

Memorandum

To: Faculty Senate Executive Committee

From: Senate Charter and Bylaws Committee (Members: Noreen Goggin, Richard Wells, John Booth)

Date: March 8, 2007

Subject: **Proposed Senate Bylaws Amendments and Reapportionment**

The Faculty Senate Charter and Bylaws Committee on February 5, 2007 agreed to submit the following recommendations for Bylaws amendments to the Senate for consideration. We obtained feedback from the Senate Executive Committee on these items on March 7, have revised them, agreed upon the revisions, and request that the EC schedule these items for a first reading in the March 14 Senate meeting. These items all were referred to the committee in its charge for 2006-2007; the reapportionment proposal is also required by Charter.

I. Revision to Bylaws Article III, Section 2, proposed new subsection g.

Committee quorums and vacancies. To conduct business, a Faculty Senate committee must have at least a majority of its full nominal membership, excluding *ex officio* members, (that is, vacancies on the committee must not exceed fifty percent of the nominal membership). For meetings of Faculty Senate committees, a quorum shall consist of at least half of the filled committee seats (that is, of the committee seats without vacancies), so long as that number is not less than half of the full committee's nominal seats. It shall be the responsibility of committee chairs to monitor their committee membership's status and any vacancies (whether occurring by repeated absence, leave of absence, resignation or retirement), and promptly to report any occurring vacancies to the Senate leadership. It shall be the responsibility of a Senate committee member promptly to advise the committee chair and Senate leadership of his/her resignation from the committee or inability to serve as a working member.

II. Article III, Section 2, proposed new subsection h.

Electronic Meetings. If a committee of the Faculty Senate (other than the Senate Executive Committee) finds it necessary or convenient to conduct its business by electronic correspondence, its reports and actions can contain only what is agreed to by a majority of the members. In the case of such electronically conducted meetings, it shall be the responsibility of the committee's chair to consult with all members on business, to verify that a majority concurs with decisions and recommendations, and to keep appropriate records of votes and decisions conducted electronically. The conduct of business by electronic correspondence shall be minuted according to the committee's normal practices, and shall be reported in the committee's reports to the Faculty Senate.

III. Regular reapportionment of the Senate.

The Faculty Senate must be reapportioned every third year to promote proportionality of representation of all academic units in the Senate. This responsibility falls to the Charter and Bylaws Committee. The Senate charter provides explicitly that reapportionment shall be done “in such a manner as to give representation proportionate to members” – in short, a standard of equality of faculty membership in each Senate group. There are no further formal requirements. UNT currently has 773 tenure track faculty, divided into eight faculty groups for representation. The ideal number of faculty per group, therefore, is equal to $773/8$ or 96.6. The accumulated disproportionality of the current grouping is substantial, ranging from 114 faculty (17.4 greater than the ideal) in Group VII down to 85 faculty (11.6 fewer than the ideal) in Groups VI and VIII.

The Charter and Bylaws committee developed the attached proposal for reapportionment seeking to maximize three objectives: (1) We sought, as commanded by the Senate charter, to structure the reapportioned groups to have as close as possible to 96.6 faculty each by not creating any new senate group with more than 2 persons above or below the target of 96.6. (2) We further tried, as far as possible consistent with the proportionate membership standard, to move as few units as possible away from the groups they are now in. And (3), remaining consistent with the proportionate membership standard, we have attempted when moving units among groups to retain or find affinities of interest or cooperation among departments. No reapportionment scheme can simultaneously meet all three objectives, and in cases in which these goals conflict the charter mandates that reapportionment maximize proportionality. The committee’s proposal meets that criterion and, we believe, represents a good faith effort to meet the other two criteria whenever possible.

The attached proposal (spreadsheet) lays out the Charter and Bylaws Committee’s proposed reapportionment of units for 2007-2010, prepared following consultation with the Senate Executive Committee. (For ease of interpretation units affected by reassignment to a new group are marked with filled boxes in the spreadsheet. No fill indicates no change.) The resulting proposal would have no group with fewer than 96 faculty, and none with more than 98 faculty. Columns in the spreadsheet indicate each of the current group’s present departments and their number of faculty, the recommended changes for each group, and the prior and proposed new membership of the senate’s districts.

As proposed, the reapportionment would leave 681 of 773 faculty (88%) in their present senate groups, and 42 of 52 departments (79%) in their present senate groups. Alternatively stated, the proposed reapportionment would change the senate group of 92 of UNT’s 773 faculty (only 12%), and of 10 of UNT’s 52 departments (19%).

Attachment: Senate redistricting proposal spreadsheet (Excel)