

October 7, 2021

MEMORANDUM

TO: University Constitution and Regulations Committee

FROM: Subcommittee on Constitutional Revision Related to Special Meetings  
(Ashley Ghiaseddin, Merritt McAlister, & Katherine Vogel Anderson)

RE: Proposals to Reform UF Constitution to Address Ambiguity  
Related to Senate Special Meetings

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The Subcommittee has reviewed the relevant UF Constitutional provisions pursuant to our charge to address ambiguity related to agenda-setting for special meetings of the Faculty Senate. We forward the following four proposals for the larger Committee's consideration.

Each proposal has strengths and weaknesses, which we will discuss with the Committee. The four proposals differ in two respects: (1) the threshold for triggering the special meeting procedure (25 versus 50 Senators); and (2) the extent of authority vested in that group of petitioning senators (agenda-setting only versus all powers of the Steering Committee for purposes of that special meeting). The four proposals reflect different combinations of these considerations.

Ultimately, the Subcommittee recommends Option One for approval. That Option will give the petitioning members the authority vested in the Steering Committee for purposes of the special meeting, and it raises the threshold for triggering a special meeting to 1/3 of Senators. We believe it the simplest and clearest revision that is also faithful with our understanding of the intent of the special meeting procedure. We also recommend setting the threshold for triggering the special meeting at 1/3 of Senators to avoid any risk of abuse of these procedures by minority factions, especially those within one Academic Unit.

Any of these options will require revisions to the Bylaws, especially to clarify procedures related to special meetings.

We look forward to discussing these proposals at our upcoming meeting.

**OPTION ONE**

**University of Florida Constitution**

**Article IV**

Section 1. FUNCTIONS— . . .

The Senate agenda prepared by the Senate Steering Committee shall consist of three parts: (a) reports of the President, Provost, and Faculty Senate Chair (b) information items, such as reports of general decisions or summaries from committees or others as appropriate; and (c) action items containing matters to be decided at current meetings and proposals for action at subsequent meetings.

. . .

Section 4. MEETINGS—The Faculty Senate shall normally meet at least once during each calendar month of the academic year or as specified by the Bylaws of the Senate. Special meetings of the Senate may be called upon due notice at such times as the Chair or President may designate or upon petition of one-third (1/3) of the members of the Senate. Where a special meeting has been called upon petition, those petitioning members shall exercise any authority that the Steering Committee otherwise may exercise pursuant to this Constitution in connection with that special meeting.

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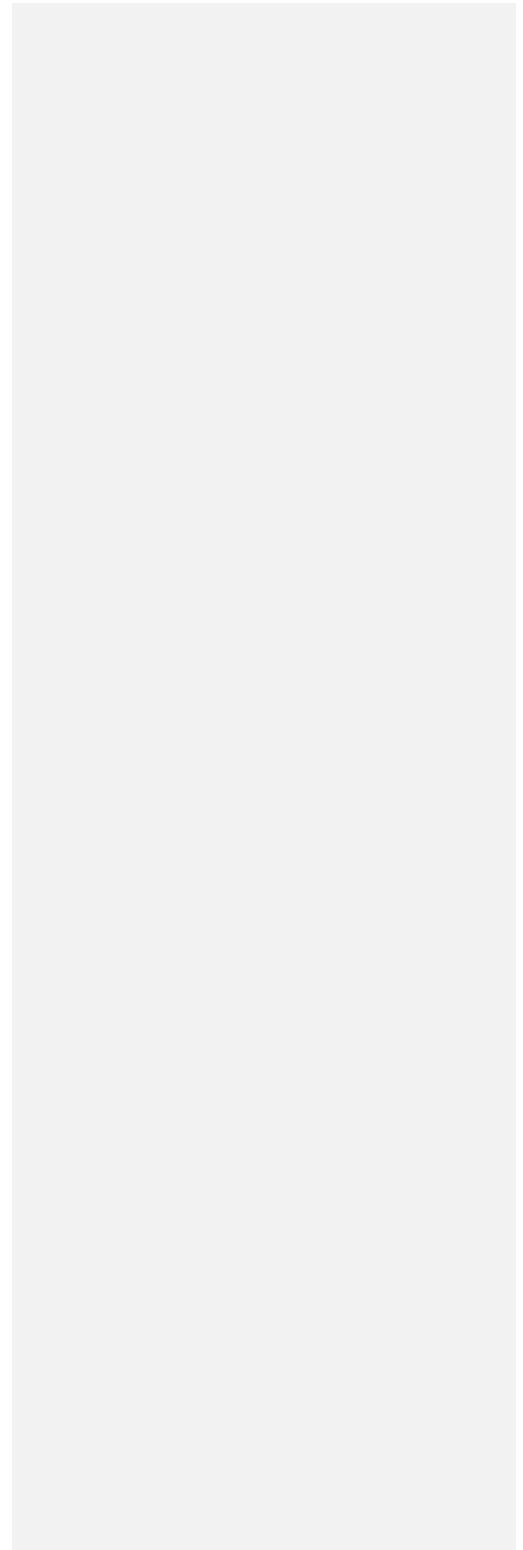
**Article V**

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Section 2A

The Steering Committee shall determine the agenda for each meeting of the Senate. It shall provide for reporting to the Senate by administrative officers, by the chair(s) of councils and committees, and by individuals. It coordinates, reviews, and refers actions and proposals from Senate and Joint Committees and from the Administration. The Steering Committee also refers matters to the Senate Policy Councils and accepts reports and recommendations from the Senate Policy Councils and committees for Senate action. Where appropriate, the Steering Committee can direct a matter to the combined attention of two or more Senate Policy Councils. It shall select an alternate member of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates from

among its members, excluding the Chair, Chair Elect, and Past Chair of the Senate.  
The Senate Steering Committee shall be responsible for establishing the procedure for voting.



## OPTION TWO

### University of Florida Constitution

#### Article IV

##### Section 1. FUNCTIONS— . . .

The Senate agenda shall consist of three parts: (a) reports of the President, Provost, and Faculty Senate Chair (b) information items, such as reports of general decisions or summaries from committees or others as appropriate; and (c) action items containing matters to be decided at current meetings and proposals for action at subsequent meetings. Unless a special meeting has been called upon petition of twenty-five members of the Senate pursuant to Art. IV, § 4, the agenda shall be prepared by the Senate Steering Committee. In the event a special meeting upon petition has been called, those who have petitioned for the meeting shall set the agenda consistent with this section.

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. . .

Section 4. MEETINGS—The Faculty Senate shall normally meet at least once during each calendar month of the academic year or as specified by the Bylaws of the Senate. Special meetings of the Senate may be called upon due notice at such times as the Chair or President may designate or upon petition of twenty-five members of the Senate. To call a special meeting upon petition, at least two of the twenty-five petitioning members must be from different Academic Units.

#### Article V

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##### Section 2A

Except where a special meeting has been called upon petition of twenty-five members of the Senate pursuant to Art. IV, § 4, the Steering Committee shall determine the agenda for each meeting of the Senate. It shall provide for reporting to the Senate by administrative officers, by the chair(s) of councils and committees, and by individuals. It coordinates, reviews, and refers actions and proposals from Senate and Joint Committees and from the Administration. The Steering Committee also refers matters to the Senate Policy Councils and accepts reports and recommendations from the

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## OPTION THREE

### University of Florida Constitution

#### Article IV

##### Section 1. FUNCTIONS— . . .

The Senate agenda shall consist of three parts: (a) reports of the President, Provost, and Faculty Senate Chair (b) information items, such as reports of general decisions or summaries from committees or others as appropriate; and (c) action items containing matters to be decided at current meetings and proposals for action at subsequent meetings. Unless a special meeting has been called upon petition of one-third (1/3) of the members of the Senate pursuant to Art. IV, § 4, the agenda shall be prepared by the Senate Steering Committee. In the event a special meeting upon petition has been called, those who have petitioned for the meeting shall set the agenda consistent with this section.

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Section 4. MEETINGS—The Faculty Senate shall normally meet at least once during each calendar month of the academic year or as specified by the Bylaws of the Senate. Special meetings of the Senate may be called upon due notice at such times as the Chair or President may designate or upon petition of one-third (1/3) of the members of the Senate.

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#### Article V

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Except where a special meeting has been called upon petition of twenty-five members of the Senate pursuant to Art. IV, § 4, the Steering Committee shall determine the agenda for each meeting of the Senate. It shall provide for reporting to the Senate by administrative officers, by the chair(s) of councils and committees, and by individuals. It coordinates, reviews, and refers actions and proposals from Senate and Joint Committees and from the Administration. The Steering Committee also refers matters to the Senate Policy Councils and accepts reports and recommendations from the Senate Policy Councils and committees for Senate action. Where appropriate, the

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## **OPTION FOUR**

### **University of Florida Constitution**

#### **Article IV**

Section 1. FUNCTIONS— . . .

The Senate agenda prepared by the Senate Steering Committee shall consist of three parts: (a) reports of the President, Provost, and Faculty Senate Chair (b) information items, such as reports of general decisions or summaries from committees or others as appropriate; and (c) action items containing matters to be decided at current meetings and proposals for action at subsequent meetings.

. . .

Section 4. MEETINGS—The Faculty Senate shall normally meet at least once during each calendar month of the academic year or as specified by the Bylaws of the Senate. Special meetings of the Senate may be called upon due notice at such times as the Chair or President may designate or upon petition of twenty-five members of the Senate. To call a special meeting upon petition, at least two of the twenty-five petitioning members must be from different Academic Units. Where a special meeting has been called upon petition, those petitioning members shall exercise any authority that the Steering Committee otherwise may exercise pursuant to this Constitution in connection with that special meeting.

#### **Article V**

\* \* \*

Section 2A

The Steering Committee shall determine the agenda for each meeting of the Senate. It shall provide for reporting to the Senate by administrative officers, by the chair(s) of councils and committees, and by individuals. It coordinates, reviews, and refers actions and proposals from Senate and Joint Committees and from the Administration. The Steering Committee also refers matters to the Senate Policy Councils and accepts reports and recommendations from the Senate Policy Councils and committees for Senate action. Where appropriate, the Steering Committee can direct a matter to the combined attention of two or more Senate Policy Councils. It



shall select an alternate member of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates from among its members, excluding the Chair, Chair Elect, and Past Chair of the Senate. The Senate Steering Committee shall be responsible for establishing the procedure for voting.

