

Bylaws and Procedures Committee

Minutes from the meeting held on Feb 8, 2021 over Zoom

Present: Nick Bircher (Medicine) [Chair], Steve Belle (Public Health), Ben Bratman (Law) [Secretary], Jim Cassaro (Music), Ryan Dunmire (University Counsel), Tom Hitter (Office of Policy Development), Stephen Jacobus (student), Susan Jones (Office of University Communications), EJ Milarski-Veenis (Office of Sr. Vice Chancellor for Engagement), Sushobhan Sen (Postdoctoral), Lori Molinaro (Senate Office), Paula Sherwood (Nursing), Lenore Thomas (Studio Arts), Jessica Townsend (Medicine), Frank Wilson (Sociology-Greensburg) [Senate Past President], Cecelia Yates (Nursing) [Co-chair].

Unable to attend: Sheila Alexander (Nursing), Chris Bonneau (Political Science) [Senate President], Morgan Pierce (student-GPSG)

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 am and a quorum ascertained.

Minutes: A seconded motion to approve the Minutes from the December 17, 2020 meeting was approved.

Old business:

Anti-Racism Action Plan

- **Part-Time Faculty and Proposed Bylaws Amendment:** Nick Bircher reminded the committee of the current state of affairs under which part-time faculty have to opt in to participate in Faculty Senate. Nick indicated that he would bring a proposed amendment to remove the opt-in procedure to the next meeting.

Nick asked for input on sources of demographic data on the racial and gender makeup of part-time faculty. Committee members suggested consulting either (1) a recent study on part-time faculty salaries conducted by the Provost's office, which might have data on diversity; or (2) the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Nick also raised the question of how to best identify the comparator pool for representation of racial minorities among the part-time faculty.

- **Reporting to Faculty Assembly about Anti-Racism Action Plan:** Nick Bircher reminded the committee that the Executive Committee expects a report on the progress of our anti-racism action plan by the March Faculty Assembly meeting (March 17). He emphasized that the committee at least needs to establish how our plan can be incorporated into the Plenary for this year. He asked committee members to send suggestions to him by no later than the first week of March.

Proposed Bylaws Amendment regarding Officer Term Limits

- Nick Bircher asked for input on whether an amendment to increase the length of officer terms should apply to just the office of President or all offices. The consensus among responses was to address all offices. Nick also asked for input on whether to seek staggered terms for the different offices. A few committee members spoke in favor of staggered terms in order to serve the goals of continuity and institutional memory. It was noted that the Immediate Past President is always in place to assist a newly elected President.
- Ben Bratman asked whether there was any precedent for candidates for president and vice president running as a team, and Nick Bircher indicated that there is no such precedent. To be sure, Lori Molinaro indicated that she would pull data on past elections.
- Frank Wilson and Nick Bircher raised the question of whether, under the procedure for approving changes to the bylaws (specifically, the 45-day posting period after approval by the Faculty Senate, under Art. VIII, Sec. 1, Para. (4)), there remains enough time to implement a change in the length of officer terms that could be effective for the upcoming April 2021 elections. Nick Bircher asked Frank Wilson if, in his communications with prospective candidates for officer positions, he had discussed the possibility of a change in the length of the term. Frank said that he had not done so. Nick Bircher's view is that it is still possible to implement a change effective for the coming election, with adequate notice to candidates, and he will draft up options and a resolution for consideration at the next meeting.

New Business:

*Committee Ruling on Serving in Two Offices (one regional and one main campus)
Simultaneously:*

- The current Vice President of the Greensburg campus's Faculty Senate seeks to run for the office of Vice President of the main campus's Faculty Senate. He has asked for the opinion of the committee on whether he can serve in both offices. Nick Bircher suggested that, though the bylaws do not cover this exact scenario, the spirit of the bylaws suggest that service in two different officer positions simultaneously, one on a regional campus and one on main campus, should not be permitted. Frank Wilson agreed with this conclusion. Frank Wilson also clarified that nominations for the Greensburg Faculty Senate would not take place until after the main campus's elections, and that the person in question has already indicated that, if elected Vice President of the main campus's Senate, he would not seek re-election to his position on the Greensburg Senate. Hence, the consensus was that the committee need not issue a formal ruling.

- Nick Bircher asked whether there should be an amendment to the bylaws anticipating this scenario and prohibiting the dual service in question. Cecelia Yates spoke in favor of amending the bylaws. Nick Bircher indicated that he would draw up a resolution.

Committee members raised no additional new business.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:02 pm.

Minutes submitted by Ben Bratman