

## Bylaws and Procedures Committee

### Minutes from the meeting held on May 5, 2021 over Zoom

[revised as per amendments approved at June 1 meeting]

Present: Nick Bircher (Medicine) [Chair], Sheila Alexander (Nursing), Steve Belle (Public Health), Ben Bratman (Law) [Secretary], Jim Cassaro (Music), Ryan Dunmire (University Counsel), Donovan Harrell (University Times), Tom Hitter (Office of Policy Development), Stephen Jacobus (student-SGB), EJ Milarski-Veenis (School of Education & Staff Council), Sushobhan Sen (Postdoctoral), Lori Molinaro (Senate Office), Paula Sherwood (Nursing), Lenore Thomas (Studio Arts), Jessica Townsend (Medicine) [Staff Council], Frank Wilson (Sociology-Greensburg) [Senate Past President], Cecelia Yates (Nursing) [Co-chair].

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

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm and a quorum ascertained.

**Minutes:** A seconded motion to approve the Minutes from the April 5 meeting was approved.

#### Old business:

##### A. *Anti-Racism Action Plan*

- *Proposed Bylaws Amendment regarding Part-Time Faculty—further consideration of requirements for Part-Time Faculty to serve as Officers of University Senate*

Nick B. introduced four possible approaches: (1) preclude service as officers entirely; (2) create a required minimum fraction of FTE (full-time equivalent); (3) create a required minimum duration of service; or (4) create a required minimum number of past semesters of employment. Hearing no commentary on these options, Nick volunteered to draft language suitable for each option. At least some of the options can adopt language from standards of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor.

Lenore T. asked if we know of any part-time faculty who want to serve and questioned whether we should impose on a category of faculty who are paid so little. Nick responded that the population of part-time faculty who might be interested in service as an officer is a tiny fraction. In order to avoid appearance of imposing, Sheila A. suggested bylaws language reflecting interest in service. Lenore raised concerns about ensuring an even distribution of service among different categories of faculty. Ben B. raised point that adding part-time faculty to University Senate is largely about inclusion and merely makes them members just as all full-time faculty are, thereby creating no inherent pressure to serve in any capacity.

Returning to the four options, Lenore and Nick raised point that part-time faculty come in and out of employment, which has to be considered in deciding which option to adopt. Nick advocated for allowing part-time faculty to still serve and vote when between semesters of service (when technically not employed by the university).

*B. Recruitment of Faculty Members to fill open slots on Committee*

Lori M. confirmed that there are three candidates on the ballot in the current election for three open slots.

**New Business**

*Proposed Bylaws Amendment regarding Constituency Committees*

Nick opened the discussion by asking question of whether to use a different term—possibly “caucus” instead of “constituency.” Sushobhan S. and Cecelia Y. each indicated support for use of “caucus.” Paula S. raised the point that the language “caucus” might dissuade some from participating.

Someone made the point that caucus/constituency committees are well suited for ethnic minority groups, LGBTQIA, or other marginalized groups on campus. Nick emphasized that these would be committees that could bring resolutions to Faculty Assembly. Frank W. then offered the additional example of part-time faculty as a potential caucus/constituency committee.

Nick pointed out that clause 11(e) in the draft amendments concerning methods of abolishing a committee is not consistent with Robert’s Rules and not consistent with how existing committees can be abolished. Ben suggested that we treat these like we treat any other committee. Cecelia indicated that it might be too much of a burden to impose all the conventional attributes of a committee upon a caucus/constituency for a small or disadvantaged group. Lenore suggested trying to find a middle ground between treating a caucus/constituency like a standing committee, on the one hand, and treating them like an affinity group, on the other.

Paula pointed out that, if we anticipate caucus/constituency committees for ethnic minority groups, LGBTQIA, etc., then the language of clause 11(b) referring to “professional focus” would need to be changed, or an additional definitional clause would need to be added.

Cecelia suggested tabling the overall issue because there are many unresolved questions, e.g. how to handle when a caucus/constituency becomes so large and structured that it becomes de facto a committee. Nick clarified that a caucus/constituency committee, according to the draft amendment, would be made up of only members of Faculty Assembly. Ben said that, with such a limitation and given the generally non-diverse population in Assembly, we would not see meaningful representation through caucus/constituency committees for ethnic minority groups, LGBTQIA, etc. Separately, Sushobhan suggested the possibility of allowing student and post doc membership in caucus/constituency committees.

Taking into account various comments made, Nick will revise the draft amendments.

Meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Ben Bratman, Secretary