

TO: SLA Faculty Assembly Executive Committee  
FROM: Bylaws Review Committee, Herbert Brant and Scott Weeden, co-chairs  
SUBJECT: Proposal on Membership of Committees by Program  
DATE: 20 February, 2020

The ad-hoc Bylaws Review Committee recommends the following action item for consideration by the Faculty:

**Change of language in Article IV, Section 2.c of the Bylaws**

*Current situation:*

The current bylaws prescribe a limit on committee membership in the following manner:

**“Section 2.c. Limitations on membership.**

No committee shall have more than two members from the same academic department or program and whether standing or elected, committees should have balanced representation from the humanities and the social sciences.”

*Proposed new language:*

**“Section 2.c. Limitations on membership.**

**No** Committees shall have no more than two members from the same academic department. *As a guiding principle, every attempt should be made to ensure the greatest diversity of membership possible, in terms of independent programs, programs within departments, as well as* balanced representation from the humanities and the social sciences.

***Rationale:***

The Bylaws Review Committee supports the principle that greater diversity of viewpoints and wider representation of academic disciplines should be made an explicit consideration in the appointment or election of committee members.

To honor the multiplicity of academic perspectives in the School of Liberal Arts, the programmatic, departmental, and disciplinary heterogeneity of each committee’s composition should be unambiguously spelled out in the Bylaws.

***Known and expected benefits:***

Inclusivity is a value that we esteem greatly in the Liberal Arts. By specifying the variety of disciplinary distinctions that must be considered in the composition of its committees, our School validates and elucidates our commitment to broadening representation and diversifying perspectives, thereby enriching the process of faculty governance.