RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION

JANUARY 10, 2016

WHEREAS, Article II Section 3 of the Faculty Senate Constitution states that a key function of the Senate is to “provide for representation of the faculty in matters affecting the welfare of the faculty,” and;

WHEREAS, it is the clear intent of the Faculty Senate Constitution to provide assured and direct representation for all faculty, in that each college is granted such assured and direct representation, and;

WHEREAS, there is currently no such assured or direct representation for the thirty-two or more faculty whose position does not currently reside within one of the six academic colleges (heretofore referred to as the “Unaffiliated” faculty), which includes faculty in the Honors College, University College, Library, and 12-month employees with required teaching responsibilities, and;

WHEREAS, the concerns, interests, and perspectives of these faculty are too easily overlooked or omitted in reviews of policies and practices regarding curriculum, programs, budgeting, assessment and planning, salary and employment issues, and;

WHEREAS, such oversight and omissions hinder the Senate’s fulfillment of its assigned charge “to serve as the representative body of the faculty of UCA” in the review of university policy, and;

WHEREAS, in practice, but not in policy, at-large faculty senators have been given responsibility for representing the unaffiliated faculty, rather than serving as intended as “at-large” representatives;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the University of Central Arkansas Faculty Senate recommends that Article III, Section 1, C, 1 and 2 of the Faculty Senate Constitution be amended so as to:

1) include three (3) Unaffiliated Faculty Association members,

2) reduce the number of At-Large Faculty Senator positions from six (6) to three (3) so as to not expand the size of the Senate and undermine its deliberative ability;

AND WHEREAS, the university has created numerous academic units that function as academic departments but are led by individuals who do not carry the title of chair;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the University of Central Arkansas Faculty Senate recommends that Article III, Section 2 of the Faculty Senate Constitution be amended so as to recognize titles that are equivalent to but different than “chair”;

AND WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate Constitution does not clearly describe procedures for filling Senate vacancies and such procedures are described in the Senate Bylaws;

WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate Constitution currently limits the number of faculty able to serve as Senate President by requiring that faculty be elected to this position in either the first or second year of their term;

WHEREAS, such a limitation reduces the pool of potential candidates and may undermine the future effectiveness of the Faculty Senate;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the University of Central Arkansas Faculty Senate recommends that Article III, Section 3 of the Faculty Senate Constitution be amended so as to:

1) recognize that such procedures to fill vacancies should and do reside in the Faculty Senate Bylaws, and

2) allow that a Senator may serve up to seven (7) successive years if he/she is elected as Senate Vice President in the third year of his/her second consecutive term;

AND WHEREAS, the University´s academic calendar may close the spring semester and lead to the dispersal of faculty prior to May 1st and thereby undermine the Senate´s ability to meet, conduct business and elect new officers after that date;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the University of Central Arkansas Faculty Senate recommends that Article III, Section 6 of the Faculty Senate Constitution be amended so as to begin the term of the new Senate at the first called meeting of the Senate after the end of spring classes or May 1st, whichever comes first;

AND WHEREAS academic tenure confers both rights and protections that promote the effective leadership of the Senate;

WHEREAS academic tenure is required in order to serve on and effectively lead the Faculty Handbook Committee;

WHEREAS the Vice President and President of the Faculty Senate have generally been awarded academic tenure prior to their election to these leadership roles;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the University of Central Arkansas Faculty Senate recommends that Article IV, Section 2 of the Faculty Senate Constitution be amended so as to require that both the Vice President and President of the Senate shall hold academic tenure at the time of their election to these leadership positions;

AND WHEREAS the role of Senate Vice President confers as many responsibilities and time commitments as the role of Senate President;

WHEREAS the Faculty Senate Constitution and the Provost´s Office confer reassigned time upon the Senate President;

WHEREAS the Provost´s Office recognizes the importance of the Senate Vice President and has, in practice, also extended reassigned time to this individual;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the University of Central Arkansas Faculty Senate recommends that Article IV, Section 5 of the Faculty Senate Constitution be amended so as to extend reassigned time to the Faculty Senate Vice President;

AND WHEREAS the duties as Faculty Senate Vice President and President may undermine a senator´s ability to serve effectively as a college or at-large senator;

WHEREAS these duties may preclude adequate and diverse representation of all academic units on the Senate´s subcommittees;

WHEREAS the presence of the former Faculty Senate President may be a distraction and undermine the leadership of the new Senate President;

WHEREAS the focus of the former Faculty Senate President should shift from the Faculty Senate to the Faculty Handbook Committee;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the University of Central Arkansas Faculty Senate recommends that the Faculty Senate Constitution be amended so as to create the following Section 7:

Once elected, the vice president and president vacate their positions as college or at-large senators in order to lead the senate. Without regard to the date of their election to the senate, the vice president shall serve two more years: one year as vice president, and one year as president. After serving as president, a senator’s term shall end. The vacancies created by their election as officers shall be filled as described in Article III.C.3.

AND WHEREAS Article VII of the Constitution makes out-of-date references to the Faculty Council and even contradicts language in Article VI relating to the requirement of a 2/3 vote to approve;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that Article VII be stricken and that the Faculty Senate Constitution be amended so as to create the following Section 5 of Article VI:

Subsequent to the approval of an amendment by the Faculty Association, this constitution shall be considered ratified upon approval by the university president, and by the Board of Trustees of UCA.