January 13, 2011

To:         Dean Sigurdson, Chair, Faculty Executive Committee

From:       B. Ferguson, Chair, Rules & Procedures Committee

Subject:    Faculty Council Election Procedure

The Rules & Procedures Committee met on Nov. 16, 2010 to consider the issue of changing Arts Faculty Council rules on elections for Senate vacancies.

Committee members reviewed the current rule (21.6 of Rules & Procedures Governing Meetings of Arts Faculty Council) which reads “To be elected, a candidate must receive the support of a majority of those present and voting”. Specifically, the Committee was asked to assess whether Senate elections alone among AFC elections might be conducted on a different basis, specifically a mail out ballot to all Faculty Council members vs a private ballot at the meeting of Faculty Council.

The committee engaged in a lengthy discussion of alternatives:

- drop-off ballots
- extending the period of balloting
- electronic voting

While committee members understood the impetus behind the call for a review of procedures, it was guided chiefly by the recognition that the current system was based upon important and widely-recognized principles and practices of open forums and decision-making which have been used in this Faculty virtually from its formation (and are followed by many other public institutions). The principle of active engagement in AFC business might well suffer if it began the process of moving towards balloting for any of its committees, each of which is important in its own way. Committee members strongly agreed that the current procedures of nomination and balloting for all elected bodies of AFC should continue without change.