



T-FSC Resolution regarding Senators-at-Large

Approved 4/14/16

At the April 14, 2016 meeting of the T-Faculty Senators Council, the Council approved the following resolution:

Resolution:

WHEREAS the first article of the current Rules and Bylaws read as follows:

"Number of Senators: The T-Faculty Senators Council consists of not more than thirty-six members (thirty-eight in the academic year ending in 2015 and thirty-seven in the academic year ending in 2016) of the Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty elected by the voting members of the several faculties of the University in the manner prescribed by the rules adopted by the Council for its own governance and consistent with these Bylaws; and with the two current representatives who were appointed at large being permitted to complete their terms, which end respectively at the end of the 2015 and 2016 academic years." (*italics added*);

And WHEREAS amending the Bylaws requires a 2/3 majority according to Robert's Rules of Order;

And WHEREAS the arguments in favor of reinstating senators-at-large are easily refuted:

1. "Elegantly solves our problem of what happens when a 3rd year senator gets elected to the EC." – but it does not, as these positions still constitute part of the total body and thus reduce the ability of the schools to elect their own representatives;
2. "Gives the senate some freedom in getting help from ex-senators and other faculty with particular experience or expertise in relevant matters," – but it does not, as this freedom is not proscribed in the bylaws, so that any committee may invite other faculty members to act as its consultant(s);
3. "One senator mentioned that in the past such seats were used to add representation from under-represented groups" – but in our past discussion of phasing out the at large seats, the consensus was that this is no longer necessary. A democratic process is more successful at representing under-represented groups. Although such a process can be imperfect, so can the EC.

And WHEREAS the arguments against reinstating senators-at-large are easily supported:

4. "Some strong objections were voiced yesterday [at the last T-FSC meeting] saying that this is not democratic" – and it is not democratic in several ways. A) it reduces the ability of schools to elect their own representatives, and B) it increases the already considerable power of the Executive Committee (EC);
5. "It was noted that the only other council with senators at large is the Student Council" – and the Student Senators Council should not be our standard. The at-large positions on the SSC are primarily to provide continuity for a body where the constituents have a high turnover rate, as students do. Tenured faculty turnover is less an issue.
6. "Each senator at large position reduces representation of some school" – even if the senators-at-large are counted as representatives of their schools, because they are beholden to the EC for their positions, not to their schools' faculty.

Be it RESOLVED that the T-FSC will not turn any of its positions into senator-at-large positions.