

October 28, 2011

Dear Phil,

This is my personal opinion. I strongly object to the condition regarding total Faculty Senate governance over curriculum as stated in Article V, Section 2, b. (2). It is my opinion that this condition (V.2.b.2) has the potential to weaken Faculty Governance. My opinion is largely based upon my experience and membership since Fall, 2007, and as chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Council (UCC) since August, 2009.

The UCC is comprised of elected Faculty members from the Academic units at Idaho State University. Elected constituents are a core component of any Faculty Governance structure.

Upon the suspension of the Faculty Senate by the State Board of Education, I reviewed the bylaws of the Faculty Senate and those of the associated Councils. From this, I observed two distinctions between the UCC and the other seven (7) Councils of the suspended Faculty Senate. The Governance distinguishing point is that the membership of the UCC was explicitly elected by their corresponding units. Other Councils' bylaws stated appointed members. Second, the UCC was the only one of the eight (8) other Councils within the suspended Faculty Senate structure to have ex-officio status with the suspended Faculty Senate.

During this time, as UCC chair, I was also working with Academic Affairs, the UCC, and other Faculty, regarding the revision of General Education Requirements (GER). The combination of this service and my observation of the uniqueness of the UCC led me to further investigate the General Education Goals, UCC, and Faculty Senate. This investigation provided me with a historical insight. In the time soon following the implementation of the current GER, the Curriculum Committee was absorbed as a sub-committee by the newly formed Faculty Senate, which evolved from a Faculty Council. Prior to this, both the Curriculum Committee and Faculty Council were independently-elected Faculty Governance structures.

Second, a strict interpretation of the relationship between the Faculty Senate and UCC, and the role of the UCC within the broader university environment became problematic with the suspension of the Faculty Senate. Subsequent to the suspension of the Faculty Senate by the State Board of Education, a number of UCC members resigned their positions. However, those elected members who remained on the UCC were committed in advancing the proposals of our colleagues with curriculum revisions to benefit our student population and the State of Idaho.

Under a strict interpretation, the UCC would not have advanced over *FIFTY* proposals since mid-February, 2011, nor moved forward Faculty Governance regarding GER. By not progressing the GER, a recommendation of our accreditation body, the regional accreditation of ISU could be jeopardized. Had the quorum of elected UCC members followed this strict interpretation, these *FIFTY* proposals and the GER would be waiting for the suspended Faculty Senate to approve them (under the proposed V.2.b.2).

In addition, over the past two months, the UCC has received and discussed the comments of our colleagues in the faculty regarding the GER and necessary General Education Requirements Committee (GERC). This has resulted in the development of a set of bylaws for the GERC, consistent with Faculty Governance in that all voting members of the GERC are elected by their constituents in the Faculty.

This fall, the UCC revised its bylaws to reflect the reporting structure to the University Provost. When the Provisional Faculty Senate becomes permanent, the UCC will review its bylaws and add the Faculty Senate as an ex-officio member, along with Academic Affairs, The Office of the Registrar, and the University Advising.

Sincerely,

Ken Trimmer, Ph.D., Chair, Undergraduate Curriculum Council

Professor of Computer Information Systems and Accounting, College of Business