

## BYLAWS OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

This [set of bylaws](#) was presented at the May 1985 Senate Meeting and tabled until fall 1985. It was passed at the Academic Senate meeting held October 18, 1995 and amended on May 7, 1997, April 21, 1999, January 19, 2000, February 15, 2012, December 5, 2018, December 11, 2019, January 20, 2021.

Bylaw 1: **Parliamentary Procedure.** When [ever](#) possible, Senate meetings will be conducted collegially and informally as an academic body. ~~At the request of any member at any time, parliamentary procedure will be observed.~~ The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, ~~Newly Revised (10<sup>th</sup> edition), or such subsequent most recent edition as is approved by the Academic Senate upon recommendation of the Committee of the Rules, Membership and Election Committee,~~ shall govern the Academic Senate in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution ~~and~~; ~~Bylaws and Standard Rules of the Academic Senate (and any Standing Rules).~~ ~~Every year the Executive Board will appoint a faculty member to act as~~ [Parliamentarian, whose role is to be well versed in parliamentary procedure and to answer any procedural questions that arise. See Bylaw 5\(a\) for definitions of typical motions.](#)

Bylaw 2: **Registration of members with the Academic Senate office.** Each school or unit shall report to the Academic Senate office the names and academic titles of its members in the Faculty Assembly; the members, officers, and terms of the school faculty council; and the names of its members of the Academic Senate. The President of the Faculty Council of each school or unit, shall provide the Academic Senate office with this information by July 1, and shall notify the Senate office of any changes.

Bylaw 3: **Quorum.** ~~Except as otherwise provided for in the Constitution, 51% A quorum is more than half of the voting members of the Academic Senate constitutes a quorum. At all Academic Senate meetings, only members physically present at the time of the vote are eligible to vote on any question or motion.~~ Once established, the presence of a quorum is presumed to continue until proven otherwise by a call to quorum which reveals the absence of a quorum. ~~As a special case, a motions to extend a meeting past its scheduled adjournment, and motions to waive required timelines, requires an actual quorum to be present. See Bylaws 4 and 5(g).~~ In the absence of a quorum, discussion may occur at the discretion of the chair, but no action shall be taken except adjournment to a specified future time. ~~Newly elected office and members of the Executive Board are invited to attend the meetings as soon as they are elected, but do not count toward a quorum and do not have a vote.~~

**Bylaw 3.1. Voting.** ~~At all Academic Senate meetings, only members physically present (or on camera in virtual or hybrid meetings) at the time of the vote are eligible to vote on any motion.~~

Bylaw 4: **Agenda.** Matters for prospective inclusion in the main body of an agenda ~~in a~~ for a forthcoming Academic Senate meeting must be provided to the Academic Senate Executive Board in sufficient time ~~to be~~ placed on the Executive Board agenda and to be discussed by the Board. ~~See Bylaw 5 for details. no later than one week prior to the Academic Senate meeting.~~ ~~Matters which are that have not been~~ so submitted may be considered under "New Business" on the Senate agenda, ~~but may not be voted on at the same meeting. When the time for adjournment arrives, the chair announces it, and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any motion to extend the meeting past the scheduled adjournment to continue discussion of a pending question must be for some specific period of time. Such motions are undebatable and require two-third vote to be approved, with a quorum present.~~

Bylaw 5: **Motions.** ~~Substantive motions from the floor (as distinct from procedural motions such as for approval, disapproval, reference of pending matters, or adjournment) shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Board (or alternatively, to the Academic Senate office) at or before the time they are orally proposed to the Academic Senate.~~

Formatted: Font: Not Italic

Formatted: Font: Not Italic

## **Motions and Resolutions.**

### **a. Definitions.**

A "motion" is a proposal for the Academic Senate to act, such as adopt the minutes or vote on a resolution. A "resolution" is a particular type of motion in which the Academic Senate expresses in a formal way its views on a matter of interest to the faculty and university, such as a statement adopting a committee report or otherwise proposing a university action (which typically initiates collegial discussions with the administration intended to reach consensus); endorsing Faculty Handbook amendments (which become official policy on approval by the university president), or expressing approval or disapproval of an action by an administrator. A motion to adopt a resolution is a typical "substantive motion." See the discussion below about amendments.

Typical "procedural motions" include: adopt the minutes; "call the question" (i.e., end debate, requires a two-thirds vote or unanimous consent); "lay on the table" (i.e., postpone indefinitely); postpone to the next meeting; refer to a committee. For procedural motions the chair may take the sense of the meeting and ask for unanimous consent without a formal vote, or may briefly hold off a vote on the motion to permit further debate.

The voting members of the Senate include the elected representatives of school faculty, elected alternatives (but only if the regular member is absent), and Senate officers and Executive Board members.

The chair of the meeting is the Senate President, or if the President is unavailable the Academic Vice-President, or if needed another Executive Board member designated by the President.

b. Procedural and substantive motions may be proposed by a voting member of the Academic Senate and require a second by another voting member.

Substantive motions and committee reports may also be recommended to the Executive Board by the Senate committees, and Provost/Senate committees, and University committees, and by school faculty councils.

Substantive motions (including approval of reports and recommendations by committees and councils) may be proposed to the Senate by the Executive Board without requiring a second.

c. Proposed resolutions and other substantive motions must be submitted to the Academic Senate President in final written form no less than 14 calendar days before the scheduled Senate meeting where it is proposed to consider the matter (e.g., by noon two Wednesdays before a scheduled Wednesday Senate meeting). That allows time for the sponsors to consult with the Executive Boards for comments and suggestions to improve the substance and form of proposals before final submission; for the Executive Board to gather relevant background information; for the Executive Board to consult with others who have views on the topic; and sometimes for the Executive Board to draft an alternative resolution.

d. The Secretary General shall post the text of proposed resolutions to the Academic Senate website and distribute it to Senators by email no less than 5 calendar days before the meeting (e.g., by end of day Friday before a scheduled Wednesday meeting). The interval between posting and consideration and voting is intended to allow Senators time to review the proposal and consult with their faculty colleagues prior to a vote.

e. During the meeting in which a proposal or resolution is to be voted on, the sponsor will have the opportunity to speak, and time will be allowed for comments and questions from other voting Senators. At hybrid meetings, the chair will attempt to alternate between those Senators in person and those Senators attending online, and will ensure that diverse views are represented.

f. Amendments. During the meeting, voting Senators may propose amendments to a resolution. If an amendment advances the spirit of the proposal or resolution and is of a clarifying or perfecting nature

in the eye of the proponent and the chair, it may be adopted by unanimous consent without a vote. In such a case, the amended proposal or resolution will be voted on instead of the original proposal.

Otherwise, amendments require motion and second and approval by vote of the Senate, and proposed amendments are voted on before any vote on approval of the resolution. If one or more amendments are adopted that in the opinion of the chair are substantive, a final vote on the resolution may not take place until the next regular meeting (or until a special meeting after at least one week has passed), and the amended proposal or resolution has been publicly posted as described above. This

pause is to allow Senators time to review the proposal or resolution and consult with their faculty colleagues prior to a vote.

g. In the case where especially urgent action is essential, the timelines for submission and posting of proposals or resolutions may be suspended by three-quarters vote of the Academic Senate, with a quorum present.

Bylaw 6: **Attendance.** Attendance shall be taken at all Academic Senate meetings. All present shall sign-in and identify themselves prior to attending. If attending remotely at virtual or hybrid meetings, voting members must have their cameras on, and must have their full name shown on the screen, with a VS designating them as a voting senator preceding their name on their screen.

Bylaw 7: **Visitors.** Meetings of the Academic Senate are presumed to be open. However, a meeting can be closed by the Executive Board to *include only* members of the University community (i.e., administrators, faculty, retired faculty, staff and students) or to *include only* members of the Faculty Assembly, or to *include only* members of the Academic Senate. If a meeting is closed, others may attend with the permission of the Executive Board.

Bylaw 8: **Executive Board.** The Executive Board typically meets as-needed weekly. Whenever possible, Executive Board meetings will be conducted collegially and informally as an academic body. Meetings of the Executive Board shall be governed by the Standing Rules, if any, established by the Board. Newly elected officers and members of the Executive Board are invited to attend meetings as soon as they are elected. ~~d.~~ If an Academic Senator is elected to serve as an officer or ~~voting member~~ Member at Large of the Executive Board, that individual shall not represent or be counted as a representative of a school or unit.

Bylaw 9: **Executive Board meetings with the University President.** At least once a month, the Executive Board shall meet with the President of the University, with his or her designate(s), or both.

Bylaw 10: **Nominating Committee.** The Nominating Committee consists of the President of the Faculty, the Academic Vice President, and two other members of the current Executive Board, together with four other Academic Senate members who are not a member of the Executive Board. ~~The method for choosing the Nominating Committee is prescribed in the Standing Rules. Candidates for the Academic Senate positions on the Nominating Committee are nominated by one or more Academic Senate voting members, either from the floor at the second Academic Senate meeting of the school year, or by a signed, nominations that must be emailed to the Academic Senate office two weeks prior to the second meeting. They are elected at the second meeting.~~

Bylaw 11: **Nominations.**

~~a. T~~The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of at least two candidates for each office for which there will be an election (i.e., the Academic Vice-President, the Administrative Vice-President, the Secretary General, and each position of Member at large of the Executive Board.) The Nominating Committee is charged with advertising widely the elections and with seeking out a wide variety of candidates reflecting diversity across all relevant dimensions. The Nominating Committee shall aim to ensure an Executive Board where Schools are represented in approximately the same proportions as in the Senate itself.

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Verdana, 9 pt

~~Members of The the Nominating Committee may not nominate any of its members are not eligible to be nominated. Should a committee member decide that they would like to be nominated, they must step down from the committee.~~

~~b. Additional In addition, nominations for an office are permissible with the signed endorsement of a minimum of twenty supporting faculty, with no more than ten of the endorsements being from any one school. Prior agreement from the nominee that the individual will serve if elected is required. Each faculty member can only endorse one faculty nominee for each Officer position. Additional~~  
~~n~~~~Nominations for Member at Large positions are permissible with the signed endorsement of a minimum of ten supporting faculty, with no more than five of the endorsements being from any one school. Prior agreement from the nominee that the individual will serve if elected is required. Each faculty member can endorse a maximum of four faculty nominees for Member At Large positions. Nominations shall be submitted in the manner, with the information, and within the deadlines, prescribed in the standing rules.~~

~~c. For any position, prior agreement from the nominee that the individual will serve if elected is required. Every candidate is expected to submit a completed "Candidate Information Statement," on a form provided by the Academic Senate office. The Academic Senate election calendar shall state the deadline for the receipt of candidate statements.~~

**Bylaw 11.1. Eligibility** All faculty in active service (of every track, full-time, part-time, and adjunct) are eligible to run for office or Executive Board membership and, if elected, to serve out their term of office even if they have a sabbatical or other temporary interruption of active service. Faculty who have resigned or retired are not eligible to run or serve as an officer or Executive Board member.

Bylaw 12: **Alternate Members.** If an Academic Senate member is unable to attend an Academic Senate meeting, the faculty council of a school or unit may elect an alternate member. If an alternate member will be attending as a voting member in place of an Academic Senator, the Senate office must be notified by ~~a telephone call or in writing~~ email in advance of the meeting.

Bylaw 13: **Non-attendance by members.** If an Academic Senate ~~meeting~~ member resigns, ~~becomes ineligible, becomes unable to serve,~~ or misses two meetings, ~~the seat will be declared vacant. If there is an alternate member, the alternate will then become the Senate member. If there are multiple alternates, the faculty council of the school will be asked to elect which one will serve as the replacement member.~~ ~~and~~ If no alternate member has ~~previously~~ been elected, the faculty council of the school will be asked to elect ~~an alternate~~ a replacement member.

Bylaw 14: **Elections.** Elections will take place by electronic ballot distributed to the Faculty Assembly, using software that protects the anonymity of the vote. The ballot will include the names of all who have been properly nominated and who have agreed to run for office. ~~Election materials provided by the candidates will be duplicated and distributed in the form received from the candidate, along with the official ballot, election schedule, and instructions for returning the ballots. If election materials are not received from an individual before the deadline, a blank Candidate Information Statement will be circulated for that person.~~ Each member of the Faculty Assembly (~~of every track, full-time, part-time, or adjunct~~) may cast one vote for each open seat on the ballot. ~~Ballots not completed and returned in accord with instructions will not be counted.~~ The election will be determined by a simple plurality. Ties will be broken by having a run-off election in which the voting members of the Senate will choose between the candidates who previously tied.

Bylaw 15: **Vacancies on the Executive Board and in Executive Offices.** If the President of the ~~faculty~~ Faculty resigns, or becomes unable ~~or ineligible~~ to serve, the Academic Vice-President shall ~~assume the duties of the~~ become President. If the Academic Vice-President becomes President, or resigns, or becomes unable or ineligible to serve, the Executive Board shall solicit suggestions, make ~~two or more~~ nominations, and hold an election for Academic Vice-President by ~~mail~~ electronic ballot of the Faculty Assembly in accord with the Bylaws and standing rules.

In the event that an executive officer, other than the President or Academic Vice-President, or an Executive Board Member at Large, resigns or becomes unable or ineligible to serve and there is less than one year remaining to serve in the term, the Executive Board shall designate a replacement whose appointment must be submitted for approval by the Academic Senate at its next meeting. If there is more than one year to serve in the term, the Executive Board shall solicit suggestions, make two or more nominations, and hold an election by ~~mail~~ electronic ballot of the Faculty Assembly in accord to the Bylaws and standing rules.

Nominations by endorsement (under ~~the third paragraph of~~ Bylaw 11.b) are not used when a vacancy is to be filled.

Bylaw 16: ~~Standing and special committees~~ **Committees**. In addition to the Executive Board, there shall be standing committees of the Academic Senate as provided ~~listed~~ in the Standing Rules. Additionally, the Academic Senate or the Executive Board may create such special committees, task forces, and bodies as necessary.

Bylaw 17: **Standing Rules**. These Bylaws authorize the creation of Standing Rules to govern procedures of the Academic Senate as listed in the Standing Rules. The Standing Rules can be adopted by either majority vote of either the Executive Board or the Academic Senate. The Standing Rules may be suspended or changed by the majority vote of either the Executive Board or the Academic Senate. The Standing Rules are to be followed so long as they are consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws.

~~**1. Choice of Nominating Committee** The Executive Board elects two members to the Nominating Committee. The Academic Senate elects four of its members to the Nominating Committee. Candidates for the Academic Senate positions on the Nominating Committee are nominated by one or more Academic Senate members, either from the floor at the second Academic Senate meeting of the school year, or by a signed, written nomination delivered to the Academic Senate office two weeks prior to the second meeting. They are elected at the second meeting.~~

~~**2. Additional Nominations** The Nominating Committee shall propose a slate of officers for the Executive Board for the next year. The Nominating Committee is charged with advertising widely the elections and with seeking out a wide variety of candidates reflecting diversity across all the relevant dimensions. The Nominating Committee shall aim to ensure an Executive Board where all schools are represented in approximately the same proportions as in the Senate itself. As prescribed by Bylaw 11, additional nominations for an office are permissible with the signed endorsement of a minimum of twenty supporting faculty, with no more than ten of the endorsements being from any one school. Prior agreement from the nominee that the individual will serve if elected is required. Each faculty member can only endorse one faculty nominee for each Officer position. Additional nominations for Member at Large positions are permissible with the signed endorsement of a minimum of ten supporting faculty, with no more than five of the endorsements being from any one school. Prior agreement from the nominee that the individual will serve if elected is required. Each faculty member can endorse a maximum of four faculty nominees for Member At Large positions. The calendar prepared by the Academic Senate office shall state the date by which such nominations must be received.~~

### ~~**3. Election Materials**~~

~~**A.** Submission of election materials. Every candidate is expected to submit a completed "Candidate Information Statement," on a form provided by the Academic Senate office. The Academic Senate election calendar shall state the deadline for the receipt of candidate statements. Election materials will be duplicated and distributed in the form received from the candidate. If election materials are not received from an individual before the deadline, a blank Candidate Information Statement will be circulated for that person.~~

~~**B.** Distribution of the election materials. Election materials to be distributed by the Academic Senate office will include: the official ballot, completed "Candidate Information Statements," the election schedule, and instructions for returning the ballots. Ballots not completed and returned in accord will not be counted.~~

**4.1. Calendar.** Each year, the Academic Senate office will publish a calendar for Academic Senate officers and Members at Large, and Senators that will include the dates of the senate meetings.

**5.2. Committees.** The Academic Senate officers and the Executive Board shall choose which standing committees shall be activated in a given year, from the committees listed in the Faculty Handbook on the Academic Senate website,. Task forces may be authorized by the Executive Board at any time.

Bylaw 18. **Composition of the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.** The co-chairs of the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities shall be one tenured professor and one full-time RTPC associate (~~or equivalent rank~~) professor (or equivalent rank for non-professorial titles). The committee may also have other members.

Bylaw 19. **Senate representation.**

~~**a.**~~ Every "school" that (a) is listed in University Bylaw 9.1 and (b) has its own faculty, and (c) has an established Faculty Council shall have at least one elected senator (elected in accordance ~~with~~ the ~~USC~~ Academic Senate Constitution and By-laws) serving on the Senate. Pursuant to this rule, the Graduate school does not have a senator because it does not have any independent faculty.

In addition, because the Libraries and Retired Faculty Association have faculty who are not affiliated with any "school," but who are actively engaged in teaching, research and/or service at the university, both of those units shall have an elected senator representing them on the Senate (in accordance with Senate's Constitution, Art. IV).

~~**b.**~~ Senate representation should be based on the total number of Tenure/Tenure-Track and RTPC faculty who work at least 50% time at USC.

~~**c.**~~ The number of Senators for each school shall be determined using the following scale based on the total number of Tenure/Tenure-Track and RTPC faculty who work at least 50% time at USC:

- <200 = 1
- 200 < 300 = 2
- 300 < 400 = 3
- 400 < 500 = 4
- 500 < 600 = 5
- 600 < 700 = 6
- 700 < 800 = 7
- 800 < 900 = 8
- 900 < 1000 = 9
- 1000 < 1500 = 10
- 1500 < 2000 = 11
- 2000 < 2500 = 12

Formatted: Font: Bold

2500 < 3000 = 13

d. The allocation of Senators will be reevaluated every five academic years based on a moving average of the past five year' headcounts or, if the Executive Board determines that such a calculation is cumbersome, the current headcount, may be used. (Note: ~~first to be reevaluated was due on~~ Dec 2024.) The reevaluation will also consider whether collegial discussion will be facilitated by a revision of the scale in Bylaw 19.c The new allocation takes effect for the subsequent academic year.