

Bylaws and Procedures Committee

Minutes from the meeting held on March 22, 2019 at 12:00-1:00 pm in 156 CL

Present: Nick Bircher (Chair), Sheila Alexander (Nursing), Ben Bratman (Law), Małgorzata [Gosia] Fort (Secretary), Lenore Thomas (Studio Arts), Sam Herron (GPSG), Jahari Mercer (SGB), Tom Hitter (Assistant Vice Chancellor), Chris Bonneau (Senate Liaison), Lori Molinaro (Senate Office), Steve Belle, Dave Gau

Unable to attend: Thottala Jayaraman (Dental Medicine), Steve Hirtle (Information Sciences), Cecelia Yates (Nursing)

Meeting was called to order at 12:02pm.

As a quorum was not yet present, the approval of the minutes from the last meeting was deferred to later in the meeting (see below).

The agenda was rearranged to accommodate our guest's schedule, and the items under New Business were discussed next.

Dr. David Gau, the President of the University of Pittsburgh Postdoctoral Association (UPPDA) gave a short presentation to the Committee. He explained why his organization is seeking the opportunity to represent the postdoctoral community on the University Senate. He presented the draft proposal of amendments to the Bylaws and the Resolution to Add Postdoctoral Associates/Scholars to the University Senate. His presentation was followed by a discussion, which centered on the issues of member designation and definition of groups represented by UPPDA with questions and comments from Steve Belle, Nick Bircher, Sheila Alexander and Ben Bratman. Gau explained that if one follows the provost's definition/guidelines, UPPDA covers postdoc scholars and associates, but does not represent clinical fellows, research associates and research assistants, who are classified as staff.

Before we moved to the next item on agenda, the approval of the minutes was put back on a table. With some members joining the gathering late, the quorum of the meeting was met. We voted and approved the minutes from the last meeting.

After that, we discussed the request from Faculty Assembly to reconsider term limits for University Senate Officers. Currently, the officers are elected for one-year term, and they can serve three consecutive terms. Should we support the change to make it a two-year term instead?

Lori Molinaro said that officers always seek reelection. There were only two cases in the history of the Senate that president served one term because he did not win the second election. Ben Bratman thought that this history is a good argument for one-year term, because it allows Senate to replace faster the weak officer, who is not bound by the two-year term. Chris Bonneau wanted us to take into account the learning curve that is needed to know the job well. For that reason, the second term is the better one to judge the officers' performance. Sheila Alexander asked if two-year term had any mechanism to impeach an officer who performs badly. Nick Bircher said that there were no internal regulations, but this could be done under the Robert's rules of order.

The difficulty of finding candidates willing to serve as officers and the time commitment needed to do the job should also be taken into consideration. Steve Belle suggested seeking the input from the Election Committee on the issues of extending the term limits and how this will affect the process of finding the right candidates. In addition to reaching out to the Election Committee, Nick Bircher volunteered to poll the past presidents on this issue. Chris Bonneau stated that lack of compensation and rewards is the main impediment of making officer positions attractive. We have a precedent of a letter from the Provost giving time off regular duties to the current President of the Senate to do the job, but the service is still not considered for promotion and there are no other credits for the work done for the Senate. If we want to encourage people to run for officers, we need to remove disincentives and create incentives to make the job more attractive. Ben Bratman talked about procedural ways of introducing the issue of compensation for the officers to the Faculty Assembly.

Tom Hitter did not have any updates on the revisions to the *Guidelines for Search Committees for Senior Academic Administrators*. Current draft under revision was tabled for later. On behalf of Bylaws and Procedures Committee, Tom will ask Chancellor for the updates.

Next meeting will be scheduled before summer, exact date TBA, so we can elect the new officers and discuss the ways to present UPPDA resolution to the Senate

Meeting was adjourned at 1:05 pm.

Minutes submitted by Małgorzata Fort