

Dear members of the Faculty Senate Executive Council,

Over the past year, there have been several moments when the process by which discussion progress and decisions are made in the Faculty Senate have seemed to be at odds with our responsibility for maintaining the academic missions of the University. In order to maintain the integrity of our responsibility, we, the undersigned members of the Faculty Senate, request that the following motions, with preamble, be put on the Senate agenda for the May meeting. Thanks for your time and attention.

Best,

Tom Borchert, Religion, on behalf of:

Andrew Barnaby, English
Jean Bessette, English
Chris Callahan, Extension
Sarah Carleton, Theater
Ben Eastman, Anthropology
Bogac Ergene, History
Michael Gurdon, Retired Faculty
John Franklin, Classics
Patricia Julien, Music and Dance
Char Mehrtens, Geology
Alison Pechenick, Computer Science
Julie Roberts, Linguistics
Tom Streeter, Sociology
Mike Wilson, Mathematics
Steve Zdatny, History

Preamble: The Senate bylaws state “[a]uthority in matters related to the academic mission of the University is vested in the faculty by the Board of Trustees.” In this academic year, concerns have been raised about how the Senate is fulfilling its function, specifically about the appropriate scope and procedures of Senate decision making, such as the procedures for deciding when something is brought to a vote of the full Senate and the organization of discussion in Senate meetings. If these concerns are left unaddressed, it is not clear that the Senate can truly fulfill its Board approved function within the shared governance model. The following two motions are offered to ensure that the Senate operates from a solid foundation of consensus in the future. The first is more general, the second offers a specific mechanism for enacting the goals of the first.

- 1) The Senate will review the appropriate scope and procedures of Senate decision making, including but not limited to when and how debate is conducted during Senate meetings, procedures for choosing which items to bring for a vote, and the relationship of Senate committees to the Senate as a whole.
- 2) An ad hoc committee made up of Faculty Senators will be appointed by the full Senate Executive Council to 1) investigate issues that have been raised about Senate process, 2) explore possible changes

to procedure that could clarify issues, and 3) within a reasonable time frame, present a report to the Senate with recommendations.