

Membership and Elections Committee Report

Academic Year 2013/2014

Regular Duties: The M&EC executed its regular charge of running elections for the Senate, Senate Committees, and faculty positions for the Consortium, and other committees. During the fall and spring semesters, the Committee updated the Faculty database before elections were called. Maintaining a perfect faculty list is very challenging for several reasons. First the list is very dynamic, in constant change due to retirement, sabbatical leaves, resignations, and new hires. Second, classification of faculty sometimes becomes blurred due to administrative assignments and establishment of new institutions such as the English Language Institutes.

Self-Nominations were run during fall and spring semesters to replace faculty on sabbatical. Special elections were also completed to fill vacancies due to resignation and retirements. Spring School and At-Large elections were executed to fill positions that will be vacant in fall 2014 due to end of service term.

Bylaw Amendments: The committee executed a total of six referendum on bylaw amendments. All amendments were passed.

Special Duties: Auditing and Identifying Committees that have staggering problems and finding solutions

The Faculty Senate charged M&EC to audit the current terms of Faculty Senate and Senate Committee positions to ensure they are in compliance with the Bylaws, particularly in regards to the staggering of terms. If we found any term not in compliance, to offer a plan to the Senate for correcting the situation and report to the Senate by February 25, 2014.

The M&EC discussed the issue and considered two approaches to solving the problem. First was an optimistic approach that the problem related to staggering and many other election related issues would be minimized with the election software that is being developed to enhance the election process here at SU. Second was a realistic approach, by which M&EC members reviewed and identified several committees that were off-track as related to staggering of terms. The M&EC members started taking actions to adjust the positions that have staggering issues during the spring school and at-large elections. The adjustment was done by limiting a number of years to be served when calls were made during spring elections. This will be an ongoing process until the staggering problem is temporarily solved.

The committee's inability to meet the deadline of February 25 was orally communicated to the Senate president who was understandable due to priority assignment regarding the +/- all faculty referendum.

1. Running All Faculty Referendum on +/- grade system

The Senate charged the M&EC to oversee the running of all-faculty referendum on +/- grade system. To execute this charge, M&EC worked very hard to finalize the faculty database and account for the number of faculty on campus. The committee prepared and coordinated the signing in of faculty to keep track of faculty voting and participation. We had 420 Faculty listed and required 211 for quorum to be met. The M&EC declared that the quorum was not met for the Senate to conduct formal discussion and voting by faculty.

2. Collaborating with Kathleen Shannon and her students in developing Election Software

M&EC members worked with Kathleen Shannon and a team of Software Engineering students whose professor is Dr. Steven Lauterburg. In this effort, Kathleen represented the Senate as a client. The team worked diligently to develop a better faculty voting software that is technologically current, user friendly and contributes positively to efficient use of M&EC members' time. The current software is an out dated program that is very crude and requires a great deal of the members of M&EC time to keep track of faculty data base, checking bylaw requirement for self-nominations and holding offices, and summarizing election results, etc. We are very optimistic that all these problems will be solved by the new software that may be implemented for fall of 2014 elections.

3. Pending new charge from the Senate

New Charge: to Membership and Elections Committee by Salisbury University Senate; March 11, 2014: to investigate electronic voting on referenda other than bylaw amendments: As we become a more mobile and less face-to-face society, some faculty are interested in exploring available options for electronic referenda to be used alongside or in place of voting at Faculty meetings. Please investigate potential procedures for voting on such referenda and their use in shared governance at other USM and peer institutions. If the committee believes this would contribute to shared governance at Salisbury University, please offer a bylaws amendment that would implement such a procedure to the Senate for consideration. Please plan to report to the Senate by March 10, 2015.

The committee has yet to act on this charge.

4. Additional charge from the senate to M&EC. A faculty needs to be on board of UGB from April 15 to April 15, a year of service

The University Green Board has requested that the Faculty Senate appoint a faculty member to serve on the Board. Please recommend an appropriate procedure for filling this position, both for the coming academic year (the term is April 15-April 15, which has already begun) and on a more regular basis in the future. However, discussion is going on about what an appropriate procedure might be; since the senate is uncertain whether this is an SGA committee or a Sustainability subcommittee. Also, there are ongoing discussions about whether the Sustainability Committee should become a Consortium committee, but at present it is not.

‘The M&EC will send out an email message to all faculty requesting for a faculty volunteer to serve on the University Green Board with the term that starts immediately and ends on April 15, 2015. If several volunteers self-nominate, a winner will be picked at random. The M&EC will address and suggest a permanent procedure of electing a faculty member to serve on the UGB during the next academic year’.