



President of the Faculty Senate

TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: Andrew Wright, President of the Faculty Senate
SUBJECT: Adding “Student Affairs” Responsibility to the UALR Constitution
DATE: October 13, 2014

Senator Tschumi has made a motion to add “Student Affairs” to the list of responsibilities assigned to the Faculty Senate.

Text of Senator Tschumi's motion:

- A. Motion FS_2014_16. Pete Tschumi (Legislation. Majority vote at one meeting.)(Action to be submitted to the University Assembly for ratification at two consecutive Assembly meetings.) That the section of the constitution specifying the functions of the Faculty Senate be modified as shown below to add student affairs thereby bringing the constitution into alignment with Board of Trustee Policy 100.4

Functions of the Faculty Senate

Within the framework of this Constitution, the authority of the UALR Assembly, and such governmental principles as are officially established for the University of Arkansas multicampus system, the Faculty Senate shall be, under the Board of Trustees, the legislative and advisory body on educational policies and programs on this campus. The Faculty Senate shall have the right to make recommendations on all matters that concern the educational mission and effectiveness of the University.

The areas of the Faculty Senate’s legislative authority shall include but are not limited to the following list taken from Board of Trustee Policy 100.4, Chapter III, section 5.2:

1. Admission requirements
2. Curriculum and courses
3. Degrees and requirements for degrees
4. Calendar and schedules
5. Awards, honors and honorary degrees
6. Student affairs
7. Interpretation of its own legislation

In addition to its legislative authority and all actions taken under this authority, the Faculty Senate shall make comments and recommendations on matters of

multicampus concern, directing them to the chancellor and, through the chancellor, to the president or other appropriate system-wide University authority. Similarly, the Faculty Senate shall make comments and recommendations on matters of UALR concern, directing them either to the chancellor alone or to both the chancellor and the president of the University of Arkansas, to be submitted by the president to the Board of Trustees.

Commentary: I do not know why this authority was not included in the constitution originally perhaps it was added to policy 100.4. Regardless as to why it is not there, it is one of the responsibilities of the faculty and should be included.

The relevant Section of Board Policy 100.4 that Senator Tschumi cites in his motion is (where I've bolded the relevant sections for emphasis):

5. Campus Governance 5.1 Scope and Purpose

The constituency of each principal campus shall develop a system of campus government to establish policies and procedures for campus governance. The purposes shall be to provide a system that permits a broad base for governance of that campus through appropriate participating involvement of the administration, students, faculty, and staff in the determination of guidelines and policies for campus affairs and to generate and promote understanding, collaboration and a sense of community on the campus. The responsibility and authority hereinafter described in this section shall be vested in the campus organization by the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees and shall be subject to review by the Board.

5.2 Authority and Responsibility

The campus governance organization on each campus **shall**, under the Board of Trustees, **be the legislative body responsible for developing educational policies and programs on that campus**. Among other matters, this responsibility includes such areas as:

- (1) Admissions requirements
- (2) Curriculum and courses
- (3) Degrees and requirements for degrees
- (4) Calendar and schedules
- (5) Academic honors
- (6) Student affairs**
- (7) Interpretation of its own legislation.

The campus government shall have the authority to make recommendations to the Chancellor, President, and the Board of Trustees on any matter of general faculty or campuswide concern, including such matters as appointment, promotion, tenure, dismissal, and non-reappointment. Through the Chancellor, action on any matter under this paragraph is reported to the President and, when requested by the campus government or considered necessary or desirable by the President, through the President to the Board of Trustees.

5.3 Organization and Operation

Each campus shall, consistent with provisions of this section, design any campus governmental structure and operate in any manner it determines consistent with the principles of sound democratic government. The following features shall be included:

- (1) Members of the administration, faculty, staff, and students under the administrative jurisdiction of each of the principal campuses shall have representation in the governance of that campus.
- (2) **The local organization shall be predominantly faculty.**
- (3) Meeting notices and tentative agenda shall be publicized at least five (5) days in advance of the meeting.
- (4) Meetings shall be open to all represented persons, although floor privileges may be limited.
- (5) Summaries of the meetings shall be made available to all members of the local governing body promptly after the meeting.
- (6) Minutes of the meetings shall be forwarded promptly to the Chancellor and shall be deposited in the campus library.

Chancellor Anderson has asked me to share his response to Senator Tschumi with the Faculty Senate:

Pete,

In reviewing the Faculty Senate agenda for tomorrow I have just seen the proposal to amend our Constitution to re-instate “Student affairs” as an area of legislative authority. I can respond to the statement, “I do not know why this authority was not included in the constitution originally perhaps it was added to 100.4.”

In fact, it was deliberately left out, and the Board of Trustees approved the then-revised Constitution without its inclusion 25-30 years ago. These were considerations:

--Faculty had a lot to say grace over. Faculty work was becoming more multi-faceted, involving more and more extra-academic roles, as the state (through ADHE and also action of the General Assembly) and accrediting associations steadily added mandates that reached down to faculty and added demands on faculty time. (A few years later, assessment of academic achievement became the poster child of this trend.)

--At the same time, student affairs functions were expanding on campuses all across the country—counseling offices (beyond academic advising); disability support services; more elaborate, legally-required, student behavior adjudication systems; financial aid offices; and more—were put in place. As a general proposition, the areas in student affairs are beyond the expertise of faculty.

--The Faculty Senate’s authority over academic policies and programs still enables it to reach into the student service domain on subjects such as admission, academic probation, suspension, etc. Further, the Faculty Senate’s authority to recommend or comment on matters outside its legislative authority remains if and when there is dissatisfaction with things in student affairs.

So my question is, is there a problem that the proposed Constitutional amendment is intended to address? If it is proposed in order to conform to the list in 100.4, then that matter was long ago settled by the Board of Trustees. Or, if there is a specific issue, problem, office, or whatever in students affairs that is a concern, I want to know what it is. In any event, it is debatable whether the proposed change represents an important step forward or an ill-advised step backwards. It deserves very careful consideration.

Subsequent to the Chancellor's statement, I've dug back through the archives to see as much of the

history of the constitution as I can. Little Rock University joined the University of Arkansas on 17th day of August, 1967 (BP 1005.1) and the merger was effected 9/1/1969 (minutes of 8/18/1969 LRU assembly meeting).

In 10/26/1970, the UALR Assembly passed its first constitution under the auspices of the University of Arkansas. However, this constitution was not signed by the Chancellor. A revised constitution was passed in 5/15/1972, which appears to have been accepted on 10/18/1972. Many changes were made to this constitution up to 4/23/1975, including making section III the "Constitution of the UALR Assembly." The minutes of the 12/10/1975 meeting make reference to the Board of Trustees enacting the UALR Constitution "last summer" with minor modifications.

In 4/13/1988, the Constitution was replaced *in toto* by the Constitution that created the Faculty Senate and delegated the authority as seen in Senator Tschumi's motion.

The minutes archives are available in the Provost's Office as well as on-line at calliope.ualr.edu/facultysenate/. I invite any Senator wishing to delve into the history of this discussion to peruse these minutes.