

Resolution II:

Resolution Increasing the Transparency and Effectiveness of Faculty Senate Proceedings

Whereas the Faculty Senate needs to participate more effectively in the determination of the agenda of its meetings;

Whereas Article VIII of the Organization and Procedures of the University Faculty (OPUF) provides, “The University Faculty Committee has the responsibility to inform and consult the Senate on a regular and frequent basis.”

Whereas Article VIII of OPUF provides that the Faculty Senate powers and responsibilities include, “To approve or reject the list of members and chairs presented by the Nominations and Elections Committee for appointed University Faculty committees, Senate committees, and administration or administration-faculty committees.

Whereas the membership of ad hoc committees that report directly to the Faculty Senate should be approved by the Faculty Senate;

Resolved, the University Faculty Committee (UFC) is asked to open its meetings to all Faculty Senators in which the UFC creates its recommendation for the agenda of the Faculty Senate;

Resolved, the UFC is asked to publish its recommendation for the agenda of the Faculty Senate on the morning of the Friday before the Faculty Senate meeting;

Resolved, the agenda must be formally approved by the Faculty Senate before the meeting begins, at which time amendments changing the agenda will be in order;

Resolved, the Nominations and Elections Committee shall nominate members of ad hoc committees, the Dean of Faculty shall submit such nominations to the Faculty Senate for approval, and the Faculty Senate can add, subtract, or substitute its own nominations for the list submitted by the Dean of Faculty.

Senate Sponsors:

Richard Bensel (presenter)

Risa Lieberwitz
Michael Nussbaum
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Other faculty:

David Bateman
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Background to Resolution II: Procedure

Almost every deliberative body in the world controls its own agenda. The Faculty Senate is an exception in that the University Faculty Committee (UFC) is responsible for setting out the agenda. However, that responsibility has sometimes been used in ways that might have been contrary to the wishes of the Faculty Senate. This resolution attempts to encourage the UFC to create a process that would, to a greater degree than in the past, take into account the wishes of the Faculty Senate. First, it asks the UFC to open those parts of its meetings in which it determines the meeting agenda. As it stands now, those meetings are closed to Senators and we do not even know, except in very unusual cases, when they are held. Second, it asks the UFC to publish the agenda on Friday morning so that Senators may anticipate how, what, and when topics will be discussed. Third, timely publication of the agenda would also allow the Senate to amend that agenda at the beginning of the meeting. That is the Senate's right under Robert's Rules but becomes difficult to exercise when the agenda is constructed in private, appears just days before the meeting, or is altered at the very last minute. For example, the UFC inserted, at the very last minute, a speech at the very beginning of our last session that had not been published in their agenda.

We also note that, in 2007, the Faculty Governance Review Committee recommended that the Dean of Faculty and the UFC report to the Senate at each meeting. In these reports, they would be required, for example, to provide progress reports with respect to the implementation of Senate resolutions. Here's the full paragraph from the report (from page 12 of the report):

"Report regularly to the Faculty Senate: Given the scope and importance of their liaison roles, the Dean of Faculty and UFC shall each make an oral report at every Faculty Senate meeting, with sufficient time for questions. These reports should fully

inform the Faculty Senate of the content of the UFC's meetings with the Administration and Trustees. Any restriction of information based on confidentiality shall be defined as narrowly as possible. At least once a semester, the Dean of Faculty and UFC shall report on the progress in implementing specific Senate resolutions. All Dean of Faculty and UFC reports shall be posted on the University Faculty website, in addition to their inclusion in the Faculty Senate meeting minutes."

Finally, this resolution would require Faculty Senate participation and consent in the creation of ad hoc committees. This would help ensure that those committees, which are often very important in our deliberations, better reflect the wishes and the will of the Faculty Senate.