

The Council of the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies (LA&PS) moves to establish an Ad Hoc Committee on the Governance of LA&PS ('the Committee'). The Committee shall recommend to Council how best to strengthen democratic, inclusive, accountable and collegial governance of the Faculty.

Establishing an Ad Hoc Committee on the Governance of LA&PS

Members of the Council of the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies (LA&PS) have recently expressed profound concerns regarding the governance of the Faculty and the University.

Hundreds of faculty signed an open letter to President Shoukri in November 2014 regarding the Academic and Administrative Program Review (AAPR) expressing that “We see this [AAPR] as a fundamentally flawed restructuring process that is inflicting harm and bringing demoralization and disrepute to the university.”

Council passed a motion in December 2014, despite attempts to rule the motion out of order, by an overwhelming majority stating it “opposes the use of the AAPR Task Force Report as the basis for any Faculty planning and calls for the re-assertion of collegial governance in academic planning processes.”

During the CUPE strike, two motions were passed with an overwhelming majority at a special 23 March meeting, again after attempts to have them ruled out of order by the Chair of Council. The first one stated that

“...Council... calls upon the University to take immediate steps to restore the rights of individual faculty and collegial bodies to make decisions regarding academic integrity and remediation, and to protect all members of the University community from reprisal or intimidation for the exercise of these rights”

and the second one was prefaced by a statement that

“...the partial resumption of classes under present conditions raises grave concerns about our ability as LA&PS Faculty Council to assure our standards will be met.”

We are persuaded that the future of the Faculty of LA&PS requires the strengthening of democratic, inclusive, accountable and collegial governance of the Faculty. The proposed Ad Hoc Committee on the Governance of LA&PS (“the Committee”) will make recommendations on how best to achieve this through a process of consultation, reflection and study of existing rules, procedures and practices within the Faculty.

The recommendations of the Committee, to be brought for approval of Council, should be in conformity with Senate rules and procedures, and will serve as the basis for change and transformation. These changes will happen at two levels:

- In areas that are the purview of Council, changes will come about through decisions of Council itself.
- In areas beyond the purview of Council, Council will frame recommendations and engage with various stakeholders within the University to promote change.

In a time of transformation that involves challenges for LA&PS such as the new SHARP budget

model and new responsibility for graduate matters, it is most propitious to open a new page in the governance of the Faculty. We expect the recommendations from the Committee will assist Council to work collegially and productively with the new Dean in effecting positive change and working towards more robust collegial governance in the Faculty.

The Committee shall seek to clarify the contribution of existing administrative structures, roles, rules and practices to the democratic, inclusive, accountable and collegial governance of the Faculty, as well as to recommend innovations. In particular it shall consider the role of Departmental and Unit Chairs in the governance of the Faculty, the structure and composition of the Council and its committees, and the selection, appointment, reappointment and evaluation of the Dean and Associate Deans.

The Committee may receive submissions and may undertake inquiries and consultations within and without the University as it sees fit. LA&PS Council asks the administration of the Faculty, including the Dean, Associate Deans, and staff, to assist the Committee in its work, and to provide the Committee in a timely fashion with all information that the Committee deems necessary to execute its mission.

The Committee shall be composed of nine members of the Council who are not the Chair, members of Executive Committee, Dean, or Associate Deans, with at least one member from each of the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Professional Programs, one of whom shall be a contract faculty member. It shall also include one undergraduate and one graduate student from across LA&PS who do not currently serve in an elected capacity in LA&PS Faculty Council or any of its committees.

Election of Committee members shall be by secret ballot of the Council membership, following its normal procedures. There shall be a ten day open nomination period, with candidates submitting a brief statement of their qualifications and interest, followed by a ten day on-line voting period. The nomination and voting process shall be conducted by the Secretary of Council, assisted by the Chair of Council. The elected members of the Committee shall be announced at the next Council meeting. The Secretary of the Council shall be asked to serve as Secretary of the Committee.

The Committee shall first report to Council in the fall 2015. Its final report and recommendations shall be submitted to Council for a vote no later than nine months after its formation, unless an extension is requested from and approved by Council.

The approved recommendations of the Committee shall become policy goals of LA&PS Council. These recommendations shall be advanced for implementation (when they are in the purview of LA&PS Council) or advanced as recommendations to other bodies (when they are not in the purview of Council) by the Chair of Council and its Executive, which will report back to Council on its progress at least once per academic term.

Mover: Terry Maley, Political Science
Second: Lorna Erwin, Sociology