SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES AND RULES

Revision to Senate Constitution, Article II, Section 4 (Membership)
Change to Senate Representation Model

(Legislative)

(Implementation: 2012-2013 Senate year)

Purpose. In fall semester 2001, a Senate Self-Study Committee was charged by Senate Chair John Nichols to make recommendations to improve Senate organization and procedures and to suggest "ways the Senate can do a better job and seek ways to give faculty at large a greater sense of ownership in what the Senate does." One of their major recommendations was to decrease and streamline the size of the Senate to make it more efficient. In 2003-2004, the Senate had 233 elected faculty senators, 24 appointed/ex officio senators and 20 student senators. At that time, the representation ratio was one senator for every 20 faculty.

Recommendation 1 of the October 2003 report, proposed to "Create a smaller, more efficient Senate by changing the representation ratio to one senator for each thirty (30) members of the electorate." The recommendation was amended on the floor to a 1:25 ratio and that recommendation was phased in over a four year time period (2004-05 through 2007-08) leading to a Senate size of 206 elected faculty seats. As seen in Table 2, due to a significant increase in the size of the Penn State faculty, the number of elected faculty senators will increase to 240 in 2011-12 based on the October 29, 2010 census.

In the past, the primary motivation for controlling the size of the Senate was that smaller committees are more agile and efficient and they may give individual members greater motivation to participate. In comparison to other peer institutions, Penn State's Senate is one of the larger representative bodies. However, we fall in the middle with respect to representation ratios. In today's economic climate there is a second motivation, as every unit of the University has been asked to reduce costs. The growing Senate makes this very difficult to do, as travel expenses continue to increase. In fall semester 2009, the cost of travel (fleet vehicle, mileage, meals, lodging) was $45,700. Therefore, maintaining a reasonably sized Senate has a number of benefits.

In spring 2010, CC&R sponsored a Forensic session to examine several possible models of Senate representation. The model that had the most support was a hybrid model that set the Senate size at a fixed level based on representation ratio, but automatically provided one elected faculty senator per unit. This model has the advantage of protecting the smallest units while setting the size of the Senate at a fixed number to avoid the time-consuming process of reexamining the faculty representation model of the Senate every few years if the University faculty continues to grow.

To meet the needs of the Faculty Senate committees without disenfranchising a significant number of current senators, we propose a hybrid model based on a maximum size of 200 elected faculty senators. This would be 6 fewer elected faculty senators than at our last reduction, but will provide enough faculty senators to more than adequately staff committees. This model prevents the need to revisit the issue every few years. In reality, rounding up from .50 would create numbers of elected faculty senators that range from 197 to 203.

As in the past, Senate reductions were handled by the units in consultation with the Senate Elections Commission. Units scheduled for size reductions after the Senate census, would be given the option of reduction by attrition, reducing seats over a four year period as terms end.

One possible problem with this model is that setting a fixed size for elected faculty members of the Senate may lead over time to overrepresentation by one unit if it shows dramatic growth. Therefore, the committee recommends that a cap be set at 15 percent of the total elected faculty Senate seats for each unit. At 200 elected faculty senators, this means that a unit would stop adding seats once they reached 30 such senators. This would equate to two senators for each of the standing committees of the Senate. The advantage of a cap is that very large units often have problems finding enough faculty senators to serve and frequently have more problems with attendance.

The formula for calculation of elected faculty Senate seats is provided below:

Unit ratio = number of faculty in the academic unit / available University faculty seats

Available seats = 200 – number of units

Number of seats allocated for unit = 1 seat + [unit ratio x available seats]

For example, in the case of Altoona:

Unit ratio = 191 Altoona faculty / 5870 total University faculty = .033
Available Senate seats = 200 – 37 = 163
Number of seats allocated for Altoona = 1 + [.033 x 163] = 6.4
Therefore, 6 seats are allocated to Altoona. (See Table 1)

It is understood that to decrease the size of the elected faculty senators would entail decreasing the number of appointed administrative senators to maintain the ten percent limit. The number of student senators would remain the same because student senators are not elected on a representation ratio.

Article II
Membership

Section 1

For the purpose of defining the electorate of the Senate, the term "University faculty" shall mean all persons who hold full-time academic appointments, and who hold one of the following ranks: Lecturer, Instructor, Senior Lecturer, Senior Instructor, Research Assistant, Senior Research Assistant, Senior Scientist, Research Associate, Senior Research Associate, Professor of Practice, Assistant Librarian, Associate Librarian, Librarian, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor with the following exclusions:
(a) The President's immediate staff;
(b) The immediate staff of the Executive Vice President and Provost, including Vice Provosts and Associate and Assistant Vice Provosts;
(c) Other Vice Presidents, including Associate and Assistant Vice Presidents, Academic Deans and Chancellors;
(d) Those holding affiliate academic appointments.
(e) Faculty members of the Pennsylvania College of Technology are not included in the electorate of the University Faculty Senate.

Section 2

The Senate shall be elected by the University faculty from among its members, except for ex officio, student, and appointed members as provided in Section 5. All members of the Senate shall have full voting rights.

Section 3

For the purpose of electing senators, the University faculty shall be divided into the following groups, hereinafter referred to as academic voting units:

(a) Each college at University Park
(b) Penn State Abington
(c) Penn State Altoona
(d) Penn State Erie, The Behrend College
(e) Penn State Berks
(f) Penn State Harrisburg
(g) Dickinson School of Law
(h) Great Valley
(i) University Libraries at University Park. All members of the University Libraries at locations other than University Park who fit the definition of the Senate Electorate are included in the Senate Electorate and census for that particular location.
(j) College of Medicine
(k) The Combined Departments of Military Science at University Park. All members of the Departments of Military Science at locations other than University Park who fit the definition of the Senate electorate are included in the Senate electorate and census for that particular location.
(l) Each campus of the University College.
(m) Such groupings as may be designated, according to such procedures as the Senate may establish.
(n) The academic voting units shall elect their senators at-large rather than as representatives of smaller units within the academic voting units, except at multi-campus units. In the case of a multi-campus unit, the academic voting unit itself shall determine the method of allocating Senate seats within that unit, provided that each geographic location is represented by at least one senator. The method of allocating Senate seats must be approved by Senate Council.

Each faculty member shall be counted in one, and only one, academic voting unit. Members of the University faculty who are not included in one of the above units (described in a-m of this section of the Constitution) may petition for assignment to an academic voting unit, according to procedures as the Senate may establish.

Section 4 (current)

The University faculty of each unit shall elect one senator for each twenty-five members of the electorate (as defined in Section 1) and major fraction thereof in that unit, except that each unit shall have a minimum of one senator. The normal term of elected faculty senators shall be four years. One-fourth of the total number, as nearly as practicable, of faculty senators from each voting unit shall be elected each year. To balance membership terms in any unit, the Elections Commission may on request permit the voting unit to elect a senator for a term of less than four years.

Section 4 (proposed)

The University Faculty Senate will be set at a fixed size of 200 elected faculty seats. Each unit (as defined in Section 3) will initially be allocated one elected faculty Senate seat. Remaining Senate seats, up to the total size, will be allocated proportionately to each academic unit based on the ratio of full-time faculty in each unit to the total of all full-time faculty. No academic unit may have more than 15 percent of the elected faculty senators. Seats will be allocated on the basis of the Senate census preceding the election. The University faculty of each unit shall elect their senators. The normal term of elected faculty senators shall be four years. One-fourth of the total number, as nearly as practicable, of faculty senators from each voting unit shall be elected each year. The Elections Commission may, on request, permit the voting unit to elect a senator for a term of less than four years.

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Table 1
Total Faculty and Recommended Model of Elected Faculty Representation

Voting Unit (37 units in 2010)	Total Faculty 10/29/10	2011-12 Senate Seats	Fixed Hybrid Recommended Model*
Abington	113	5	4
Agricultural Sciences	318	13	10
Altoona	191	8	6
Arts & Architecture	189	8	6
Berks	122	5	4
Business	135	5	5
Communications	65	3	3
Earth & Mineral Science	245	10	8
Education	186	7	6
Engineering (ENGR 365, ARL 152)	517	21	15
Erie	246	10	8
Great Valley	45	2	2
Harrisburg	211	8	7
Health & Human Development	290	12	9
Information Sciences & Technology	51	2	2
International Affairs	9	1	1
Law	69	3	3
Liberal Arts	626	25	18
Libraries	66	3	3
Medicine (HMC 723, COM 291)	1030	41	30
Military Sciences	18	1	1
Nursing	36	2	2
Science	407	16	12
(Subtotal)	5185	211	**165**
University College			
Beaver	36	2	2
Brandywine	64	3	3
DuBois	48	2	2
Fayette	60	2	3
Greater Allegheny	43	2	2
Hazleton	57	2	3
Lehigh Valley	35	2	2
Mont Alto	61	2	3
New Kensington	42	2	2
Schuylkill	47	2	2
Shenango	33	1	2
Wilkes-Barre	39	2	2
Worthington Scranton	58	2	3
York	62	3	3
Subtotals University College	685	29	34
TOTALS	**5870**	**240**	**199****

*   1 seat + [unit ratio x available seats] = number of seats allocated for unit (for details see above)

** Although the target size of the Senate is 200, rounding up from .50 will mean the actual number of senators will range from 197 to 203.

Table 2
Senate Size 1985 to 2010

Year	Total Faculty	Elected Faculty Senate Seats	Representation Ratio	Students	Appointed/ Ex-Officios	Retired Faculty	Total Senate Size	Notes
1985	3395	170	1/20	17	17		204	
1986	3402	172	1/20	17	17		206	
1987	3476	174	1/20	15	17		206	
1988	3502	177	1/20	17	17		211	
1989	3534	179	1/20	18	18		215	
1990	3637	183	1/20	18	18		219	
1991	3766	189	1/20	16	18		223	
1992	3842	191	1/20	18	19		228	
1993	3895	192	1/20	15	19		226	
1994	3795	188	1/20	16	19		223	
1995	3883	194	1/20	17	21		232	
1996	4065	203	1/20	17	19		239	
1997	4033	200	1/20	19	19		238	
1998	4011	202	1/20	17	19		238	
1999	4064	205	1/20	18	21		244	
2000	4227	212	1/20	17	22		251	
2001	4349	217	1/20	21	22		260	
2002	4445	222	1/20	22	22	2	268	
2003	4684	233	1/20	22	24	2	281	
2004	4992	250	1/20-25	22	25	2	299	first year of phase-in
2005	4909	223	1/20-25	24	22	2	271	second year phase-in
2006	4963	206	1/20-25	24	21	2	253	third year of phase-in
2007	5201	214	1/25	24	21	2	261	final year of phase-in
2008	5372	220	1/25	24	22	2	268	
2009	5541	221	1/25	25	22	2	270	
2010	5723	232	1/25	26	22*	2	282	
2011	5870	240	1/25	26	24	2	292	

* The Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School also served as Chair of the Academic Leadership Council in 2010-11.