THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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To: Senate
From: Nominating Committee
Re: Triennial Review Recommendations
Date: 1 May 2020

Background

As senators are aware, every triennium the Nominating Committee solicits comments from senators, senate committees, and member of the campus community on Senate's operations. A website (https://senate.ubc.ca/otriennialreview) was established earlier this academic year to provide background information and inform submissions. Broad feedback was welcomed; however, to focus comments on tangible areas for improvement, the Nominating Committee suggested that submissions consider the following questions:

1) Is the current size and composition of Senate appropriate, and is representation suitably balanced between groups?
2) Do the Rules and Procedures of Senate effectively support Senate's functions on behalf of the University?
3) Do Senate committees have appropriate mandates and terms of reference to aid Senate in academically governing the campus?
4) Does the Senate have sufficient resources to fulfill its mandate?
5) Do Senate committees have appropriate sizes and compositions?
6) How can the Senate improve its communication with the campus?
7) How can Senate better ensure that all its constituent groups (e.g., convocation members, deans, faculty members, senior administrators, students) are engaged in its work?
8) Do you have any feedback regarding the Council of Senates?
9) Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

In response to that general call and specific prompting by the Secretary to Senate committees, seven submissions were received. The Nominating Committee considered all those submissions, and after due consideration is making the following recommendations.

The Senate Nominating Committee would recommend that Senate resolve as follows:

That Senate approve the recommendations of the Triennial Review and amend the Rules and Procedures of Senate as set out in the following.

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Addition of teaching and learning environment to the Learning & Research Committee Terms of Reference

That the terms of reference of the Learning & Research committee be amended to add the following:

> ***To provide a leading forum for the discussion of the teaching and learning environment of the University, including the social and emotional well-being of all students, learners, faculty, and staff***

Recommendation 2: Addition of Research Unit Organizational Matters to the Terms of Reference of the Learning & Research Committee

That the terms of reference of the teaching and learning committee be amended to add the following:

> ***Proposals for the organization or re-organization of research institutes and centres;***

Recommendation 3: Removal of Research Unit Organizational Matters from the Terms of Reference of the Academic Policy Committee

That the terms of reference of the Academic Policy Committee be amended as follows

> *Proposals for the organization or re-organization of academic units* ***with teaching programs****;*

Recommendation 4: Standing Guest Invitation to Senate and Its Committees for the Senior Advisor on Indigenous Affairs

That the Rules and Procedures of Senate *be amended as follows:*

That the following new section be added:

> *"13: Any other section of these* Rules and *Procedures notwithstanding, the* Senior Advisor to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Principal on Indigenous Affairs shall be welcome as a guest with speaking rights at any Senate or Senate Committee meeting except if either resolves to consider a matter in closed session." And

That all subsequent and referential section numbers be renumbered accordingly.

Recommendation 5: Training for Appeals Committee Members

That the Rules and Procedures of Senate *be amended as follows:*

That the following new section be added:

"39: No member of the Appeals of Standing and Discipline Committee shall hear an appeal until they have attending any training program that many be required by the Committee from time to time." And

That all subsequent and referential section numbers be renumbered accordingly.

Detailed Rationales:

Recommendation 1: Addition of teaching and learning environment to the Learning & Research Committee Terms of Reference

The Senate Learning & Research Committee has requested a new term of reference to draw focus to its work on the campus environment and to emphasize all those to participate in the teaching and learning enterprise.

That the terms of reference of the Learning & Research committee be amended to add the following:

To provide a leading forum for the discussion of the teaching and learning environment of the University, including the social and emotional well-being of all students, learners, faculty, and staff

Recommendation 2: Addition of Research Unit Organizational Matters to the Terms of Reference of the Learning & Research Committee

Recommendation 3: Removal of Research Unit Organizational Matters from the Terms of Reference of the Academic Policy Committee

Presently, all academic organization matters are the responsibility of Academic Policy Committee. The Academic Policy Committee and the Learning & Research Committee have agreed that non-teaching focused academic units – namely research institutes and centres – would be better overseen by Learning & Research Committee as research initiatives are within its terms of reference.

Recommendation 4: Standing Guest Invitation to Senate and Its Committees for the Senior Advisor on Indigenous Affairs

The Senate Nominating Committee has considered how best to welcome expert views on indigenous issues into the work of Senate. While a voting seat was considered, the Senate's balancing rules would require three additional seats to be added for any administrator, and also

create obligations to the assembly upon the incumbent that may not be desired or reasonable. The Committee would like therefore to issue standing invitations to the Senior Advisor for Senate and its committees so that the incumbent can decide if and how to engage with the work of Senate and its committees. This would be an exception to Senate's normal rules that only allow guests (except with permission) as non-voting observers at Senate and its committees.

That the Rules and Procedures of Senate *be amended as follows:*

That the following new section be added:

"13: Any other section of these Rules and *Procedures notwithstanding, the* Senior Advisor to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Principal on Indigenous Affairs shall be welcome as a guest with speaking rights at any Senate or Senate Committee meeting except if either resolves to consider a matter in closed session." And

That all subsequent and referential section numbers be renumbered accordingly.

Recommendation 5: Training for Appeals Committee Members

While the Secretary presently works to organize administrative law and quasi-judicial training for appeals committee members as soon as possible, the University Ombudsperson has drawn to the Committee's attention that the rules do not currently require such training. The Committee agrees that this should be made a requirement:

That the Rules and Procedures of Senate *be amended as follows:*

That the following new section be added:

"39: No member of the Appeals of Standing and Discipline Committee shall hear an appeal until they have attending any training program that many be required by the Committee from time to time." And

That all subsequent and referential section numbers be renumbered accordingly.

Recommendations Not Acted Upon

The Nominating Committee notes that it received substantive recommendations from the Ombudsperson regarding a variety of areas around equity and diversity, including on appeals panels, on Senate, and on its committees. The Nominating Committee thanks the Ombudsperson for her suggestions and greatly values the diversity of our campus community. At this time, Senate is primarily an elected body with elections primarily conducted on the basis of faculties. Under such a system, there is no way of ensuring that ethnic, gender, or other identity factors (other than academic discipline) are ensured election on Senate itself. That said, the Nominating Committee encourages the Registrar to take whatever reasonable steps are possible to encourage as many candidates as possible from diverse backgrounds in Senate elections and encourages all member of the UBC community to do the same.

Comment on Senate Resources

During the course of the triennial review, the Committee was made aware of concerns regarding Senate Secretariat staffing levels and their implications for the work of Senate. More specifically, several Senators, including chairs of standing committees, expressed concern about work overloads for the Secretariat and the effects of that overload on the well-being of staff, the prioritization of tasks, and the timeliness of task completion. We recognize that recommendations about staffing in the Secretariat are beyond the scope of the triennial review, but we think it appropriate to bring these concerns to the attention of Senate. We hope that some consideration will be given to reviewing and adjusting staffing levels, as needed.