

Committee on Academic Titleholder Representation

Recommendations Related to the Faculty Senate and Elections

November 2018

At Cornell there are approximately 1600 tenured/tenure track (TT) faculty, 460 researchers, 380 lecturers, and 230 extension faculty. The pool of academic titleholders also includes the emeriti (600+), visitors and adjuncts (900+), and post-docs (500+). The University Faculty (= TT + emeriti) currently have representation through the Faculty Senate; everyone else is aligned with the Employee Assembly (EA). Research-Teaching-Extension (RTE) issues are rarely, if ever, considered by the EA.

We recommend a plan whereby all academic titleholders are brought under the umbrella of the Faculty Senate with a group of about 1000 “RTE Faculty” being given “university voting rights”. If adopted, our proposal will enable such individuals to serve in the Faculty Senate and participate in elections for Faculty Trustee, Dean of Faculty, and Associate Dean of Faculty. These changes are important because they are supremely practical: faculty should address faculty-related issues with all the players in the room. This style of shared governance communicates respect, inspires participation, and leads to more effective leadership on academic issues. Moreover, there are couplings between the long-term health of the tenure system and the long term health of the academic tracks that surround it. Oversight of these interconnections is the responsibility of the Faculty Senate.

None our recommendations involve changing the definition or status of the University Faculty. We are not recommending to the colleges and departments a particular voting rights template. We are simply proposing what we think is an improved framework for senate-level shared governance.

The Committee

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§1. Changing the Rules

Since we are proposing changes that relate to the composition and operation of the Faculty Senate it is necessary to modify its bylaws. The precise modifications are identified in this section so that they can be handily referenced throughout the report. The adoption process is described.

§2. The University and RTE Faculties

The academic titles that define University Faculty are codified in the University Bylaws. They are basically the tenured and tenure track positions. We recommend that all other academic titleholder groups be identified with the “RTE Faculty”. The notion of “university voting rights” is clarified.

§3. Electing Senators

We recommend that an RTE Faculty member with university voting rights be allowed to serve as a department Senator, as an at-large Senator, or as one of approximately 20 College-RTE Senators. The College-RTE seats are apportioned among the colleges and are elected positions.

§4. The Composition of the Faculty Senate

The size of the Faculty Senate will grow to about 120 members with the addition of the College-RTE seats and a dedicated RTE seat for the Library. We recommend the creation of a non-voting ex officio seat for post-docs.

§5. Elections for University Faculty Positions

We recommend that voting RTE Faculty be allowed to participate in elections that determine Faculty Trustees, the Dean of Faculty, the Associate Dean of Faculty, UFC membership, and N&E membership.

§6. Post-Referendum and Beyond

If our recommendations are approved by the University Faculty, then there is significant follow-up work that relates to just how we implement the senator-selection process and how we compose and structure various standing committees of the Faculty Senate.

Appendices

[A1.](#) The Process Followed

[A2.](#) Required Modification to the University Bylaws

[A3.](#) Recommended Modification to the Operating Principles of the University Faculty.

[A4.](#) Recommended Resolution for consideration by the Employee Assembly

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[A6.](#) Recommended Referendum for consideration by the University Faculty

Background material and reactions to a preliminary set of recommendations that the Committee released in September are available on the [committee website](#).

§1. Changing the Rules

By “university voting rights” we mean having the right to vote in the Faculty Senate and to vote in elections for Faculty Trustee, Dean of Faculty, Associate Dean of Faculty, and various other university-level positions. Our recommendation is to extend university voting rights to a specified subset of the RTE Faculty. To enact these changes it is necessary to modify selected passages in the [Operating Principles of the University Faculty](#) (OPUF). The OPUF is a bylaw-type document that governs the Faculty Senate, its committees, and associated elections. Here is a list of the required changes with links to before-and-after descriptions of the relevant text:

Change	Topic	OPUF Reference
S1	Voting and Nonvoting Members of the RTE Faculty	Article I
S2	Eligibility to Serve in the Faculty Senate	Article IX-B
S3	Make-Up of the Faculty Senate	Article IX-C
S4	Apportionment of Constituency Seats and College RTE Seats	Article IX-D
S5	Election of At-Large Seats and College RTE Seats	Article IX-E
S6	RTE Faculty Participation in Meetings	Article X-D-6
S7	Election of the Dean of Faculty	Article V-F
S8	Election of the Associate Dean of Faculty	Article VI-G
S9	Election of the Faculty Trustees	Article IV-A-2
S10	Election of University Faculty Committee Members	Article VIII-B-1
S11	Election of Nominations and Elections Committee Members	Article VIII-B-2

The actual approval process has two steps as described in [Article XIV of the OPUF](#):

1. The Faculty Senate passes a resolution that confirms support for [S1-S11](#). ([Draft resolution document](#))
2. The University Faculty passes a referendum that supports the Faculty Senate resolution. ([Draft referendum document](#))

In addition, the Employee Assembly (EA) needs to express support insofar as 2000+ of its members are being realigned with the Faculty Senate. ([Draft EA resolution](#))

§2. The University and RTE Faculties

Cornell is quite precise with its line-up of [academic titles](#) and [title modifiers](#) but somewhat fuzzy when it comes to “Who is on the faculty?” and “Who has voting rights?” This is because those definitions have largely been [left to the colleges](#) as per [Article XIV](#) of the University Bylaws. An exception is the definition of the University Faculty that is set forth in [Article XIII](#) of the University Bylaws. The titles that define the University Faculty are as follows:

The University Faculty	
Titles with University Voting Rights	Comments About Modified Titles
Professor	Those whose title is modified by courtesy or emeritus/a have university voting rights. Those whose title is modified by adjunct , visiting , or acting do not have university voting rights. These rules are in the University Bylaws where “voting rights” = “university voting rights”
Associate Professor	
Assistant Professor	
University Professor	
At-Large Professor	

Central to our proposal is the identification of the RTE Faculty where “RTE” stands for research, teaching, and extension. Here are the titles that define the RTE faculty:

The Research Faculty	
Titles with University Voting Rights	Comments About Modified Titles
Research Professor (all ranks)	Those whose title is modified by courtesy , visiting , or acting do not have university voting rights.
Research Scientist (all ranks)	
Senior Scholar/Scientist	
Research Associate (all ranks)	
Librarian/ (all ranks)	
Archivist (all ranks)	
Titles without University Voting Rights	
Visiting Critic	
Visiting Scholar/Scientist	
Visiting Fellow	
The Teaching Faculty	
Titles with University Voting Rights	Comments About Modified Titles
Professor of the Practice (all ranks)	Those whose title is modified by courtesy , visiting , or acting do not have university voting rights.
Clinical Professor (all ranks)	
Lecturer (all ranks)	
Titles without University Voting Rights	
Instructor	
Teaching Associate	
The Extension Faculty	
Titles with Voting Rights	Comments About Modified Titles
Extension Associate (all ranks)	Not applicable.

OPUF modification [S1](#) encodes the above definitions.

For reference, here are the approximate populations of the relevant groups for 2017-18:

Faculty	Voting	Nonvoting
University	2200	260
Professors (all ranks)	1600	260
Emeritus/a	600	0
RTE	1070	520
Research	450	370
Teaching	390	150
Extension	230	0

The classification of academic titleholders into four faculties is also approximate:

- There are lecturers whose jobs have a research component.
- There are research associates with teaching responsibilities.
- There are professors who have a formal commitment to extension.
- Etc

Despite the fuzzy boundaries, the RTE acronym captures the essence of what we do as a faculty. Every faculty member engages in some mix of research, teaching, and outreach. That is why we prefer the simple and descriptive quality of “RTE Faculty” to “Academic Associates” or “Contingent Faculty”, or (and this is the worst) “non-tenure track faculty”.

We appreciate the arguments for RTEC (“C” for “clinical”), RTEP (“P” for “of the practice”), and RTEl (“L” for “Library”) but advise against assigning too much importance to the actual composition of the acronym. Recognition and identity hinge on perceptions of the titles—that is what we need to address.

On the matter of who gets university voting rights, we believe that titleholders on tracks that lead to senior positions should have university voting rights. Those whose positions are short term, part-time, or visiting positions should not have university voting rights.

We are not in favor of “splitting” promotion ladders on the voting issue, i.e., granting university voting rights only to those who are at or near the “top rung” on grounds that they have the required perspective. That may make sense in a college or department, but in the Faculty Senate, a beginning academic who has fresh memories of life as a post doc, research student, teaching assistant, entrepreneur, or clinical practitioner can contribute a lot. It should be noted that the tenure track is not split with respect to voting—assistant, associate, and full professors have university voting rights.

Finally, we mention that all RTE faculty, regardless of title, are welcome to attend Faculty Senate meetings and participate in debates. OPUF modification [S6](#) makes that explicit.

§3. Electing Senators

RTE Faculty with university voting rights can serve in the Senate either as a representative of their department or school (a “constituent senator”), as an at-large Senator (there are nine), or as a College RTE representative (this is new).

The College RTE seats are for RTE faculty only. They are apportioned among the colleges according to n where n is the number of RTE faculty in the unit:

- A college has 1 RTE seat if $n \leq 25$.
- A college has 2 RTE seats if $25 < n < 100$.
- A college has 3 RTE seats if $100 \leq n$.

This is patterned after the OPUF rule ([Article IX-D](#)) that gives a department/school a second senator if it has more than 25 members who belong to the University Faculty. Based on AY2017-18 data, the allocation of College RTE seats is as follows:

College	Number of RTE Faculty with University Voting Rights	Number of College RTE Seats
CALS	295	3
AAP	4	1
CAS	273	3
SCB	44	2
CIS	15	1
COE	56	2
CHE	68	2
ILR	45	2
LAW	19	1
VET	123	3
	942	20

One reason for aligning RTE-specific seats with the colleges is that use of academic titles varies widely from college to college. The College-RTE senator idea respects that reality while at the same time creating an opportunity for that group of senators to caucus and bring to the Faculty Senate RTE-issues that are university-wide.

Here is a table that summarizes and senator-related voting rules.

Type of Senator	Eligibility	Electorate	OPUF Modifications
Constituent	U or RTE	U and RTE (Dept-wide)	S1 + S2 + S3 + S4
At-Large	U or RTE	U and RTE (University-wide)	S1 + S2 + S3 + S4 + S5
College RTE	RTE	U and RTE (College-wide)	S1 + S2 + S3 + S4 + S5

Changes are highlighted in red. “RTE” means “RTE with university voting rights”.

§4. The Composition of the Faculty Senate

If our proposal is adopted, then the Faculty Senate will include these voting members,

1. The President of the University (or Provost when attending as Chief Educational Officer), ex officio.
2. The Dean, ex officio.
3. The Secretary, ex officio.
4. The Ithaca-Based Faculty Trustees, ex officio.
5. One emeritus/a faculty member selected by Cornell Academics and Professors Emeriti.
6. **One voting RTE faculty member from the library.**
7. Nine at-large members of the University Faculty (at most six of whom are tenured).
8. Department/School Senators **possibly selected from the RTE Faculty** (approximately ninety).
9. **College RTE Senators** (approximately twenty).

and these five ex officio nonvoting members:

1. [The Student Assembly](#)
2. [The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly](#)
3. [The Employee Assembly](#)
4. **[The Office of Postdoctoral Studies](#)**
5. [ROTC](#)

Changes specified in **red**. See OPUF modification [S3](#) for more details. The idea behind the nonvoting ex officio seats is to create a formal communication channel between the Faculty Senate and the associated constituencies.

§5. Elections for University Faculty Positions

In the following table we indicate who can vote for certain University Faculty positions. Changes are in **red**, “U” means voting members of the University Faculty, and “RTE” means RTE Faculty with university voting rights.

Office	Eligibility	Electorate	OPUF Modifications
Dean of Faculty	U	U and RTE	S1 + S7
Associate Dean of Faculty	U	U and RTE	S1 + S8
Faculty Trustee	U	U and RTE	S1 + S9
Member of University Faculty Committee	U	U and RTE	S1 + S10
Member of Nominations and Elections	U	U and RTE	S1 + S11

Note that in every case the electorate consists of the entire voting faculty. We believe that this will filter for office-holders who appreciate the combined strength of the University and RTE faculties.

§6. Post Referendum and Beyond

Two important matters need to be addressed if and when the University Faculty approves our recommendations.

The first concerns the process of Senator selection. Steps need to be taken to ensure that those who express interest in serving in the senate are duly considered by their academic unit. Diversity within the Faculty Senate needs to be improved and this will require a measure of proactivity on the part of chairs and directors. Elections are supposed to be by secret ballot (OPUF [Article IX.E.2](#)), a process that is rarely followed but which would probably result in a healthier turnover of the membership. The Dean of Faculty Office will need to monitor the percentage of constituent senators who are selected from the RTE faculty to make sure there are no unhealthy dynamics, e.g., trends that reflect disengagement by the University Faculty. To guard against this, both the [recommended Senate resolution](#) and the [recommended referendum document](#) stipulate that the changes be reviewed after they have been in effect for three years.

The second challenge that needs to be addressed concerns RTE representation on the [standing committees](#) of the Faculty Senate. There already is a measure of participation but composition rules need to be clarified. Clearly, the [Faculty Advisory Committee on Tenure Appointments](#) should be composed solely of tenured members of the University Faculty. How RTE issues are to be handled at the committee level is very important. The option we prefer is to expand the charge (and membership) of the [Academic Freedom and Professional Status of the Faculty Committee](#) so that it can address RTE issues such as (a) promotion and renewal standards, (b) professional development, (c) recruitment and retention, (d) academic freedom, (e) switching and mixing tracks, (f) emeritus/a status for qualified RTE faculty, (g) title definitions and ranks, (h) clinical professor allocation ceilings, and (i) various HR issues. It should be mentioned, however, that strong arguments can be made for a new standing committee that is dedicated to RTE issues.

Our committee will look carefully at these challenges and provide recommendations to the Faculty Senate after the results of the referendum are known. This timeline makes sense because the Faculty Senate can handle its election protocols and committee arrangements without OPUF modification.