The LFPA Executive Committee hosted two open forums to discuss governance structure on Monday, March 30 and Thursday, April 2. There were 43 library staff in attendance between both sessions.


In both forums, Ann Snow briefed attendees about the dwindling number of University Support Staff, and pointed out that the number will continue to dissolve with retirements and potential exits. With only 27 current USS, Ann suggested the group either needs to become part of LFPA or create a new governance body with UPS, since they share similar concerns and do similar types of work. Ann informed the groups that at the University level, USS have merged with UPS to form a new Senate body.

There were suggestions that LFPA could be one large assembly with a body for faculty and academic staff and another body for USS & UPS. Each group could conduct their own business, hold their own meetings, and have their own quorums, but meet together as a whole to do joint business. This would require the membership of LFPA Exec to change to be more representative since UPS are the largest group within LFPA but have the least representation on the Executive committee.

The issue of quorums was discussed and it was stated that if LFPA became a large group with small bodies within, the quorum would still have to include all members, depending on what we were voting on.

Some felt that the majority of issues discussed by LFPA are faculty issues (promotion and tenure-related processes, etc.) and that not many issues concern UPS. It was suggested that because of this, it may be more productive and efficient for faculty to have their own governance group and UPS/USS to join forces so that each group can focus their energy on their own issues. Separating could give new life to the groups and both groups would have a chance to start fresh and find committed people to represent each group. An idea of having joint committees, but being separate groups, was also suggested.

It was suggested that the Libraries emulate the University structure. Some thought that since the University formed a task force, surely they found evidence that USS merging with UPS was the best option.

There was an issue raised that without the strength of faculty members, UPS & USS concerns might be overlooked or get lost. It was thought, by some, that staying together would give us ‘strength in numbers’. In opposition to that thought, some thought that by splitting up we would have two groups with two voices which still gives strength in numbers.

Many people in both forums supported the idea of forming a task force to find the best option. The task force could look at options around the University and get together with USS, UPS, and faculty to find out what they think the purpose/goal of governance is. The task force could also look at what Code & Bylaws would need to do depending on what outcome was found to be the best. It was also suggested that sending out a poll to find out peoples’ preferences could be of use.