

To: Faculty Senate

From: **The Faculty Senate Committee on Constitution and Rules**

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Subject: Proposed Amendments to the Faculty Senate Rules and Bylaws

The Faculty Senate (FS) Committee on Constitution and Rules unanimously recommends the following amendments to the FS Rules and Bylaws.

1) Changing the timing of FS elections to allow the process to begin in the fall semester.

As it stands with the current FS elections timeline, the FS Committee on Elections is rushed to proceed with FS elections in a short time at the end of the spring semester. Also, with election results currently only coming at the end of the spring semester, those who are elected to FS positions do not have the opportunity to use that information in workload discussions for the following academic year. Completing the election earlier in the spring will alleviate both concerns.

Advantages:

1. More time to prepare for FS elections.
2. FS members will have the opportunity to include their FS membership in workload discussions from the start of their terms.

Potential Disadvantage:

1. Small changes in the population of those eligible for FS membership often occur at the end of the fall semester as new faculty start and others retire. If the election process begins in the fall semester it would be difficult, if not impossible, to incorporate these changes.

Our committee believes the advantages outweigh the potential disadvantage, so we propose the following amendment to **Rules 2.B.3**:

The nominating procedure for University Faculty Elections shall commence as soon as possible ~~after promotions have been announced in the spring~~ **fall** semester, or five weeks before the last day of classes in the spring semester, ~~whichever is earlier~~ **at the latest**.

2) Extending the FS committee term limit from one year to a preferred two-year period.

Our committee was informed that much effort is spent at the start of each academic year trying to populate the many FS committees and to select the chairs of these committees. This work would decrease if the term for committee membership was extended to two years from the current one year.

Advantages:

1. Less time is spent populating committees.
2. Members will have the knowledge of their committee membership for workload discussion purposes before the second year of their term begins. As it stands with a one-year

commitment, which is usually made in the summer, the workload discussion for the upcoming academic year has already passed.

3. Strengthened institutional memory and increased efficiency as members gain familiarity with their duties and maintain established relationships.
4. Longer projects may take place with less disruption.

Potential Disadvantages:

1. Decreased potential for participation leading to less diversity of opinion.
2. Getting "stuck" for two years with possible ineffective committees, chairs or individual members.
3. The incoming FS president will not have the ability to choose all the chairs of the committees and will therefore have less influence over leadership and direction.

Our committee believes the advantages outweigh the potential disadvantages, so we propose the following amendment to **Bylaws VIII.4:**

Except as provided in the sections describing particular standing committees providing for a longer term, appointments to standing and ad hoc committees and appointment of chairs shall be made ~~new~~ each year, **as necessary**, following Senate elections. **Ad hoc committee members and chairs shall serve one-year terms while the standing committee members and chairs shall serve two-year terms; however, members may elect to serve a one-year term.**

3) Require FS meetings to take place in a hybrid format. Since 2020, FS meetings have included an online remote attendance option. To formalize this practice and provide clarity regarding faculty senate meeting structure, our committee proposes the following amendment to **Bylaws V.1:**

Regular meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be held biweekly during the Fall and Spring semesters. If no agenda items are received for a regular meeting, the President of Faculty Senate shall be empowered to cancel the meeting and the Faculty Senate will convene at its next regularly scheduled meeting. **All regular meetings shall be conducted in a hybrid format, allowing both in-person and remote participation.** The time for regular Faculty Senate meetings shall be from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. with the day and location to be determined through a majority vote of the new Senate. An equal number of meetings shall occur on each campus.

Advantages:

1. Formalizing our current practice to allow continued flexibility, convenience and accessibility.
2. Maximizes participation.

Potential Disadvantages:

1. Technical challenges may disrupt proceedings.
2. Managing hybrid meetings is more of a challenge.
3. Participants may be less engaged resulting in less depth of discussion.