

A PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
SENATE UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS BOARD AND
THE SENATE APPEALS BOARD

by

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History of the Problem

At the March meeting of Senate, Paper S.329 was presented as a summation of the several previous attempts to establish a Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board and a Senate Appeals Board. After considerable debate, during which some sections of the paper were approved, Senate referred the matter to the Academic Vice-President for reassessment - "with a view to making sure there are appropriate appeal mechanisms ... that it not be so complex and that the bodies be not so separate (so that) more problems are likely to occur."

With these instructions of Senate in mind, lengthy interviews were conducted with Admissions personnel, members of the present Ad Hoc committees, Senators and administrators. These discussions indicated the need for a complete re-thinking of the problem. Thus, since Senate did not approve Paper S.329 in total and thus none of its parts are yet accepted policy, I have chosen to completely re-define and restructure its proposals. Those wishing to review past debate on this matter are referred to Papers S.305, S.293, S.308 and S.329, plus the minutes of the meetings of December 1 and December 8, 1969 and January 12, January 26 and March 2, 1970.

Re-Statement of the Problem

At a special meeting of Senate in November 1968, two Ad Hoc Committees were struck in response to strong student-faculty criticism of existing admission and transfer policy. The first, the Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board (SUAB), was charged with directing the admissions, standing and credit procedures of the University; and the second, the Senate Appeals Board (SAB), was charged with hearing student appeals.

The Registrar was instructed by Senate to direct to these committees all cases for which a definite policy had not yet been established or which would require individual interpretation. The cases were to go to SUAB for interpretation and decision. In cases where the request of the applicant was denied, he was informed of his right to appeal either in person, via representation, or both, to the Appeals Committee. The decision of the Appeals Committee was final and binding.

While there is merit in some of the aspects of this Ad Hoc system (students were provided with an appeals mechanism allowing them personal representation, and some Senators did become familiar with the complex problems of admissions, transfer and standings policy) there were also several negative results. They are too

numerous to list them all here, but perhaps the most serious were the lack of confidence which developed between the committees that resulted from the frequent reversal of SUAB decisions by the Appeals Committee; the general lack of confidence among admissions personnel in the consistency of the committees; and the general malaise generated within the Registrar's Office in having Senate Committees doing their jobs for them. The general problem facing Senate now then is to reconstruct these committees within the spirit of the Ellis Report so that the problems encountered within the previous system are minimized or eliminated. The ultimate goal is to provide a mechanism for the establishment and review of policy, a mechanism which provides students with rights of appeal, and which, at the same time, will allow the Registrar's Office to perform in a confident, efficient manner.

Justification of the Two Committee System

While the Ellis Report, as accepted by Senate, calls for the formation of the SUAB and the SAB, a few qualifying comments are in order here. As seen in the previous paragraphs, these committees were generated as a result of alleged inadequacies in admissions procedures within the Registrar's Office. This, it seems to me, has been a misinterpretation of facts. If there was a problem, and it has never been clearly demonstrated that there was, it was that Senate had not provided sufficient guidance in the form of University policy so that the admissions personnel could adequately screen applicants, particularly student transfers. Thus what is required is a body, like SUAB, which can generate new policy and review existing policy; not committees which review hundreds of individual cases. That is the job of the admissions personnel. So while there is a clear need for the two committee system at present, Senate may want to reconsider the situation within two or three years when we have generated needed policy and procedures. At that time "exceptional" cases should be rare, and could easily be handled within the Registrar's Office as they are in most Universities.

The Motions

It is moved that Senate accept the following:

- (1) The Registrar's Office is charged with the administration and application of policy emanating from the Senate. If a need is felt for interpretation of such policy, the Registrar shall seek the guidance of the Admissions Board. It should be clearly understood that the decision to apply a policy of Senate (interpreted if necessary by the Admissions Board) is the responsibility of the Registrar. It follows that if such a decision is appealed, only the propriety of applying a policy in a particular case can be disputed. In other words, appeal does not involve questioning the advisability of the policies of

Senate. This does not mean that the rules of Senate are immutable, but simply points out that there is a difference between policy reform and appeals of specific cases. Where policy reform is deemed necessary, it shall be conducted by Senate acting either on its own initiative or upon a recommendation from the SUAB.

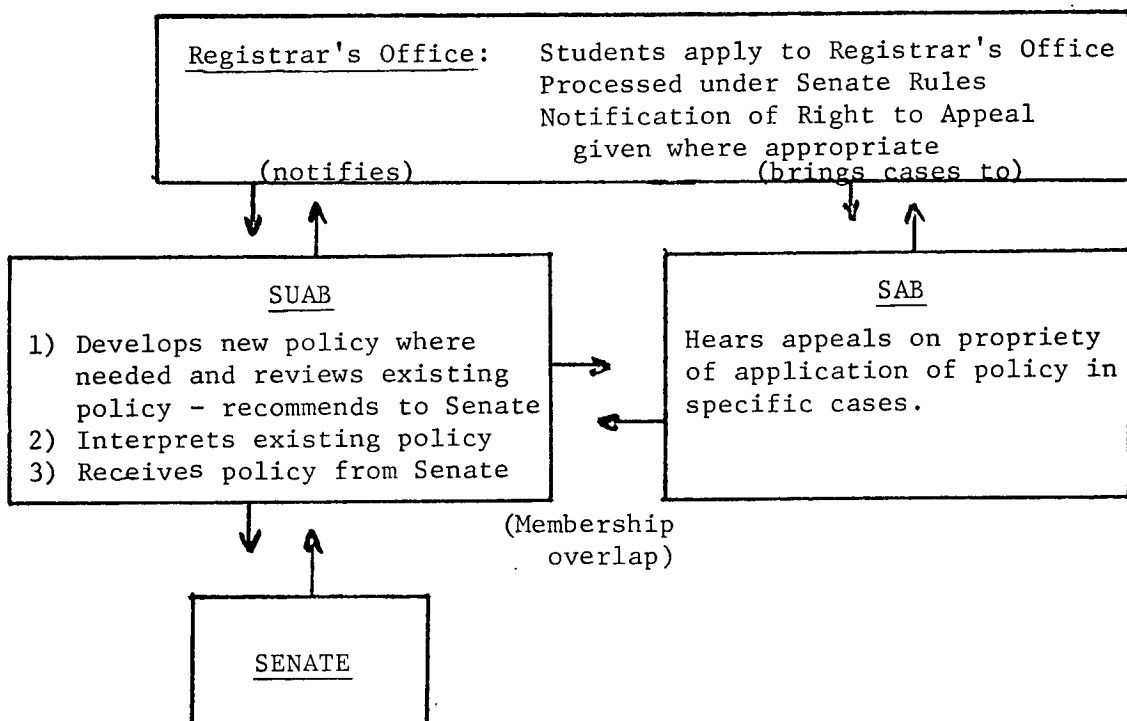
(2) The Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board (SUAB)

Purpose: To recommend to and receive from the Senate policy decisions on undergraduate admissions, re-admissions, standing, and credit transfer and, where necessary, to provide general direction in the interpretation of such policy.

Procedure: It is the general responsibility of the Registrar to apprise the committee of areas in which policy needs to be formulated or of circumstances which necessitate the review of existing policy. Then, in line with the purpose above, there are three possible procedural routes which the committee shall follow:

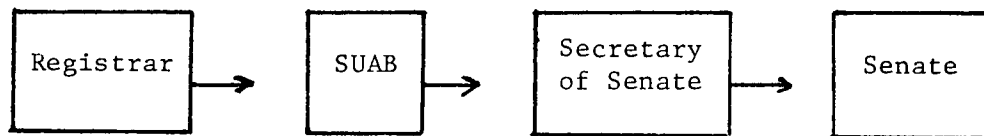
- a) Recommendations to Senatē; the Registrar will notify SUAB of need for review or establishment of policy; SUAB will forward recommendations to Secretary of Senate for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting of Senate.

OPERATING MODEL (SAB)

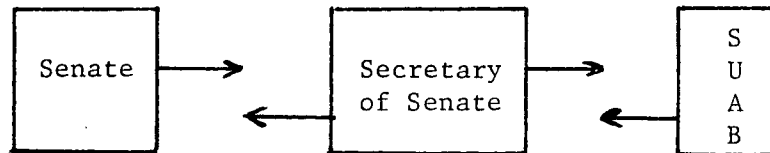


- b) Receive policy decisions from Senate: Senate will instruct the Secretary of Senate to pass policy decisions to the SUAB, and the SUAB will, where necessary, provide general direction to the Registrar in the interpretation of the policy. In cases where Senate requests a recommendation from the SUAB, they will be handled as in a).
- c) Interpretation of existing policy: The Registrar will inform SUAB of the need for an interpretation of an existing policy. The interpretation will be made and transmitted to the Registrar's Office.

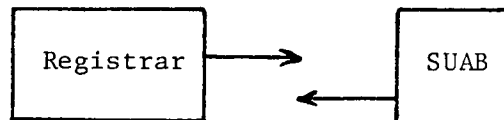
a. Recommendations to Senate:



b. Receive Policy Decisions from Senate:



c. Interpretation of existing policy:



Membership:

Academic Vice-President or a Senate designate of his choice as Chairman (non-voting except in case of tie).

A Senate Appointee to the Academic Board, plus alternate. (There are two Senate appointees to the Board - they should decide which shall serve on the committee as the prime member and which as alternate.)

The Director of Admissions.

Three Students (one elected by Student Council, with provisions for an alternate, and two student Senators elected from Senate, with the third student Senator to serve as alternate; one year term).

Three faculty members (one elected by each Faculty from its Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, with each Faculty also providing an alternate; two year term).

One member of Senate elected by Senate for a two year term.

Recording Secretary (non-voting).

Operation:

A quorum will be five voting members.

Decision will be based upon majority (of those present) rule.

The Director of Admissions will be responsible for preparing the Agenda of the meetings, sending out notice of meeting, preparing and distributing minutes of each meeting to the members of SUAB and SAB.

Meetings shall be closed and proceedings shall remain confidential. Policy statements will be publicized through normal channels.

(3) The Senate Appeals Board (SAB)

Purpose:

To consider cases wherein an individual feels aggrieved by the decision of the Registrar to apply a particular admission, re-admission, standing, credit transfer or grade change policy in his specific case (see (1) above).

Procedure:

In cases where a student request with respect to admission, re-admission, standing, credit transfer, or grade change is denied by the Registrar, the student will be informed, in writing, of his right to appeal the application of a particular policy in his case. If he wishes to appeal, he will be informed of the date of the next meeting of the committee in writing and of his right to appear before the committee in person, via a representative, or both. The decision of the committee is final.

Membership:

The Registrar or his designate (non-voting, Chairman).
One Faculty Member of SUAB, elected by SUAB.
One Student, plus alternate, chosen in a manner to be determined by Student Council.
One Senator to be elected by Senate, plus alternate.
One Recording Secretary (non-voting).

Operation:

A quorum is three voting members.

Meeting shall be closed and proceedings shall remain confidential.

Regular meetings will occur three times a semester; in the week prior to registration; after registration but before the final date to change courses; and in the ninth week of the semester. Special meetings may be scheduled as deemed necessary by the Registrar or his designate and shall be announced well in advance of the meeting.