

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY

Senate Chair's Report

Senate Meeting, April 30, 2019

Before the end of the semester, the Senate needs two faculty members to volunteer to serve on the Constitution and Bylaws Committee (CBC) for AY19/20. The faculty members do not need to be senators, but I encourage any senator who is not currently serving on a standing committee to volunteer. The CBC plays an important role in interpreting and proposing revisions for the guiding documents of the Senate, such as the Senate Constitution and the Bylaws and Rules of Procedure. Next academic year, the CBC, in consultation with the Faculty Affairs Committee, expects to be taking on the important work of revising the Faculty Handbook. If you are not familiar with the Faculty Handbook, take a look at it [here](#). Please contact me if you might be interested in serving, and Senator Wrenn (chair of CBC next year) or I can explain more about what the Senate hopes to accomplish with this project.

On Thursday, May 9 and Friday, May 10, as part of the ACTCSP, I will be taking part in the interviews of candidates for HSU president (the current membership of the ACTCSP can be found at the presidential search [site](#)). It is my understanding that after this round of interviews, the names of the top three finalists will be shared with the CSU Board of Trustees and a recommendation made by the Chancellor in a closed session of the Board of Trustees on May 20 (this is in keeping with the original search schedule we received in October, 2018). According to a CSU spokesperson, as reported in [this article](#) in the Times-Standard, the Chancellor intends to announce the final choice on May 22.

Several faculty senators have contacted me about their concerns regarding procedure and transparency in the current searches for administrators, such as Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs, Vice Provost/Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, Director of Academic Resources, and Athletics Director. Chapter VII of the Faculty Handbook outlines the procedures for creating search committees for administrators. Faculty have been told by HR/APS that it is now policy not to disclose the names of search committee members or to provide any information about the candidates beyond simple bios. This policy appears to violate shared governance principles for at least some searches and senators are questioning the necessity of imposing such a restrictive policy.

Section 701 of the Faculty Handbook governing administrator position search committees,

The University observes a policy of collegiality that includes the participation of faculty, staff, and students (where appropriate) on search committees that review the applications of persons applying for administrative positions in the University. These committees will have access to documents relating to the candidates, will participate in the interview process, and make their recommendations known to the President or other administrator, who is responsible for making the appointment.

Unless specified otherwise below, all search committees for administrative positions not under the Division of Academic Affairs, at the level of Associate Vice President or higher, will have a minimum of two General Faculty members, appointed by the President in consultation with the Senate Executive Committee (Academic Senate Resolution #19-05/06-EX, March 7, 2006)

Among the current administrator searches, only the composition of the search committee for Vice Provost/Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies is specified in the Faculty Handbook (section 714)

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The search committee for Staff Deans (Dean for Research, Graduate Studies and International Programs and Vice Provost for Academic Programs and Undergraduate Studies) shall consist of:

- Faculty members, one from each college and the University Library, elected by the faculty of the colleges and the University Library.
- One non-academic staff member selected by the President or their designee.
- One or two deans appointed by the President or their designee.
- One student member selected by the Associated Students.
- The President or their designee may select one or more members in consultation with the Executive committee of the Senate who will serve to represent areas or issues not represented by the above.
- The President or designee will select the chair of the search committee from among the faculty elected to serve on the committee.

A general call for nominations was sent by the Senate Office to the General Faculty on August 31, 2018, for service on the search committees for AVP of Faculty Affairs, AVP of Student Affairs, Vice Provost, and Director of Academic Resources. The AVP for Student Affairs search was subsequently suspended. The search committee for the Athletic Director position was organized by the President's Office in December 2018/January 2019. As I interpret section 701, because the Athletics Director position is not at the level of "Associate Vice President or higher," the search committee is not required to have faculty representation; however, in consultation with the Senate office, President Rossbacher solicited nominations of three faculty to serve, and it is my understanding that they are serving on the committee with AVP of Administrative Affairs, Doug Dawes, serving as Chair.

Since the Director of Academic Resources position is under the Division of Academic Affairs, the search committee is not required to include faculty members among its membership. Because of the current HR/APS policy of confidentiality regarding membership on search committees, I am unclear as to how many and which specific faculty members are currently serving on that search committee.

The search for the AVP for Faculty Affairs is ongoing and candidates will be visiting campus soon. On October 24, 2018, the Senate Appointments and Elections committee approved the nominations of faculty members Chelsea Teale, Jayne McGuire, Ramesh Adhikari and Katia Karadjova to serve on the search committee. At its January 22, 2019, meeting, the Provost requested that the Senate Executive Committee approve Anne Paulet as an addition to the faculty members who were already serving.

The composition of the search committee for the Vice Provost position is specifically outlined in section 714 of the Faculty Handbook. When the self-nominations for service on that search committee were received by the Senate Office in October, 2018, a General Faculty election should have been held. It was thought at the time an election was unnecessary because only one self-nomination was received for each faculty position on the search committee. These nominations were: Jill Pawlowski for CPS representative, Kyle Morgan for the Library, Alison O'Dowd for CNRS and Julie Alderson for CAHSS (Julie replaced Joice Chang who withdrew her nomination). These nominations were approved by the Senate Appointments and Elections Committee. Senator Zerbe has indicated that his understanding of General Faculty election procedures is that even when only one nomination is received per position, faculty in each respective electorate should be allowed to vote yes/no on that candidate. I apologize for not catching the nomination and appointment vs. election discrepancy.

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It came to my attention last week that Senator Kerri Malloy is serving as Chair of the Vice Provost search committee, and his appointment potentially puts the selection of Chair out of compliance with section 714. In accordance with the provision in section 714 that "(t)he President or their designee may select one or more members in consultation with the Executive committee of the Senate who will serve to represent areas or issues not represented by the above," at the November 27, 2018, meeting of the Senate Executive Committee, in response to a request by the Provost that Senator Malloy represent the Senate and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council, members approved the addition of him to the Vice Provost search committee. It was not shared with the SenEx committee at the time or subsequently that he would serve as Chair. Senator Malloy's selection as Chair seems to conflict with the requirement in section 714 that "the President or designee will select the chair of the search committee from *among the faculty elected to serve on the committee*" (emphasis mine). Because no general faculty election was held for the faculty representatives on that committee, however, technically no faculty *were elected* to serve, and appointment to the Chair position could be seen as open to any faculty member serving on the search committee.

I do not point out these potential issues with procedure to suggest that the current Vice Provost search should not move forward as planned; rather, I simply wish to highlight why a lack of transparency in the membership of MPP search committees is problematic, especially for constituencies who select representatives to serve on those committees through elections or other consultative processes. I urge the administration to re-think the policy of refusing to disclose who is serving on MPP search committees, particularly for the positions at AVP and above and/or positions whose search committee memberships are outlined specifically in the Faculty Handbook.