

## **Report of the University Structure and Governance Committee on Charge S-1006: Staggered Terms for Staff Senators**

**Charge:** Recognizing that staff senators joined the Senate as a single group, and that their terms are for two years, resulting in concurrent term expiration dates for all staff Senators, consider the feasibility of staggering those terms. If staggered terms are found to be appropriate, make recommendations on how to divide the terms so only a portion of the total number ends in any given year. Respond to Senate Executive Committee by January 2011.

**Background:** In February 2005, the University Senate voted to add ten staff representatives, and the University Enabling Regulations were amended accordingly in June 2005. The ten staff representatives were elected to serve terms of two years, with provisions for new representatives to complete their terms in the case of vacancies, and for replacements to be elected to cover periods of leave. Since initially all staff senators were elected at the same time, for the same terms of two years beginning in 2006, with replacements if necessary completing those terms rather than beginning new terms of two years, all staff representative positions have been up for election at the same time, with new cohorts beginning their terms in July 2008 and July 2010.

In March 2010, the University Senate voted to increase the number of staff representatives from ten to fourteen (seven from New Brunswick, four from Newark and three from Camden), and this proposal was adopted by the Board of Governors in October 2010. In anticipation of this approval, with the exception of one unfilled vacancy in Newark, all the staff representative positions for 2010–2011 were filled based on the staff elections held in 2010.

As a result, the terms of all thirteen staff representatives currently serving on the University Senate are set to expire at the same time, in June 2012.

**Considerations:** Thus a situation has arisen in which there is potential loss of continuity in the representation of staff interests in the University Senate, and in staff participation in the work of Senate committees. At the same time, the increase from ten to fourteen representatives has made staggered terms, with half of the staff senators elected each year, a more realistic and practical option. The USGC concluded that the potential benefits arising from preserving continuity outweigh the disadvantages of more frequent elections and the consequent election every second year of only one Senator from Camden.

In this context, the USGC also considered whether a move to terms of three years, consistent with terms for faculty Senators, would be appropriate. It concluded that similarities between the circumstances and work conditions of staff and faculty Senators were not so great as to make a compelling case for identical terms, and that electing a third of the fourteen Senators each year was not practical. It therefore recommends adoption of staggered terms of two years for staff senators.

A separate charge, S-0915, is currently considering the Staff Senator Election Process itself, which is not addressed here.

However, transitional arrangements will be needed to cover the move from identical terms to staggered terms. The USGC concluded that in principle, at the next election after current terms expire (in 2012), fourteen Senators should be elected, distributed as required, with the half having the highest number of votes (on each campus) receiving terms of two years and the remainder terms of one year. In practice, since only whole Senators can be elected, the USGC recommends a detailed procedure set out below.

**Recommendation:** The University Structure and Governance Committee recommends adoption of the following resolution by the Senate:

**Be it resolved that:**

Terms of two years for staff senators be staggered as follows:

- senators currently elected to serve two year terms should in fact serve those terms
- an election should be held in 2012 for fourteen staff senators, to serve as follows:
  - \* the four candidates with the most votes in New Brunswick should be elected to serve terms of two years, with the next three highest vote winners elected to serve terms of one year;
  - \* the two candidates with the most votes in Newark should be elected to serve terms of two years, with the next two highest vote winners elected to serve terms of one year;
  - \* the candidate with the most votes in Camden should be elected to serve a term of two years, with the next two highest vote winners elected to serve terms of one year
- thereafter, an election should be held each year to replace retiring staff senators with newly elected senators to serve for terms of two years.

University Structure and Governance Committee, 2010–2011

Peter Gillett, RBS:N/NB (F), Chair – Executive Committee Liaison

John Aspray, SAS-NB (S)

Christopher Binetti, GS-N (S)

Daniel Bubb, At-Large Camden (F)

Jaishankar Ganesh, SB-C Dean (A)

Yuan Gao, NCAS (F)

Richard Gomes, PTL-N (F)

Marc Holzer, SPAA Dean (A)

James Hughes, EJBSPPP Dean (A)

Paul Leath, SAS-NB (F)

Charles Maher, GSAPP (F)

Jody Miller, SCJ (F)

Naftaly Minsky, SAS-NB (F)

Daniel O'Connor, SC&I (F)

Jon Oliver, Associate Director of Information Technology

Rebecca Pero, SAS-NB (S)

Joseph Potenza, SAS-NB (F)

Robert Puhak, FAS-N (F)

Jorge Reina Schement, SC&I Dean (A) - Administrative Liaison

Rayman Solomon, Law-Camden Dean (A)

Kenneth Swalagin, Senate Executive Secretary

Andrew Yu, Law-N (S)