

Suggested Qualifications for the Secretary of the Senate

Academic Experience

1. Rank of full professor with a distinguished record of research, teaching and service.

This person holds the highest ranking faculty position in the university and, as this person is the voice of faculty governance to the Board of Trustees, central administration, other administrators, the faculty, the students, and the media, he or she must hold the highest rank the university bestows on its faculty and have a record of outstanding performance in all three of the categories according to which the university evaluates faculty. This individual is called upon with some frequency to defend the sometimes unpopular actions of the Senate or its committees and needs the respect given the university's highest academic rank in order to be effective.

Governance Experience

2. Experience in shared governance leadership.

The learning curve for this position is extremely steep. Knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of all the Senate committees and of how all the various offices of central administration function, what their areas of purview are, who is in charge of them, and how most effectively to work with these people are a sine qua non of this position. It is also important for this person to be familiar with the individuals around campus who perhaps are not in governance at the moment but who have expertise in given areas and experience with particular issues in order that she or he can call upon them for their advice and counsel. It is unlikely (but not impossible) that anyone who has not served in one of the offices above will have this knowledge and be able to function effectively immediately upon or shortly after his or her appointment. The ten-year recommendation is based in the fact that the issues and problems confronting the university change rapidly and the already-steep learning curve inherent in this position would be exacerbated if the Secretary had to get acquainted with all the recent and current matters pertinent to shared governance at a given time.

3. Extensive knowledge of the University Rules.

As University Rules points out the holder of this position functions as a "resource person" for both the governance system and the university at large and also, although this has never been codified, as "the Keeper of the Rules." Because the membership of the Rules Committee turns over and only a certain number of rules issues come before it during any given two- or three-year period, it is important that the Secretary have extensive knowledge of the totality of the Rules. Nonetheless, the Secretary should at a minimum have two or more years of experience on CAA, Rules, and/or CAFR because these are the committees where one is exposed to the most central (and contentious) issues in the university and to those University Rules that govern them. Senate and other university committees, central administration, faculty, and students come to this person with queries about the Rules and should be able to receive a reasonably quick answer their questions.

General Leadership Experience

4. Experience in working with and coordinating the activities of diverse committees or groups.

One of the major functions of this office is to coordinate the work of the Senate's committees and constituent bodies, to mediate differences between them in, for instance, their responses to and recommendations on Senate legislation.

5. A proven ability to function effectively with central administration and the Senate's constituent bodies and committees.

One of the most important functions of this office is to mediate issues between the Senate and central administration. Thus, a record of proven ability to do so is important in the evaluation of potential candidates.

6. Proven strong organizational skills including the ability to work efficiently—to initiate projects, to follow through simultaneously on all projects and to complete them in a timely manner.

The workload of the Secretary of the Senate is extremely heavy and entails working on many different projects simultaneously, having to be in constant communication with various Senate committees and constituent bodies, many different offices in central administration, deans' offices, and individuals around the university. Thus, administrative efficiency is paramount to this position.

Qualifications Centering on Values

- 7. A commitment to the values and Institutions of shared governance.
- 8. A commitment to the spirit and letter of the University Rules.
- 9. A commitment to a fair, open and appropriately extensive consultative process.
- 10. A willingness to defend fair and due process.
- 11. The willingness and ability to promote collegiality.

12. A respect for the diversity and academic values of the university.

Given the diversity of academic disciplines in our Institution [and recent legislation that has come before the Senate], the Secretary of the Senate should have a broad perspective on and an appreciation of all the disciplines that come together to form The Ohio State University.

13. A willingness and ability to advocate for diversity.

Both because diversity is a significant component of the university's mission and because a commitment to it is consistent with the values for which we stand as an institution, it is important that the highest faculty office in the university share this commitment and act upon it.

14. A willingness to promote student learning and participation in university governance.

Our students deserve a seat at the table of university governance and, as educators. It is our responsibility to assure that their experience in shared governance is as rich and rewarding as possible.

Qualities of Character and Ability

15. Discernment and sound judgment.

The Secretary of the Senate is not directly supervised and frequently has to make quick statements and decisions in interviews with press, in meetings, and with high-ranking university officers about important issues. Thus, this person must have the discernment and sound judgment to make such decisions in the best interests of the university.

16. Integrity.

The individual who holds this office must operate above self-interest and must be able to set aside his or her own partisan views in favor of the values of due process and the interests of shared governance and the University Rules.

17. Excellent Communication Skills.

Much of the Secretary of the Senate's position consists of communicating, both in writing and orally, with committees, constituent bodies, and individuals all across campus. The ability to write well and correctly and to speak with precision and accuracy are central to this position.