January 28, 2010

Dr. Steven Leslie
Executive Vice President and Provost
MAI 201 (G5000)

Mrs. Patricia Ohlendorf
Vice President for Legal Affairs
MAI 102 (G4800)

Dear Steve and Patti:

The Faculty Council has submitted to President Powers the enclosed “Proposal from the Faculty Rules and Governance Committee to Revise the Membership and Election of Faculty to the Faculty Council Executive Committee,” Documents of the General Faculty 7788-7789. This legislation was approved by the Faculty Council at its meeting of January 25, 2010. Prior to making his decision, he would like to receive from each of you a written recommendation regarding this legislation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanking you for your help, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Charles A. Roeckle
Deputy to the President

CAR/am

Enclosure

cc: President William Powers, Jr.
Dr. Sue Greninger, Secretary of General Faculty and Faculty Council
Ms. Debbie Roberts, Executive Assistant, Office of the General Faculty
January 26, 2010

William Powers, Jr.
President
The University of Texas at Austin
MAI 400
Campus Mail Code: G3400

Dear President Powers:

Enclosed for your review and action is a proposal to revise the membership and election of faculty to the Faculty Council Executive Committee (D 7788-7789) submitted by the Faculty Rules and Governance Committee and approved by the Faculty Council at its meeting on January 25, 2010.

Please let me know if you have questions or concerns regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,

Sue Alexander Greninger, Secretary
The General Faculty and Faculty Council

Enclosure

SAG:dlr

xc: Steven Leslie, provost
Charles Roeckle, deputy to the president
Janet Staiger, 2009-10 Faculty Council chair
Hillary Hart, Faculty Rules and Governance Committee chair
Alan Friedman, Faculty Rules and Governance Committee member
DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

PROPOSAL FROM THE FACULTY RULES AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE TO REVISE THE MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTION OF FACULTY TO THE FACULTY COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Faculty Rules and Governance Committee, Dr. Hillary Hart (civil architecture and environmental engineering) submitted the following proposal to revise the membership and election of the Faculty to the Faculty Council Executive Committee. The secretary has classified the legislation as general legislation. It will be voted on by the Faculty Council at its meeting on January 25, 2010.

Sue Alexander Greninger, Secretary
The Faculty Council and General Faculty

PROPOSAL FROM THE FACULTY RULES AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE TO REVISE THE MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTION OF FACULTY TO THE FACULTY COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Proposal: (1) that the three slots on the Faculty Council Executive Committee (FCEC) currently reserved for those faculty elected by the Faculty Council (FC) to the Faculty Advisory Committee on Budgets, the Faculty Welfare Committee, and the Educational Policy Committee be filled by members elected directly by the FC to serve on the FCEC. (2) As soon as possible after the results of the spring FC election have been determined, the faculty on the next year’s FC will be asked to nominate themselves or others for the FCEC ballot; they will have until two weeks before the May meeting to do so. All FC members so nominated who are willing to serve will appear on the ballot distributed at the special meeting of the FC in May. If fewer than six nominations have been made, the FCEC will solicit additional nominations to achieve that number. At the May meeting each FC member will vote for up to three candidates; the three largest vote-getters will be elected to the FCEC.

If this proposal is approved the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) would be revised from (a) to (b):

(a) Composition. The Chair, Chair Elect, and Past Chair of the Faculty Council; the Secretary of the Faculty Council; one Faculty Council member (elected by the voting members of the Faculty Council) from each of the following standing committees: Faculty Advisory Committee on Budgets, Educational Policy Committee, and Faculty Welfare Committee; and the Chair (or the Chair Elect in the absence of the Chair) of the Graduate Assembly. Their term of service, commencing on the first class day of the fall semester, shall be for one year, with the proviso that some continuity of service from one year to the next is desirable.

(b) Composition. The Chair, Chair Elect, and Past Chair of the Faculty Council; the Secretary of the Faculty Council; the Chair (or the Chair Elect in the absence of the Chair) of the Graduate Assembly; and three Faculty Council members elected by the voting members of the Faculty Council. Terms of service commence on the first class day of the fall semester; they are for one year (though renewable).

The Present Situation: Currently the FCEC includes the chair, past chair, and chair elect of the Council; the chair of the Graduate assembly; the secretary of the General Faculty; plus three faculty members of the Council who are elected to the Faculty Advisory Committee on Budgets, the Faculty Welfare Committee, and the Educational Policy Committee. These three elected members of the FCEC are currently chosen from a slate of two for each position proposed by the FCEC, which has acted as a nominating committee.

Rationale: This proposal seeks to alter both the composition of the membership for the three faculty elected to committees and the election process. The current system of electing three FCEC members by standing committee designation seems somewhat arbitrary. (Why precisely these three committees? Why not, for example, include the Committee of Counsel on Academic Freedom and Responsibility or the Faculty Grievance Committee?) Further, without a more transparent and open nominating process from the Faculty Council
membership as a whole the present system may become self-perpetuating. Although the FCEC solicits nominations, few have come from the membership; moreover, although the ballot has a place for candidates nominated at the meeting when the election is held, candidates are rarely nominated from the floor. The Faculty Rules and Governance Committee believes that the proposed method of electing these three FCEC members directly is more likely to result in an active, effective, and representative FCEC.

The selection process for determining the other five members of the FCEC will remain the same if this proposal is approved.