

From Craig Owens: April 23, 2018

I'm writing to offer a way of thinking about representation on faculty senate that addresses both the need for equitable representation of the various divisions while maintaining a University-focused, rather than constituency-focused or division perspective.

In what follows, I'm proposing that we eliminate proportional representation as an assumed merit. If the point of faculty senate is for each senator to "represent" the collective concerns and needs of the faculty, there's no reason that just because there are more faculty in, say, Arts and Sciences than in Journalism, Arts and Sciences should be represented by more senators. As long as Arts-and-Sciences perspectives are represented at the table, the merits of those points of view, not the number of people who hold them, ought to be the basis for deliberation.

In short, I think we need a model that values each divisional perspective equally, without regard to how many actual faculty are in that division. With that in mind, I'm suggesting this:

1. That one senator from each of the 10 academic divisions be elected by that academic division in every odd year: HUM, SS, Math/Sci, Arts, Cowles, JMC, BPA, PHS, SOE, Law: 10 "divisional" senators.
2. That ten senators be elected at large, by the whole faculty, with one coming from each division. Every faculty member would get ten votes and would distribute them among ten divisional slates.

Faculty with joint appointments would be asked periodically to "declare" which division they wish to be counted as. (Let people name their own identities, in short).