

Rationale for amending the Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article X, Section 5

It is the ongoing responsibility of the Faculty Senate Nominations, Elections, and Governance (NEG) Committee to review and update the Senate's bylaws and resolutions. As part of this duty, the committee identified specific weaknesses in the prescribed process for amending the Senate Bylaws (Article X, Section 5). A quick review of the corresponding Faculty Senate Resolution (Section 6.1.6) did not sufficiently address these weaknesses in the Bylaws.

With the focused effort of the members of the Faculty Senate NEG Committee, and the endorsement of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the attached proposal is recommended based on the following:

- The current wording of Article X, Section 5 implies that any proposed amendment to the bylaws must be brought to the faculty for a vote, regardless of the merit or impact of that proposed amendment. No wording in the current article, nor Resolution 6.1.6., gives the Senate or any associated committee the explicit authority to prevent a proposed amendment from being brought for a vote. This means that it is, at present, procedurally easier for an amendment to the Bylaws to be considered than it is for a generic proposal to be approved through normal Senate business.
- The NEG Committee, with the concurring sentiment of the EC, believes it is important for the Bylaws to remain as that document which expresses the core functions and values of the Faculty Senate. The Bylaws must not be procedurally easy to amend, and should include a carefully prescribed process for the evaluation of the impact of any proposed amendments on the Senate and on the College.
- The NEG Committee, with the concurring sentiment of the EC, believes that the currently worded Article X, Section 5 inhibits the Faculty Senate's ability to constructively consider amendments. Specifically, provisions prohibiting only one open hearing per year, and prohibiting amendments to the bylaws in years when officer elections are held, should be removed to allow for the NEG to logistically be able to carry out its responsibilities.
- The proposed amendment language advocated by the NEG Committee allocates to the Faculty Senate the responsibility for ultimately determining which proposed amendments will or will not move to the Faculty for a vote. The NEG believes that omitting the Senate membership, as the current amendment process does, fails to recognize the duties of senators to act as stewards of the institution.