

19 February 2009

TO: Kenneth G. Holum
Chair, University Senate

FROM: Sabrina A. Baron
Chair, Senate ERG Committee

SUBJECT: Senate Policy on Eligibility for Election in the Faculty Constituency
(Senate Document 08-09-16)

On February 4, 2009, the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) charged the ERG Committee to consider eligibility for election of professors of practice in the faculty constituencies of the Senate as defined in Section 3.2.a (1) of the University Plan of Organization.

After substantive deliberation at the Committee's regularly scheduled meeting on February 19, 2009, the Committee has decided that election of professors of practice to the Senate should not go forward at this time because more information is required before a decision can be made on this question. As pointed out by Chair Holum in the charge, this decision has impact across all departments in the University, beyond the immediate concerns of the School of Public Policy who raised this question, and thus must be well informed and well considered. It is the opinion of the Committee that this decision cannot and should not be made in a short span of time to accommodate imminent elections.

The wording of Section 3.2.a (1) of the Plan of Organization is as follows:

those who hold a full-time tenured or tenure track
appointment at the rank of Professor, Associate Professor,
Assistant Professor or a rank recognized by the University
as equivalent to these,....

The Committee believes that this language clearly excludes professors of practice from this qualification as they do not hold tenured or tenure-track positions. As the Plan of Organization currently stands, professors of practice seem more likely to qualify for Section 3.2.a (3) as follows:

Instructors and Lecturers who have job security.

There does, however, appear to be a number of issues with including professors of practice in this constituency as well. It is the determination of the Committee that any inclusion of professors of practice at this juncture would require revision of the Plan of Organization itself.

In addition, the OIRP rep on the Committee raised some very pertinent questions about the need to more clearly define the status and rank of professors of practice generally. Campus-wide practice appears quite inconsistent and idiosyncratic. The rep also raised the question of the status and rank of College Park Professors, which seems to also need to be considered as part of this determination, as well as questions with regard to which faculty were included in the statistical counts that were the basis of the recent reapportionment of the Senate.

Therefore, the Committee is unable to make a clear determination at this time. The Committee will undertake further research with the particular assistance of the OIRP and UHR reps, and also including consultation with Ellin Scholnick and Marvin Breslow, which was not accomplished prior to today's meeting. The Committee will resume consideration of this question at our next meeting in March with more information in hand.




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February 4, 2009

TO: Sabrina Baron
Chair, Senate Committee on Elections, Representation, and Governance

FROM: Kenneth G. Holum 
Chair, University Senate

SUBJECT: Senate Policy on Eligibility for Election in the Faculty Constituency
(Senate Document 08-09-16)

Section 3.2.a(1) of the Senate Plan of Organization defines as eligible for election in one of the three faculty constituencies “those who hold a full-time tenured or tenure-track appointment at the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor or a rank recognized by the University as equivalent to these.” In an email to me, Steve Fetter, Dean of the School of Public Policy, has pointed out that the School has three (soon to be four) distinguished professors of the practice who we consider in every way (except tenure decisions) to be senior members of our faculty, equivalent to full professors.” He has inquired whether the School’s faculty would be permitted to elect one of these as its representative in the Senate.

Obviously, we need to determine how the Plan of Organization is to be interpreted on this point, with reference to Professors of the Practice generally in the University. I would therefore be very grateful if you would raise the Dean’s question with your committee and advise me how I should respond to Dean Fetter. It would be useful to invite Associate Provost Ellin Scholnick to join in the discussion, because she is exceptionally well-versed in faculty appointments and ranks, and to invite Marvin Breslow also, as the Senate’s Parliamentarian. Since elections are now in progress, I would appreciate a response as soon as possible, perhaps after your meeting of February 19.

KGH/rm