The Committee on Shared Faculty Governance

The College faculty elected the Shared Governance Committee in spring 2013, with the charge of researching faculty governance structures and recommending ways to strengthen faculty governance in Emory College. There is broad consensus that Emory College needs strong faculty governance, with transparency and consultation as core values. To support our academic mission, we require governance mechanisms that lead to effective faculty participation in institutional development. It is clear that responding to future challenges will require flexibility, and the capability to make strategic choices. Faculty governance should guide decision making by faculty and administrators in order to create an environment that optimally supports faculty in their teaching and research, and fosters innovation, creativity, and collaboration in offering the best possible education to our students. In order to maximize the importance and influence of the faculty in the ongoing governance of the College, the Shared Governance Committee makes the following recommendations: first, to adopt a faculty senate to replace the current governance model of Emory College and, second, to implement a fully consultative model for the ongoing evaluation of programs.

The Committee on Shared Faculty Governance recommends, first, a College Faculty Senate as the best solution for informed, consultative, transparent and, therefore, effective faculty governance. Our current system of governance by the whole should be replaced for at least three interrelated reasons. First, it is cumbersome, and we must have a system that can act more efficiently in order to engage effectively in both advisory and decision making roles. Second, faculty engaged in governance must be well informed, and this requires a more significant investment of time than most faculty are able to make on an ongoing basis. Third, important decisions must be made over time, through a series of discussions and data-gathering. Because governance by faculty meeting of the whole means that faculty come into and out of discussions at different points, it becomes more and more difficult for faculty to provide an informed and effective voice to administration. A college faculty senate, that is dedicated to full consideration of issues at hand, in open dialogue and consultation with both the full faculty and the administration, and ultimately responsible for being the voice of the faculty, will address these problems and is the best solution to achieve the objectives of shared governance.

The Shared Governance Committee offers a second recommendation articulating principles that should guide the evaluation of programs and departments, including their creation, transformation or elimination. In particular, to the fullest extent possible such decisions should be reached via processes that are data-driven, consultative, and transparent.

Shared faculty governance is a privilege and a responsibility. If we want an effective voice then we must take this responsibility seriously. Empowering a faculty senate will accomplish this goal.
The committee makes two recommendations:

1. The Committee on Shared Faculty Governance recommends changing the bylaws to provide for a representative college faculty senate for faculty governance.
2. The Committee on Shared Faculty Governance recommends the faculty endorse a clear set of guidelines for the ongoing evaluation of programs and departments.

Each of these recommendations is spelled out in detail:

**Recommendation 1:**
The Committee on Shared Faculty Governance recommends changing the bylaws to provide for a representative College Senate for faculty governance.

We think a College Senate model of representative governance is necessary for several interrelated reasons:

1. The college faculty has reached a size where governance by the full faculty is too cumbersome. All of our peer institutions of a similar size use some form of senate model.
2. Different faculty attend different college faculty meetings, leading to iterative rather than progressive discussions.
3. Being informed on the critical issues takes time and effort, and requires more focused attention than full faculty governance allows.
4. Faculty want to be able to focus on their teaching and research, and representative governance will allow all faculty to participate through electing representatives and then having these individuals spend the time to fully understand and discuss the issues.
5. For representative government to work, faculty must trust their representatives. Having representative government that is second-guessed by faculty on all decisions undermines both the principles of representative government and, perhaps more importantly, leads to the lack of ability to move forward on important initiatives, thus hamstringing the very idea of shared faculty governance.

We note that if the faculty adopt this model, there will need to be a transition phase. At the end of this document, we provide guidelines for this transition.

**Logistics:**

1. **Size:** a College Senate consisting of 21 elected members plus one ex-officio member, the past-president of the senate (see below).
2. **Composition:** There shall be 6 representatives from each of the three divisions (humanities social sciences, and sciences), plus 3 at-large members. At any given time, at least one representative from each division must be a full professor, one must be an assistant professor and one must be LTF. The remaining representatives can be from any rank.
3. **Election of senate members (would need to be phased in)**
   a. Slates shall be developed by the nominating committee, composed of the chairs of each of the standing committees. The nominating committee shall seek advice from chairs and directors in developing the slates.
   b. Individual faculty shall vote for the representatives from their division and the at-large members
c. Term of office shall be three years. Because serving on the college senate will involve a great deal of work, senate members shall be released from other service responsibilities during their term of office.

4. Senate leadership (would need to be phased in)
   a. The senate shall have a president, a president-elect, and the past-president to serve as the executive council. The executive council will be responsible for setting the agenda.
   b. The president shall be in their third term of office.
   c. The president-elect shall be in their second term of office.
   d. The past-president shall serve as an ex-officio member of the senate for one year following their term as chair.
   e. Candidates for president-elect should be nominated by the senate in a secret ballot; the two top vote getters who are willing to stand for election will be voted on by the full faculty (electronic ballot) after speaking before the full faculty meeting at the end of the preceding academic year. The elected candidate will be designated President-elect during their second year in office and will be President in their third year in office.

Process:

Responsibilities:

1. Jurisdiction and Functions The College Senate represents the Emory College Faculty. It may consider and take positions on any matter of interest to Emory College faculty including those having to do with the role of the College within the University where action by the Faculty of the College is presently limited by University Bylaws.
   a. The College Faculty Senate is empowered to be proactive in working with faculty and administration to create and implement innovative policies regarding core college missions of research and teaching.
   b. The Administration shall consult with the College Senate on all matters pertaining to the College and to the Faculty of the College. This consultation shall include but not be limited to proposals for the development and modification of College programs and the setting of priorities and goals for the College. Consultation shall include reference to the budgetary implications of such proposals. The Committee shall have access to information necessary to conduct studies and to make recommendations to the Administration.
   c. It is the responsibility of the College Senate to bring all significant matters to the attention of the faculty in a full Faculty Meeting and, as a body, to entertain questions from the full faculty at such meetings. Issues that involve significant changes to the curriculum must be brought to the full faculty for discussion, input and feedback. Either the College Senate or the college faculty can ask for a vote of approval or disapproval of the senate’s recommendations (if 25% of the faculty request such a vote as per guidelines below), and the College Senate should take this vote into consideration, although the College Senate ultimately has full responsibility for making decisions or for making recommendations to the administration.
2. **Standing Committees.** The standing committees of Emory College shall report to the College Senate. Issues which the Administration wishes to be considered by a Standing Committee shall be directed to the College Senate, which shall determine the committee(s) to which the issue is to be assigned. The College Senate shall consider any matters presented to it by Standing Committees and may take whatever action concerning such matters as the College Senate deems appropriate. **The College Senate will have responsibility for overseeing all aspects of the standing committees, including the authority to re-define committees and their mandates.**

3. **Sub-committees, working groups and task forces.** The College Senate may decide that certain tasks are best accomplished in smaller working groups. They may do this in one of two ways:
   a. A working group composed of elected senate members can be constituted at any time.
   b. The senate may seek advice and guidance from any faculty they deem appropriate, but these faculty may serve only in an advisory role to the senate. All issues must ultimately come back to the College Senate for discussion before final decisions are made, or before making recommendations to the administration.

**Communication:**

1. **From the College Senate to the faculty:** The College Senate shall provide open avenues of communication between the full faculty and the senate in the following ways:
   a. Electronic posting of all meeting minutes
   b. An executive summary each semester of discussions, activities and decision.
   c. At least one full faculty meeting each semester, consistent with responsibilities outlined above. College Senate members will provide information about all issues under discussion in the senate, and the faculty will have the opportunity to ask any questions, or raise any discussion items with the college senate members.
   d. At least a few members of the College Senate should try to attend one meeting each year with the chairs and directors.

2. **From the faculty to the College Senate:** There would be multiple avenues by which faculty can bring issues to the senate and/or the full faculty
   a. Any faculty member can request any issue to be placed on the senate agenda; if the item does not appear on the published minutes, the president of the senate or a designate should communicate with the requesting faculty.
   b. If at least 25% of faculty request an item to be brought to the full faculty, the senate must do so, as outlined in Process item 1c.
   c. Faculty can post on the College Senate BB site.
**Recommendation 2:**
The Committee on Shared Faculty Governance recommends the faculty endorse a clear set of guidelines for the ongoing evaluation of programs and departments. First and foremost, there should be clear criteria for program and department evaluation that include at a minimum:

1. Centrality to the educational and research missions of the college and university
2. Broad effectiveness of programs and departments in terms of the core missions of teaching and research.

In developing guidelines for program and department evaluation, we emphasize several guiding principles. We note that each and every situation poses unique considerations and thus we recommend a process that is both flexible while simultaneously providing clear, transparent and fair processes of evaluation. Specifically:

1. The process must be data driven and consultative. In addition to discussion between the administration and the College Faculty Senate, there should be discussions with program and department chairs about ongoing evaluations. Discussions in the context of Academic Planning Sessions should be used for open dialogue about possible or potential challenges and/or difficulties in ways that allow disclosure and assessment of possible negative consequences for programs and departments.
2. The process must be transparent within the constraints of confidentiality of individual faculty. We emphasize that transparency must exist among the administration and the concerned faculty (as well as the senate members), although not necessarily among the full faculty. Although deliberations about programs or departments may be confidential, all recommendations and justifications, especially about possible negative consequences, should be made available to the concerned program or department, in writing and orally in appropriate meetings.
3. The evaluation process should be multi-stage, allowing the designated program or department to respond in person and in writing to both the administration and to the College Faculty Senate during discussions about challenges and possible negative consequences.
4. In the rare circumstance of program or department closing, the dean should express in writing the intention and justification to close a program or department to the chair, and the chair should be provided an opportunity to respond in writing and in person in response to this possibility. Possible closing should be discussed in as much detail as possible with the College Faculty Senate. The administration, senate members and chairs should engage in multiple discussions before final decisions are made.
5. If a decision to close a program or department is made, there should be a clear process of appeal in place that allows a department or program to appeal on the basis of procedure. Grounds for appeal would include lack of information in writing about possible closing and/or lack of opportunity to respond in writing and in person to the reasons for closing. The senate must refer appeals to an appeals committee which will judge whether the preceding process has been followed. Appeals would go to a committee constituted of chairs of the standing committees. Recommendation of this committee goes back to the senate.
In addition to these two recommendations, the Committee on Shared Faculty Governance strongly endorses the faculty taking the following steps:

1. Development of a new ECAS mission statement that will focus on strategic goals and objectives especially concerning the curriculum.
2. A full review and possible revision of the standing committee structure of ECAS.

Transition Process to the representative Senate model.

1. Current Gov Comm members will become members of the senate for the 2014-2015 AY. Two will be appointed for a one year term to the new senate, and one will be appointed to a two year term. One member of Gov Comm will be elected to be president of the senate.
2. Slates will be developed and 3 new members of the senate from each division will be voted in in the spring 2014 semester, with staggered length terms to yield a rotation of 2 of the 6 division representatives being elected each year.