

University Senate Organization & Administration (O&A) Committee

Minutes from Friday 11 October 2013

Olympian Room, Burge Union, 11:00 AM

Committee members in attendance: Chris Anderson (chair), Lea Currie, Elizabeth Berghout, Mohamed El-Hodiri, John Hachmeister, Heidi Hallman, Marquise Paige, Logan Bayless, Kevin Lee, Brian McDow, Melodie Ash, Peggy Palmer

Guest: Cody Christiansen participated as a non-voting observer at the invitation of absent committee member Qi Chen

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 AM.

1. Introductions: Committee members and guest introduced themselves.
2. Old business: There was no old business to discuss.
3. New business: The committee discussed the following two charges:

Charge #1: Review the composition and leadership of the University Senate standing committees and recommend any needed changes in proportions of represented constituencies, or committee purviews. The following information should be obtained from the committee chairs:

Is the name and description of your committee concurrent with its responsibilities?

Is the size and composition of your committee appropriate?

Are there adjustments that should be made to the committee responsibilities?

Are there overlaps or gaps between your committee's responsibilities and those of other committees?

Is there a need to combine your committee with another, or should subcommittees be added?

The committee adopted a motion to conduct an email-based survey of current committee members and chairs with regard to these questions. The questionnaire to each committee will be customized to highlight that committee's description or mission statement, as well as provide a list of other committees and their respective descriptions. Chris Anderson will consult with the University Governance staff to obtain committee membership rosters and email addresses. Chris Anderson will draft email surveys and circulate them among the O&A committee members for suggestions and approval by 1 November, with the aim of sending the messages shortly thereafter.

Follow up reminders will be sent and all responses saved, summarized, and then circulated among O&A Committee members for asynchronous discussion about the need for further action or any in-person O&A Committee meetings for discussion. Absent any specified deadline, the committee will endeavor to forward its data, inferences, and any recommendations on this charge to the University Senate in early 2014.

Charge #2: In almost every other faculty governance body and in most professional associations, the past-president has a defined role. Investigate the utility of having a person serve as president-elect, president and then as past-president. One pro is having the wisdom and knowledge of the president retained a year longer, and one of the cons is that the commitment made by the individual in that role is extended by one year. Identify any specific duties the past-president might perform and make a recommendation to SenEx by December 2, 2013.

Discussion among O&A Committee members revealed little enthusiasm for this charge, as no one was ostensibly in favor of formalizing a defined role for past-president of the University Senate or Faculty Senate, and several committee members expressed reservations.

Nevertheless, an ad hoc subcommittee was formed of Elisabeth Berghout and Kevin Lee, who agreed to conduct an investigation of formal roles for past presidents at governance bodies at peer institutions; Brian McDow offered to help identify a list of peer institutions as identified by the university for other purposes. The subcommittee will endeavor to provide a brief report by Friday 25 October.

Peggy Palmer observed that KU's Unclassified Senate had a formal role for its immediate past president, and she agreed to provide the subcommittee and chair references to relevant documentation.

The information gathered by the ad hoc subcommittee and members acting as individuals on this issue will be circulated among O&A Committee members for asynchronous consideration and discussion. Committee members were advised to be prepared for an end-of-semester meeting if deemed necessary after such review and discussion in order to provide a response to SenEx by its 2 December 2013 deadline.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:40 AM.

Minutes submitted by Chris Anderson