Proposal for Clarification of Statement on Voting Rights in University Faculty

Current Statement from *Guide to Faculty Governance*, Chapter II, Section B, Paragraph 4 (Web link [http://provost.richmond.edu/facresources/governance/membership.htm](http://provost.richmond.edu/facresources/governance/membership.htm))

4. Voting Rights and Quorum Determination

Full-time faculty, those who are tenured and those who are on term or probationary (tenure-track) appointments, have voice and vote in faculty meetings. Visiting faculty shall have voice but no vote in faculty meetings. Visiting faculty are temporarily at the University while holding an appointment elsewhere. Full-time faculty members on sabbatical leave or leave of absence continue to hold their right to vote in the event they attend the meeting. Professional librarians and administrators with faculty status hold the right to vote.

A majority of the faculty is a quorum for the transaction of business. Included in the quorum determination and quorum count are: full-time tenured faculty, full-time faculty on term or probationary (tenure-track) appointments, librarians with faculty status and administrators and directors with faculty status. Excluded from the quorum determination and quorum count are: part-time and adjunct faculty members, faculty on visiting appointments, faculty on sabbatical leave or leave of absence, and student representatives.

Proposed Clarification:

4. Voting Rights and Quorum Determination

Full-time faculty who are tenured, on tenure track, or on continuing term appointments have voice and vote in faculty meetings. Full-time visiting faculty, i.e. those holding temporary, non-continuing appointments, shall have voice but no vote in faculty meetings. Full-time voting faculty members on sabbatical leave or leave of absence continue to hold their right to vote if they attend the meeting. Professional librarians and administrators with faculty status have voice and vote in University Faculty meetings and in school faculty meetings as determined by each school’s faculty.

A majority of those individuals with voting rights is a quorum for the transaction of business. Excluded from the quorum determination and quorum count are faculty on sabbatical leave or leave of absence.

Comment
The original statement goes back to a time at least 25 years ago when there were no faculty members or very few faculty members who were full-time yet not tenure stream.
In this context the interpretation of the statement is that voting rights were only for tenure stream faculty and those individuals who were given faculty status. Now we have a number of full-time faculty members who are on continuing faculty appointments which are not tenure stream, here called “continuing term” appointments as they are for a fixed period but designed to be renewed as long as there is still a need and the performance meets expectations. This proposal makes it clear that these continuing members of the faculty should have voting rights. At the same time it makes it clear that faculty on temporary appointments are essentially visitors and will have voice but not vote in University Faculty matters. The narrow definition of visiting in the original did not fully encompass faculty who were temporarily at Richmond.

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