Recommendation of the University Committee for a Mail Ballot to be Sent to All Faculty Regarding Change in Present System of Faculty Representation on the Faculty Senate

The University Committee, in response to a 1986 faculty request, established a Task Force to analyze the present UWM procedure of electing representatives to the Faculty Senate. The Task Force conducted a national survey and brought its recommendation to the University Committee. This was followed by a mail advisory ballot to all faculty to determine whether or not the present system should be changed. The results of the advisory ballot (announced in the February 1988 UC Newsletter) indicated that there may be a need for change.

Therefore, the University Committee moves that a formal mail ballot, with rationale and explanation as described below, be sent to all UWM faculty.

SUGGESTED BALLOT:

Do you favor retention of the present system for election to the Faculty Senate or do you favor a change?

[ ] Favor retention of present system

[ ] Favor a change

ALL FACULTY: PLEASE VOTE FOR ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

If a change in election to the Faculty Senate is made, which of the two proposed systems do you prefer?

[ ] Favor representation and voting by Division with an at-large component. *

[ ] Favor representation and voting by School or College with 8 members of the Senate elected at large. **

* EXPLANATION OF REPRESENTATION BY DIVISION

Under the proposed system, the allocation of representation per division and the nomination procedures will be the same as at present. Votes for nominees of a given division, however, would be cast by members of that division. In addition, each voter would be entitled to three additional votes which could be cast for nominees within or outside his/her division but no more than one vote could be cast for each nominee. The other election regulations, e.g., the provision which requires at least two assistant professors from each division, would remain the same.

Rationale: Two main objections have been made to our present method of election to the Faculty Senate: 1) faculty senators are chosen to represent the four divisions but they are elected not by faculty members from each of those divisions but by at-large voting and 2) the faculty has grown so large that most members know few of the candidates from all the four divisions for whom they are voting. The proposed system of representation and election would answer these two objections by providing for voting only by members of
Ballot for Faculty Senate Representation.

each division for the faculty members to represent that division, except for
the right of each voter to cast three votes outside his/her division. The
latter exception would make possible a significant degree of at-large voting
and satisfy those faculty who wish to cast votes outside their division.

The argument for representation by division rather than by school or college
is that the issues that come before the Faculty Senate are generally much
broader and more universal than those on which the schools and colleges have
separate and divergent interests. That is also the rationale for maintaining
at least a degree of at-large voting.

** EXPLANATION OF REPRESENTATION BY SCHOOLS OR COLLEGES

The proposal would keep the total Faculty Senate at about the same size and
reserve 8 seats for election at large. (Thus 14 seats including the Univer-
sity Committee, would be elected at-large). The remaining senators would be
elected by schools and colleges.

The specifics are as follows: For schools or colleges with more than 24
voting faculty members, the faculty count shall be divided by 24 and rounded
off to determine the number of senators. Any school or college entitled to
four or more senators must elect at least one assistant professor for every
four entitlements. For departmentalized schools or colleges, not more than
two senators selected under this entitlement may be from the same department.
Each school or college will be allotted at least one Senator.

Any candidate would have to decide beforehand whether to run for an at-large
university-wide position or for a school/college position.

Rationale: The current procedure of electing members by the faculty as a
whole may make name recognition a primary reason for elective success. The
present procedure may also encourage block voting for possibly disproportion-
ate representation by certain groups or by faculty members who espouse a
specific issue. By reserving 8 seats for an at-large election, however, some
groups should still find more adequate representation than they would if all
seats were assigned to the schools and colleges.

The present system, which is based on divisional affiliation, is not very
representative since divisions represent a rather artificial construct unique
to Madison and Milwaukee. It is questionable whether there is a sufficient
community of interests in any one division to make this the basis for a
choice. Almost all other universities surveyed base election on representa-
tion by schools or colleges.

The Senate should be representative; there should be direct accountability to
the electorate. This is not the case at present. Yet, since the Senate deals
mostly with university-wide issues, the representation should not be too
narrow as would be the case if elections were held on a departmental basis.

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