

May 4, 2004

TO: Suzanne Pasch
Convener, Steering Committee

FROM: Cindy Friedman
President, Staff Senate

SUBJECT: Governance Review

At our meeting on April 28, the Staff Senate reviewed the governance document in response to the Steering Committee's request for a review of the governance process. I have detailed the main points of our discussion below.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE

The Staff Senate recommends that any revised governance document include a section that codifies the importance of participation in campus governance. The section should state clearly that all faculty, staff, and students are able and encouraged to participate.

For governance to truly be inclusive of the entire campus, all areas must feel entitled to participate. It was the point of much discussion that many staff do not feel such entitlement. Many are not encouraged by their supervisors to participate. Some, in fact, are discouraged from doing so or are told that they can only do so on personal time such as lunch hours.

The revised governance document should make clear to supervisors that their staff should be given the time to facilitate their participation in governance. It should make clear to staff that they are entitled to take the time to do so.

To encourage active participation, we suggest that those involved in governance (elected to senate or seated on a committee/council) have something incorporated into their job descriptions/job responsibilities and included in the evaluation of their job performance. This, we feel, will ensure active participation and attendance to meetings. It was also suggested that staff that attend meetings or do the work of governance beyond their normal work hours be given compensatory time for such meetings.

STAFF/FACULTY RATIO ON COMMITTEES/COUNCILS

It is noted that on several governance committees and councils that the ratio between staff and faculty is not equal. For example, CPP has a membership consisting of six faculty but only two staff. The Staff Senate recommends that for all committees and councils for which the charge is not specifically academic (such as CAP), that the number of members of staff and faculty be made equal and kept in proportion when/if committee/council membership is adjusted.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE STAFF SENATE

The Staff Senate is satisfied with its current membership makeup. Increased membership would be welcomed if necessary to equalize the ratio of staff and faculty on committees/councils or to accommodate new governance committees or councils. It should be noted, however, that any change to the membership of the Staff Senate must maintain a balance between unit, and non-unit staff.

NEW COMMITTEE

The Staff Senate recommends the development of a new committee that would look at human resources issues as they relate to the staff. This would not be a grievance committee nor would it be an evaluation committee for promotions. This committee would not deal with issues constrained by union contracts. The committee would deal with issues such as grants, staff evaluation process (not individual evaluations), human resources policies, employee services, etc. The committee would consist of staff, human resources representatives, and students.

We offer the following example of the committee's involvement:

A new evaluation system for CWA and IFPTE staff (PES) was recently introduced to the campus. We understand that such a committee would not have been part of the state or union discussions regarding the development of the PES. However, the committee could have participated in such discussions with the College's Human Resources staff who then could have taken the concerns of the committee, and thus, the staff, to the larger group that was developing the PES.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

There was discussion of the difficulty in getting students to attend governance meetings. It was discussed that the members of SGA may be overburdened with too many meetings and that they may not be broadly representative of the student body. It was suggested that student representatives to governance committees/councils might be open not just to SGA members but to a larger pool of student leaders.

KEEPING THE CAMPUS INFORMED

The Staff Senate suggests that the Fourth Friday could be used as a means to notify the campus about governance issues and can be a tool for soliciting campus feedback or informing the campus of an issue progressing through the governance steps.