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Original Motion to Create Governance Commission

Otterbein University

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The Administrative Council acknowledges the outstanding work of the Governance Committee on their charge “to examine the campus Bylaws annually to see if wording is up-to-date pertaining to current practices, and to submit corrective legislation, as appropriate, to the Administrative Council.” Their excellent work has fostered lively discussions at several specially called Administrative Council meetings to review the Bylaw changes. The dialogue has been healthy, eye opening, and thought provoking.

During those discussions the questions of “Is this how we want to be governed” and “Does our current system allow for the most efficient way to provide transparency within the campus community” continued to arise. In our knowledge, those questions have not been asked in a formal way and a campus wide study of these issues has not taken place in some time. Otterbein has changed drastically since the current governance system was crafted and installed in the late 1960’s.

Therefore, the Administrative Council **moves that the Bylaw change discussion be postponed** and that a Governance Review Commission be established to:

Gather information on and analyze various models of shared academic governance based on the principles of participation, inclusiveness, and representation that are affirmed as the core of Otterbein’s system of governance.

Consult with all relevant constituent groups within our community for input on how we want to be governed and what type of governance system would foster the greatest campus transparency, by means of:

- Meetings with constituent groups such as students, staff, administrators, and faculty, conducted both through an existing forum such as Staff Council meetings and, where appropriate, in called meetings or focus groups.
- A set of strategic conversations regarding key issues in governance structure and possible Bylaws revisions conducted in Senate.
- Other means the Commission considers appropriate, such as surveys, meetings with chairs or directors, or other mechanisms.

Produce a report that recommends key guiding principles and policies for Otterbein’s governance system, as well as proposing a revised set of Bylaws (to be considered in Senate) in fit with these principles and policies. The proposed Bylaws revisions document should be constructed and presented in such a way that specific changes from the previous Bylaws are clearly marked within the document, and each change is accompanied by a rationale.

This Governance Review Commission will consist of the following members:

Chair: A member of the Administrative Council elected or appointed by the Administrative Council.

One Student Trustee
One Faculty Trustee
One member of the Governance Committee of the Board of Trustees
Two students
Two members of the Faculty Council
Three members of the Staff Council
Three members of the Administrative Assembly
One member of the Governance & Bylaws Committee
One member of Alumni Council

The two student members will be elected or appointed by the Student Life Committee. All other constituent groups will elect or appoint their members to the commission.

The commission will look at all aspects of the current system and will be charged with maintaining the spirit of the structure of the current Senate as stated on the Senate website:

The Otterbein University Senate is the legislative body on campus. It is a unique governing body in that it is designed to represent all segments of the University community with a combined membership of students, administrators, staff and faculty.

It is recommended that the commission complete its work during the spring and fall semesters of 2013 and that a final report be presented at a January 2014 meeting of the Administrative Council. The Administrative Council will review, discuss and work with the commission to make any necessary revisions and then forward the report to the full Senate for its consideration.

The current Bylaws will remain in effect until the Senate adopts any recommended changes by the commission and committees that are established, but not in the current bylaws, will be expected to coordinate their work with the appropriate governance bodies.