

**CALL FOR SPECIAL MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE
(PURSUANT TO GR IV. B)**

TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER ACTION REGARDING

**FACULTY GOVERNANCE/OVERSIGHT/CONSULTATION
WITHIN THE SHARED GOVERNANCE REGULATORY STRUCTURE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY**

To: The Vice-Chair (Secretary) of the University Senate
From: Ten (plus) Members of the University Senate

We hereby request, pursuant to GR IV. B, a Special Meeting of the University Senate be convened as soon as possible to discuss and consider action regarding faculty governance, oversight, and consultation within the shared governance regulatory structure of the University of Kentucky.

The University of Kentucky Governing Regulation, Part II, describes the governance of the University of Kentucky. Authority for various functions and duties are delegated from the Board of Trustees to the President, the University Senate, the Graduate Faculty and Faculty of educational units.

GR II. A. Delegation of Authority. 3. states, in its entirety -

*At an institution-wide level, the University Senate, as a **primary educational policy-forming agency of the University**, establishes the **broad academic policies** of the University. Within the limits set by the Board of Trustees and the University Senate, the Graduate Faculty is delegated jurisdiction over programs leading to graduate degrees and has the responsibility to safeguard, promote and assist in the development of research in all fields. Within the limits set by the institution-wide policies of the Board of Trustees, the University Senate, and the Graduate Faculty, **the respective faculties exercise the governance role of policy-making responsibility for the instructional, research and service programs of their educational units**. The University Senate, the Graduate Faculty, and the faculties of educational units are authorized to issue rules concerning the policy and procedure-making responsibilities that are attendant to their delegated educational policy-making role.*

It is our understanding that the rationale for conferring upon the University Senate and the Graduate Faculty and Faculty of educational units the governance role for forming and making broad **academic** policies is because of our unique qualifications, talents, skills, experience and wisdom in education-related policies and practices.

Senate Rules and the rules of the Graduate Faculty and the rules of educational units are promulgated, enacted and adhered to by members of the University Faculty in order to advance our educational mission but also to guarantee **fair, equitable, transparent**, and most importantly, to ensure **quality decision-making** in all matters affecting that mission.

We also understand that in its delegation of authority, the Board of Trustees grants to the President administrative authority over all aspects of the university mission, including education and management. With regard to the education mission, the President appoints a Provost and Deans and Chairs and Directors that serve as administrative and educational officers.

Herein lies the core of our University's "shared governance" structure. Whereas the faculty are tasked with governance, oversight, consultation and enforcement duties with regard to the educational mission - administrators, such as the President, Provost, Deans, etc. are given roles in governance, oversight, consultation, and enforcement, of both *administrative* and *academic* policies, procedures and practices.

Specifically, our Governing Regulations (GR I) define "shared governance" as follows:

*The diverse expertise collectively available to the University in its faculty, administration, staff employees, and students is a valuable resource. The University as a whole will be able to function at maximum effectiveness where there is an environment in which the sharing of this expertise is valued and promoted. **If this expertise is shared, it will enable policy-makers at every level of the organization to make better decisions. To achieve this objective in an environment of shared governance, faculty bodies and administrators will reciprocally solicit and utilize the expertise of the other as each makes decisions in their respective areas of policy-making authority.** Through these empowering processes of shared governance, the administration, faculty members, staff employees and students all share the responsibility of attainment of the University's goals.*

Over the years, the manner in which this shared governance structure has functioned is with open and transparent engagement between administrators and faculty in certain key decisions, notably, the search for new appointees, such as Provost, Deans and Chairs, as well as faculty hires.

Over the past several years, and especially during the last year, we have borne witness to numerous occasions where the faculty side of the shared governance equation has been limited or reduced considerably by administration officials.

For example -

The search for the new Associate Provost/Graduate School Dean has resulted in an outcome that is, from various accounts and documentations, contrary to the practices and procedures of numerous other searches that have involved search committees. The precedent often is that the search committee brings forward several qualified candidates for faculty and students and staff to review and discuss and provide insight, information and academic-based opinions - all occurring in open forums and meetings.

The current "listening tour" of the President with regard to the appointment of the next Provost (or perhaps an interim Provost or other kind of academic officer) is also being carried out in a manner that is contrary to previous practices and procedures for the university-wide vetting of this key position in the shared governance structure. In the past, search committees have been engaged and several candidates for the position have been brought before the university

constituencies at open forums and meetings. It is not clear which University Faculty or representatives of the University Senate are being consulted in this “listening tour” and so there is no way of knowing of the candidates that are under consideration and therefore no opportunity for faculty, and other constituencies, to adequately weigh in (“share”) with insight, information and academic-based opinions.

Through various sources and documentations, it has become apparent that an open, internal or external, search for Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences will not be forthcoming in the next year. Budgetary concerns have been stated as the rationale for such delay. Faculty in the college and in the University Senate have expressed interest in being more involved in the review and search process for the next Dean of A&S, but have not been reassured that such meaningful and broad-based consultation will occur.

There are numerous instances, across the university, in colleges, schools and departments where faculty governance, oversight, and consultation has been limited, or reduced considerably, contrary to long-held practices and procedures within those educational units. The phrase “consultation with faculty” has been interpreted, in some instances in a manner that basically obliterates or severely diminishes the faculty role and authority in such education-related decision-making.

Over the last year, especially, we have borne witness to efforts to diminish, sidestep or undermine the role of the Senate Council Chair, the Senate Council, the University Senate, and University Faculty overall - in our shared-governance scheme. This “mission creep” of diminished faculty input in key educational policy and academic organization decisions has reached a critical mass moment at the university.

The decision as to the next Provost, affects our entire student body and faculty.

The decision as to the next Dean of the Graduate School affects our entire graduate student body and faculty.

The decision as to the next Dean of A&S affects the largest college in terms of faculty and students and student credit hours.

Faculty input, consultation, review is critical to an informed, merit-based, academic decision on all of these key personnel decisions.

For these reasons, we, the undersigned members of the University Senate, call for a Special Meeting of the University Senate to discuss these issues, as well as other concerns that may be brought forth at the Special Meeting, and to take necessary steps and actions (including the creation of a task force to further study this issue) – as soon as possible.

University Senators

Herman Farrell, College of Fine Arts
Molly Blasing, College of Arts & Sciences

Debra Harley, College of Education
Roger Brown, College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
Stefan Bird-Pollan, College of Arts & Sciences
Yuha Jung, College of Fine Arts
Julia Stevens, College of Medicine
Julia Johnson, College of Arts & Sciences
Bob Lorch, College of Arts & Sciences
Gregory O. Hall, Graduate School
Michelle Sizemore, College of Arts & Sciences
Alan Brown, College of Arts & Sciences
Kevin Donohue, College of Engineering
Robyn Brown, College of Arts & Sciences
Zixue Tai, College of Communication and Information
Melissa Stein, College of Arts & Sciences
Alison Gustafson, College of Agriculture Food and Environment
Allison Soult, College of Arts & Sciences
David Pienkowski, College of Engineering Faculty
Brian Rymond, College of Arts & Sciences
Ellen Usher, College of Education
Gail Brion, College of Engineering
Akiko Takenaka, College of Arts & Sciences
Alberto Corso, College of Arts & Sciences
John C. Young, College of Engineering
Melissa Morgan, College of Agriculture Food and Environment
Ken Calvert, College of Engineering
Thomas Troland, College of Arts & Sciences
Jillienne Haglund, College of Arts & Sciences
Bob Coleman, College of Agriculture Food and Environment
Gabriel Dadi, College of Engineering
Christopher Flaherty, College of Social Work
Rebecca L. Freeman, College of Arts & Sciences
Kay Shenoy, College of Arts & Sciences