

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Graduate Issues
Presented at March 14, 2008 College Senate Meeting

I. Charge of the Committee – approved by Senate May 2007

“Recommend that the Chair of the Senate form an Ad Hoc Committee to study the following and other relevant issues that pertain to our graduate students and our graduate programs:

1. Graduate student representation on the College Senate and the formal process to make them permanent members.
2. The need for a permanent Senate Committee that will look at graduate issues in general.

II. Committee Membership

Betty Cappella, School of Education, **Joseph Bess**, Student Member, **Judy Bondurant-Utz**, School of Education, **John DeNisco**, School of the Professions, **Brian Dubenion**, Student, **Melisa Dybbro**, Professional Staff, **Musa Abdul Hakim**, Librarian Faculty Member, **William Mitchell**, Natural and Social Sciences, **Kevin Railey**, Administrative Liaison, **John Thompson**, School of the Professions, **Aimable Twagilimana**, Arts & Humanities, **Greg Wadsworth**, Natural and Social Sciences (Chair), **Donn Youngstrom**, Arts and Humanities. (The Committee also benefited from the contribution of another graduate student, **Vanessa L Haddad**, especially her work on the graduate student survey.)

III. Summary of Committee Recommendations.

1. Graduate Student Representation

- a. Graduate students should have formal representation on the College Senate
- b. An appropriate distribution of representation for students is two graduate student senators and ten undergraduate student senators.
- c. The most appropriate body to organize and conduct elections of graduate student senators is the Graduate School
- d. The appropriate length for terms of office should be determined by the Graduate School in consultation with graduate students. The prohibition of students serving more than three years total (graduate or undergraduate) should be left in place
- e. All recommendations can be implemented by amendment to Article III of the by-laws (see item VI for specific motion).

2. Permanent Graduate Issues Committee

- a. A new standing senate committee on graduate issues should not be established. Instead the College should rely on other governance and oversight structures.
- b. The Graduate Advisory Council should be the primary body through which faculty and students engage in governance and oversight of graduate programs.
- c. The senate representative to the Graduate Advisory Council should make a formal report (at least annually) on the activities of the Council during a regular Senate meeting.
- d. The College administration and Graduate Advisory Council should explore ways in which the Council might be made more affective in governance and oversight.
- e. The Chair of the Graduate Advisory Council should be a member of the Senate Agenda Committee (see item VII for specific motion to amend Standing Rules and Handbook of College Senate).
- f. All future senate committee rosters should be structured so that one or more of the members are on the graduate faculty and are in a graduate program. Graduate faculty status should be indicated on rosters (see item VIII for specific motion to amend College Senate Handbook).
- g. The By-Laws and Elections Committee should review the effectiveness of these recommendations after a trial period of two years.

IV. Recommendations on graduate student representation

1. Graduate Student Representation. **The committee concluded that it was appropriate that graduate students have formal representation on the College Senate.** This is consistent with the inclusive organizational structure of the College Senate and the recent USG initiative to provide graduate students representation on the Senate. It is also consistent with results of an on-line survey conducted by the committee which indicated very strong support among graduate students for elected representation on the Senate.
2. Number of representatives. **The committee concluded that two graduate student senators and ten undergraduate student senators was a reasonable distribution of representation for students.** It was roughly consistent with the current demographics of students on campus. It is also consistent with the current USG commitment to “reserve” two of its current 12 seats for graduate students. It will provide graduate students with a significant voice on the Senate. While the committee agreed this was a reasonable distribution between undergraduate and graduate students, we did not discuss the appropriateness of the current level of student representation (12 Senators).
3. Structure to organize and conduct elections. The committee discussed several possible organizations that could conduct elections of graduate student representatives. We respected the good faith effort of USG which is currently conducting elections of graduate student senators under its by-laws. However, the committee felt that elections of graduate student senators would be more effective if it were conducted by a campus organization with closer ties to the graduate students. **The committee concluded that the most appropriate body to organize and conduct elections of graduate student senators would be the Graduate School.** Of the organizations discussed, it was the only one whose mission spanned all graduate programs. This responsibility was seen as compatible with its status as a “School”. The committee agreed that, as with other constituencies that elect senators, the details of how elections would be conducted would be left up to the Graduate School. The Graduate School would also need to develop a policy for replacing senators who resign or who fail to fulfill their duties. The most significant limitation for the Graduate School as the organizing body is that it does not currently conduct elections nor does it have policies for conducting the elections. The committee recognized that the College would have to insure that the Graduate School had the resources and personnel needed to organize and conduct elections. [While the committee felt it would be inappropriate to propose specific details on how the Graduate School would organize the election, the committee did discuss the advantages of eventually establishing a graduate student organization.]
4. Length of Terms. Currently, the Senate By-Laws do not specify the length of student terms of office on the Senate but instead term length is determined by the USG constitution (Article III. C. 7.). The By-Laws do specify that “the total term of office for any student member of the Senate shall be no more than three years.” The committee discussed the advantages of 1-yr terms compared to 2 yr terms for graduate student senators. **The committee concluded that the appropriate length of terms of office should be determined by the Graduate School in consultation with graduate students. The prohibition of students serving more than three years total (graduate or undergraduate) should be left in place.**
5. The recommendations including amendments to the College Senate By-laws will be presented to the College Senate as a committee motion (see item VI for committee Motion I).

V. Recommendation on a permanent senate committee for graduate issues.

1. A New Graduate Issues Committee. The original charge of the committee was to consider the “need” for a permanent grad issue committee on the Senate. Instead the committee considered several alternative governance structures to address graduate issues. These included forming a new standing committee on graduate issues. While the committee recognized that a new permanent grad issues committee could be affective, there were other governance structures than might be just as affective. The committee also discussed the complications of introducing a new committee into the context of the current senate committee structure. **The committee’s recommendation is not to establish a new graduate issues committee and instead to rely on other governance structures.** However, if in the

future the Senate restructures its committees then it should consider how graduate issues are handled in the restructured committees.

2. Graduate Advisory Council. The committee considered how current campus structures might be used to improve governance of the graduate program. This included a discussion of the history, structure and effectiveness of the current Graduate Advisory Council and the potential of the Council as a governance body. Some committee members expressed concern that under past deans the Graduate Advisory Committee had not had this responsibility or that it was not particularly effective in carrying out this responsibility. However in reviewing the structure of the Council, with its mixture of students and elected faculty representatives, it seemed well suited to a governance role. Dean Railey and committee members who serve on the Council expressed a willingness to explore how the Council might better fulfill this role. A survey of other campuses found that similarly structured graduate councils were often used for governance of graduate programs. Additionally, the “School” status of the graduate program further suggests that the primary responsibility for governance should reside within the School. **Therefore the committee recommends that the Graduate Advisory Council should be the primary body through which faculty and student can engage in governance and oversight of graduate programs. The committee further recommends that the Administration and Graduate Advisory Council explore ways in which the Council might be made more affective in governance and oversight.** The committee briefly discussed some issues the Council may want to review with respect to its role in governance. These include a review of the composition of the Council, a review of its outreach to its core constituencies including the graduate faculty, graduate students, Chairs and/or Coordinators of graduate programs, and the four academic schools that house graduate programs, and a review of how leadership on the Council interacts with leadership of other governance bodies including the Senate.
3. Interaction between the Senate and the Graduate Advisory Council. The committee considered several strategies to improve interactions between the Senate and the Graduate Advisory Council. Currently, the Chair of the Senate appoints a senate representative on the Council. In the past, this representative reported on Council activities to the Chair of the Senate. **The committee recommends that the senate representative to the Graduate Advisory Council make a formal report (at least annually) on the activities of the Council during a regular Senate meeting.** The report would highlight activities of the Council that would be of interest to the Senate.

The committee also recommends that the Chair of the Graduate Advisory Council be a member of the Agenda Committee. This would insure that Senate leadership was aware of graduate issues being addressed by the Council. It would also allow for these issues to be addressed by the Senate in a timely fashion. This invitation can be formalized by amendments to the Standing Rules of the Senate and the Senate Handbook. (see item VII for committee Motion II)

4. The committee reviewed the current structure Senate committees with respect to graduate issues. Although graduate issues may not be an explicit charge of any of these committees, many of the committees are concerned with issues related to the graduate programs. The committee reviewed current membership on standing committees and found all committees currently included graduate faculty. **The committee recommends that all future committee rosters be structured so that one or more of its members are on the graduate faculty and are in a graduate program and that graduate faculty status should be indicated on rosters.** This recommendation can be initially formalized by amendment of the College Senate Handbook section III, Committee Chairs. (See item VIII for committee Motion III on graduate faculty representation on Senate Committees) **The committee recommends that the By-Laws and Elections Committee review this process after a trial period of two years.** If it is deemed effective enough to become a permanent part of Senate structure, By-Laws Article III, F. 5 should be amended.

VI. Motion I of the Ad Hoc Committee Graduate Issues on Graduate Student Representation.

Whereas the College Senate is “the official agency through which faculty and students engage in governance of the College,” and

Whereas graduate students represent a significant component of the College’s student body, and

Whereas graduate students have issues and perspectives which differ from the undergraduate student body, and

Whereas the current By-Laws and policies of the Senate make no formal provision for representation of graduate students on the Senate,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Agenda and By-Laws Committee present the following amendment of the College Senate By-Laws to the Faculty. The amendment provides for formal representation of graduate students on the Senate. [Note: the earliest implementation of the amendment would be for Spring 2009 elections.]

Amendment of Article III section C and D of College Senate By-laws.

(Additions are indicated by **bold underlined text**, deletions are indicated by ~~striketrough~~.)

By-laws Article III

C. Faculty members shall be the majority membership of the College Senate. The College Senate shall only include the following groups: Faculty (consisting of the four schools and the library), professional staff members, support staff members, students (**undergraduate and graduate**), and administrators (non-voting), with specific members as follows:

1. The President of the College, ex-officio, non-voting; and
2. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs ex-officio, non-voting, the Vice President for Student Affairs ex-officio, non-voting, and the Vice President Finance and Management ex-officio, non voting; and
3. Seven* members of the College Faculty (Article II, Section A and B) elected at large by a majority vote of the College Faculty; and
4. Six members elected at large by a majority vote of the professional staffs of the Instructional Resources, Student Affairs, and other professional groups not otherwise represented; and
5. Six members elected from each of the approved Faculties (School of Arts and Humanities; School of Education; School of Natural and Social Sciences; School of the Professions) and other Faculties recommended by the Senate and approved by the President; and one member from the Butler Library Faculty. Each of these Faculties shall determine how its senators shall be elected; and
6. Two University Faculty Senators elected by the College who must be full-time faculty members and an alternate University Senator appointed by the Chair for a one year term to serve in case of need by the elected Senators, who must be a full-time faculty member.
7. ~~Twelve~~ **Ten undergraduate** students elected by the student body whose terms of office and method of election shall be determined in accordance with the United Students’ Government constitution; and
- 8. Two graduate students elected by the graduate student body whose terms of office and method of election shall be determined in accordance with the policies of the Graduate School; and**
- 9.** One member of the college support staff elected as determined by the support staff.
- 10.** Two members ex-officio, non-voting appointed by the President.

D. The term of office for an elected senator shall be three years for all senators who are not students. **Terms of office of undergraduate student and graduate student senators will be in accord with the United Student’s Government By-Laws and in accord with Graduate School Policies respectively.** ~~Student senators are elected by the United Students’ Government in accord with its By-Laws. However, the elections and the by-~~

laws committee of each unit, as well as the College Senate By-Laws and Elections committee shall arrange terms so that approximately one-third of the elected members shall be elected each year.

1. No elected member of the Senate shall be eligible to succeed himself after serving two consecutive terms.
2. The total term of office for any student member of the Senate (**as either an undergraduate or graduate student representative**) shall be no more than three years.

VII. Motion II of the Ad Hoc Committee Graduate Issues on membership of Chair of Graduate Advisory Council on Senate Agenda Committee.

Whereas the Graduate Advisory Council plays an important role in governance of graduate programs, and

Whereas the governance and oversight of graduate programs can be improved by more affective interaction between the Graduate Advisory Council and Senate leadership, and

Whereas the Senate Agenda Committee “advises the Chair of the College Senate on the dispatch of Senate Business,”

Therefore be it resolved that the Standing Rules of the College Senate and the College Senate Handbook be amended as follows. The amendments provide for membership of the Chair of the Graduate Advisory Council on the Senate Agenda Committee.

1. Amendment to College Senate Standing Rules section 1.2. (Addition is indicated by **bold underlined text**)

“*Agenda Committee.* The Vice Chair, an elected student senator, **the Chair of the Graduate Advisory Council** and the Senior University Senator shall be members of the Agenda Committee. Further details about the Agenda Committee are provided in *The College Senate Handbook*, Section III. The Agenda Committee shall advise the Chair of the College Senate on the dispatch of Senate Business to insure that matters submitted for Senate consideration shall be properly included under one or another of the headings in the Order of Business. The Agenda Committee shall make no determination as to the merits of matters received for consideration of the Senate.”

2. Amendment to the College Handbook under Standing Committees (pg 6). (Addition is indicated by **bold underlined text**)

“The Agenda Committee is chaired by the Chair of the Senate and includes the Vice Chair, an elected student senator, the Senior University Senator, **the Chair of the Graduate Advisory Council** and at least three other members of the Senate appointed by the Chair. The duties and obligations of the Agenda Committee are addressed in both the Standing Rules and the College By-Laws.”

VIII. Motion III of the Ad Hoc Committee Graduate Issues on graduate faculty representation on Senate Standing Committees

Whereas the College Senate, as the “principle deliberative and advisory body of the College,” has a role in reviewing issues related to graduate students and the Graduate School, and

Whereas the governance structure of the College Senate relies on eight Standing Committees, and

Whereas issues of importance to graduate students and the Graduate School span the charges of the eight Standing Committees, and

Whereas the ability of Standing Committees to review issues related to graduate students and the Graduate School would be facilitated by representation of Graduate Faculty on the committees,

Therefore, be it resolved that the College Handbook be amended as follows. The amendment provides for representation of graduate faculty who participate graduate programs on all Standing Committees and for graduate faculty status to be indicated on Committee rosters.

Amendment to College Senate Handbook (pg 6). (Addition is indicated by **bold underlined text**)

“Committee Chairs. Committee Chairs have the responsibility of developing a list of members for presentation to the Senate. Committee membership is limited to fifteen (15); the Senate has the right to strike, but not add, names which are proposed to it. Chairs are urged to exercise care and common sense in developing committee membership lists. Specifically, Chairs are urged to:

- A. be aware of the size limitation on committees;
- B. make every effort to see to it that all Schools and Professional Staff are represented in approximately equal proportions (e.g., approximately two professional staff members and two representatives from each of the Schools).
- C. consider librarians as either faculty or staff and, by tradition, and include on each committee;
- D. make every effort to insure that one or more of the committee members are on the Graduate Faculty and are in a graduate program.**
- E.** include at least one student representative (a student Senator should be considered);
- F.** accept the appointment of a non-voting administrative liaison; and
- G.** make sure that at least one other member of the committee is a Senator.

Members of standing committees are appointed to serve two year terms of office. Ideally, terms of committee members are staggered, so some continuity can be maintained. When a committee roster is presented to the Senate (by tradition, committee rosters are presented at the first meeting of the Senate, for approval), the following information should be included: name, unit the individual represents, **Graduate Faculty affiliation,** office address and phone number, e-mail address, specific years of term of service on the committee.”