

Motion to reconsider Deputy Provost membership on Senate October 24, 2011

Motion:

I move that Senate reconsider the Motion **“It is moved by the Senate Operations Review Committee that the Deputy Provost position be added to the ex-officio roster of Senate on an interim basis until the final composition of Senate is determined by SORC and ratified by Senate.”** that was passed at the September 2011 meeting of Senate for the following reasons:

In the Queen’s Senate [meeting of 27 September 2011](#), the Senate Operations Review Committee (SORC) [moved](#) that a new *ex officio* position in Senate be created for Vice-Provost Cole. Senator Morelli asked how the addition of an administrative *ex officio* position would affect the longstanding principle that faculty hold the majority of positions in Senate. Principal Woolf replied that the vice-provost is also a faculty member, and that in any case Senate makes no distinction between faculty and administrative positions. The vote was then taken and the SORC motion was carried.

Principal Woolf’s response showed little comprehension of the matter of Senate’s composition, and in fact misled Senate on this vote. Senate has been “a representative body”—i.e., one whose membership is meant to represent the university’s varied composition— since 1913, and it both confirmed and refined its policy of representative composition when it adopted “the principle of student representation” in 1968 and “the principle of staff representation” in 1994.[\[1\]](#) The argument for introducing student representation, as enunciated by the Committee on Structure and Procedures of the Senate in 1967, was that “Senate composition should be [. . .] *more fully representative of the principal academic elements of the University*” (Hooey, emphasis added). It is true that the same committee also “considered for the first time, the nature of individuals’ membership in the Senate” and “concluded that ‘The first principle of Senate membership is participation as opposed to representation’” (Hooey). This key principle is, presumably, what Principal Woolf had in mind when he claimed that Senate makes no distinction between faculty and administrative positions. But the principle “of participation as opposed to representation” pertains only to “*the nature of individuals’ membership*,” i.e., to all individual senators’ obligation to participate for the good of the whole University rather than to represent partisan interests within the University. In the matter of Senate *composition*, on the other hand—which was at issue when Principal Woolf spoke—the distinctions made by Senate between faculty and administrative positions could not be more open or notorious: the various representative constituencies in Senate are rigidly prescribed and are even subject to quotas. Two obvious distinctions that Senate makes between faculty and administrators are that faculty are appointed to Senate by election and ordinarily serve for three years, whereas administrators are appointed *ex officio* and serve for the duration of their tenure in office. As shown on its current “[Composition](#)” webpage, Senate currently sorts its members into four representative groups, each with its own quota: three groups of “elective members” (Faculty with 36 seats, Students with 16, and Staff with 3), and one group of 16 “ex officio members” who are all, except for the presidents of the AMS, SGPS, and QUFA, administrators.[\[2\]](#)

In its “[Interim Report on the Composition of Senate \(April 22, 2010\)](#),” SORC itself refers to the “guiding principle” of “proportionate composition as directed by Senate in 1996,” and lists the following proportions: that

- Faculty members never be less than 54%;
- Ex-officio members never be more than 19%;
- Student members never be less than 23%
- Staff members never be less than 4%[\[3\]](#)

Not only does this support the “guiding principle” of faculty majority with specific ratios: it also clearly distinguishes “Faculty,” “Ex-officio,” “Student,” and “Staff” as four non-coincident membership categories. For the assignment of a distinct percentage to each complement, together with the fact that the four percentages add up to 100, indicates that each complement must be treated as distinct, without double-counting. On this model the elected faculty complement should remain at least 54%, whatever the separate *ex officio* complement might be composed of.

Moreover, this distinction between “faculty” and “*ex officio*” places has always been honoured in practice. Principal Woolf, for instance, is appointed to the [Department of History](#), but he is not counted by Senate both as an administrator serving *ex officio* and as one of the 15 faculty members allotted to Arts and Science. The current composition of Senate allows for 36 faculty members, and the “[Membership](#)” webpage duly shows 35 faculty senators and “1 Faculty vacancy,” none of which positions have been filled or deemed to be filled by double-counting members with *ex officio* seats. (Similarly, the *ex officio* positions filled by the presidents of the AMS and SGPS are not counted among the elective student positions: the “Membership” webpage shows 13 students and “3 student vacancies,” rather than double-counting students in *ex officio* seats.)

In its “Report on the Composition of Senate” (Sept. 2009; see n. 3 above), SORC “reaffirmed the historic principle that faculty should retain the majority voice on Senate” (p. 2). And Margaret Hooley’s essay “[The Queen’s University Senate: Evolution of Composition and Function 1842 - 1995](#)” (1996) confirms that past Senates have also taken pains to respect what she calls the “principle of the faculty constituting a majority voice.” For instance, she writes:

The period following 1958 was marked by the addition of four new Faculties, substantial enrolment increases and expansion of the central administration. Between 1958 and 1968, *ex officio* membership grew from 6 to 14 to accommodate the Deans of the new Faculties, a Dean of Student Affairs, the University Librarian and 2 new Vice-Principals. **To maintain the faculty majority in the Senate, the elected component of its membership also increased—from 10 to 17**, the Senate itself almost doubling in size. (emphasis added)

Thus, as her Table 1 shows, Senate had 14 *ex officio* and 17 faculty positions in 1967-68 (for a faculty majority of 55%); after 1968 (when students were first admitted with four seats), Senate had 17 *ex officio*, 30 faculty, and 4 student positions (for a faculty majority of 59%). Before the creation of the Vice-Provost’s *ex officio* position this last month, Senate had 16 *ex officio*, 36 faculty, 16 student, and 3 staff positions (for a faculty majority of 51%—considerably below the

minimum of 54% recommended in 1996). The creation of a new *ex officio* position for the Vice-Provost has changed these numbers to 17, 36, 16, and 3, for a faculty complement of exactly 50%. Thus, Senator Morelli's observation that the creation of the new *ex officio* position would breach "the principle of the faculty constituting a majority voice" was precisely correct.

If Senate has taken pains to maintain this principle in the past, why is it now being breached? To reclaim its prescribed majority of 54%, assuming that all other positions (including the new *ex officio* position) remain constant, the faculty complement should be increased by 7, to a total of 43 (17 *ex officio* + 43 faculty + 16 students + 3 staff = 79, and $43 / 79 = 54\%$).

But Senate should also attend to the "principle," enunciated in 1996, confirmed by SORC in 2009, and quoted above, that "Ex-officio members never be *more* than 19%" (emphasis added). At present, with 17 out of 72 Senate positions, the *ex officio* members have 24% of the seats in Senate. Everything else remaining constant, they now have four seats in excess of the balance prescribed in 1996.

Given the wish that has often been expressed not to increase any further the numbers in Senate (see Hooey), the best solution might be to transfer three seats from *ex officio* administrators to elective faculty. That would make for 14 / 72, or 19% *ex officio* seats and 39 / 72, or 54% faculty seats.

[1] Margaret Hooey, "[The Queen's University Senate: Evolution of Composition and Function 1842 - 1995](#)" (1996), Table 1.

[2] *Ex officio* seats in Senate were originally restricted to administrators. *Ex officio* positions were added for the president of the AMS in 1971-72, for the president of QUFA in 1980, and for the president of the Graduate Student Society around the same time (certainly by 1993). (Hooey; these dates are given in Hooey's summary "Chronicle," and differ slightly from the dates given in her narrative. She does not say exactly when the GSS president gained *ex officio* status.) A SORC recommendation of 1995 that "ex officio components [be reduced to] include 'only the core academic administrators'" (Hooey) further underscores the basic identification of *ex officio* members with Administration.

[3] Whether this principle was truly "directed by Senate," as SORC claims, remains unclear. Hooey notes that the SORC proposal in which it was first formulated "was rejected by Senate in March, 1996." But it has subsequently been invoked and apparently endorsed by SORC. Even before the "Interim Report" of April 2010, A SORC "[Report on the Composition of the Senate](#)" (24 Sept. 2009) states that "When calculating allotted seats, SORC attempted to follow, as closely as possible the following proportions which were presented to Senate in March 1996" (p. 2) (it then lists the proportions as given in point form in the text above).

This discussion is also available on the Queen's Senate Faculty Caucus Blog at:
<http://senatefacultycaucus.wordpress.com/2011/10/06/mark-jones-the-principle-of-faculty-majority-6-october-2011/>

Senator J. Morelli