

Membership and Elections Committee

PROCEDURES FOR OPERATION

May 2002

(Approved by the Senate May 21, 2002)

The following is a list of the responsibilities of the Membership and Elections Committee and a description of how these procedures are conducted by the committee.

1) Maintain Faculty Database

The committee, in conjunction with the provost's office and payroll staff, will establish and maintain an electronic database of all full-time faculty (as defined by the Senate Bylaws) by school, department, rank, and tenure status. This database will be used to construct accurate e-mail distribution groups to notify faculty of elections and to allow only authorized access to electronic ballots. For example, in school elections, only faculty from the designated school will be able to access to the ballot for that particular school.

2) Call for Nominations

The committee will call for self-nominations by e-mail at least one week prior to an election. The call corresponds to all open positions to be voted on in the following election. A document will be attached to the e-mail listing all open positions, other faculty currently holding office and eligibility requirements for each position. The e-mail will direct faculty to a URL at which they can nominate themselves. A staff member in the SU Web office maintains this web page. Eligibility to run for a particular position is checked by the committee prior to construction of the final ballot, and a final ballot is drafted from these self-nominations.

3) Conduct Elections

Elections are generally run twice a year, once in April-May to replace all expired terms and once in August-September to replace inactive members, retirees, long-term sabbaticals and others. In addition, special elections are run at the direction of the Senate when needed. If there are Bylaw changes on which the faculty must vote, these can be added to a ballot, or run as a special referendum. The annual deadline for submission of Bylaw changes to the committee is April 15. Elections are usually conducted in two phases. The first phase includes elections at the school level to fill positions designated to a particular school. The second phase includes elections for at-large positions. These are held after the results of school elections are known to prevent conflicts such as having two people from the same department elected to a committee, one as a school representative and the other for the at-large position. Elections are announced by e-mail. The e-mail directs faculty to a URL at which they can vote. A staff member in the SU Web office maintains this web page. Voting occurs for at least one week.

Returning of Ballots - The successful use of electronic voting precludes the need for any member of the committee to handle paper ballots. Under extraordinary circumstances of technical failure or faculty disability, a faculty member will be issued a paper ballot that will be returned to a member of the committee. Since this mechanism cannot be adjusted to assure voting confidentiality, every effort will be made by the Membership and Elections committee members to aid all faculty members in the successful completion of the electronic ballot as a first and preferred course of action.

Re-voting – Faculty have the option to recall or change a vote within the voting time frame. Each time a faculty member logs on and votes using the web-based voting system, the previous votes are overridden, until the election is closed.

Counting Results - The results are retrieved from a secure website by a minimum of two members of the Membership and Elections Committee shortly after the election has ended.

Tie Breaking - In the event of a tie, a second election, including the tied winners only, is run for the position.

Compiling Results - Once the results are complete, new rosters of committee memberships are constructed. The composition of the committees is examined by Membership and Elections committee members to see if any adjustments must be made to abide by Senate and Forum Bylaws. For example, faculty members could be elected to three committees when they can only serve on two. As a general rule, these individuals are contacted and asked which committees they would prefer, and the slots on the committees that they vacate are given to the second place finishers in the election.

Recording Results – The results of elections and the count of ballots for each position are sent to the Membership and Elections chair from the webmaster. These results are kept on file for up to 1 year.

All results of the election, including the results of any proposed changes to the Bylaws, are forwarded to the President of the Faculty Senate and SU Faculty by e-mail. Bylaw amendments are reported as approved or not approved along with the number of faculty who voted and the number who voted for and against the Bylaw change. In the case of elections for individuals to Senate or Forum committees, exact vote counts will not be made available to those outside of the Membership and Elections Committee to protect against possible violations of voter confidentiality.

Actions When No Candidates Self-Nominate for a Position - In the event that no candidates self-nominate for a position, and the position remains vacant after elections, the Membership and Elections Committee will send out a call for volunteers to temporarily fill the position for a semester and appoint a replacement as outlined below. The committee will continue to call for nominations for the vacant position at each normal election time (fall and spring) until a candidate is found. In such an event, the term of office will be reduced by the amount of time that the position was vacant to keep

the rotation of membership off the committee constant. (Example: If the original request for nominations was for a term of 2003-2006 and the position was vacant for all of 2003, then an individual elected would only serve from 2004 – 2006.)

4) Appoint Faculty for Temporary Vacancies

The Membership and Elections Committee can appoint replacements for temporary vacancies (with the exception of the Promotions Committee) for no more than one semester. Vacancies may be due to sabbaticals, illnesses, or other reasons. The appointments are made after sending an e-mail announcement to faculty of the open position(s). The appointments are made by drawing names from a hat. If a vacancy continues for more than one semester and another appointment is necessary, the committee will as a matter of policy re-appoint the same faculty member currently serving as a replacement to facilitate continuity of operations within the committee. Should the current replacement be unwilling to continue service, an appointment will be made following the usual procedures.

If the vacant position is a designated school position, then every effort will be made to appoint a replacement from the particular school. If no one from the particular school is willing to serve then the position will remain vacant.

5) Remove Inactive Committee Members

The Membership and Elections Committee can remove inactive committee members at the request of the committee chairs. The chairperson of a committee who would like to replace an inactive member must submit a signed letter of recall to the chairperson of the Membership and Elections Committee. The Membership and Elections Committee will then notify the inactive member that a letter of recall has been submitted and request a response from the inactive member within one week of the notification. The member to be recalled can then submit, in writing, a letter outlining any extenuating circumstances that should be considered during the recall deliberations. These documents are reviewed by the Membership and Elections Committee who then approve the letter of recall and remove the inactive committee member, or disapprove the chair's request. In the event that the recall is for a position on the Membership and Elections Committee itself, deliberations and voting will occur in the absence of the inactive member. Appeals regarding a recall decision will be forwarded to the entire Senate. The decision of the Senate is final.

A member of a committee shall be considered inactive and may be removed from the committee by the Membership and Elections Committee in accordance with Article V Section 8 and Article VII Section 1 of the Bylaws if the member has during a semester:

a) failed to respond to the committee chair's call for a meeting two or more times by indicating suitable meeting times, or

b) failed to offer five or more suitable meeting times during a week two or more times in response to the committee chair's call for a meeting, or

c) failed to attend a meeting scheduled at a time she/he had indicated was suitable two or more times.