

Constitution, By-laws, and University Manual Committee Report 2015-16 #2
February 18, 2016

As you recall, during the Fall Semester of 2015, a referendum of the General Faculty took place. The referendum, which did not pass, would have made certain types of full-time non-tenure track appointees, such as lecturers, clinical faculty, and research faculty, eligible to be elected to the Faculty Senate; it would also have changed the approximate ratio determining the number of senators a college or unit may elect from “1 to 10” to “1 to 12” (to make sure that the number of senators would remain approximately the same).

Connected with this referendum were also some other proposals mainly aimed at avoiding misunderstandings. They are reintroduced in this report.

Chiefly, they consist in proposing the elimination of a sentence from the membership paragraph of the Senate Constitution since that sentence is repeated, in a very similar form, in the Senate By-laws membership paragraph. Further, it is proposed to change that sentence in the By-laws to avoid a misunderstanding and to adjust the sentence to the current situation. The misunderstanding to be avoided refers to the expression “part-time”: The way the sentence is written now it could be misconstrued as meaning that those part-time faculty who are limited to teaching two courses are to be counted when a college or unit determines, on the basis of the “1 to 10” ratio, how many senators it may elect. The By-laws do not intend to include these part-time people in the count; rather, the language goes back to a time when URI had tenure-track part-time faculty members. The additional changes aim at adapting the sentence to the current situation.

To change the membership paragraph of the Constitution, another referendum of the General Faculty is needed. This can be conducted only if the Faculty Senate votes in favor a motion that the referendum be carried out. To pass, the referendum requires a majority of those General Faculty members participating in the vote.

The changes to the membership paragraph of the By-laws require a two-thirds majority vote of the Faculty Senate, and cannot be voted on at the meeting at which they are first moved.

Thus, the CBUM Committee recommends: That the Faculty Senate approve the changes to Article III of the Constitution of the Faculty Senate as proposed below, and direct the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to conduct a referendum of the General Faculty concerning these changes.

*I hope that what is written here
Is understandable and clear;*

*If this account, though, does fall short,
Ask him who gives you this report.*

PROPOSED CHANGES

Constitution of the Faculty Senate

Article III – Membership

1. The Senate shall consist of designated *ex officio* members and of elected members of the full-time ~~teaching, library, research and extension~~ tenure-track faculty, chosen in the approximate ratio of one senator for each 10 full-time tenure-track faculty members. ~~For the purpose of determining the number of senators to be elected by a college, the library or other unit of the faculty authorized to conduct elections, part-time faculty members shall be counted according to the fraction of full time which they serve.~~ Any member of the tenure-track faculty with the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor ~~of the full-time teaching, library, research and extension faculty~~ may be elected a member of the Senate. The Senate will provide means by which all eligible faculty members not in a college or the library have the opportunity to vote and to be candidates for election. The President, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice Provosts, the Vice Presidents, the deans of the colleges and schools, the Dean of Admissions, the person who served as Senate chair during the previous academic year, the President or, in his/her absence, the Vice President of the Student Senate, and the President or, in his/her absence, the Vice President of the Graduate Student Association shall be members of the Senate *ex officio* without the right to vote, but with the right to make and second motions. Other officers of administration, including personnel deans and the directors and assistant directors of the University administrative divisions, shall not be eligible for election to the Senate.

If the General Faculty approves the changes to Article III of the Constitution of the Faculty Senate, changes in the By-laws will be required for consistency.

The CBUM Committee recommends: That the Faculty Senate approve the changes to By-laws section 2.2. Per By-laws 12.1, if moved and seconded, a vote on the matter will take place at a subsequent Faculty Senate meeting.

By-laws of the Faculty Senate

2.2 Each faculty or other faculty unit shall elect one senator for each ten of its full-time tenure-track members or majority fraction thereof. For the purpose of determining the number of senators a college or other authorized faculty unit is entitled to elect, ~~part-time~~ tenure-track faculty members with part-time appointments resulting from a part-time assignment, a joint appointment in more than one college or unit with Senate representation, or phased retirement shall be counted according to

the fraction of full-time which they serve in a particular college or unit. Terms shall be so arranged as to provide that one-third, or approximately that number of senators, shall be newly elected members each year. No college, school, or other authorized faculty unit shall have a majority of elected senators, and if this should be imminent following the membership apportionment as prescribed elsewhere in the Constitution and By-laws, the faculty involved shall be entitled to elect no more than one less than a majority of the elected members of the Senate. All full-time tenure-track faculty members, as set forth in Article III of the Constitution, shall be entitled to vote and to be candidates in Senate elections, but none shall vote or be eligible for election in more than one college or other unit. Each college or school, the library and other authorized unit not included in a college or school or in the library is entitled to elect at least one senator, regardless of the number of members in its faculty. The Executive Committee, with the concurrence of the Senate, shall determine how faculty members not included in a college or school or the library shall be grouped for participation in elections and shall designate a leader to organize elections; but the number of units so formed shall be kept to a minimum consistent with adequacy of representation of distinct disciplines. Normally the principle of not more than one unit for 10 faculty members will be applied, so that the total number of senators will not be excessively increased and the ratio of one senator for 10 faculty members will not be unduly disturbed. Faculty units so designated shall be announced at the regular Senate meeting in April of each year, and recorded in the minutes.

The CBUM Committee also introduces the following changes to the University Manual Chapter 4, which are considered editorial.

4.11.10 Membership in the University Faculty, also referred to as the General Faculty, shall be based on appointment by the President and on direct participation in or supervision of any of the following activities: teaching, librarianship, and research, within the University. The General Faculty shall consist of tenure-track professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors (see 7.10.10); the President, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, the Vice Provost(s), and the academic dean of each college or school and of the library.