

Senate Council
November 20, 2017
Proposed New Senate Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion

(Snippet from May 11, 2017 SC Minutes)

9. University Senate Matters (1:45 – 2:15 pm)

The Chair asked SC members to consider the diversity of Senate membership and wondered if there were any obvious steps that could be taken to improve and increase diversity of members. Blonder commented that the University was overwhelmingly white and she was not sure if the Senate's ethnic and racial make-up mirrored that of the University as a whole, or if the Senate lagged behind. SC members discussed what was generally perceived as a University culture that lacked an emphasis on diversity, e.g. a series of white men on a podium at a recent building dedication and the lack of conversations in search committees about soliciting applicants from a diverse pool. There were a variety of comments and suggestions on how to increase the diversity in Senate membership.

- *Diversity should be considered by colleges when nominating faculty to serve in the Senate. Dean's offices could communicate a message to their college faculty when the Senate's college elections are being conducted.*
- *UK has so few faculty of color that many faculty of color cannot take on additional service roles – most faculty of color are already serving the University in some way.*
- *In some colleges, faculty of color are quickly promoted into administrative positions, which removes that faculty member from the faculty ranks, thereby worsening diversity of the faculty.*
- *In search committee deliberations, it is often students who raise the issue of having diverse perspectives.*
- *One SC member learned he was half Native American, but once that information became more widely known, he was inundated with offers to serve on committees pertaining to minority affairs.*
- *Every college has a diversity officer and it seems likely that UK's Vice President for Institutional Diversity Sonja Feist-Price would meet with all of them, either individually or as a group.*
- *The letters that are sent to deans to initiate college elections could also include suggestions on how to encourage participation from a diverse group of faculty.*
- *The Char could reach out to Vice President for Institutional Diversity Feist-Price and ask that she (Feist-Price) contact diverse faculty, too, about college elections.*
- *It would be interesting to know if the salary "fighting fund" ever gets used to promote/secure diversity among current faculty members.*
- *Invite Vice President Feist-Price to attend a SC meeting to talk about diversity initiatives that Senate could undertake.*

*SC members then discussed the possibility of creating a new Senate committee, to be focused on increasing diverse membership. After discussion, Grossman **moved** that the SC recommend to Senate that it establish a permanent committee (that is not required to be chaired by a senator) on diversity and inclusion and that the charge of the new committee includes the following responsibilities: 1. to increase the diversity among*

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*senators, in particular representation of underrepresented minorities; 2. to work with admin to disseminate best practices for recruiting and retaining faculty of color; and 3. address other issues around diversity and inclusion as they arise. Grossman noted that his intent was to give Senate an opportunity to think about it and discuss it at the September Senate meeting, but then vote on it in October. McGillis **seconded**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.*