

Amendments to Faculty Voting Procedures and Related Handbook Language

Background

The Faculty Handbook's current voting procedures contains four interrelated problems that this motion seeks to address.

(1) Double-Voting: Legislation and handbook amendments currently require two approvals by electronic vote following discussion at two separate meetings. This practice made sense when voting occurred in person and attendance affected outcomes, but things have changed. Proposals are now circulated a week in advance, meetings are recorded, and voting takes place electronically over a full week—making the second vote redundant, especially for legislation.

(2) Undefined Terminology: The term “legislation” appears in the Handbook but is never defined. The only example explicitly mentioned is the approval of new academic programs. *Robert's Rules of Order*—our default authority in the absence of explicit Handbook text—does not use the term at all. This creates ongoing ambiguity about which faculty actions require one versus two votes, and what should be labeled legislation or something else.

(3) Amending Amendments: For Handbook amendments, the two-vote requirement raises an additional procedural question: if an amendment is itself amended at the second reading, does that restart the process and trigger a third vote? The current language provides no guidance and could allow this cycle to repeat indefinitely.

(4) Outdated Amendment Language: Section VIII, which governs amendments, was never updated to reflect electronic voting. It still refers to “a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at two meetings,” language that conflicts with current practice and other Handbook text, since the faculty who cast electronic ballots may differ from those who attended the meeting.

Motion: That the Faculty Handbook be amended such that: (1) double voting is eliminated for all matters other than Handbook amendments; (2) the term ‘legislation’ is replaced with ‘resolution’ throughout, which, as specified by *Robert's Rules*, means a formal motion presented in written form; (3) substantive amendments to proposed Handbook amendments are prohibited at the second-reading stage; and (4) references to ‘members present and voting’ are eliminated from Section VIII to align with electronic voting procedures.

Textual Changes

III.A. “Functions: Faculty carry out the educational and research missions of the university. Faculty functions include teaching, advising, scholarship, research and creative work, as well as service to the university. Faculty participate in university governance through **legislative resolutions** and other acts of the Faculty Meeting...”

IV.G.2.c. “Establishment of undergraduate academic programs requires **legislative** approval by the faculty.”

IV.A.1. “The faculty, at its regular and duly-called special meetings, discusses, **legislates passes resolutions**, and takes other actions on matters within its purview as defined by this Handbook and consistent with the Board Bylaws; on all rules and regulations outside this Handbook as they pertain to faculty...”

IV.A.3.b. “At least five teaching days before each regular Faculty Meeting, except the degree voting meeting, the Faculty Senate Chair distributes the agenda and text(s) of proposed faculty **legislation resolutions** or other actions to be considered at the meeting, together with appropriate supporting documents, to all voting members.”

IV.A.3.e. “Faculty **legislation is resolutions are** normally formulated by the Faculty Senate or a Faculty Handbook committee as defined in this Handbook (see section VI.D., below). Procedure for changing the Handbook is clarified in Section VIII.”

IV.A.3.e.i. “Except for amendments to pending motions **and handbook changes**, all **legislation and Handbook changes resolutions** must be approved by electronic votes following ~~two separate~~ **the** Faculty Meetings, **normally consecutive**. **All handbook changes are subject to the provisions of VIII.b., and must be approved by electronic vote following two separate Faculty Meetings; provided that once approved by the first electronic vote, no further amendments are allowed to the proposed changes.**”

IV.A.3.e.iii. “A second reading **and vote of a proposed handbook amendment** may be waived only by a two-thirds vote, with one-third of the eligible voting membership present and voting. ~~A second reading may not be waived if the legislation has not first been reviewed by a faculty standing committee or by the Faculty Senate.~~”

VI.B.2.b.i. “[The Faculty Senate] introduces issues and formulates **legislation-resolutions** or proposals for other actions for consideration by the Faculty Meeting.”

VI.B.2.b.ii. “[The Faculty Senate] reviews proposed **legislation-resolutions** before its submission to the Faculty Meeting...”

VI.D.2.g.v. “The committee [UCC] is responsible for overseeing the periodic review of undergraduate academic programs mandated by faculty **legislation resolutions**...”

VIII.B. “Proposals for further revision of the Handbook must be adopted by the Faculty ~~Meeting~~ **by a through a** two-thirds **majority in electronic votes conducted following** ~~of the members present and voting at~~ two **Faculty M**meetings in a single academic year, and approved by the Board of Trustees.”