

Faculty Benefits Committee

December 7, 2017

The charge to the Faculty Benefits Committee includes writing an annual report to the Faculty Senate. This report is to include summaries of benefits, comparisons to other institutions, reviews of data from the Faculty Concerns morale survey, and “a review of feedback solicited from the faculty in regard to current and desired benefits.” This announcement is to solicit such feedback from faculty senators and to encourage senators to take this announcement to the faculty that they represent. The committee has constructed a website to facilitate this effort:

<https://www.missouristate.edu/FacultySenate/faculty-benefits-committee.htm>

Comments may also be conveyed to committee members including this year’s chair: Dr. Reed Olsen, ReedOlsen@missouristate.edu.

Faculty Senate Committee on Rules
Response to Charge Six
25 November, 2017

FACULTY SENATE CHARGE SIX

Charge: When identifying potential individuals to serve as Chair of Faculty Senate, consider whether the pool should be extended to include recent chairs of standing committees and councils of Faculty Senate. If so, a time period of eligibility would need to be determined, perhaps similar to the time period of eligibility for recent senators.

Rationale: It is sometimes difficult to find qualified candidates who are willing to serve.

RULES PROCESS FOR CHARGE SIX

Rules Committee members: John Heywood (chair), Terrell Gallaway, Stephen Haggard, Tom Kane, Mike Hudson (ex officio), Beth Hurst (ex officio)

Findings and conclusions: Members of the Rules Committee were unanimous in believing that prior service as an elected Senator should be a prerequisite to serving as Chair of the Faculty. The Senate is a representative body and should not, we believe, be led by an individual who has never been elected by a constituency within the faculty. Chairs of Senate councils and standing committees often have a record of service as a Senator and would automatically be qualified to serve as Chair of the Senate on those grounds.

Summary of Proposed Changes to the Bylaws: None

Faculty Senate Committee on Rules
Response to Charge Eleven
15 November 2017

FACULTY SENATE CHARGE ELEVEN

Charge: Consider whether changes to the Bylaws should be treated as Senate Actions or Internal Actions, and update the Bylaws to make this explicit.

Rationale: For much of the history of the Faculty Senate such changes have been treated as Senate Actions, but more recently they have been treated as Internal Actions.

RULES PROCESS FOR CHARGE ELEVEN

Rules Committee members: John Heywood (chair), Terrell Gallaway, Stephen Haggard, Tom Kane, Carol Maples, Mike Hudson (ex officio), Beth Hurst (ex officio)

Findings and conclusions:

1. ART XI SEC 2b of the *Bylaws of the Board of Governors* states “the faculty shall have the power to formulate and adopt its own constitution and Bylaws, subject to approval by the Board” (emphasis added). The President of the University acts on behalf of the Board to provide the necessary approval (*Bylaws of the Board of Governors*, ART X Sec 2). Thus, changes to the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty* require administrative approval and therefore constitute Senate Actions.
2. From 1987 (when the current *Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty* were adopted) through AY 2008/09, all changes to the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty* were recorded as Senate Actions and were submitted to the administration for approval, as required by the *Bylaws of the Board of Governors*.
3. Charge 7 to the Rules Committee for 2001/02 was to propose a “clear mechanism for the Senate to create new *ad hoc* committees and make other changes to its internal operating procedures.” The rationale for this change was that the administration in the previous year had “disapproved” several Senate Actions because they did not call for any administrative action. This charge led, in AY 2002/03, to the creation of “internal actions” (SA 8-02/03), a change to the Bylaws that was approved by VPAA Bruno Schmidt and President John Keiser.

4. It is clear that neither President Keiser nor the Senate considered changes to the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty* to be Internal Actions. In the same year that several Senate Actions were “disapproved” by the administration because they required no administrative action, Senate Actions to change the *Bylaws of the Faculty* were acted on by the administration, and changes to the *Bylaws of the Faculty* continued to be submitted to the administration as Senate Actions, and were acted on by the administration as such, until AY 2009/10.
5. Starting with AY 2009/10 and continuing to the present, changes to the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty* have been treated implicitly as Internal Actions since they do not appear on the Senate Action log and have not been submitted to the administration for approval. This clearly violates the *Bylaws of the Board of Governors*. No rationale for this change is recorded in the Proceedings of the Faculty Senate for AY 2009/10. However, it is perhaps not coincidental that this change occurred at a time when relations between the faculty and the administration were strained.

Summary of Proposed Changes to the Bylaws:

1. Amend ART VIII of the *Bylaws of the Faculty* to explicitly state that any amendment to the Bylaws that is approved by the Senate becomes a Faculty Senate Action.

PROPOSED SENATE ACTION TO AMEND THE BYLAWS OF THE FACULTY

Original Language

ART VIII AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

- SEC 1** Amendments of these *Bylaws* may be proposed by the Committee on Rules of the Faculty Senate; and shall be proposed by the Committee on Rules of the Faculty Senate when made necessary by amendments to the *Constitution*. *Bylaws* and amendments to the *Bylaws* of college councils, graduate council, or any other body of the Faculty Senate, shall be proposed by the Committee on Rules of the Faculty Senate.
- SEC 2** Amendments of these *Bylaws* may be proposed upon petition to the Faculty Senate of twenty-five percent (25%) of the senators. Amendments proposed by petition shall be referred to the Faculty Senate Rules Committee for their recommendation before being submitted to the Faculty Senate.
- SEC 3** Proposed amendments may only be fully considered during the course of two Senate sessions. Proposed amendments, submitted in writing, must first appear on the agenda and be discussed at one session of the Senate with the vote on the proposed amendment(s) occurring at the next regularly scheduled session of the Senate. No proposed amendments shall be accepted later than the March session of each academic year. Voting on proposed amendments shall be by secret ballot and without discussion in the session when the vote is taken. Ballots shall be prepared and distributed by the Secretary of the Faculty. An affirmative vote equal to a two-thirds majority of the senators present and voting shall be necessary to make a proposed amendment part of these *Bylaws*.

Proposed Changes

(additions in bold, omissions struck through)

ART VIII AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

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SEC 3 Proposed amendments may only be fully considered during the course of two Senate sessions. Proposed amendments, submitted in writing, must first appear on the agenda and be discussed at one session of the Senate with the vote on the proposed amendment(s) occurring at the next regularly scheduled session of the Senate. No proposed amendments shall be accepted later than the March session of each academic year. Voting on proposed amendments shall be by secret ballot and without discussion in the session when the vote is taken. Ballots shall be prepared and distributed by the Secretary of the Faculty. An affirmative vote equal to a two-thirds majority of the senators present and voting shall be necessary to make a proposed amendment part of these *Bylaws*.

SEC 4 Any amendment to these *Bylaws* that has been approved by the Faculty Senate becomes a Faculty Senate Action and is subject to administrative approval, as set forth in the *Bylaws of the Board of Governors*.

Final Language

ART VIII AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

SEC 1 Amendments of these *Bylaws* may be proposed by the Committee on Rules of the Faculty Senate; and shall be proposed by the Committee on Rules of the Faculty Senate when made necessary by amendments to the *Constitution*. *Bylaws* and amendments to the *Bylaws* of college councils, graduate council, or any other body of the Faculty Senate, shall be proposed by the Committee on Rules of the Faculty Senate.

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SEC 4 Any amendment to these *Bylaws* that has been approved by the Faculty Senate becomes a Faculty Senate Action and is subject to administrative approval, as set forth in the *Bylaws of the Board of Governors*.

Faculty Senate Committee on Rules
Response to Charge Sixteen
20 November 2017

Rules Committee members: John Heywood (chair), Terrel Gallaway, Stephen Haggard, Tom Kane, Carol Maples, Mike Hudson (*ex officio*), Beth Hurst (*ex officio*)

CHARGE SIXTEEN

Charge: Add a standing Committee on Policy Review to the Bylaws.

Rationale: This was recommended by the *ad hoc* Committee on the Policy Library and was approved by the Faculty Senate last year.

Summary of Proposed Changes to the Bylaws:

1. Incorporate the language proposed by the *ad hoc* Committee on the Policy Library, with two additions:
 - (a) Indicate that the chair of the committee will be appointed by the Chair of the Faculty Senate.
 - (b) At the request of Senate Chair Macgregor, add an *ex officio* member from the Student Government Association.

PROPOSED SENATE ACTION TO AMEND THE BYLAWS

Proposed Changes

Additions in bold, deletions ~~struck through~~, [*comments bracketed and italicized*]

ART I FACULTY SENATE

SEC 9 Committees of the Faculty Senate

B Standing Committees [*line 629*]

(11) **Committee on Policy Review** [*insert at ~line 968*]

(a) **Purpose**

- (aa) **Shall meet up to twice monthly to discuss pending policies under consideration by university leadership and to review current content in the university Policy Library.**
- (bb) **Shall identify current and emerging content in the university Policy Library (excluding the Faculty Handbook) that should be reviewed by the Faculty Handbook Revision Committee or warrants further review by the faculty.**
- (cc) **Shall prepare and present periodic reports with recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding policies being referred to the Faculty Handbook Revision Committee, pending operating policies (OP) under consideration by university leadership, and other Policy Library content that should be further reviewed by the faculty.**

(b) **Membership**

- (aa) **The Chair of the Faculty Senate, the Chair-Elect of the Faculty Senate, and the Chair of the Faculty Handbook Revision Committee shall be members of the Policy Review Committee.**
- (bb) **A minimum of three additional faculty members will be appointed by the Chair of the Faculty Senate, so as to provide representation from various academic colleges. These additional faculty members will serve a two year term and may be reappointed for up to two consecutive terms. One of these faculty members will be appointed by the Chair of the Faculty Senate to serve as committee chair.**
- (cc) **The Student Government Association shall provide a representative to the committee who will be *ex officio* without vote.**

(dd) The Director of Human Resources, the Provost, and Chief General Counsel will be *ex officio* members without vote.

Faculty Handbook Revision Committee (FHRC)

The FHRC met on September 12, October 10, and November 14, 2017. As part of these scheduled meetings there were three items that came up for discussion. The outcome of these discussions resulted in the following proposed changes to the current Faculty Handbook. The FHRC would also like to request input on the forms used during annual review and promotion and tenure processes.

Item 1: 14.5.1 Dismissal Procedures

Current language:

- A. The President of the University will initiate formal dismissal proceedings by addressing a written communication to the faculty member informing him or her of the statement of charges and that he or she will be dismissed as of a date specified in the written communication, but in no case less than 30 business days from the date of delivery of the communication. The faculty member will also be notified by the President that he or she may file a formal grievance within 15 business days from the date of the delivery of the communication. If a grievance is filed, it will follow the APGP process. If no grievance is filed, the dismissal will take effect as indicated in the written communication specified above.

Proposed additional language:

- B. The President of the University may initiate formal dismissal proceedings, under this Section 14.5.1(B) in situations where a faculty member has neglected or refused to perform his or her University duties by failing to be present for University classes, department meetings or other required activities. Such proceedings will begin by informing the faculty member that the University considers the faculty member in abandonment of his or her job duties, and that the faculty member will be dismissed as of a date specified in the written communication, but in no case less than ten calendar days from the date of delivery of the communication. The faculty member will also be notified by the President that he or she may file a formal grievance within 5 calendar days from the date of the delivery of the communication. If a grievance is filed, it will follow the APGP process, and the faculty member will continue to receive his or her full salary and employee benefits during the conduct of the APGP process. If no grievance is filed, the dismissal will take effect as indicated in the written communication specified above. For purposes of clarity, termination under Section 14.5.1(B) shall be limited to those situations where a faculty member has not been physically present to perform his or her duties for the University, and this absence is unplanned, not excused, and disruptive to the University. Scheduled absences, or arranged hiatus from University duties will not rise to the level of dismissal under this subsection 14.5.1(B).

Pending final decision of termination under Sections 14.5.1(A), the faculty member will be suspended, or assigned to other duties in lieu of suspension, only if immediate harm to the faculty member or others is threatened by continuance. Before suspending a faculty member, pending an ultimate determination of the faculty member's status through the grievance process, the administration will consult with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee concerning the propriety, the length, and the other conditions of the suspension. Salary will continue during the period of the suspension. The faculty member may request review by the Board of Governors of the dismissal, as provided in Section 174.150 RSMo.

Rationale: Language added specifically addressing dismissal due to job abandonment.

Item 2: Glossary - Start Date

Current language in Glossary:

Start date: Date on which faculty are expected to be on campus for the beginning of work. Normally it is the Monday prior to the beginning of classes each Fall and Spring Semester.

Proposed language:

Start date: Date on which faculty are expected to be on campus for the beginning of work. Faculty are expected to attend meetings and other events scheduled the week prior to the beginning of classes each Fall and Spring Semester.

Rationale: Language revised to clarify expectations of faculty to be present on campus and faculty obligations to attend departmental meetings or other beginning of academic semester meetings.

Item 3: 3.2.2 Initial Appointment Contract Letters

Current language

The precise terms of every appointment shall be stated in the initial appointment contract letter. The conditions of appointment may vary in individual situations, but they must conform to policies stated in this Handbook. The conditions of employment for each faculty member

including rank, salary, length of appointment, length of probationary period (including the last semester during which a tenure application can be made), credit for prior academic service or equivalent experience, terminal degree and tenure status, and position responsibilities and performance expectations shall be clearly stated in writing. New faculty will also be provided a copy of the departmental tenure, promotion, and performance review guidelines in effect on the date of the hire. The criteria employed for tenure decisions will be those in the Faculty Handbook and in departmental guidelines at the time the initial appointment letter is given (see Section 4.8.7, Faculty and Department Head Procedural Agreement).

Proposed language

The precise terms of every appointment shall be stated in the initial appointment contract letter. The conditions of appointment may vary in individual situations, but they must conform to policies stated in this Handbook. The conditions of employment for each faculty member including rank, salary, **start date**, length of appointment, length of probationary period (including the last semester during which a tenure application can be made), credit for prior academic service or equivalent experience, terminal degree and tenure status, and position responsibilities and performance expectations shall be clearly stated in writing. New faculty will also be provided a copy of the departmental tenure, promotion, and performance review guidelines in effect on the date of the hire. The criteria employed for tenure decisions will be those in the Faculty Handbook and in departmental guidelines at the time the initial appointment letter is given (see Section 4.8.7, Faculty and Department Head Procedural Agreement).

Rationale: “Start date” was inserted to bring Section 3.2.2 in alignment with current contract letters.

Request:

The FHRC would like to request comments on the forms used for the annual review and promotion and tenure processes. The Committee will begin looking at these documents in January with regard to clarity, pertinence, and functionality. The link to the comment form on the FHRC website is <https://www.missouristate.edu/provost/facultyhandbook/>

Final Report

Ad hoc committee on 120 vs 125 minimum hour requirement

Committee charge:

Investigate the appropriateness and feasibility of changing the MSU minimum undergraduate graduation requirement from 125 hours to 120. The question for the committee to answer is: *Should MSU reduce the minimum graduation requirement for a bachelor's degree from 125 to 120 hours? If so, under what conditions should this change be implemented?*

Committee members:

Tom Dicke, Chair-Elect of Faculty Senate, Gary Webb, CoAg; Pedro Koo, COAL; Rebecca Woodward, CHHS; Jef Cornelius-White, COE; Jun Luo, CNAS; Kevin Pybas, CHPA; Richard Gebken, COB; Rob Hornberger, Registrar; Chris Craig, Associate Provost

Narrative:

Early in the Fall, 2017 semester the Chair of Faculty Senate, Dr. Cynthia McGregor, created the Ad Hoc Committee on the 120 Hour Graduation Requirement and presented it with the above charge. The committee met several times over the course of the semester and had extensive discussions on our charge. Ultimately the committee unanimously agreed that changing the General Baccalaureate Degree Requirements from 125 hours to 120 hours was both appropriate and feasible.

The charge originated as part of the University's ongoing focus on affordability and efficiency. Currently roughly 78% of programs could be completed in 120 hours if the 125 hour graduation requirement were changed.

The main items considered by the committee were the potential impact on general education and program requirements, financial impact for the university and for students, the rationale for the 125 hour requirement, potential impact on programs with hour requirement significantly above 120 hours and the minimum hour requirements of our peer institutions and four year colleges in general.

The committee concluded that changing the minimum undergraduate graduation requirement from 125 hours to 120 would have no impact on either general education or, with perhaps one exception, any change to any major or minor requirements.

The committee concluded financial impact needs to be acknowledged but is not a sufficient reason to maintain the 125 hour requirement. The committee solicited input from the Office of the Registrar, which concluded the financial impact of the change was difficult to predict but would most likely not be significantly positive or negative.

The committee could find no compelling rationale for a 125 hour minimum graduation requirement. Unlike the other General Baccalaureate Degree Requirements (see below) the minimum hour requirement is not obviously attached to any indicator of student achievement such as GPA. In the case of programs, program faculty set major/minor hours and other requirements based on their professional judgements. It is unclear what the minimum hour requirement is based on other than the tradition that college is a four-year experience.

Committee investigations indicate that a 120 hour minimum hour graduation requirement is the norm for our peer institutions. Our institutional accrediting body, the Higher Learning Commission, considers 120 hours to be the commonly accepted minimum program length for bachelor's degrees

Summary:

The committee found the reasons to change the requirement to 120 hours more compelling than the reasons to retain the 125 hour requirement.

Summary of reasons to change.

- The primary reason to consider the change is to eliminate a potential roadblock to graduation in four years. At present a student can take a full load for eight semesters and still be five hours short of the minimum required for to graduate.
- Aligns with the University focus on efficiency and affordability
- Is consistent with minimum hour requirement at other state schools in Missouri and at benchmark intuitions.

Reasons to retain 125:

May draw majors away from programs with relatively high hour requirements such as Nursing or many education programs.

- There was doubt in the committee that many students consider programs interchangeable, at least based on a semester of classes.

Some departments may have integrated the 125 hour requirements into their programs through informal advising.

- Unclear how prevalent this is but departments can formalize the practice by adding classes they consider necessary to major or minor.
- No guarantee student will take recommended classes.

Potential cost to the University

- Needs to be acknowledged but not a reason to maintain otherwise unnecessary requirement.

All majors/minor requirements:

<http://www.missouristate.edu/registrar/catalog/majorsminors.htm>

General Baccalaureate Degree Policies and Requirements

[Op3.04-27 General Baccalaureate Degree Policies and Requirements](#)

Credits and grade point average requirements

All candidates for any baccalaureate degree must meet the following minimum credits and grade point average requirements:

1. Completed a total of at least 125 semester hours of credit.
2. Completed 40 hours of upper division credit (courses numbered 300 and above).
3. Attained at least a 2.00 Missouri State cumulative GPA.
4. Attained at least a 2.00 combined (MSU and transfer) GPA.
5. Attained at least a 2.00 general education GPA on all courses used to meet the student's General Education requirements.
6. Attained at least a 2.00 GPA on all courses that are required in the major.
7. Attained at least a 2.00 GPA on all courses that are required in the minor.

Senate Action – 120 hour requirement

Early in the Fall, 2017 semester the Chair of Faculty Senate, Dr. Cynthia McGregor, created the Ad Hoc Committee on the 120 Hour Graduation Requirement and charged it to “investigate the appropriateness and feasibility of changing the MSU minimum undergraduate graduation requirement from 125 hours to 120.” The committee was asked to make a recommendation to Faculty Senate no later than its December 7, 2017 meeting. The ad hoc committee met several times over the course of the semester and as a result of these deliberations the committee brings forward the following proposed Senate Action for your consideration. The committee recommends this action unanimously among those voting. The proposed revised language for the Undergraduate Catalogue is below the Senate Action.

Whereas a change in the minimum semester hours required for graduation from 125 to 120 will require no change in either general education or program requirements; and

Whereas most of the reviewed peer intuitions adhere to a 120 minimum hour graduation requirement, and our institutional accrediting body, the Higher Learning Commission, considers 120 hours to be the commonly accepted minimum program length for bachelor’s degrees; and

Whereas changing the minimum graduation requirement to 120 hours is consistent with the University’s focus on affordability and efficiency, and the potential financial impact on the University and students has been considered; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate supports a change of the University’s minimum undergraduate graduation requirement from 125 to 120 hours of credit.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that this change be introduced between semesters and be applied to any catalog term, including past semesters.

General Baccalaureate Degree Policies and Requirements

Credits and grade point average requirements

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3. Attained at least a 2.00 Missouri State cumulative GPA.
4. Attained at least a 2.00 combined (MSU and transfer) GPA.
5. Attained at least a 2.00 general education GPA on all courses used to meet the student's General Education requirements.
6. Attained at least a 2.00 GPA on all courses that are required in the major.
7. Attained at least a 2.00 GPA on all courses that are required in the minor.
<https://www.missouristate.edu/registrar/catalog/genebacc.html>