

January 24, 2014

To: Faculty Senate

From: Craig Parks, Chair, Committee on Committees

Re: Potential restructuring of Senate committees

Last semester the Senate asked the Committee on Committees (CoC) to look at the structure of the Budget, Graduate Studies, and Research and Arts committees to determine if they are adequate and appropriate given the current charges of those committees. This memo reports on CoC findings in regard to the **Graduate Studies Committee**.

The Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) consists of 14 faculty members, with each college having at least one representative and no college having more than two; five at-large graduate students; and ex officio representatives of the Graduate School, GPSA, Provost, and each urban campus Chancellor. The CoC studied the history of GSC to learn why there are 14 members, but could not discover the reason. Informally they were told that the number was set so that a quorum cannot be achieved unless the number of faculty members in attendance is more than the number of graduate students in attendance, but they find no written confirmation of this. The CoC also talked with Jon Yoder, the current chair of GSC, and examined the typical workload of GSC. The committee also noted that Academic Affairs processes more business with fewer members (12 faculty, two undergraduate) than does GSC. Finally, the committee realized that the membership charge merely requires at least one member from each college, and does not specify that members must come from colleges that offer graduate training. This means that the Honors College, for example, could demand voting representation on GSC. While it seems unlikely they would actually do so, the possibility is nonetheless there. The CoC thus recommends that **membership of Graduate Studies be changed to one member from each college that offers graduate training, and the number of graduate-student members be reduced from five to three**. This last change keeps in place the fact that a quorum will contain a majority of faculty members. Also, since graduate students are already at-large, and since GPSA has an ex officio member on GSC, the CoC sees no evidence that this last change will adversely affect representation of graduate-student interests.