

To: University Faculty Council
From: CAS Faculty Council
Date: 11/25/19
Subject: Streamlining Faculty Governance

The CAS Faculty Council advocates investing in a restructuring of our current faculty governance structure so as to streamline deliberation, policy and procedure making mechanisms, the curriculum and program review process, the ability to respond efficiently and effectively to fast-changing developments in higher education (including increased assessment and reporting requirements), and faculty work-load.

In addition, we advocate streamlining our faculty governance structure so as to reduce duplication of effort, gaps of communication and/or information sharing between committees, and long procedural processes for curriculum innovation.

Furthermore, we advocate streamlining our faculty governance structure so as to foster increased trust among the faculty in all three colleges and consolidate a stronger, more concentrated voice of and for the faculty.

We, the CAS Faculty Council, propose the following as possible means of reframing our current faculty governance system. We offer each of the following proposals as *starting points* for deliberation, which may be considered individually and/or holistically.

1. Consolidate all general education curriculum approvals under the aegis of one General Education Committee that handles all the business of general education, including approving intensive designations (such as Writing Intensive and Speaking Intensive). To ensure that the General Education committee has sufficient staffing to meet the increased work-load, it would seem advisable to increase significantly the membership of the committee, which could break up into working groups to handle distinct designations. Furthermore, directors of WI/SI/CE/FSEM could serve as *ex officio* members of the larger General Education Committee and as members of appropriate working groups. The new CourseLeaf catalog management software seems to us to have great potential in supporting this approach.

2. Currently, there are five steps that any department-level curriculum proposal goes through: (1.) approval of department chair; (2.) college-level curriculum committee; (3.) college-level governing body; (4.) University Curriculum Committee; (5.) University Faculty Council. While we understand the value of oversight to ensure the quality and integrity of the curriculum, we maintain that robust review at the department level, followed by an inter-college review by a University Curriculum Committee, and then final approval by the University Faculty Council would offer sufficient and appropriate review. We propose reframing the curriculum approval process so that: (1.) the department chair approval signifies ground-level attention to minimizing duplication

across the curriculum and predicting adequate enrollment; (2.) streamlining the process so that the University Curriculum Committee (with adequate representation from all 3 colleges) handles all the curricular business of the university faculty; and (3.) the UFC reviews and offers final approval on all curricular changes that the UCC recommends.

(3.) To further streamline, if desirable, the business of the Distance and Blended Learning Committee could be rolled into the University Curriculum Committee, and Honors course designations could be handled by the UCC, with the Honors Director serving as an *ex officio* member of the UCC.

(4.) Administrator-directors of various programs (such as the Teaching Center, the James Farmer Multicultural Center, Honors, the Community Engagement Center, for example) could create an advisory committee of fellow program-directors to serve in lieu (where it makes sense) of faculty advisory committees. This could potentially reduce advisory committee proliferation and/or faculty service work-load, while still ensuring that program directors receive valuable input and feedback for their programs. A process of review could be initiated that would seek feedback from relevant stake-holders to determine: (a.) if a faculty advisory committee is necessary for a given program; and, (b.) if so, whether an advisory committee of program directors could adequately serve as an alternate sphere of input for some of the duties assigned to a given faculty advisory committee.

(5.) Re-conceptualize the CAS Faculty Council, so that it serves as a Caucus of the CAS, capable of responding to issues relevant to CAS and important to its faculty rather than as a formal council that meets monthly to approve the minutes of the CAS Curriculum Committee (see #2 above).

CAS Faculty Council: Angela Pitts (CPR, President); Laura Mentore (Anthropology, Vice-President); Jackie Gallagher (Geography); Miriam Liss (Psychological Sciences); Andrew Delaney (Athletics); Larry Lehman (Mathematics); Gregg Stull (Theater and Dance); Helen Housley (Theater and Dance); Sarah Morealli (Earth and Environmental Sciences)