



The University of Vermont
FACULTY SENATE

Memo

To: Faculty Senate Executive Council
From: Catherine Paris, Faculty Senate President and FSEC Chair
Re: Proposed changes to Curricular Affairs Committee membership and presentation of CAC business to Faculty Senate Executive Council and Faculty Senate
Date: 1 February 2018

Proposed change to Curricular Affairs Committee membership

I propose that two at-large members, nominated by the Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC) chair and approved by the Faculty Senate Executive Council (FSEC), be added to the roster of the Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee. Rationale is as follows:

Prior to January 2018, UVM Extension existed as a free-standing entity within the University. As such, it was invited to elect a representative to each of the six Faculty Senate standing committees. Per the Senate Constitution and Bylaws, two representatives were elected to the CAC, the largest Senate committee. However, after Extension was reintegrated into the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs), Extension lost the prerogative to contribute members to Senate committees. (Extension faculty could, of course, be elected as representatives of CALs.) This had the effect of reducing the size of most Senate committees by one; CAC membership was reduced by two. This change came at a time when the CAC was experiencing a significant increase in the volume of new program proposals it was being asked to consider, a trend that continues to the present day; thus a greater demand was being placed on the committee's time as its membership was being reduced. The solution proposed here would restore the CAC to its pre-2018 size and would allow the chair to nominate two prospective members likely to be productive and contributing members of the committee. If approved, the change would go into effect on July 1, 2019, the date on which Senate committee terms begin.

(Note: Chairs of the other five Senate committees stated that the loss of a member did not impact their committee's ability to do its work effectively and felt no need to add another member.)

Proposed change to presentation of Curricular Affairs Committee business

In order to free more time for discussion at meetings of the UVM Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate Executive Council (FSEC), as senators are calling for, I propose that the slate of Curricular Affairs Committee actions be voted on as part of a consent agenda, as they are when they come to the UVM Board of Trustees. Rationale is as follows:

Curriculum proposals that come to the Executive Council and the Senate have been reviewed thoroughly and thoughtfully by both the CAC review subcommittee and the full CAC. (Proposals for graduate programs have also been reviewed by the Graduate College Executive Committee.). A detailed summary of each action, prepared by the CAC chair, is posted with the meeting materials. Thus, FSEC members and faculty senators will have had the opportunity to become informed about each proposed action in advance of the meeting at which these actions will be voted upon. Under the process proposed here, the CAC chair will provide a brief (several sentence) description of each action, then call for a vote on the package (the consent agenda). If there are concerns about a particular action, any FSEC member or senator can make a motion that that item be discussed and voted on separately. Such a process is not expected to compromise the integrity of the review and approval process. It does shift some burden to senators to make themselves informed about the proposals they will be voting on, but it also frees up limited Senate time for discussion, as noted previously.

If this expedited process is acceptable to the FSEC and to faculty senators, we will plan to implement it beginning with the March meetings of those bodies.