

## **DRAFT FAQ – FEBRUARY 1, 2011**

### **Where can I get more information about the proposals and read the documents?**

The documents, as well as working drafts as component analysis, are available through the Academic Senate website at <http://www.humboldt.edu/senate/reports/reports10-11.html>

Progress reports and updates are also available on the Change Steering Committee's web site: <http://change.humboldt.edu/>

### **What is the basic concept of the University Senate?**

The basic concept of the University Senate is that it would be the primary policy recommending body for the campus community and therefore include voting delegates from all constituencies of the campus community. This is the concept that was recommended by the Cabinet for Institutional Change and is in the University Senate model used by San Diego State University. It is also the concept that was endorsed *in principle* by the Academic Senate in February 2010.

### **Why are most of the members of the proposed University Senate faculty members?**

- ❖ The University Senate takes the place of an Academic Senate, which is the traditional body through which the faculty acts on its responsibility to advise the President of the University on matters of University policy including:

Admission requirements for students, conditions for the award of certificates and degrees to students, and the content and conduct of courses, curricula, and research programs. Criteria and standards to be used for the appointment, promotion, evaluation, and tenure of academic employees, which shall be the joint responsibility of the academic senate and the trustees. These responsibilities are traditional within academia and are also recognized by California state law (HEERA).

- ❖ In recognition of the fact that these are core faculty responsibilities, faculty loads include time for collateral duties and it is expected that faculty will provide service to the University, including participation in shared governance at the university, college and/or department level. This is part of the “job” of faculty.
- ❖ The University Senate as proposed is a delegate body, not strictly speaking a representative body. The majority of the work of the University Senate will still be directly related to the faculty responsibilities for shared governance and so there needs to be a preponderance of faculty both to serve on the committees of the senate and to provide a diversity of faculty voice.

### **Why does the faculty vote on the proposals?**

- ❖ The proposals significantly change the General Faculty Constitution, which can only be changed by a vote of the faculty

- ❖ The proposals delegate traditional and legal faculty responsibilities for policy recommendation to a body which includes both faculty and non-faculty voting members. The General Faculty is the group which has the authority to do this.

### **Is there provision for the faculty to meet as a body?**

Section 1.0 “Authority” in the proposed constitution of the University Senate states: Any action of the Senate may be reviewed at a *general meeting of the faculty* upon a written request signed by 10 percent of the full-time faculty and submitted to the Senate Chair. Such a meeting of the faculty shall be called by the Chair within two weeks of the request.

Section 6.51 in the proposed constitution states: A *faculty session of the Senate* shall comprise only senators elected by the faculty. Its function shall be to express the collective voice of the faculty. It may make determinations regarding any issue. Any member of the university community may attend a faculty session; however, only elected faculty senators may speak and vote.

### **Why does the faculty need to be able to meet as a group?**

While the proposals would have the faculty delegate the majority of their governance responsibilities to the University Senate, there are activities and issues on which the faculty may need to meet and act independently. Thus the election of members of the University Faculty Personnel committee is governed by the election procedures of the General Faculty, not the Senate. To change the bylaws of the General Faculty in this regard would require a vote of the general faculty. A faculty session of the Senate provides for the faculty to meet and vote on issues that are specifically to be voted on by faculty only, such as the graduation list. In examining other campuses on which University Senate models exist, there are consistently provisions for structures providing for the faculty to meet as faculty. The draft constitution is consistent with the SDSU constitution in this regard.

### **What is the relationship to the Dean’s Council?**

The University Senate makes recommendations to the President with regard to university policies (including academic policies). It is not involved in the specifics of the implementation of those policies within divisions except in so far as it is necessary to understand the mechanics of implementation in order to write good policy.

### **How can Senate be involved in policy decision making that could affect contracts, work load and layoff?**

This question came up primarily in the context of discussions about the University Resource and Planning Committee of the Senate. This committee would indeed be involved in discussions with regard to budget policy and decision making *at the university level*. However, contractual issues are specifically identified in the collective bargaining agreements, and neither the Senate nor any other recommending body act to contradict those agreements. Committees of the Senate should solicit input from multiple sources during their work to ensure that their recommendations are consistent with in place contractual agreements, as is the case currently. If there are any questions, committees should ask the advice of

offices such as Human Resources and Faculty Affairs as well as consulting leaders of the various collective bargaining units as needed. Members of the HSU community, including collective bargaining representatives can provide evidence and advice or raise questions to the Senate through its committees and delegates at any time during deliberations on an issue. Even after the Senate makes a recommendation to the President, the President may solicit additional input before making a final decision. In general, this should not be needed, as input from a variety of source should have been provided during the deliberative process, and possible conflicts, if any, addressed. Furthermore, while the work of policy making is to provide the structure and guidelines for activities which are carried out within units, units will continue to work with their own decision making structures and administrators to implement those policies in ways that are both consistent with the policy and appropriate within the unit.

The particular problem of decisions about budget allocations cuts is difficult no matter what the structure. On a campus of our size, decisions to make cuts to units are very visible, and this is the case regardless of where or how the cuts are made. It is not the business of the Senate to make specific personnel decisions and there is no authority or process for it to do this. It is the responsibility of the Senate to make recommendations with regard to how we align our limited resources with the vision and mission of the university and provide for appropriate curriculum, instruction and educational experiences for our students. Unfortunately, when such decisions lead to the cutting of programs or activities, these have very definite personnel implications, but the actual personnel processes must be carried out under the relevant collective bargaining agreements which are completely separate from the activities of the Senate.

### **What background information was used in developing the proposed University Resource and Planning Committee?**

The proposed University Resource and Planning Committee developed based on the following sources:

- The current University Budget Committee structure and described in the Faculty Handbook and on the University Budget Committee website
- Senate Resolution #11-007/08 EX Resolution on Proposed Changes to the HSU Budget Process,
- The Maddox Report
- The WASC report
- Input from emails, Senate meetings and town hall meetings

### **What is the timeline for the process?**

#### **Proposals submitted to faculty**

Discussions to ensure that people understand the proposals

Vote

Installation of a new senate ... JANUARY 2012?

### Who can I contact for further information?

You can contact any member of the Faculty Affairs expanded committee:

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