**University Senate Ad-hoc Committee on Shared Governance**

**Proposal for Discussion on a Faculty Senate**

In Spring 2014 the University Senate Ad-hoc Committee on Shared Governance submitted a proposal on Governance Structure for campus discussion; the discussion was based on the document, Proposal for Discussion from the Subcommittee on Governance Structures http://und.edu/university-senate/\_files/docs/university-senate/us-shared-governace.pdf. This proposal discussed the formation of a Faculty Senate, the restructuring of University Senate, and the restructuring of the committees associated with it. There were two Campus Conversations, an online collection of comments, and many informal conversations about the proposal. On May 12, 2014, a campus-wide forum was held.

In the campus discussion three themes emerged:

* Faculty want to create a forum for faculty where they can work collaboratively on matters of particular concern to their roles and responsibilities. This body would be charged with representing the views and will of the faculty. Many would suggest this demonstrates there is a need for a Faculty Senate.
* Any faculty governance group should report directly to the President.
* There is not a need to change the University Senate at this time.

It appears that there is broad-based support for a Faculty Senate. The Ad-hoc Committee expects to test that assumption in the upcoming Campus Forum. There also appears to be mixed opinions about the role and purpose of the University Senate. The Ad-hoc Committee decided to withdraw any proposals for changes to the University Senate in order to focus on the primary issue of establishing the need for a Faculty Senate and how such a group would be chartered.

In this Fall Open Forum, we propose that the discussion have two purposes:

1. To determine what concerns there are about moving forward with a proposal to form a Faculty Senate. In the Fall Open Forum we wish to confirm or disconfirm the perception of broad-based support.
2. If there is broad-based support for a Faculty Senate, to discuss three possible strategies for faculty governance:
	1. Reestablish a Faculty Caucus within the University Senate, an idea that has been implemented in the past (see below). This would not be a formal governance structure change, but rather the creation of an opportunity for faculty to more systematically discuss matters of importance and provide input to the University Senate.
	2. Reestablish a Faculty Caucus within the University Senate and give it an explicit charge of developing and submitting a faculty senate constitution to the University Senate. This option would not involve any near-term change to the University Senate.
	3. Request that the University Senate create a committee to develop a constitution that establishes a faculty senate and which also may alter the nature and make-up of the University Senate. This option could lead to a very significant change in the shared governance structure.

In the Open Forum last spring some faculty recalled a time when the faculty senators on the University Senate met in a Faculty Caucus on the weeks opposite of the Senate meetings. We understand the purpose of the Faculty Caucus was to develop faculty positions on issues on the University Senate agenda. No one recalls why this group is no longer meeting. Nonetheless, the Faculty Caucus does provide a possible model for the proposed Faculty Senate.

The Ad-Hoc Committee, University Senate leaders, and members of faculty discussion group have identified three possible strategies for moving forward with the development of a Faculty Senate. Thus, we propose that faculty discuss the following three strategies for creating a Faculty Senate.

1. The Faculty Caucus of the University Senate

In keeping with prior history, ask the current University Senate leadership to reconvene the Faculty Caucus. This body would be made up of 2014-15 faculty senators elected to represent the faculty in the University Senate. Their responsibility would be to function on behalf of faculty to represent those positions and issues in the University Senate. This group would function within the current University Senate structure.

1. A Faculty Senate constitution developed by the Faculty Caucus of the University Senate

With a purpose of having a more formal faculty governance group, ask the current University Senate leadership to reconvene the Faculty Caucus of the University Senate as described above. In addition, the Faculty Caucus would be expected to develop a proposal for a Faculty Senate.

1. A committee charged by the University Senate to develop a constitution for a Faculty Senate

A third strategy for developing a more formal faculty governance group is to make a motion in University Senate to form and charge a committee to develop the constitution for a Faculty Senate.

Each of these strategies has strengths and weaknesses. If the assumption of broad-based support holds true, the Open Forum will permit University Senate leadership to understand the possible directions they can take to move forward with a proposal for more robust faculty governance.