



Report of the Senate Executive Committee

FOR DECISION

Presented by:	Peter Stoicheff, Vice-Chair, Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	April 26, 2025
Subject:	Creation of New Engagement Committee
Proposed Motion:	That Senate approves amending the <i>Senate Bylaws</i> such that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Engagement Committee, as described in this report, be established, • The Round Table on Outreach and Engagement be formally deleted, from the Senate Bylaws, and • The changes to the terms of reference for the Education Committee as outlined in this report be made.

Background:

Shift Toward Senate Engagement

The *Senate Engagement Plan*, adopted by this committee in April 2022, outlines a commitment to having the Senate more meaningfully engaged in the work of the university. One of the proposed actions of this plan is to “Consider creating a dedicated ‘Senate Engagement Committee,’ whose mandate would be to champion, support, and assist with the fulfillment of goals in the *Senate Engagement Plan*.” This report outlines a path forward to advance this recommendation.

Creation of the Senate Engagement Working Group

In summer of 2024, the Governance Office created a working group of interested Senators to advise the Governance Office on advancing the work of the *Senate Engagement Plan*. One of the topics for discussion of this working group was the creation of the standing committee on engagement.

At the January 2025 meeting of this working group, there was a discussion about what the general responsibilities of this committee should be. Additionally, it was noted that this committee – to enable it to be as successful as possible – should be integrated into the work of University Relations as this administrative office has oversight of community and alumni relations.

At the March 2025 meeting of the Senate Engagement Working Group, a draft of the potential terms of reference was discussed (Attachment 1). The working group raised no concerns about the proposed membership or responsibilities of this committee. One member raised a concern with the term for

membership on this committee being one year in length, renewable for a total of three years, saying that this made continuity and momentum more difficult. Other members believed that the proposed one-year terms were appropriate, saying that this was in line with other Senate committees and that the approved guidelines of the Senate Nominations Committee had as one of its criteria for decision making the desire to have continuity of membership. Working group members believed that reviewing the term lengths of all committees of Senate would be a good discussion for this new committee.

Dissolution of the Senate Round Table on Outreach and Engagement

At the April 2014 meeting of Senate, there was discussion about the future of the Senate Round Table on Outreach and Engagement. During this meeting (and in the report that went to Senate at the time), it was discussed that the structure and exact functioning of the Round Table may have outlived its purpose and that the work should be re-envisioned in a new format.

As such, the Round Table has been defunct for many years (the last year someone was appointed to sit on it was 2017), but it has never been taken out of the *Senate Bylaws*. The Governance Office believes this to simply be an oversight – the Round Table was previously administered by an office other than the Governance Office. As the Engagement Committee would replace the general purpose of the Round Table, formally eliminating it from the bylaws is being recommended at this time.

Changing Role of the Education Committee

At the October 30, 2021 meeting of Senate, Senate delegated to the Education Committee the ability to confirm changes made by University Council to the admissions requirements to existing academic programs. This change – made through amendments to the *Senate Bylaws* – was made to enable more frequent and timely consideration of requests for changes to admissions qualifications, as the Education Committee meets more frequently than Senate as a whole. This requirement for Senate to confirm changes to admissions requirements to existing programs is set forth in the *University Act*.

Since these changes have come into effect, the work of the Education Committee has shifted considerably to focusing on the academic programming of the university. However, changes to admission requirements are not the only academic issues considered by Senate, so additional pieces could be added to the Education Committee's oversight that would thematically align with this area of focus, such as:

1. The creation of departments, schools, and colleges,
2. Changes to the enrolment plans of the university, and
3. Reporting on the academic priorities of the university.

Note: Although the Education Committee has delegated authority to act on behalf of Senate to confirm admission requirement changes to existing programs, for the above three areas, it is recommended that the Education Committee have an advisory capacity to Senate.

The three areas of oversight noted above thematically align with the area of admissions changes in a way that recommending an educational session to take place at a Senate meeting does not. That is, currently the Education Committee has a split role, and focusing it on more strictly academic matters allows the committee to have both a greater focus and area of expertise. As such, at the recent meeting of the Education Committee, this committee endorsed removing the authority for determining

education sessions from its terms of reference and to focus this committee more on the academic mission of the university.

Additionally, this switch from having strictly “education” sessions to more of “engagement” sessions as a part of Senate meeting is in line with the principles of the *Senate Engagement Plan*. The goals of these sessions are not simply to inform Senators about specific initiatives of the university or to educate them about proposed changes, but rather to meaningfully include Senate in the decision-making process on these matters and to allow space and build capacity for provide relevant input. Having a committee of Senate that is explicitly focused on engagement (engagement with the work of the university, engagement with the external community, etc) being the entity to bring forward ideas for engagement sessions creates a thematic alignment for the future Senate Engagement Committee.

NEXT STEPS:

Should the recommendations outlined in this report be adopted, the necessary bylaw changes will be brought forward to the upcoming meeting of Senate. As this committee was not included in the recent call for interest for Senators to serve on Senate committees, an additional call for interest for this committee would be required.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. *Senate Bylaws* – New Engagement Committee Terms of Reference
2. *Senate Bylaws* – Current Round Table on Outreach and Engagement Terms of Reference
3. *Senate Bylaws* – Revised Education Committee Terms of Reference

Senate Bylaws – New Engagement Committee Terms of Reference

Part V(6)

Senate Engagement Committee

The Senate members of the Senate Engagement Committee shall be nominated by the Nominations Committee and elected annually by the Senate.

a. Membership

The Committee shall be composed of:

- i. The Chair of the Executive Committee or a designate from the Executive Committee;
- ii. The Vice-President, University Relations;
- iii. Two appointed members of Senate;
- iv. Two elected members of Senate;
- v. One student member of Senate selected annually by the student members of Senate; and
- vi. The Secretary (non-voting member)

The Committee shall also have as non-voting resource personnel staff members working in alumni or community relations appointed by the Vice-President, University Relations.

b. Term

The term of a Senate member on the Committee is one year, renewable annually for up to two additional years. The Vice-President, University Relations is a member for the duration of their term.

c. Chair

The Chair shall be appointed on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee.

d. Duties and Powers

- i. To develop and maintain a statement on the roles and responsibilities of members of Senate.
- ii. To develop strategies to promote engagement between Senators and the university community.
- iii. To develop strategies to facilitate communication between the university and the constituencies represented on Senate and engagement with the broader community.
- iv. To evaluate and report to Senate on the extent to which Senators have been, are, and may be engaged in the work of the university.
- v. To develop, in consultation with relevant university academic and administrative units, ideas for engagement sessions at Senate meetings that allow for Senate input on matters of strategic institutional importance.

Senate Bylaws – Current Round Table on Outreach and Engagement **Terms of Reference**

Note: This is the section that would be replaced by the proposed Engagement Committee.

Part V, Section 6

Round Table on Outreach and Engagement

a. Membership

Membership on the Committee shall be composed of:

- i. The President
- ii. Four District Senators (Regional Advisory Council Chairs) nominated by the Nominations Committee and elected by Senate;
- iii. Four members of the General Academic Assembly appointed by Council
- iv. Four staff members involved in Outreach and Engagement appointed by the President
- v. Four Community Leaders appointed by the President
- vi. One Undergraduate student appointed by the USSU
- vii. Vice-President University Advancement or designate to serve as Secretary (non-voting member)

b. Term

The term of a Senate member on the Committee is for one year, renewable annually for an additional two years up to a maximum of three years.

c. Chair

The President will serve as Chair. The Committee will choose a Vice-Chair.

d. Duties and Powers

- i. Nurture and support the University's outreach and engagement efforts.
- ii. Convene a university-community symposium on engagement, with broad participation from many communities and parts of campus.
- iii. Honour and celebrate existing initiatives.
- iv. Build awareness and understanding of the concept of engagement.
- v. Begin the process of identifying future areas of need and priority.
- vi. Invite leading public scholars to share their experiences in Outreach and Engagement with the Round Table.
- vii. Sponsor community lectures and/or workshops.
- viii. Sponsor clinics to support the work of faculty involved in Outreach and Engagement activities.
- ix. Submit regular reports to Council.
- x. Submit regular reports to Senate.

Senate Bylaws – Revised Education Committee Terms of Reference

Part V, Section 8

Current Text	Proposed Text (additions in bold)
<p>The members of the Education Committee shall be nominated by the Nominations Committee and elected annually by Senate.</p>	<p>The members of the Education Committee shall be nominated by the Nominations Committee and elected annually by Senate.</p>
<p>(a) Membership</p> <p>Membership on the Committee shall be composed of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i.2 ex-officio members of Senate; ii.2 appointed members of Senate; iii.2 elected members of Senate; iv.1 student member selected annually by the Student Members of Senate; v.The Secretary or designate (non-voting member). 	<p>(a) Membership</p> <p>Membership on the Committee shall be composed of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i.2 ex-officio members of Senate; ii.2 appointed members of Senate; iii.2 elected members of Senate; iv.1 student member selected annually by the Student Members of Senate; v.The Secretary or designate (non-voting member).
<p>(b) Term</p> <p>The term of a Senate member on the Committee is for one year, renewable annually for up to two additional years, for a maximum of three years. The term of the Chair will be one year, renewable annually for up to two additional years for a maximum of three years.</p>	<p>(b) Term</p> <p>The term of a Senate member on the Committee is for one year, renewable annually for up to two additional years, for a maximum of three years. The term of the Chair will be one year, renewable annually for up to two additional years for a maximum of three years.</p>
<p>(c) Chair</p> <p>The Chair shall be selected by the members of the Committee.</p>	<p>(c) Chair</p> <p>The Chair shall be selected by the members of the Committee.</p>
<p>(d) Duties and Powers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i.To consult with the Executive Committee respecting formation of the Senate agenda. ii.To provide at each meeting of Senate an opportunity for education/exploration of issues relating to the University of Saskatchewan. iii.To poll Senators regarding their interests in issues relating to (ii) above. iv.To confirm a decision of University Council to change academic and other qualifications required for admission as a student and to report for information to Senate on these confirmations as appropriate. 	<p>(d) Duties and Powers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i.To confirm a decision of University Council to change academic and other qualifications required for admission as a student and to report for information to Senate on these confirmations as appropriate. ii.To recommend to Senate whether or not the decision of University Council to establish a department, school, or college should be confirmed. iii.To recommend to Senate changes to the enrolment plans of the University. iv.As needed, to provide input to the university on the academic priorities of the university.