

# ACTION ITEM: TERM LIMITS FOR FACULTY SENATORS

A BYLAW CHANGE PROPOSAL



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# CURRENT RULES FOR FACULTY SENATOR APPOINTMENTS

- **Faculty Governance Document Section 3.02(c)** [*emphasis is mine*]

The term of membership for Senators is **two years; Senators may be re-elected by their units**. In the case of contract expiration and non-renewal, the academic unit replaces its Senate and team members as discussed in section 3.02(h).

## SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH HOW WE DO IT NOW?

- There's **nothing** wrong with it in theory, but in practice...
- The Parliamentarian's evaluation of college elections has resulted in the following conclusions:
  - Colleges in which Senate seats are in high demand often have more nominees than seats. Long-term, respected incumbents tend to win elections on strong name recognition. While this isn't itself bad, newer faculty interested in shared governance have a tougher time securing a spot.
  - Other colleges have the opposite problem: Senate appointments assigned to the same individuals term after term regardless of their other commitments, causing scheduling and attendance issues.
  - Term limits will *not* single-handedly fix these or any other representation problem, but would help.



## PROPOSED LANGUAGE

- **Faculty Governance Document Section 3.02(c)** [*revisions in red*]

The term of membership for Senators is two years; Senators may be re-elected by their units **once**.

i. Upon the expiration of two (2) consecutive terms, former Senators are ineligible to run for an open Senator seat in their colleges until two (2) academic years have passed from said expiration.

ii. The two consecutive term limit will initially be applied to all Senators active in Fall 2019. All Senators active during Fall 2019, regardless of prior time served, are eligible to run for re-election once more.

iii. Senators elected as Officers of the Senate are exempt from the two consecutive term limit until they no longer hold an Officer position. At that point, the Senators may serve out any time remaining on their current terms and are then subject to ineligibility as described in 3.02(c)(i).

iv. In the case of contract expiration and non-renewal, the academic unit replaces its Senate and team members as discussed in Section 3.02(f).

## NOTES ABOUT THIS LANGUAGE

- This allows for four consecutive years of Senate service *at a time*. Former Senators are still eligible to be Senators again after a short break.
  - With two terms, a break and re-election current Senators can still serve 8 out of the next 10 years.
  - In theory, a popular Senator could still serve 14 out of the next 20 years...
  - ...or 20 out of the next 30 years (et cetera, et cetera).
- Becoming an Officer of the Senate allows a Senator to run for re-election beyond the limit and continue serving. This ensures that the recruitment, election, and continuity of Officers is not disrupted.
- **Anyone** serving on Senate next fall may still run for another term in 2020 or 2021 regardless of how long they have been serving.



## NOTES ABOUT THIS LANGUAGE



**No one is interested in retroactively counting terms and immediately turning over a large number of current Senate seats. That would be unnecessarily disruptive, contrary to the purpose, and mean.**

**Term limits as proposed would not begin to take effect for another three years.**

## This language was written:

- ...with the intent of **honoring** the service of longstanding Faculty Senators and to provide avenues for their continued service,
- ...to **not immediately disrupt** college election processes,
- ...to provide **continuity** of Senate Officer leadership,
- ...to provide a systemic check that provides occasional opportunities for **new Faculty Senators to join**,
  - ...and to allow those wishing to leave to do so.

## TIMELINE

This proposal's **first reading and discussion** as an Action Item will take place during the March 15th, 2018 Faculty Senate session.



Faculty Senate's **vote** on this proposal will take place during the March 29th, 2018 session.