

UNIVERSITY ASSEMBLY & FACULTY SENATE  
University of Missouri-St. Louis

Response to Quality Review Team

July 31, 2007

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## RECOMMENDATIONS OF REVIEW TEAM

1. *“Write a brief, general mission statement for the Senate and University Assembly.”*
2. *“Re-establish the Senate List-serve for communication with the campus community.”*
3. *“Review the role of the staff in campus governance with a view to increasing representation and terms of service.”*
4. *“Provide some representation of the Honors College to membership in the Senate and University Assembly.”*
5. *“Consider increasing committee service terms to three years.”*
6. *“Find a way to improve attendance of the deans and vice chancellors and to have them become more involved.”*
7. *“Encourage the administration to commit to a formal level of compensation, or in-kind compensation, and have the details included in the Operating Rules of the Senate and University Assembly.”*

The Steering Committee of the 2006-2007 Faculty Senate and University Assembly met on July 31, 2007 to discuss the recommendations. The committee appreciates the work of the review team and constituents who participated in the site visit. We hope that our responses to the recommendations will improve the operation of our campus' shared governance system.

## RESPONSES FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE ON BEHALF OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY

### Item 1: Mission statement

A mission statement has been drafted by the Steering Committee and will be proposed to the full membership of the University Assembly and the Faculty Senate at the first meeting of the 2007-2008 academic year.

### Item 2: Re-establish the List-serve

Communication among representatives and constituents is an important link that could be strengthened. A List-serve to discuss Senate and Assembly related issues may be an effective vehicle. The Steering Committee was concerned that excess emails from the List-serve may be a challenge, but endorses the concept.

Alternatively, a blog where individuals could post issues for comments might be as effective for sharing information but would eliminate the potential for excessive emails.

This recommendation will be brought to the full membership for discussion. It is hoped that a member with a keen interest in serving as monitor for such a communication link will volunteer to launch a system as recommended.

### Item 3: Increase participation by staff members in the University Assembly

The by-laws call for membership of the Assembly to include 3 staff. Six (6) committees of the Assembly (out of a total of 7) have staff members represented. Though standing committees may invite anyone from the university community to committee meetings in advisory roles, the Steering Committee does not object to increasing formal representation on Assembly committees where appropriate.

The Staff Association will be contacted to determine their interest in working with the By-Laws & Rules Committee of the Faculty Senate and University Assembly to propose increasing representation in the University Assembly.

### Item 4: Provide for representation by the Honors College

The Steering Committee believes that such a change in the membership of the University Assembly and the Faculty Senate is unwarranted. Faculty teaching in the Honors College have an academic “home” in one or more of the other colleges of the university, and are represented in that way. Issues that are unique to the Honors College and its faculty can be communicated by the Dean of the Honors College, who is an *ex officio* member of the University Assembly.

Structurally, the Honors College is similar to the Graduate School (and the recently eliminated Evening College). They have no faculty of their “own” but are primarily administrative units whose senior academic administrator carries the title of “dean.” Given this parallel nature it does not seem appropriate to change the membership structure to include representation from the Honors College.

### Item 5: Changing length of terms on committees

The Steering Committee understands and appreciates the recommendation that faculty should serve on Senate and Assembly committees for 3 years rather than 2 years. A learning process occurs in committee service and an individual may find s/he rotates off the committee just as s/he is learning how to be most effective. The downside of expanding the term of service is that the Committee on Committee may find it more difficult to recruit faculty to committee to a three-year term.

This recommendation will be referred to the By-Laws & Rules Committee for consideration and recommendation to the full membership of the Senate and the Assembly.

### Item 6: Improve attendance of deans and other administrators at meetings of Assembly

The Steering Committee found no evidence that attendance by deans and other administrative leaders was poor. Quite the contrary, most deans regularly attend meetings of the Senate and Assembly, especially when matters affecting their units are

being debated. Administrators from Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, and their subunits regularly attend meetings of the governance organizations.

The leadership of the Chancellor and Provost who report to the Senate and Assembly at each meeting provides credibility to the governance process.

The Steering Committee believes that this recommendation does not need significant attention given the supportive administration the campus currently enjoys.

#### Item 7: Compensation for Senate/Assembly chair

The Steering Committee agrees with the recommendation that a “standard” compensation package of 2 course releases per academic year (one each semester) plus a stipend of 10% of salary for the summer be institutionalized in the Operating Rules for the Assembly and Senate. An incoming chair of the Senate and Assembly may negotiate with the Chancellor for a modification of this package.

At the July 31, 2007 meeting of the Steering Committee, Chancellor George agreed in principle to this recommendation. It will be referred to the By-Laws & Rules Committee to draft a proposal for consideration by the full membership of the Senate and Assembly.