

Stephen F. Austin State University
SFASU Faculty Senate
Evaluating the Need for Term Limits
Passed, February 11, 1998, Faculty Senate meeting #272

Article I. Organization, Section 5 of the Preamble of the Constitution of the Faculty Senate presently reads:

(a) The term of membership of the Faculty Senate shall be three years, with the exception of a member of the Faculty Senate elected to the position of Chair-Elect. The term of membership of the Chair-Elect will end at the completion of his/her term as Chairperson of the Faculty Senate. To provide for continuity of organization and function, one-third of the membership shall be elected each year. Upon the completion of a term (a full three-year or four years if elected Chairperson of the Faculty Senate, or a two-year unexpired term of membership), no faculty member shall be eligible for re-election until the expiration of two academic years.

The Faculty Government & Involvement Committee has been charged to look at term limits of Senators. The rationale for the extended term limits would be to have stronger continuity in the Faculty Senate and allow interested faculty to be re-elected without waiting two years, especially in colleges with small faculty numbers.

After examining the issue, the following recommendations are made. Please send any comments which you might have to a member of the Faculty Government and Involvement Committee (Lauren Scharff, chair, Janie Kenner, and Brent Burt). This will be available on the Faculty Senate Web page for comments.

Update: After discussion during the first reading in Faculty Senate Meeting #270, the Committee has proposed an [alternative proposal](#). Please indicate in your comments which proposal you support. Thank you.

Original proposal:
[\[Go to Alternative proposal\]](#)

Section 5.

(a). The term of membership of the Faculty Senate shall be three years.

(1). A Senator may serve one three-year term or serve two three-year terms (6 years) consecutively if elected by their respective college faculty. The maximum number of years a senator could serve would be six or seven.

(2). A senator could be elected as Chair-Elect in either the third or sixth year and would serve as Chair in either the fourth or seventh. A senator could serve as Chair only once in the 6 year time period and would be ineligible to serve an additional term after serving as chair.

(3). If a senator served out a one-year unexpired term, the senator could be re-elected for two consecutive terms, serving a maximum of seven years.

(4). No member shall be eligible for re-election until the expiration of two academic years after serving four (if chair), six or 7 years, which ever applies.

Second Proposed Amendment Regarding Term Limits for the Faculty Senate

Following discussion at the November 12th Senate meeting, a second alternative in term limits is proposed.

Rationale: The Senate serves as an advisory board rather than a true policy creator. Further, senators are elected representatives whose presence on the Senate depends upon their colleagues' perception of their performance. Thus, the accumulation of "power" and undue influence on policy should not be a concern if senators are allowed multiple consecutive terms. Further, consecutive terms would allow both better continuity and also college representation where few faculty are willing to serve.

Proposal:

Section 5.

(a). The term of membership of the Faculty Senate shall be three years. A senator (including previous chairs) may be elected for multiple consecutive terms.

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