



MISSOURI UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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Dear Members of the General Faculty:

At the recent General Faculty meeting, Chancellor Schrader and myself were asked to provide additional information in support of concern over critical issues in the newly proposed Bylaw updates. These represent modifications to a version which had been developed last academic year by a joint task force consisting of faculty and administration, at the request of then Senate President, Martin Bohner. This letter summarizes specific concerns, provides reference to supportive information (as requested), and reinforces the recommendation for your negative vote against the proposed changes.

First, the proposed alternative language regarding selection of the Vice Provost and Dean tips the delicate balance of shared governance. One of the most concerning aspects of the proposed alternative is how faculty members are selected from each academic department within a college. The proposed language stipulates that diversity of committee membership should be achieved through the appointment of other, non-faculty constituents. It is pleasing that the authors of the current proposal recognize the need for diversity, but it is concerning that this principle would not be applied to faculty membership as well. In other words, if this language were to be adopted, what will be widely perceived is that diversity is important for others, but not for faculty. This is a perception that we cannot promote. It goes against the intent of Affirmative Action and is also counter to best practices at public research universities throughout the United States.

UM System collected rules are predicated upon principles of shared governance as articulated by entities such as the AAUP. Specifically, the AAUP articulates that "*The selection of academic deans and other chief academic officers should be the responsibility of the President with the advice of, and in consultation with, the appropriate faculty*" (AAUP Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities, Section 2.C.). Thus, a serious concern is that, as proposed, the process is set up to be a selection committee, rather than an advisory committee. Regardless of the intent of any current officer, the policy as proposed would unnecessarily tie the hands of any hiring authority in the future by potentially promoting a single candidate by the committee.

Furthermore, it is clear that this AAUP statement, and resulting best practice throughout higher education, is aimed at giving the President/Chancellor flexibility in identifying representative faculty, staff and other constituencies. Thus, providing representation with respect to a diversity of member characteristics as well as diversity of thought. The proposed Bylaw specifically takes this flexibility and authority away from the executive, particularly in the selection of a committee chair. It is for these reasons that the term "search advisory committee (SAC)" is used throughout the UM System to enforce the nature of the fundamental duties of the committee. The term "advisory" has a distinct philosophical meaning and was stripped away in the proposed Bylaw (from the version developed by the joint task force)

In addition to the interpretation of shared governance, the fundamental need for diversity is not well understood by some. Perhaps the most misunderstood aspect is that administration is seeking a prescribed outcome from searches. This could not be further from the truth. Rather, it's about promoting faculty diversity through fairness in process. And the first major step in this process is in the selection of a diverse search committee, in all aspects. High quality individuals from diverse backgrounds will examine closely the "face of the university" when considering to apply and they will make determinations of institutional commitment via the public face—the search advisory committee. If these potential applicants see no commitment to diversity, they will never apply and we miss out on the opportunity to demonstrate our excellence. Thus, it is critical that the hiring authority be provided the ability to help ensure a search advisory committee is diverse in *all* of its membership. The lack of clear policy and best practices encouraging faculty diversity was also a basis of recent student demands at MU and is also the basis of new initiatives being promoted by the Board of Curators.

In closing, I will echo the Chancellor's urging to vote against this latest revision to the faculty Bylaws. It will have the effect of unsettling our balance of shared governance and represents a step backwards with respect to best practices in several key areas. Unfortunately, if passed by two-thirds majority of eligible faculty, the net effect of these changes in the proposed Bylaws make them unlikely to be accepted by the Board of Curators.

Attached is a table that illustrates the differences between the newly proposed Bylaws and that which was negotiated by the joint task force. In addition, a brief list of reading materials which provide background on the key issues discussed herein is provided.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Marley, Ph.D.
Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
For Academic Affairs

The table below outlines the primary points of comparison between these two plans in more details. As S&T works to follow best practices to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone, faculty are urged to consider the possible outcomes, both intentional and unintentional, of this new plan that is presented for a vote.

Points of Difference	Faculty/Admin Task Force Version	Pros/Cons	Current Alternative Version	Pros/Cons
Selection of VPD search committee faculty members	Department chairs nominate three prospective faculty members	Pro: mechanism to address diversity, manage workload, provide a voice to NTT and TT	Each department elects one committee member from tenured faculty	Pro: more direct faculty governance; greater emphasis on tenured faculty. Con: there is a risk that there will be the same people on the majority of committees; the committee as a whole may not include diversity of thought; decreased opportunity to create a diverse group of faculty and potentially a diverse candidate pool.
Selection of search committee chair	Chosen by Provost from a choice of three candidates nominated by the committee	Pro: ability to map skill set to campus/system strategic plan	Elected by committee	Pro: team building exercise. Supports trust/group cohesiveness. Con: election could be based on factors unrelated to skill set (i.e. seniority, eagerness for the job, others' reluctance to "run against" a colleague).
Candidate recommendations	Unranked list of three or more	Pro: provides choice for hiring authority	Unranked list of acceptable candidates	Pro: allows to reset a search if candidate pool is not deep. Con: allows the committee to put forward a single name, thus eliminating choice for the Provost.
Percentage of faculty on committee	2/3 faculty	Pro: allows for NTT and TT faculty voices	2/3 elected tenured College faculty	Pro: concentrates influence among elected tenured faculty from the College. Con: May exclude NTT or TT faculty voices and their recognition as faculty. Also, limits pool of eligible committee members, since some departments have relatively few tenured faculty and may determine that a NTT or TT faculty would be the best representative. Eliminates the appointment of a department chair from the other College to provide insight as the committee size might soon become unwieldy.

Selected Readings

Goldberg, C. B. (2005). "Relational demography and similarity attraction in interview assessments and subsequent offer decisions: Are we missing something?" Group & Organization Management, 30(6), 597-624.

Valian, Virginia (1999). Why so slow?: The advancement of women. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Williams, DA, Berger, JB, and McClendon, SA (2005). Making excellence inclusive: Toward a model of inclusive excellence and change in postsecondary colleges and universities. Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Web links to relevant readings:

http://web.uri.edu/advance-women/files/Recruit_Handbook-download_version.pdf

<http://www.russellreynolds.com/insights/thought-leadership/different-is-better-why-diversity-matters-in-the-boardroom>

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/jhe/summary/v075/75.2smith.html>