

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND SENATE PROCEDURES
(Final; Action)

SP.20.25 Proposed Revision to the Senate *Constitution*, Article VI and *Bylaws*, Part F, Providing for Routine and Emergency Electronic Participation in Meetings of the Senate and its Committees

BACKGROUND

Both the Illinois Open Meetings Act and our governing parliamentary authority, *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, require that for electronic participation in meetings, the governing documents of the Senate must make specific provisions for such participation. As the coronavirus emergency has shown us, the Senate and its committees need rules for electronic participation in their meetings.

RECOMMENDATION

The Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures recommends the approval of the following revisions to the *Constitution* and *Bylaws*. Text to be deleted is ~~struck through~~ and text to be added is underlined. Adoption of amendments to the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* requires a two-thirds vote of the Senate.

The amendments to the *Bylaws* proposed in this document will take effect only upon final approval of the amendments to the *Constitution* by the Board of Trustees.

REVISION TO THE SENATE *CONSTITUTION*, ARTICLE VI

1 **Section 6.** A senator must be present at a Senate meeting to vote; no senator may vote
2 by proxy or absentee ballot. The *Bylaws* may provide for electronic participation in
3 meetings of the Senate and its committees.

4 New Section 8 [renumber current Sections 8-12 to be 9-13]

5 **Section 8.** The *Bylaws* shall provide for procedures for the operation of the Senate in the
6 event of an emergency or disaster declaration related to public health concerns by the
7 Governor of the State of Illinois or the Director of the Illinois Department of Public
8 Health. These procedures may include provisions for electronic meetings of the Senate
9 and its committees, and special authority for the Senate Executive Committee.

REVISION TO THE BYLAWS, PART F

10 New Sections

11 **6. Electronic Participation in Meetings of the Senate and its Committees**

- 12 a. Except as provided in Section 7 below, meetings of the Senate shall be
13 conducted in person.
- 14 b. As provided in the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/7), if a quorum of
15 the members of a Senate committee is physically present for a meeting, a
16 majority of the committee members present may at their discretion allow a
17 member to attend the meeting by a means other than a physical presence if
18 the member is prevented from physically attending because of: (i) personal
19 illness or disability; (ii) employment purposes or the business of the
20 University; (iii) a family or other emergency; or (iv) another provision
21 authorized in the Open Meetings Act. "Other means" is by video or audio
22 conference.
- 23 c. If a member needs to attend a meeting of a Senate committee by a means
24 other than a physical presence, the member must notify the chair of the
25 committee at least 24 hours before the meeting, unless advance notice is
26 impractical.
- 27 d. Votes of members participating by other means shall be accepted and
28 counted, but must be cast by the member, not by a proxy.
- 29 e. Notices of meetings shall include an adequate description of how and under
30 what circumstances members can join the meeting by other means than
31 physical attendance. Further details, such as how to be recognized to speak
32 and how to vote, shall be made available, as a minimum, on the Senate
33 website. Provision must be made for secure participation and secure voting
34 for members attending by other means.

35 **7. Emergency and Disaster Provisions**

36 The provisions of this section shall apply in the event of an emergency or disaster
37 declaration related to public health concerns by the Governor of the State of

38 Illinois or the Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, when it is
39 impossible for members to safely meet in person to carry out the business of the
40 Senate.

41 a. If the provisions of the Illinois Open Meetings Act requiring the physical
42 presence of a quorum have been suspended (5 ILCS 120/7(e)), the Senate
43 and its committees may meet electronically by video and/or audio
44 connections, provided that a quorum is present electronically. The provisions
45 of these *Bylaws*, Part F, Sections 6d and 6e must be followed. Votes shall be
46 taken in such manner that each member's vote is identified and recorded.

47 b. The Senate Executive Committee is authorized to act for and on behalf of the
48 Senate on urgent matters that require immediate attention, with the
49 stipulation that, before taking such action, the Senate Executive Committee
50 shall seek the advice of those senators who can be contacted. Any such
51 action taken by the Senate Executive Committee shall be reported to the
52 Senate at the next regular meeting of the Senate following such action.

UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND SENATE PROCEDURES

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