Resolution 2017-2018-5 Faculty Senate Bylaw Change, Governance in Academic Units

Whereas, the Faculty Senate Constitution contains Article VII. Governance in Academic Units, specifying that each academic unit of the university shall provide for non-administrative faculty representation in its governance; and

Whereas, the Bylaws do not provide details regarding governance in Academic Units; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Bylaws of the Faculty Constitution be amended as follows to include a new Section IX. Governance in Academic Units with the Constitution Article VII automatically updated to reflect, as set forth in Senate Bylaws, Section IX:

SECTION IX.
Governance in Academic Units

A. Operation and Bylaws

Each academic unit, and departments and schools whose leader holds an administrative appointment, must operate according to written bylaws approved by a majority of the unit’s general faculty. The unit’s general faculty is defined in Faculty Senate Bylaws Section I. Definition of Faculty and typically includes the leader of the unit. The unit’s bylaws will be approved by the unit faculty, the unit leader, and appropriate Dean (or equivalent). The Dean will have the Office of Faculty Excellence review the bylaws to ensure compliance with university policy. When fully approved, the bylaws will be posted electronically by the Office of Faculty Excellence in a manner accessible and easily navigable by all unit faculty. The unit bylaws will be reapproved and revised (as needed) every five years or whenever requested by a majority of the unit faculty.

B. The unit bylaws shall at least include the following topics:

a. Frequency of Meetings - Meetings of Department/School faculty will be regularly called by and presided over by the leader. Their frequency will depend on the needs and usages of the units. At least one meeting per semester shall be held. Chairs and directors in colleges with multiple units should meet at least monthly with the college dean.

b. Meeting Rules - Unit meetings should run according to the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, or other rules as specified in the unit's bylaws (note the quorum and recusal rules therein).

c. Faculty-called Meetings - The faculty in a Department/School shall be entitled to call a special meeting with a specific agenda upon presentation to the appropriate leader of such a request of one-third of the Department/School faculty. The special faculty meeting shall occur within five business days of the presented request if reasonably possible.

d. Membership and Voting - All general faculty should attend and participate in unit meetings. The unit bylaws must designate voting rights.

e. Records - Proposed meeting agendas must be provided to the faculty by the leader in advance of the meetings. Minutes must be circulated to the members before the next meeting and offered for approval at the next meeting. Agendas and approved minutes must be posted electronically in a manner accessible and easily navigable by all unit faculty. A shared drive or unit intranet is the preferred means for information sharing.
f. Except for records deemed confidential under law or university policy, leaders must not keep unit records confidential from unit faculty. As requested by unit faculty, records must be posted electronically in a manner accessible to all unit faculty.

g. Unit policies and bylaws; unit budgets; formal plans; unit meeting agendas, minutes, and exhibits; unit committee records (including membership, agendas, minutes, and exhibits); as determined by a majority of the faculty of each unit, must be posted online in a manner accessible and easily navigable by all unit faculty.

h. Upon the request of unit faculty, other public data relevant to unit members should be posted electronically in a manner accessible and easily navigable by all unit faculty.

C. Steering Committee

Each unit is strongly encouraged to have a steering or executive committee of senior faculty to advise the unit leadership.

Approved by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee on October 5, 2017.