuous improvement, to reflect and sustain a dynamic learning environment. The governance document should be reviewed annually and updated as needed.

Proposed changes:

Philosophy

*Whereas a university's foundation is its faculty, faculty governance process and structure for Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) are dedicated to the principles, concepts, and objectives of the University mission. A system of collegial faculty self-governance ensures the rights of faculty are supported and faculty responsibilities in fulfilling the mission of the university are properly executed. Therefore, the Faculty Senate engages in collegial dialog with the President of the University, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and others in positions of administrative leadership. **Collaborative and shared leadership among all university constituents is critical to creating a campus environment conducive to student achievement.** Fairness, mutual respect, continuous improvement, an informed faculty, and collegial decision-making are the hallmarks of the governance structure.*

Mission

Faculty governance at FGCU fosters effective and open communication, instills academic integrity, ensures academic quality, and emphasizes the rights and shared responsibilities of constituents including students, staff, community, faculty, and administration; and so, the Faculty Senate declares, without reservation, that all university employees ought continually to offer their support to promote this mission. An efficiently managed faculty governance process and structure is integral to institutional success and every effort must be made to secure full and fair expression within the governance structure and processes, for all constituents.

Guiding Principles

*Faculty governance at FGCU provides a structure and process for the faculty to promote a supportive and quality-oriented learning environment for students, staff, community, faculty, and administration, in furtherance of the mission and guiding principles of the university. **This process requires coordinating faculty representation on university-wide committees and task forces to provide input and oversight in faculty affairs and recommendations concerning student, staff, campus, community, and administrative affairs. The faculty governance structure should enhance representation for all faculty members in the governance of the University. The Faculty Senate is an autonomous body representing the collective opinion of the faculty of the university to the administration and community. Its governance system ought to encourage transparency and reasoned discourse. To accomplish these principles the Faculty Senate shall authorize inquiry into and propose policy relevant to its philosophy, mission and purpose.***

The Faculty Senate promotes the rights and responsibilities of faculty with respect to:

- **teaching and learning;**
- **research and scholarly activity;**
- **service to our local, regional, national, and global communities; and**
- **academic freedom**

III. Leadership Replacement Section 3.03

Background: The Leadership Team noted that we do not have a process for replacing officers who can not complete their term.

Proposed change:

“(a) Each Spring, the Senate elects a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Parliamentarian for one-year terms which begin the following Fall semester. **If any officer is unable to fulfill his or her term, a new election process must be scheduled for the next Senate Meeting, following the procedures in 3.03 (f). ...**”

IV. Faculty Eligibility Section 3.02

Background:

Some experience at FGCU might be considered a prerequisite to election as a Senator. Currently there is no requirement, so faculty in their first semester might be elected.

Proposed change: addition of a new subsection (b) to Section 3.02 and re-lettering the other subsections.

“(b) **To be eligible for Senate membership, a faculty member must have completed two semesters of employment at FGCU before beginning to serve their term as a Senator. This restriction does not apply to Alternate Senators (Section 3.02 (f)).**”

V. Standing Team Facilitator Duties Section 4.01(h)

Background: The Leadership Team discussed the need for Team Facilitators to schedule meetings.

Current By-Laws:

“Section 4.01 General Principles

(h) Each standing team elects a facilitator to lead the work of the team by calling team meetings, developing agendas, and assisting the team’s work in other appropriate areas. The facilitator serves as a member of the Leadership Team. No faculty member may concurrently serve as the facilitator of more than one standing team.”

Proposed change

“(h) Each standing team elects a facilitator to lead the work of the team by calling team meetings, developing agendas, and assisting the team’s work in other appropriate areas. **The facilitator must schedule at least one face-to-face meeting each semester.** The facilitator serves as a member of the Leadership Team. No faculty member may concurrently serve as the facilitator of more than one standing team.”

VI. Discussion Time Limits Section 3.04(f)

Background: In an effort to better manage meeting agendas, extend the current 15 minute time limit to presentations by the Faculty Senate President and University Provost. Both would be eligible for the time limit extensions as needed, with the approval of 2/3 of the Faculty Senate

Current By-Laws: Section 3.04 Operation

“(f) Discussion of business items by the Faculty Senate is limited to fifteen (15) minutes. Reports delivered during meetings of the Faculty Senate are also limited, with the exception of the reports of the Senate President and Provost. The time allotted for such discussion and reporting may be extended by affirmation of two-thirds of the voting Senators present.”

Proposed changes

“(f) Discussion of business items by the Faculty Senate is limited to fifteen (15) minutes. Reports delivered during meetings of the Faculty Senate are also limited to 15 minutes. The time allotted for such discussion and reporting may be extended by affirmation of two-thirds of the voting Senators present.”

VII. Faculty Affairs Team - Section 4.02(b)

Background:

Each standing team was asked to review their current structure and duties and to suggest any changes they felt were needed. The Faculty Affairs team proposes the following:

Current By-Laws: 4.02 Composition, Responsibilities and Duties of Faculty Standing Teams

(b) Faculty Affairs Team

(i) Composition

The Faculty Affairs Team consists of two (2) faculty members representing each academic unit. Members must have at least four years full-time experience in higher education to be eligible for service on the Faculty Affairs Team.

(ii) Responsibilities and Duties

The Faculty Affairs Team functions to advise the Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and to provide a direct faculty voice and source of informal appeal regarding personnel-related matters pertaining to faculty. The team reviews and recommends policies concerning all matters relating to: faculty status of positions not clearly defined by the Collective Bargaining Agreement or BOR; annual review, promotion, and reappointment issues within and across academic units; transition from multi-year to tenure-track appointments and vice-versa; merit criteria; the availability and allocation of summer support opportunities; sabbaticals and leaves of absence, professional development and resource support, and office assignment; the ownership and use of intellectual property such as taped lectures and material, electronic/digital resources; academic freedom and integrity issues.”

Proposed changes:

“(b) Faculty Affairs Team

(i) Composition

The Faculty Affairs Team consists of two (2) faculty members representing each academic unit, with the exception of Library Services, which may choose to have only one. At least one member from each unit must be at the rank of Associate Professor or higher. Members must have at least four years full-time experience in higher education to be eligible for service on the Faculty Affairs Team.

(ii) Responsibilities and Duties

The Faculty Affairs Team is a standing committee of the collegial faculty governance system, reporting to the Faculty Senate. It provides a direct faculty voice regarding all personnel-related matters pertaining to faculty, as well as the traditional professional expectations and responsibilities of faculty. The team, at the direction of the Senate leadership, reviews and recommends policies concerning matters relating to:

- general faculty status of university employees, in situations where faculty or non-faculty status is not delineated by the Collective Bargaining Agreement;
- annual review, promotion, and reappointment issues across academic units;
- assessment of faculty teaching, research, and service;
- merit criteria;
- the availability and allocation of summer support opportunities;
- sabbaticals and leaves of absence;
- professional development and resource support;
- the ownership and use of intellectual property;
- academic freedom and integrity issues;
- criteria for honorary faculty status, including Emeritus status; and
- other issues of traditional academic concern related to faculty expectations and responsibilities.

The Faculty Affairs Team does not negotiate or otherwise determine terms and conditions of employment. Any recommendations related to terms and conditions of employment will be forwarded to the UFF chapter leadership for consideration.”

This change is being forwarded to the Senate without a consensus endorsement from the Leadership Team

VIII. Leadership Transition Section 3.03

Background

In an effort to both establish term limits for Faculty Senate President, and to insure productive transition in leadership; the intent of this amendment is to create a direct transition for the Vice President one year to President the following year, effectively we would elect a President-elect each year. This creates a two-year commitment for the officer. It also precludes a President from serving in that office for more than one year.

Current By-Laws:

“(a) Each Spring the Senate elects a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Parliamentarian for one-year terms which begin the following Fall semester. The President-elect shares duties with the outgoing President over the summer to facilitate the transition process”

Proposed changes:

“(a) Each Spring the Senate elects a Vice President, A Secretary, and a Parliamentarian for one-year terms which begin the following Fall semester. **The current Vice President assumes the office of President for the next year.** The **new President** shares duties with the outgoing President over the summer to facilitate the transition process”

Changes that are not be being put forward at this time:

Extending Term of Senate Membership

“(d) The term of membership for Senators and team members is **three** years; Senators may be re-elected by their units. In the case of contract expiration and non-renewal, the academic unit replaces its Senate and team members as discussed in section 3.02(h).”

Senate Officers automatically as Senate Members

“(b) **Newly elected Senate officers (see Section 3.03 (a)) are automatically Senate members for the next academic year and are not included in the above representation formula (3.02 (a)).**”

Standing Team Facilitator Term Limit

“(h) Each standing team elects a facilitator to lead the work of the team by calling team meetings, developing agendas, and assisting the team’s work in other appropriate areas. The facilitator serves as a member of the Leadership Team. No faculty member may concurrently serve as the facilitator of more than one standing team. **No faculty member can serve more than three consecutive academic years as a team facilitator for a given standing team.**”