

Charter of The University Senate

Faculty Governance Committee
A Proposal to Revise Faculty
Governance

Origin: the Fisher Report

"The Campus governance arrangement at Western is one of the most illogical and incoherent we have seen. The existence of both a Faculty Senate and an Academic Council is confusing, often redundant, and according to many interviewees, both bodies are essentially unimportant....

Origins

[T]he present design at Western simply will not work during a period of thoughtful and participative transformation."

The Board of Regents adopted Fisher's recommendation that the new President immediately commission a special task force on faculty governance.

Committee Charge:

- To evaluate the present system of faculty governance and determine whether it should be retained or a new alternative developed.

Historical Perspective:

Academic Council (1966)

- In early 1960s curriculum was handled strictly by the administration.
- Faculty added to Curriculum Committee
- Academic Council formed to broaden faculty voice in other issues
 - ◆ Faculty Affairs Committee

Historical Perspective

Faculty Senate (1976)

- Faculty Advisory Committee
- Southern Association recommendation
- AAUP draft of a proposed constitution
- University Committee formed by President
- Faculty vote
- Revisions by Board & constitution adopted

Historical Perspective

- Academic Council (1966)
 - ◆ Membership: 12 ex officio administrators; 30 Faculty Members of whom 9 were department heads. Chaired by the VPAA
 - ◆ Revised over the years, but the Academic Council still has ex-officio administrative members voting

Historical Perspective

Faculty Senate

Membership limited to those who spend at least three-quarters of "contractual obligation in teaching, research or public service, and/or other non-administrative assignments."

Ex-officio members do not vote.

Personal Perspective

- "If a president wanted to render a faculty impotent, he would have designed a system like this" (Fisher quoting a faculty member)
- The President's resistance to having the faculty regent as a member of the Senate Executive Committee.

Goals of current proposal

- A single body which performs the functions of the current bodies
- To perform additional functions not covered by the present forms of governance
- To operate both effectively and efficiently

Membership--Comparison

Academic Council (54 voting members)

- Eligibility: all full-time ranked faculty members including administrators who have been at Western for two years.
- Voting membership:
40 faculty members (department heads eligible), 5 student members, 6 deans, President of SGA, Registrar, Staff of VPAA

Membership--Comparison

Faculty Senate (52 members)

- Eligibility: only those who are non-administrative three-quarter time.
- Ex-officio members are non-voting. They are the President, VPAA, and faculty Regent.

Membership--Comparison

University Senate (47 members)

- Eligibility: All full-time faculty with rank of Instructor and above, excluding visiting or adjunct professors; dept heads may serve
- Ex-officio, non-voting: President, Provost, Academic Deans, Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Libraries, Faculty Regent

Representation

- Academic Council: Ratio of unit's faculty to total faculty; total number ca. 40
- Faculty Senate: One per department plus at-large senators for each college; 10% of total
- University Senate: One per department with 12 at-large representatives apportioned among undergraduate colleges and library

Committees

- Academic Council: Rules, General Education, Academic Requirements and Regulations (3)
- Faculty Senate: Executive Committee, By-laws Elections and Amendments, Faculty Status and Welfare, Prof. Resp. and Concerns, Fiscal Affairs, Academic Affairs, Communications (7)

Committees

- University Senate:
 - ◆ Executive Committee
 - ◆ University Curriculum Committee
 - ◆ General Education
 - ◆ Faculty Welfare and Responsibilities
 - ◆ Ad hoc committees and appointments to university-wide committees

Composition of Committees

- Academic Council:
Rules: Chair, Vice-Chair, one or two members elected from each unit's reps
- Faculty Senate:
Executive Committee: Chair, and one rep from each college. Secretary-Treas., Parliamentarian, and Faculty Regent are ex officio and non-voting (not actual practice).

Composition of Committees

- University Senate:
Executive Committee: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Chairs of other Standing Committees, one senator from each college and library, Provost, and Faculty Regent

Univ. Senate--other committees

- University Curriculum Committee: (16)
 - ◆ One senator from each college and library
 - ◆ One faculty member from and elected by each curriculum committee (including Graduate Council)
 - ◆ Three appointed by the Executive Committee
 - ◆ One student selected by caucus of student reps
 - ◆ Ex officio and non-voting: rep from VPAA

Other Committees:

- General Education: (14 members)
 - ◆ one senator from each undergrad college
 - ◆ one from each of the five curriculum committees
 - ◆ three appointed by the Executive Committee
 - ◆ one student selected by caucus of student reps
 - ◆ Ex-officio and non-voting: rep of VPAA

Other Committees

- Faculty Welfare and Prof. Resp. (11)
 - ◆ one senator from each undergrad college and library (6)
 - ◆ Three faculty members appointed by the Executive Committee
 - ◆ A representative from Extended Campus and part-time faculty member
 - ◆ Ex-officio and non-voting: Rep of VPAA, dean

Handling of Issues

- Resolutions:
 - ◆ Can originate with committees or membership of Senate
- Academic policies vs. implementation (programs and courses)
 - Policies: require approval of entire Senate
 - Courses: College or committee approval, information item only for Senate

Comparison with current practice

- Academic Council actions 1998-1999
 - ◆ Total: 261
- University Curriculum Committee
 - 197 items on the consent agenda;
 - 64 action items
- University Senate: All items on consent agenda; only policy issues on action agenda

Checks and Balances

- University Senate approves all items before they are sent to the Office of the Provost
 - ◆ tacit approval for information items; approval by majority vote for action items
 - ◆ Senate has right to move any information item from consent agenda to action agenda

Checks & Balances, cont.

- University Curriculum Committee and the General Education Committee
 - ◆ approve all action items received from the college curriculum committees
 - ◆ has right to move any information item to action agenda

Checks and Balances

- College Curriculum Committees
 - If a proposal is rejected twice by the University Curriculum Committee or the General Education Committee, then the College Curriculum Committee may appeal directly to the University Senate to act on its proposal. The decision of the Senate is final.

Implementation

- How? Faculty vote
- When? Mid to late November
- Committee reports results of vote to the President
- President makes recommendation to the Board of Regents

Summary

- 1966/1976 vs. 1999
- CHE vs. CPE
- Administrators 1966 vs. Administrators 1999

- "[A]ll governance systems are problematic"

Move that the Faculty Senate begin a review of the proposed charter for a new University Senate. The initial stage of this review will be conducted by the Senate's Faculty Status and Welfare Committee. This committee will review the proposal, solicit further faculty opinion, suggest revisions, and suggest a formal mechanism by which the Faculty Senate will consult the entire faculty on any proposed change to Western Kentucky University's system of faculty governance. The committee will present its recommendations to the full Faculty Senate at its February 2000 meeting.

Senate Resolution passed after above material was presented.