

Discussion of Shared Governance



THE RATIONALE FOR CHANGES IN SHARED GOVERNANCE AT NORTHWESTERN GFC Winter 2010

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

January 28, 2010: Special University Senate Meeting to discuss proposed changes and to vote on current governance document

May 3, 2010: University Senate Meeting – Implementation steps

History



- 2 years of reflection by GFC
- Learning from sister institutions
- Learning from experience of faculty from other Universities

Argument I: We can do Better



- Phenomenologically driven: faculty do not participate robustly in University civic life
- Data driven: faculty report alienation, lack of information, learned helplessness, or simple over commitment
- Which (normatively) can lead to change rather than abandonment of the idea of civic life

Argument II: We have a vision



- One Northwestern is a powerful statement that creates One University across campuses, schools, and colleges.
- We need to create ways to change the culture to allow us to think of ourselves as one place in which we all have a stake, rather than disparate interests
- Interdisciplinary work is at the heart of our distinct culture: we need a governance structure that reflects this.

Two levels of Governance



Academic Senate

- Representative
- Elected
- Ongoing training
- Leadership of committees
- Recommendations to Executive Committee and thus to Trustees
- Ongoing governance meeting monthly in academic year

University Assembly

- Jacksonian Democracy
- Twice a year
- Open to everyone on the entire faculty and administration
- Broadest oversight on matters that affect everyone

Argument III: We like democracy



- Plan allows greater participation and dare we say it—empowerment—for faculty
- Plan allows for multiple ways to participate
- Plan draws on existing strengths, such as PRC model, and the power of our faculty’s research
- Plan draws on academic sources (Aristotle, DeTocqueville, Peirce, Bellah) —creation of “habits of the heart ” for increased involvement
- We like democracy as well as administrative expertise

Comparison



Old plan

- University Senate
- GFC
- Some appointed, some elected
- Only tenure and tenure track faculty

New plan

- University Assembly
- Faculty Senate
- All elected
- All full time faculty
- Faculty may petition for agenda items
- Addition of Senate Committees as needed (Childcare, Social Responsibility, or Sustainability)
- Report to Executive Committee quarterly