

For the 11/10/2016 Faculty Meeting

Re: Voting Membership of the Faculty

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Introduction

Why care about who gets to vote at Faculty Meetings?

What policies and issues do the faculty vote on?

According to Section 8.4 of the Constitution of the Faculty of Augsburg College, the Faculty provide programs of study, establish graduation requirements, and approve candidates for academic degrees. In short, the Faculty controls the academic programs of the College. In addition, Faculty are responsible for recommending candidates for hiring to faculty positions, tenure, promotion and dismissal for cause (Section 8.5; 9.1 of the By-Laws to the constitution of the Faculty).

The Faculty have created structures to facilitate this work. Section 9.2 of the By-Laws outlines the Faculty committee structures by which much of the work of the Faculty is accomplished. Membership on these standing committees are determined by election and/or ratification by the voting members of the faculty.

The current language as approved by the Faculty last spring for Section 8.2.2 (formerly 8.2.B), describing the voting membership of the Faculty says:
“The voting membership of the Faculty will include all full-time members of the Faculty holding the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, and all full-time, non-tenure track faculty. It will include the officers of the administration, the Provost and Chief Academic Officer, Director of Ministries, the Registrar, and the full-time Librarians. Tenured faculty who are in phased retirement may also vote.”

Historically, tenure-track faculty also filled many administrative positions that have since been professionalized, such as recruitment and enrollment, or the registrar. The College and the Faculty and the Academic Programs have changed substantially over time. Not surprisingly, issues with the current language of 8.2.2 have arisen.

- Who should vote at Faculty meetings?
- Should adjunct faculty have voting rights at Faculty meetings?
- Who are “officers of the administration”? If they are not faculty, should they have voting rights at Faculty meetings?

Some possible scenarios on FHB language for Voting Membership of the Faculty
to start the conversation – none of these are currently being proposed.

1. Change the present language slightly (8.2.2)

“The voting membership of the Faculty will include all full-time members of the Faculty holding the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, and all full-time, non-tenure track faculty. It will include the officers of the administration, ~~the Provost and Chief Academic Officer~~, Director of Ministries, the Registrar, and the full-time Librarians. Tenured faculty who are in phased retirement may also vote.”

Comments

- Removing the Provost and Chief Academic Officer language is appropriate as they are “officers of the administration”, so they do not need to be listed separately.
- This allows the major stake-holders in the academic programs of the College to vote on matters concerning the academic programs.
- This allows officers of the administration who are not teaching to have influence over the academic programs of the College.
- “Officers of the administration” can change from administration to administration, at the whim of administration; they are staff members and not members of the faculty.
- It does not allow adjunct faculty to vote.

2. Change 8.2.2 to read:

“The voting membership of the Faculty will include all members of the Faculty. It will include the officers of the administration, the director of Ministries, the Registrar, and the Librarians. Tenured faculty who are in phased retirement may also vote.”

Comments

- Everyone gets to vote, including adjuncts. It opens faculty governance to everyone involved in the academic programs of the College.
- The Faculty HB applies to all faculty.
- Does not distinguish who carries the service load on the academic program from those who teach without engaging with the governance of the College.
- Quorum becomes an issue. Will there ever be a quorum at Faculty meetings? Will the definition of what constitutes a quorum need to be changed? Can the definition of what constitutes a quorum be changed?
- If adjunct faculty vote, what effect could this have on the academic programs, and how might this affect the adjunct responsibilities/pressures? What other ways to obtain adjunct representation is there?

3. Change 8.2.2 to read:

“The voting membership of the Faculty will include all full-time members of the Faculty who are subject to professional review as governed by this Faculty Handbook. Tenured faculty who are in phased retirement may also vote. The Provost, Dean of Arts and Sciences, and Dean of Professional Studies are voting members of the Faculty.”

Comments

- Only faculty who undergo reviews by faculty get to vote, as these are the faculty who are invested in the long-term well being of the College, and will “be here” to see the ramifications of governance decisions on the academic program. This would include all tenure track faculty, all full-time faculty.
- Adjunct faculty are ineligible to vote.
- Non teaching staff and Faculty, whose positions may have historically been held by teaching faculty, will no longer vote; their positions have influence in the governance structure of the College in other ways. For example, the Registrar.
- The Provost, Dean of Arts and Sciences, and Dean of Professional Studies will also be eligible to vote, as they are actively engaged in the academic programs of the College.
- Librarians are staff, and do not vote.
- Non teaching Faculty who previously had voting privileges would no longer have voting privileges.

4. Change 8.2.2 to read:

“The voting membership of the Faculty will include all members of the faculty. Tenured faculty who are in phased retirement may also vote. The Provost, Dean of Arts and Sciences, and Dean of Professional Studies are voting members of the Faculty. A quorum of the Faculty will be determined by fifty percent of the full-time faculty.”

Comments

- All faculty get to vote: tenure track, non tenure track, full time, adjunct.
- Staff are excluded. Officers of the administration and librarians do not vote.
- The Provost, Dean of Arts and Sciences, and Dean of Professional Studies will also be eligible to vote, as they are actively engaged in the academic programs of the College.
- As in option 3, if adjunct faculty vote, what effect could this have on the academic programs? How might this affect the adjunct responsibilities/pressures? What other ways to obtain adjunct representation is there?
- “full-time faculty” means tenure track and non tenure track teaching faculty whose contracts are $\geq 5/6$ (as defined in 6.1 of the Faculty Handbook).
- With any definition, the definition of quorum should be considered. (8.3.C in FH)