



October 30, 2020

Faculty Senate,
NDSU
1340 Administration Ave, Fargo, ND 58105

Dear Senate Executive Committee,

The Senate Standing Committee on Academic Program Review (APRC) has been diligently examining programs and creating advice for improvements for many years. I have served the committee since fall 2016, and have served as chair of the committee since the fall of 2018. I will finish my second 4-year cycle with the committee in the spring of 2024. Over this time, the senate has never formally asked for a report, nor did the committee feel any issues warranted Senate deliberation. Having more deeply read the Senate bylaws, I recently noticed that Article III section 3 mandates an annual report. This is an error on my part, and I will be more diligent in preparing this report in the future. If the senate wishes, I can provide the reports I have written to the Provost over the past few years.

At this juncture, the APRC has identified a few issues that do need consideration of the Senate and I would like to bring them to your attention. We request that the Senate consider language to clarify the meaning of 'administrator' in the Senate bylaws, and in the Senate constitution. Currently the constitution, in Article III, section 1 defines a faculty member, and in Article III section 2 defines an administrator. Please note, that neither section 1 nor section 2 explains if an administrator should not be considered a faculty member at the same time. It is my belief that this is the intention; the faculty senate should be run by peoples who we consider to be faculty and not administrators. That administrators have responsibilities that can conflict with what is best for faculty should be clear to all, which is why the constitution defines administrators as a separate group.

The senate Bylaws, which define the APRC, state in article IV section 12 the makeup of the committee. Notably, one tenured faculty from each representation unit, one faculty representative of the graduate school as designated by the Dean of the graduate school, and one faculty representative from the Provost's Office, are designated. We believe, as stated above, that 'tenured faculty' or 'faculty representative' means non-administrator faculty. Again, this is not clearly defined in the senate constitution and one way or another it should be.

If the Senate agrees with our interpretation laid out above, additional changes to the bylaws are requested. We request that section 12, 1b be changed from "one faculty representative" to "one representative" as an administrator from the graduate school would be more knowledgeable than most faculty members, furthermore, having a faculty member appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies (as defined above) would skew the balance between the individual units (as the faculty would belong to some unit). Additionally, we request that Section 12, 1c be changed from "one faculty representative" to "one representative". Here we feel that it is more helpful to have an

actual administrator (assistant provost for example) with knowledge of the workings of the provost's office (and her ear).

Finally, we suggest adding a new line to section 12, 1e. "The Director of Assessment and Accreditation". The reason for this request, is that the Director can serve as a liaison to the Assessment committee, and answer questions pertaining to assessment of programs as they are evaluated. We note that this final request might be unnecessary if the Director of Assessment could be considered a representative of the provost (but this too should be made explicit in the bylaws).

One last issue that we would like to bring up, is that during my time on the committee we have had the past president serve as a voting member. Given our recent investigation of the bylaws, this position is actually not stipulated and including the past president is an error. As near as I can tell, it was listed in past versions of the 'committee membership excel spreadsheet' found on the senate website (as a voting member). I am not sure when or how that happened. While the committee feels the past president is useful, as the senate rules are not well known to us, it is not required by our mandate and the practice will be ended. I will let the (busy) past president know that it is at her discretion, however, I hope again the senate can clarify this issue for us once and for all.

I would, of course, be happy to discuss these matters in person if need be.

Sincerely,



Andrew B. Croll,
Associate Professor of Physics,
Department of Physics,
North Dakota State University
Fargo, ND, 58108.