

TO: SLA Faculty Assembly Executive Committee
FROM: Bylaws Review Committee, Herbert Brant and Scott Weeden, co-chairs
SUBJECT: Proposal on Proxy Voting
DATE: 25 October, 2019

Due to the wide array of professional activities undertaken by faculty in the IU School of Liberal Arts, the ad-hoc Bylaws Review Committee recommends the following action item for consideration by the Faculty:

Change in Article III, Section 7.c of the Bylaws

Current Bylaw:

Section 7.c. A proxy vote shall be permitted those Faculty members unable to attend meetings of the Assembly only in the instance of a conflict of regularly scheduled classes with that meeting.

1. Prior to its exercise, the proxy vote must be registered with the Secretary.
2. A proxy vote may not be used in the determination of a quorum.
3. In no case may a Faculty member vote more than one proxy.

Proposed New Language:

Section 7.c. A proxy vote shall be permitted those Faculty members unable to attend meetings of the Assembly ~~only in the instance of a conflict of regularly scheduled classes~~ **due to documented professional activities related to teaching, research, and service that are in conflict** with that meeting.

1. Prior to its exercise, the proxy vote must be registered **in writing via e-mail at least 48 hours prior to the meeting** with the Secretary **Vice President of the Assembly, who will then present it for approval by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee members. The Vice President will announce the approved proxy votes at the meeting for inclusion in the Secretary's tally.**
2. A proxy vote may not be used in the determination of a quorum.
3. ~~In no case may a Faculty member vote more than one proxy.~~

Rationale:

Increasingly, faculty have requested proxy votes due to their participation in professional activities beyond regularly scheduled classes. If we wish to invite the full participation of faculty in the matters before the Assembly, and at the same time, honor their commitments to significant scholarly activities, a proxy vote should be available in a wider range of circumstances.

The Bylaws Review Committee recommends that the Vice President of the Assembly be the officer in charge of collecting the proxies, and presenting them to the Executive Committee for approval, as a way to reduce the number of last-minute pre-meeting tasks that must be completed by the President and the Secretary.

Known and expected benefits:

In the judgment of the Bylaws Review Committee, the current bylaw is too restrictive, and disenfranchises those faculty who happen to have a conflict with the day and time of the Assembly meeting. By offering faculty members an option for exercising their privilege and duty to vote on issues under consideration – even though they may be absent due to professional activities – the committee believes that participation in the decision-making process will be more robust, and the results of votes will better represent the Faculty's will.