

SENATE BYLAW 4

The Senate: Organization and Procedure

(Senate Bylaw 4, January 21, 1965; Amended 9/71, 4/84, 6/95, 12/95, 4/2001, 4/2002, 3/2003, 2/2004, 4/2004, 1/2006, 2/09)

(A) Senate Organization and Procedure: Senate Function

As the legislative body of the University, the Senate is directed by the University Constitution to take cognizance of matters which concern more than one college, school, or other major academic unit, or which are otherwise of general University interest; and it is empowered by the University Constitution to legislate with respect to such matters, subject to the approval of the President and in appropriate instances the Board of Trustees and subject to the regulation procedures of the Florida Board of Governors, if applicable. Among such matters are:

- (1) The educational policies of the University
- (2) The creation of new degree programs
- (3) The abolition of degree programs
- (4) Curricula matters affecting more than one college
- (5) Criteria for faculty appointment, promotion and tenure
- (6) Matters of general professional importance
- (7) Recommendations of candidates for honorary degrees
- (8) The University calendar
- (9) Academic regulations affecting students

(B) Senate Organization and Procedure: Notice of Proposed Bylaws

The constitutional requirement that the proposal for a Bylaw shall be submitted to the Senate at least two weeks prior to action upon it, shall ordinarily be met by including the proposal on the agenda of two successive meetings of the Senate. In cases of emergency, however, the Secretary of the Senate may either issue the regular agenda two weeks, rather than the customary one week, in advance of a meeting of the Senate or may make a special advanced mailing of the proposed Bylaw to the members of the Senate.

(C) Senate Organization and Procedure: Senate Agenda

- (1) The Senate Agenda, prepared by the Senate Steering Committee, shall consist of three parts:

- (a) Reports of the President, Provost, and Chair of the Senate;
 - (b) An Information Agenda consisting of information items, such as reports of committees, and
 - (c) An Action Agenda, consisting of action items, containing matters to be decided at the current meeting.
- (2) Placing items on the Agenda:
- (a) Items to be included on the Senate Agenda shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Senate.
 - 1. Items to be included on the Agenda may be submitted by any member of the Senate, by the chairperson of any committee or council, by a member of the faculty, or by an administrative officer of the University.
 - 2. Items to be included on the Agenda shall be submitted in writing, in the manner prescribed by the Senate Steering Committee.
 - 3. The Senate Steering Committee shall post the process for submitting items to the agenda on its website.
 - (b) The Senate Steering Committee shall determine whether items should be:
 - 1. Referred to a Senate Council or Committee,
 - 2. Placed on the Information Agenda of the Senate
 - 3. Placed on the Action Agenda of the Senate,
 - 4. Deferred, or
 - 5. Declined.
 - (c) Ordinarily, the Senate Steering Committee shall refer matters brought to its attention to the appropriate Senate Council or Committee for consideration and report.
 - 1. Upon receipt of the report or before, the Steering Committee normally places the item on the Information Agenda prior to its placement on the Action Agenda.

2. The Steering Committee may place an item immediately on the Information Agenda if it feels that no committee consideration or report is necessary, or on the Action Agenda in unusual, special or emergency circumstances.
 - (d) The Steering Committee shall within 48 hours inform the person who submitted the item as to its disposition.
- (3) Distribution of the Agenda: The Secretary of the Senate shall distribute the Agenda, and all materials related to items on the Agenda, to each member of the Senate seven days before the meeting of the Senate.
- (4) The Information Agenda
 - (a) Matters appearing on the Information Agenda shall appear in the Agenda and on the Senate website as a brief written report summarizing any longer report.
 - (b) Matters appearing on the Information Agenda may be elaborated orally before the Senate.
 - (c) After the presentation of an information item, the presiding officer shall inquire whether the Senate wishes to discuss the materials presented in the information item. Upon an affirmative indication by ten Senators, the matter shall be opened for discussion.
 - (d) After presentation of the scheduled information items, any Senator may ask the Senate to add to the Information Agenda of the meeting any item previously submitted to the Steering Committee by the specified deadline that has been deferred or declined by the Steering Committee. Upon majority vote by the Senators present, the item shall be added to the Information Agenda of the meeting.
- (5) The Action Agenda
 - (a) Matters appearing on Action Agenda shall be debated and voted on at that meeting of the Senate.
 - (b) Any Senator may ask the Senate to add to the Action Agenda of the meeting any item on the Information Agenda of the meeting. Upon two-thirds vote by the Senators present, the item shall be added to the Action Agenda of the meeting.
 - (c) The Senate shall not vote or take other action on any item not on the Action Agenda.

(D) Senate Organization and Procedure: Senate Membership

The membership of the Senate shall include the following:

- (1) Elected Members who shall be apportioned among the academic units in proportion to the number of faculty members in each unit, except that no unit is to have fewer than two senate seats, and no unit is to have more than twenty-five seats (one-sixth of the total number of seats). Apportionment shall be determined as follows:

- Step 1. Determine the percentage of faculty members in each unit by dividing the number of faculty members in that unit by the total number of faculty members. Multiply that fraction times the total number of seats in the Senate (150) and round to determine the number of seats each unit is proportionally entitled to. In rounding, standard conventions should be applied, so fractions of .5 or more are rounded up, and fractions less than .5 are rounded down.
- Step 2. If any unit receives more than one-sixth (25) of the total seats available in the Senate, that unit is assigned 25 seats.
- Step 3. If any unit receives fewer than two seats in step one, that unit is assigned two seats.
- Step 4. If the total number of seats assigned in steps 1-3 is less than 150, determine the total number of faculty members in the units which have not been assigned their number of seats in Steps 2 and 3, and determine the remaining number of seats to be assigned.
- Step 5. Determine the proportionate share of each of these units by dividing the number of faculty members in that unit by the number from step 4. Multiply that fraction times the number of seats remaining to be assigned after step 3 and round to determine the number of seats each unit is proportionally entitled to, as in Step 1. If any unit would be assigned more than 25 seats, then it is assigned 25 seats and if any unit would be assigned fewer than 2 seats, it is assigned 2 seats. Steps 4 and 5 are now repeated with the additional units removed.
- Step 6. If, owing to the necessary rounding off procedure, more or less than 150 seats have been awarded in the previous steps, adjust as follows. If more, reduce the number by subtracting one seat from as many units receiving seats through the rounding-off process as necessary, beginning with the smallest fraction that had led to an additional seat, until the total number of seats assigned is 150. If

less, increase the number by adding one seat from as many units receiving seats through the rounding-off process as necessary, beginning with the largest fraction that had not led to an additional seat, until the total number of seats assigned is 150.

- (2) Non-voting Members. Non-voting members shall be as set forth in Article IV, Section 2(B) of the Constitution. Non-voting members shall have the right of the floor and the privilege of introducing motions.
- (3) Administrative liaison personnel. Administrative liaison personnel shall be as set forth in Article IV, Section 2 (C) of the Constitution.

(E) Senate Organization and Procedure: Senate Elections

- (1) Quotas for Elected Members
 - (a) Colleges, schools and independent academic units shall be considered in the assigning of quotas for elected members of the Senate. These quotas shall be computed annually by the Secretary of the Senate and the Steering Committee or its designate based on information from the Office of Academic Affairs and distributed to academic units by the end of the fall term.
 - (b) The Secretary of the Senate shall maintain a publicly available list of those faculty ineligible for election to the Senate by virtue of two successive terms, and the point at which they return to eligibility.
- (2) Procedures for Election of Senators
 - (a) As soon as possible after receiving notification of the quota for the unit, the administrative officer of each college, school or independent academic unit shall constitute a nominating committee of faculty. If the unit has several elected Senate members, the administrative officer shall see that the nominating committee shall be representative of the faculty in each major area of academic interest within that unit. Proportionate representation of such academic areas shall be considered by the committee in making nominations for the elective Senate seats to be filled that year. The nominating committee shall name twice as many nominees as there are seats to be filled. Upon completion of two consecutive three-year terms in the Senate a faculty member shall be ineligible to serve again for a period of three years.
 - (b) Before March 15 of each year, the administrative officer shall circulate the list of nominees and summon all faculty members to a meeting at which nominations shall be called for from the floor.

- (c) All nominations shall be incorporated in a ballot which shall be mailed to all faculty members in each unit by the administrative officer by April 1 of each year. Care shall be taken to ensure secrecy as to the identity of each eligible voter. Voting may be accomplished through electronic means as long as such secrecy is ensured. All ballots must be returned by April 15 in order to be counted. Tellers, composed of faculty, may be appointed to record the vote. A plurality shall be sufficient to elect, and tie votes shall be decided by lot.
- (d) The three-year terms of elective Senators shall begin the first day of the fall term following their election.
- (e) When a vacancy in the Senate shall occur because an elected member takes a leave of absence, or because of a temporary but unavoidable professional conflict, or because of the extended illness or death or resignation of any elected member before the expiration of the term as an elected member, the vacancy shall be filled by a temporary Senator. The temporary Senator shall be selected as the candidate on the most recent ballot who received the second most votes or by special election. The temporary Senator shall serve during the absence of the regularly elected member, except if the regularly elected Senator shall be absent for more than one year, the temporary Senator shall serve until the next Senate election.
- (f) The Provost shall publish annually a list of all Senate, Joint and Presidential Committees, Boards and Councils indicating the membership and responsibilities of each.

(F) Senate Organization and Procedures: Chair Elect Nomination and Election Procedures

In February of each year the Senators will be notified that a complete roster of Senate members can be found at the Faculty Senate website. Each will be asked to submit from 1-150 nominations for Chair Elect at a date at least two weeks from the date of the notice to the Chair. All nominees will be notified that they have been nominated and, if they wish to be on the ballot, that they must notify the Chair by submitting a 250-word (maximum) summary of their qualifications and goals by the deadline stated in the Chair's notice. Senators will be notified of the list of the final nominees, and the election by means of a written ballot will be held at the last meeting of the Faculty Senate for the academic year. A majority of those Senators voting shall be necessary for election. The nominee having the greatest number of votes shall be the Chair Elect if such number represents a majority of the Senators voting. If no nominee receives a majority of votes, the Senate shall choose the Chair Elect by means of run-off ballots among nominees with the two highest numbers of votes, until one nominee receives a majority.

(G) Senate Organization and Procedure: Senate Meeting Procedures

(1) Meetings

- (a) The Faculty Senate shall normally meet at least once during each calendar month of the academic year or as specified elsewhere in the Bylaws of the Senate.
- (b) Special meetings of the Senate may be called upon due notice at such times as the Chair or President may designate, or upon petition to the Chair of at least 25 voting members of the Senate.

(2) Conduct of Senate Business

- (a) In the conduct of its business, the Senate shall be guided by the customary rules of parliamentary procedure, insofar as these are not modified by the provisions of the Constitution of the University of Florida or the Bylaws of the Senate. In cases of dispute recourse shall be to Robert's Rules of Order.
- (b) Decisions in the Senate shall be taken by majority vote of the members present and voting, except as provided in the Constitution and Bylaws.

(3) Voting in the Senate

- (a) Except in elections, voting in the Senate shall ordinarily be by voice; but, at the discretion of the presiding officer or upon the request of any member, a vote shall be taken by show of hands; or at the request of 20 members a vote shall be taken by signed written ballot.
- (b) In the selection of the elective members of Senate councils and committees, voting shall be by ballots distributed to all voting members of the Senate by the Secretary of the Senate. Such elections may be accomplished through electronic means.

(4) Quorum

A quorum for any meeting of the Senate shall consist of those elected members who are present. In order to facilitate voting, members should sit in seats designated for members by the Senate Steering Committee.

(5) Proxies

No proxies shall be recognized.

(H) Senate Organization and Procedure: Public Appearances Before the Senate or a Senate Committee.

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Individuals or representatives of groups who desire to appear before the Senate or a Senate Committee regarding any item being considered on the meeting agenda of the Senate or of the Senate Committee must submit their requests to the Secretary of the Senate specifying the agenda item about which they wish to speak. Such a request, along with the requestor's name and contact information, any group represented, and any supporting documentation, must be submitted at least two (2) days prior to the start of the meeting. Consistent with law, the Faculty Senate Chair or the Chair of the Senate Committee will determine whether the item will be heard and when (at what meeting and when on the agenda) it will be heard, and may require a representative for a group if many members request to be heard on the same topic. The Faculty Senate Chair or the Chair of the Senate Committee may set time limits on requestors' presentations. The time limit on any presentation shall not exceed 5 minutes. The Faculty Senate Chair or the Chair of the Senate Committee may limit the aggregate time for public comments at a meeting to 15 minutes.