1966

Report of Special Committee on Faculty Participation in Selection and Removal of Chairmen of Departments

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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TO: President Francis H. Horn
FROM: Chairman of the Faculty Senate

1. The attached RESOLUTION, titled Report of Special Committee on Faculty Participation in Selection and Removal of Chairmen of Departments, is forwarded for your consideration.

2. The original and two copies for your use are included.

3. This RESOLUTION was approved by vote of the Faculty Senate on May 19, 1966.

4. After considering this resolution, will you please indicate your approval, disapproval or other comment and return the original copy, completing the endorsement below.

      May 23, 1966
      (date)

      ____________________________ /s/
      Chairman of the Faculty Senate

ENDORSEMENT

TO: Chairman of the Faculty Senate
FROM: The University President

1. Returned.

2. Approved_ Disapproved_ Other (explanation attached).

      ____________________________ /s/
      President

Original received and forwarded to the Secretary of the Senate and Registrar for filing in the Archives of the University.

      ____________________________ /s/
      Chairman of the Faculty Senate

Form approved 11/65
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
Kingston, Rhode Island
Faculty Senate

May 11, 1966

The Faculty Senate Committee on "FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN SELECTION AND REMOVAL OF CHAIRMEN OF DEPARTMENTS" submits the following report:

1. The Chairman of a Department is appointed by the Board of Trustees, upon the recommendation of the President of the University, for a three-year term. The President's recommendation is made with the advice of the Dean of the College who shall request and take into consideration the individual or collective preferences of the members of the Department with the rank of Assistant Professor or above. *

2. A Chairman of a Department may be continued in that position after a three-year term only by appointment by the Board of Trustees, upon recommendation of the President of the University. The President's recommendation is made with the advice of the Dean of the College, who shall request, and take into consideration, the individual or collective preferences of the members of the Department with the rank of Assistant Professor or above.

3. Those Chairmen of Departments, who, as of this date have served for three years or more, should be brought into this system of review and reappointment as soon as practicable.

*From "Faculty and Staff Handbook" University of New Hampshire.

Signed

Dean James W. Cobble
Prof. Edward O. Magarian
Prof. Everett E. McEwen
Prof. Kenneth R. Williams, Jr.
Prof. Robert A. DeWolf, Chairman
Professor William R. Ferrante  
Chairman, Faculty Senate  
Wales Hall, Campus  

Dear Bill:

You and Professor Holmsen have brought to my attention the fact that no final decision has been made concerning Senate Bill 107, a resolution approved on May 19, 1966, submitted to me on May 23, and returned to you on May 25 with the notation, "Holding for further study and consultation. Am inclined to object to part of the provisions."

I have re-studied the matter and discussed it with some of my colleagues, as a result of which I am approving the recommendation. I would point out, however, that in response to my letter of inquiry to Professor Robert A. DeWolf, chairman of the committee that submitted the resolution, the committee apparently did not understand the system under which we were then currently operating. I pointed out to Professor DeWolf that our present policy was, "that a chairman initially appointed for three years is assumed to be continued on a year-to-year basis so long as it is mutually agreeable to the chairman and the administration, with the understanding that there is at least an informal evaluation of the situation each year." Professor DeWolf wrote that, "I doubt if the Committee was aware of this policy - if so, it was never mentioned." In the Army, in the situation like this, we would call it incompletely staff work; in other words, the committee failed to inform itself of what was existing policy and practice regarding the matter the committee had under study. Frankly, I believe that our present policy is preferable to the policy that is being proposed; however, I doubt if the matter is significant enough for us to have a major disagreement about.

I am instructing Dr. James, the academic vice president, to bring to the attention of the deans of the respective Colleges Part 3 of the resolution, that is, "Those Chairmen of Departments, who, as of this date have served for three years or more, should be brought into this system of review and reappointment as soon as practicable."

I would make one further comment upon the implementation of the resolution. As I read it, the intent is that a department, in each case, shall
be consulted. It is not mandatory upon the department chairman, the dean, and the president to abide, necessarily, by what a majority of a particular department may indicate in a poll of the members of the department. I'm inclined to agree with Professor DeWolf when he wrote me, "As far as the Dean's part in the report's first two paragraphs is concerned, the Committee believed that nothing is recommended but what a good Dean would do anyway." There may be occasions, however, in which, after consultation with the members of a particular department, the dean may believe that the best interests of the University will be served by going along with the minority rather than the majority viewpoint. I assume we're all men of good will, working for the welfare of the University, and I doubt that in many cases, except where a department is seriously split, there would be many cases where the dean did not go along with the majority viewpoint.

Cordially yours,

Francis H. Horn
President

cc: Dr. F. Don James
March 27, 1967

Dr. Francis H. Horn
President
Administration Building
Campus

Dear Dr. Horn:

This letter is in reference to Senate Resolution No. 107, Faculty Participation in Selection and Removal of Chairman of Departments. At the Senate meeting on January 19, 1967, when you announced that you had approved the measure, I said I would write you a letter to confirm our understanding of the phrase "The President's recommendation is made with the advice of the Dean of the College, who shall request and take into consideration the individual or collective preferences of the members of the department with the rank of Assistant Professor or above." I apologize for not doing this sooner; this is one of those items I put aside until "later".

You will recall that there were several questions on this point. I want to confirm for the Senate that the Bill was passed by the Senate and approved by you with the understanding that the results of a survey of any department made by the dean was not binding on the dean or the President. It is assumed that the dean and President take into account the results of the survey when considering the appointment or reappointment of a department chairman. I note that this same interpretation is expressed in your letter to me dated January 17, 1967.

There was no disagreement in the Senate with my proposal to clarify this point in a letter to you. I will attach a copy of this letter to copies of the Bill in the Senate files.

Sincerely,

William R. Ferrante
Chairman, Faculty Senate
This Resolution No. 107 was approved by President Horn -- (see letter from Dr. Horn to Dr. Ferrante, Chairman of the Senate, dated January 17, 1967) see also minutes of Senate meeting on January 19, 1967.