

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Vancouver Senate Nominating Committee
c/o
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November 6, 2009

To: Vancouver Senate
From: Nominating Committee
Re: **Culture of Service (approval)**

Motion 1: That the report of the Nominating Committee on “Culture of Service” be received.

Motion 2: That **Recommendations 1 through 3d** be approved.

At the January 2009 meeting of Senate, the Nominating Committee was directed to consider ways in which to enhance the “culture of service” amongst members of the University community and to review ways in which service to the University is currently evaluated. The Committee was also directed to explore mechanisms by which faculty, students and staff can be encouraged to actively participate in the governance of the University and its units and report on its deliberations by the May 2009 meeting of Senate. The Committee was subsequently granted an extension, with a revised report back deadline of November 2009. The report presented herein is intended to fulfil the reporting responsibility assigned to the Committee.¹

Diminished Culture of Service – Observations

Active faculty involvement in academic oversight and institutional governance and support is essential to the fulfillment of the strategic goals of the University. To the extent that service occupies a central place in an institutions research and teaching missions, it is reasonable to expect robust faculty engagement and leadership in understanding and advancing service as a core value of the university. This is not always the case due in large part to an actual or perceived lack of emphasis on the importance of institutional service responsibilities. Service – particularly within the University – tends to trail as a distant third behind research and teaching. Despite increases in service expectations, service is not recognized comparably to teaching and research within academic communities.

This disengagement shrinks the pool of faculty who are willing to serve and limits the collective experience and expertise necessary for proper academic governance, thereby making academic governing bodies such as the Senate less representative and less responsive to the faculty and University at large. The Committee’s consultations indicate that the impact of a diminishing ‘culture of service’ touches upon all aspects of institutional service and governance.

In its consultations, the Committee found anecdotal evidence of a ‘diminishing culture of service’ across the campus. While faculties and students self-select for a variety of different

¹ While the referral speaks to “faculty, students and staff,” the Committee’s discussions have primarily focused on the issue of service with respect to faculty, being the major representative group on Senate and because staff service falls under different administrative provisions. Students have been consulted separately and the results of that consultation have been forwarded to the Vice-President, Students and are available through the Senate secretariat.

