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Memorandum

To: The University Senate

From: Senate Executive Committee (SEC)

Date: October 6, 2010

Re: Motion to Approve a Revised Voting Process for Senate Meetings
             (Senate Document#: 10-11-20)

In December 2008, the Senate Office reorganized and downsized from five staff members to four. Unfortunately, the reduction in staff made it difficult to manually count voting cards used for voting purposes. Therefore, the Director of the Senate asked the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) to allow the office to use an electronic voting system through the use of hand-held clickers. This process was implemented as a tool for efficiency in the fall 2009 semester.

The process of using clickers to vote has been effective particularly when voting results are close. It is clear that the efficiency that the clickers afford is a necessity for the Senate. However, an unintended consequence of the new system is the elimination of the elements of "accountability" and "a sense of the room". The past voting system which had senators hold up voting cards allowed those in the room to see those elements first-hand. Because the clickers are anonymous by nature they do not allow for these elements to be visible.

In order to rectify this situation, the SEC moves that the Senate vote to approve a revised voting process for Senate meetings. The new process is one in which voting senators would raise their hands and press the button on the clicker corresponding to their vote on each question in the following manner:

1. All those in favor of a proposal would be asked by the Chair to press "1" on the clicker and raise their hands.
2. All those opposed to a proposal would be asked by the Chair to press "2" on the clicker and raise their hands.
3. All those who wish to abstain would be asked by the Chair to press "3" on the clicker and raise their hands.

The results of each category above would be displayed dynamically as the voting continued and the voting would stay open until the Chair announced its completion. The SEC believes that this new method resolves any concerns about accountability and the sense of the room. Should the Senate choose to reject this motion, the Senate would continue with the current voting system.