

# MEMO

**To:** Faculty Council  
**From:** Jonathan Carlson  
**Subject:** Proposed Constitution & Bylaws Amendment  
**Date:** October 26, 1998

At the meeting of Senate Committee Chairs this fall, it was suggested that the Rules and Bylaws Committee consider certain changes to the Faculty Senate Constitution and to the Faculty Senate Bylaws. Here is my report on the decisions taken by the Rules and Bylaws Committee.

1. Whether the Senate Constitution and Bylaws should be amended to expand eligibility for Senate offices.

Each year, the Committee on Elections faces the sometimes daunting task of identifying persons who are willing to stand as candidates for Senate officer positions. The job is made more difficult by the fact that only current members of the Faculty Senate are eligible for these positions. The Rules and Bylaws Committee believes that the problem of finding candidates for these positions might be eased by broadening the eligibility criterion for these positions. Moreover, the Committee believes that there are many people who are not Senate members at the time of an election who might nevertheless make excellent officers. The Committee therefore proposes to amend the Constitution (and to make the necessary changes in the bylaws) to expand eligibility for Senate officer positions to any *current or former* member of the Faculty Senate.

I am **attaching a proposed amendment to the Constitution**. It must be approved by 1) a majority of those voting in the Senate, 2) a majority of those voting in a faculty referendum, 3) the president of the University, and 4) the Board of Regents.

2. Whether changes can be made which will make it easier for the Committee on Committees to identify incoming Senators in time to include them in committee appointments.

Every year the Committee on Committees must make nominations for committee membership to the Senate at its April meeting. The current chair of the Committee on Committees has indicated that this poses a problem of timing--the Committee finds that it must make committee membership nominations before it knows the identity of the newly-elected Senators. He feels that his Committee would have an easier time making nominations if it knew in advance who the new Senate members would be.

I'm **attaching a proposed amendment to the Senate Bylaws**. Its purpose is to ensure that the Committee on Committees is told the identity of new Senate members as soon as possible following the Senate election. Changes in the bylaws can be adopted by a majority vote in the Senate.

Proposed Amendments to Article II of the Constitution

3. **Terms.** A member of the Senate is elected for a three-year term and may be re-elected to a second term of three years. Following one or more years of absence from the Senate, a faculty member becomes eligible once more to serve two consecutive terms. A first term may be automatically extended by election to the Council as specified in Article III, 3 below. In such a case a member of the Senate may be reelected only to an abbreviated term, the length of which is the unexpired portion of the second three years of eligibility. Either a first term or a second consecutive term may be automatically extended by election as ~~vice president~~ an officer of the Senate as specified in paragraph 5, A below.
  
5. **Officers.**
  - A. The officers of the Senate are a president, a vice president, and a secretary. Any present or former member of the Senate shall be eligible to be elected as an officer. Any person elected as an officer of the Senate shall automatically be a member of both the Senate and the Faculty Council. Terms are for one year and begin with the adjournment of the organizational meeting. The vice president and the secretary shall be elected from its membership by a majority of those present and voting at the organizational meeting. The president shall be the person whose term as vice president is just ending. If the past vice president's service in the Senate would otherwise end at this time, it shall automatically be extended for one year. No one may hold two offices simultaneously or serve consecutive terms in the same office. If the president's service in the Senate would otherwise end at the conclusion of his or her term as president, it shall be automatically extended for one year.
  
  - B. If the office of president becomes vacant, the vice president shall become president for the remainder of that term and remain president for the following term. If the office of vice president becomes vacant, it shall may remain vacant until the end of the term, and in which case the Senate shall elect a president as well as a vice president and secretary at its organization meeting. Alternatively, at any time during a vacancy in the office of the vice president, the Faculty Council may call an election to fill the vice presidency, and a vice president shall then be elected ~~from the Senate membership~~ at the next regularly-scheduled Senate meeting, provided that at least 10 days notice of the election has been given to the Senate membership. If the office of president becomes vacant when the office of vice president is also vacant, the secretary shall convene a special meeting of the Senate with at least 10 days notice (unless the organization meeting is sooner) at which a president shall be elected ~~from its membership~~ to serve the remainder of the term. That person shall be eligible for election as president for the following

term. If the office of secretary becomes vacant, the president shall appoint an acting secretary for the remainder of the term. In the event that any vacancy in any Senate office occurs in a manner not contemplated by these rules, the Faculty Council may call an election to fill the vacant office. ~~from the Senate membership~~. The election may be held at a special meeting of the Senate called for that purpose, or at a regularly-scheduled Senate meeting, provided that at least 10 days notice of the election has been given to the Senate membership.

#### Proposed Amendment to Article III of the Bylaws

**Section 6.** The Committee on Elections, consisting of five members with staggered three year terms, presents to the first Senate meeting of the spring semester a list of faculty members eligible to vote, a list of Senate positions to be filled, and a list of persons eligible for each position. At the same time the Committee determines the number of positions to be provided on the Council for each represented college. The Committee supervises all elections and decides tie votes by lot. The Committee also presents, at the regular April meeting of the Senate, at least two nominations for the offices of vice president and secretary of the Senate, and, if the current year's vice president is unable to succeed to the presidency as specified in the constitution, then also for the position of president of the Senate. ~~Nominations are to be made from the membership of the Senate.~~ Nominations for Senate offices are to be made from faculty members eligible to vote in Senate elections who are also current or former members of the Senate. The Committee solicits suggestions from the members of the Senate for its consideration in preparing the slate of candidates. It seeks short autobiographical sketches from the nominees and distributes copies of these to the members of the Senate before the meeting in April.

#### Suggested Amendment to Article V of the Bylaws

**Section 2.** Not later than one week following the close of balloting for election to Senate and Council membership, the Committee on Elections shall report the results of the election to the Committee on Committees. The Committee on Elections ~~reports~~ shall also report the results of the voting for Senate and Council membership to the Senate ~~in~~ at its regular meeting in April ~~the results of the voting for the Senate and Council.~~