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Relations Between UFA and University Senate 4-26-93

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To: Dr. Hagop Pampookian, UFA President
Members of the UFA Executive Committee
Members-elect of the 1993-94 UFA Executive Committee

From: John Kelley JK

Subject: Relations between UFA and the new University Senate

Date: April 26, 1993

Although UFA has endorsed (for a three year trial) the new University Senate as the governance mechanism for SSU, no document exists that describes the operational relationship between the two organizations. Neither the UFA Constitutional "amendment" granting this endorsement, nor the University Senate Constitution itself defines the relationship.

Unless this uncertainty is resolved, next year could be quite unpleasant for the University (and for those of us "lucky" enough to hold governance positions!) We already are a fractious bunch; an unsatisfactory solution--or none at all--to this jurisdictional problem can only make matters worse.

What to do? I believe that we should design a relationship between UFA and US that takes into account the North Central team's observations about SSU governance:

The effectiveness of governance is limited by (1) too many committees, (2) inadequate information flow among constituent groups, and (3) poorly defined decision-making responsibility.

If SSU currently has too many committees, poor internal communication, and ill-defined decision-making responsibility, next year could be worse.

The following is a draft proposal that responds to these concerns and to the necessity of defining the UFA/US relationship:

1. The UFA's standing committees (most of them at least) should be put in "cold storage" for a year, with the option to reactivate them later if that is the will of the UFA membership. (The standing committees can be suspended by a change in the UFA Bylaws, which requires an affirmative vote by a majority of those UFA voting members actually voting.)

Just about all the UFA committees have their counterparts on the University Senate. If the UFA continues to operate its committees, then the demands for faculty participation in the public life of the University may be stretched to the breaking point.

The University Senate Constitution requires 29 faculty to participate; 27 of them must be committee members plus members of the full body. This is 25% of the faculty. Because of the range of matters that will come before the Senate, these 29 faculty will need to devote more time to the Senate than the 29 most active faculty ever devoted to the UFA!

2. The UFA should function as the collective voice of the academic electorate which comes together each year in its regular meetings (or at the polls) to do several things:

- A. Elect its ^{OWN} Executive Committee and ^{ELECT} twenty seven Faculty Representatives to the University Senate.
- B. Monitor the performance of the University Senate by receiving reports from and questioning:
 - 1.) The UFA President (who automatically is Vice-President of the University Senate).
 - 2.) The Faculty Representatives on each of the standing Senate committees.
- C. Express the collective recommendations or judgements of the Faculty through "sense of the faculty" resolutions addressed to the University Senate, the University President, external bodies etc., as necessary.
- D. Require, as necessary, the University Senate to reconsider its recommendations in matters of academic freedom, academic misconduct, and curricular issues. This reconsideration is required when 60% of the Faculty, as certified by UFA, disagree with a Senate recommendation in the above listed areas. (See Section 5.10 FACULTY CONSENT of the Senate Constitution for details.)
- E. Fill mid-term faculty vacancies in the Senate including those vacancies created by recalling a faculty representative for non-performance of duties.

The preceding description of a possible working relationship between the UFA and the Senate is premised on the assumption that a good analog for the relationship is that of stockholders to a board of directors or of an electorate to a legislative body. Some might suggest that a better analogy is to that of a two-house legislature. I believe this is a poor analogy (as are all analogies to one degree or another!).

The UFA did not create a two-house legislature by endorsing the creation of the University Senate. Rather, by endorsing the creation of the Senate, the faculty have switched from a rather limited-jurisdiction direct democracy (of essentially an advisory nature) to a broad-jurisdiction representative body, the University Senate, which shares expanded power in a collegial style with representatives of the other constituent groups of the University.

Will it remain an effective body, exercising power in a collegial style with the Administration, Staff and students, or will power gravitate back to the Administration? Absent a committed faculty the answer is obvious. If faculty must divide their energies and time between both UFA committees and Senate duties, commitment will lag. If the two bodies get bogged down in arguments over authority, little will be accomplished and that little will be accompanied by embittered relationships undermining efforts to repair past damage.

When Benjamin Franklin left Constitutional Hall for the last time in September 1787, an old lady asked him, "Well, Doctor, what do we have a republic or a monarchy?" Franklin replied, "A republic, madam, if you can keep it."

The UFA should insure that the 'republic is kept', by giving the their representatives in the Senate the clear authority to act and then holding them accountable.

Note: Perhaps the old and new Executive Committee can get together after May 1, to discuss this proposal and get your reactions to it?