Committee on Governance

Proposed Substantive Revisions to the Faculty Constitution

Background and Rationale for Proposed Changes

 November 26, 2014

Ballot Item#2: Inclusion of the Faculty Handbook in Article I, Section 2

The inclusion of the Faculty Handbook in the Constitution is necessary because, with the exception of the explanation of the importance of the Faculty Handbook in the Preface, it is not mentioned in the Faculty Constitution. Therefore, it is essential to include a statement of the importance and jurisdiction of the Handbook in the Constitution. Additionally, this new section specifies that all policies affecting faculty will be included or referenced in the Faculty Handbook.

Ballot Item#3: Members of the Committee on Governance shall be tenured (Article I, Section 5c)

Requiring that members of the Committee on Governance be tenured protects the members from coercion or retribution when called upon to make controversial or high profile decisions. Possession of tenure protects the members who otherwise might fear their job would be adversely impacted by their actions on the Committee. There have been cases of attempted coercion of Committee on Governance members.

Ballot Item#4: Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate shall be tenured (Article I, Section 6d)

The reasons for requiring the presiding officer of the Faculty Senate (President) are similar to those provided for the justification of tenure for the Committee on Governance. The President of the Faculty Senate is a very high-profile elected official who serves as the spokesperson for the UNM Faculty and may be called upon to articulate positions in direct opposition to those espoused by the Administration and/or Regents.

Ballot Item#5: Change in calculation of number of Faculty Senators in Article I, Section 6

The change in the calculation of the number of Faculty Senators is necessary for the following reasons. The first is that as the size of the voting faculty increases over time, the size of the Faculty Senate increases with no upper limit according to the current Constitution. Under these conditions the Faculty Senate is larger and unwieldy and vacancies will be difficult to fill. . The proposed changes cap total number of senators at 68, with no school/college able to elect more than 33% of the total senators. All colleges/schools are guaranteed at least one Faculty Senator.

Ballot Item#6: Inclusion of Provost in Dean/Director (re)appointments in Article III, Section 3.

The language for the appointment/reappointment of Deans needs to be changed to reflect current practice as codified in Policy C35. The change eliminates an obsolete administrative process whereby the president was mandated to recommend candidates for Dean appointments/ reappointments to the Board of Regents. Policy C35 provides for the appointment/reappointment of Deans by the Provost or Chancellor of Health Sciences, the procedure that has been followed for decades.

 Ballot Item#7: Removal of “Other Administrative Officers”, Article III, Section 4

The section of "Other Administrative Officers" is not necessary and quickly becomes out-of-date as titles change.