

Senate Membership Eligibility

This issue originally came to the agenda of the Faculty Senate at the request of President Bardo, noting that there are a number of Clinical Educators and Engineering Educators on campus who are not effectively represented on the Unclassified Professional (UP) Senate. Their interests and background align more closely with Faculty than with unclassified professionals. The Rules committee was tasked by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to look into clarifying and potentially expanding the membership eligibility of the Faculty Senate to include teaching unclassified professionals.

After careful study of the terminology used to identify and classify employees on campus, as well as an examination of the appropriateness of including additional employees whose main responsibility is teaching in the faculty senate, the Rules committee makes the following recommendation to revise the Faculty Senate Rules and Constitution:¹

- > Replace the current definition of eligibility: “The teaching/research faculty is defined as all full-time (1.0 EFT) university personnel who are tenured, temporary, probationary or instructors with faculty status at least 50 percent of whose University duties include teaching, research, and/or library service. Eligible members of the faculty also serve as the electorate.”

- > With the following: All employees who have teaching/library responsibilities of 50% or more and .5 FTE or greater will be eligible for membership in the Faculty Senate, including: temporary faculty, probationary faculty, tenured faculty, contingent unclassified professionals, provisional unclassified professionals, and regular unclassified professionals. These employees all have the e-class designation of FA or F2.

¹ Note that changes to the Faculty Senate Rules can be effected by a majority vote of the Senate; Constitutional changes require a vote of the General Faculty and a meeting would need to be called to effect such a vote if approved by the Senate.

Terminology

Employees at WSU can be categorized in several different ways. This can lead to confusion when trying to classify different kinds of employees, particularly when some of the terminology has changed over time but documents have not been revised to accurately reflect these changes. Various categories include:

- * *Rank* - employees eligible for advancement: asst, assoc, full prof; Instructors and Lecturers do not have rank (Senior Lecturer is a title).
- * *Title* - instructor, lecturer, educator. (no longer used: "Adjunct")
- * *Appointment status*
 - * Contingent UP- funding based on grants until they run out
 - * Provisional UP - like probationary - first three years of employment
 - * Regular UP- more permanent status - automatic after 3 yrs with good evaluations.
 - * Temporary Faculty - lecturers/instructors on an annual contract with benefits
- * *Appointment type* ("faculty" - used to identify employees who have 50% or more teaching duties)
- * *FTE* (full 1.0 or part time .5)

Points to note:

- .5 FTE has been included because there are a number of faculty in Fine Arts (Music) that are .5 not 1.0 FTE and this is the norm in their college.
- "Adjuncts" - are teaching employees who are hired on a semester to semester basis with no special notice regarding renewal, and who are not benefits eligible. They are not included as members because of their lack of continuity/permanence - which could result in irregular service;
- GTAs are not included because they are represented by Student Government Association.
- Departments will be impacted with regard to their own voting *only* to the extent that they choose to be. Policy 2.15 states that "The electorate for nominating a department chair shall, as a minimum, include all those serving as full-time (1.0 EFT) professors, associate professors, assistant professors and tenured instructors, who provide at least 50 percent of their University duties within the department. This group may, by majority vote, establish as a policy the extension of the electorate to (but no farther than) all those in the department enfranchised to vote under the Faculty Senate Constitution." Thus, departments may *choose* to extend their electorate to include temporary faculty and teaching UPs as defined within the revised Senate membership.

- Adding UPs will change balance of seats between the colleges in the Senate, and would also increase the number of total Senators if the 12:1 ratio is maintained.
 - 5 new members from Barton School (added to 39 faculty with Rank + 10 "Temp Fac" who have already been serving in Senate)
 - 5 current Senators > remain at 5 Senators
 - 12 new members from Education (added to 38 faculty with Rank)
 - 3 current Senators > change to 4 Senators
 - 8 new members from Engineering (added to 62 faculty with Rank)
 - 5 current Senators > change to 6 Senators
 - 52 new members from Health Professions (added to 36 with Rank)
 - 4 current Senators > change to 7 Senators
 - 18 new members from Humanities (added to 41)
 - > +1 seat
 - 14 new members from natural sciences (added to 53)
 - > no change
 - 17 new members from soc sci (added to 53)
 - > no change
 - 16 new members from Fine Arts (added to 48)
 - > +1 Seat
 - 1 new member from Library > no change
- * Total of 7 new Senators if ratio is maintained.

The Rules committee makes the following additional recommendations connected to revising the membership criteria for the Senate:²

- > We recommend that the language used in Policy 5.06 (Faculty Internal Disputes, ie Greivances) be revised to reflect the same clarification of language used for Faculty Senate membership so that temporary faculty, contingent unclassified professionals, provisional unclassified professionals, and regular unclassified professionals be included in this policy. The types of disputes that they are likely to have will be linked to their teaching capacity on campus and they should be accorded a panel of peers based on the types of disputes that might arise.

The current language used in Policy 5.06 is: "The term "faculty member" refers to persons who, at the time the grievance is filed, are full-time members of the faculty or who hold a fractional time appointment of .5 or more, and who are tenured, temporary, probationary, or *instructors with faculty status*" (italics added).

- > We do NOT recommend that any of these additional groups be added to the grievance pool for the same reasons already noted (burden of time, risk to those without tenure).

² With the support of the Faculty Senate, these recommendations will be forwarded to President Bardo who has authority of revisions to the University Policy Manual.

- > With regard to the appropriate policy to cover Dismissal for Cause, the Rules committee recommends that all unclassified professionals, regardless of teaching responsibilities, remain covered under Policy 6.12 (Disciplinary Action and Termination). Policy 4.23 (Dismissal for Cause) specifically states that it applies to a “faculty member who has tenure at Wichita State University or whose term of appointment has not expired” (ie “probationary” and “temporary faculty”).

- > With regard to whether temporary faculty or unclassified professionals should be restricted from serving on certain committees, the Rules committee recommends that membership on the Faculty Affairs Committee and the Faculty Support Committee be reserved for *probationary and tenured faculty* only, and that the two at-large positions on the University Tenure and Promotion committee be reserved to *tenured* faculty. These modifications to the composition of these committees is based on the responsibilities carried out by the committee that touch on tenure and sabbatical leave that do not affect temporary faculty or unclassified professionals. The current language for the composition on most committees simply reads “9 faculty, one chosen from each division”.³

Questions that have been raised in our discussions:

- Q: Do these additional teaching faculty *want* to have Faculty Senate membership instead of UP?
- A: Yes. Quite a few, especially in Health professions have been trying to get this issue addressed for several years.
- Q: Do these teaching faculty want to serve or will Senate membership and committee membership be a burden?
- A: A look at some of the people on this list has drawn remarks that these are some of the most dedicated employees in their units. They already serve in many capacities and would like the ability to serve in the Faculty Senate as well.
- Q: Could all of the newly added members be eligible to serve as officers in the Faculty Senate?
- A: Yes. There is nothing to restrict such service and the Rules committee found no reason to put such a restriction in place.

³ Approval of this recommendation simply requires a majority vote by the Senate to amend the Rules of the Senate.