

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

SP.13.08 Revision to *Standing Rule 14*

BACKGROUND

In February 2011, the Urbana-Champaign Senate took up a proposal to clarify the process by which items of business are placed on the Senate's agenda. Based on provisions of *Bylaw A.3*, the Senate adopted *Standing Rule 14* to describe that process, to set deadlines for proposals to be submitted to the Office of the Senate, and to prescribe the form such proposals must take. Recent discussions have revisited the issues from 2011 and have also raised some questions about the extent of the Senate Executive Committee's latitude in setting the agenda.

Following an April 2013 request from the Senate Committee on General University Policy, the Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures reviewed *Standing Rule 14*, as well as committee reports and Senate minutes documenting the creation of the Senate Executive Committee and describing its authority. A summary of those documents is appended to this proposal. The text proposed below is intended to replace the existing language of *Standing Rule 14* in its entirety to clarify the process and its requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

The Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures recommends that the Senate adopt new text for *Standing Rule 14*. The proposed text follows the existing language.

CURRENT LANGUAGE

1 **Setting the Agenda for Senate Meetings**

- 2 A. To submit an item for inclusion on the agenda of a specific regular Senate meeting, as
3 required in the Senate Bylaws, Part A, paragraph 3, the proposing committee or senator must
4 provide notice of the proposed item to the Office of the Senate not later than 5:00 p.m. on the
5 business day prior to the meeting at which the Senate Executive Committee is scheduled to set
6 the agenda. Dates of these meetings shall appear on the published Senate calendar. Notice may
7 be made by delivery in paper form or by email to the Senate Office, received not later than the
8 above mentioned deadline, and must be sufficiently explicit to be used as the basis for listing the
9 item on the Senate agenda. It is preferable, though not required, that the complete proposal be

10 submitted at this time. It is required that the complete proposal be submitted to the Office of the
11 Senate not later than 12:00 noon on the day on which the Senate packet is to be distributed. If the
12 complete proposal is not submitted by this deadline, the item shall be deleted from the Senate
13 agenda, unless the Senate Executive Committee has provided otherwise. Packet distribution
14 dates for regular Senate meetings shall appear on the published Senate calendar.

15 B. Any item meeting the requirements of A above shall be placed on the agenda of the indicated
16 meeting by the Senate Executive Committee. This Committee shall arrange the items on the
17 agenda as seems most suited to the efficient organization of the Senate's business. In the event
18 that, in the opinion of the Senate Executive Committee, too much business has been proposed for
19 the agenda of a regular Senate meeting, except for the last meeting of the academic year, the
20 Committee may postpone one or more items of business for not more than one meeting.

21 **PROPOSED LANGUAGE**

22 **Setting the Agenda for Senate Meetings**

23 A. Under the Senate By-Laws, the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) is responsible for
24 preparing the agenda for Senate meetings.

25 B. Any Senator or Senate Committee may submit an item for inclusion on the agenda of a
26 specific regular Senate meeting.

27 C. To place an item on the Senate agenda, any Senator or Senate Committee must provide
28 written notice of the proposed item – on paper or electronically – to the Office of the Senate no
29 later than 5:00 pm on the business day prior to the SEC meeting during which the agenda is set.
30 The published Senate calendar shall include the dates of these SEC meetings.

- 31 1. Senate Committees must submit written notice of items of business for the agenda that
32 are sufficiently explicit to describe an agenda item.
- 33 2. Individual Senators proposing items of business for the agenda must submit them in
34 complete draft form.
- 35 D. The SEC may postpone any item of business for not more than one Senate meeting. No item
36 may be postponed beyond the last meeting of the academic year. It may also refer the item to a
37 Senate Committee for further discussion; such a referral shall not further postpone the item being
38 placed on the Senate’s agenda, except by consent of the sponsor. If the item is postponed, the
39 SEC must provide the sponsor with a rationale for the postponement, and, where appropriate,
40 suggestions for revision.
- 41 E. In all cases, Senators and Senate Committees must submit complete final forms of their items
42 of business to the Office of the Senate no later than noon on the day on which the Senate packets
43 are distributed. If the complete final proposal is not submitted by this deadline, the item shall be
44 deleted from the Senate agenda, unless the SEC has provided otherwise. The published Senate
45 calendar shall include the dates for packet distribution for regular Senate meetings.
- 46 F. Nothing in this Standing Rule precludes any individual Senator from submitting proposals to
47 the SEC for its discussion and advice at any time, provided that all items submitted for inclusion
48 on the Senate agenda must follow this Standing Rule’s requirements on deadlines and form of
49 submission.

UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND SENATE
PROCEDURES
William Maher, Chair
Jennifer Baldwin
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Wendy Harris
Scott Jacobs

Calvin Lear
Anna-Maria Marshall
Mark Roszkowski
Sandy Jones, *Ex officio* (designee)
Jenny Roether, *Ex officio*
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APPENDIX

The Senate Executive Committee's predecessor, the Senate Council, was first created in September 1968 and "given authority to supervise the agenda of the Senate meeting and to coordinate the work of Senate Committees." (*Guide to the Urbana-Champaign Senate*, February 10, 1969.) This action was based on the prior report of the Senate Committee on the University Statutes and Senate Procedures (USSP) that stated: "A continuing concern of this committee has been the lack of coordination of Senate activities." The Council's "tasks would be to present the views of the faculty to the administration, to integrate and coordinate faculty activities through Senate committees, to evaluate the roles of existing committees, to act as an agenda committee, and to perform such other duties as the Senate may specify." (USSP Report U-C 6-68-14, included in Senate Minutes, September 3, 1968.)

The Council's role in regard to the agenda was clearly understood to be one of coordination and scheduling: "The Senate Council has been authorized to supervise the agenda, but if it does not act the Clerk prepares the agenda in the standard order listed above. . . Individual Senators who wish to bring matters before the Senate may do so directly from the floor." (*Guide to the Urbana-Champaign Senate*, February 10, 1969, p. 8.) The context of the *Guide* text reflects the rationale for Council's involvement as one of being able to make sure that notification of such matters could occur in advance so that materials could be distributed before meetings.

In a November 10, 1969 report, USSP noted that as of that time, the Senate had no Bylaws, and in putting forward proposed provisions regarding the introduction of New Business, USSP noted: "At present, any idea of new business can be raised by any member of the Senate either by requesting Professor Charles Wert as chairman of the Senate Council, or the Clerk of the Senate, Dr. Charles Warwick, to include the item in the printed agenda sent out with the Senate mailing, or by rising in the Senate at the time that new business is called for."

The Senate Council role and scope of responsibility for the agenda remained virtually the same with the 1970 reconstitution of the Senate. The *Bylaws* for the new Senate, approved November 9, 1970 stated in B.1: "The function of the Senate Council shall be to coordinate the activities of the Senate committees, to evaluate the functions of these committees, to supervise the agenda for Senate meetings, and to perform such other duties as the Senate may specify." *Bylaw* B.3 read: "Items of business submitted to the Senate Council by any Senator shall be placed on the agenda, provided that such items are submitted prior to preparation and distribution of the agenda." Except for the addition, sometime between 1970 and 1978, of the words "in writing" between "submitted" and "prior," as well as some differences in paragraph numbering, these provisions remained the same in the June 1978 *Bylaws* and today.¹

Following comments from Chancellor W. P. Gerberding and Vice-Chancellor Morton Weir about the Senate's lack of prestige and its need to reconstitute itself into separate faculty and student senates, an Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty and Student Participation in University

¹Bylaw B.3 currently states: "Items of business submitted to the Senate Council by any senator or Senate committee shall be placed on the agenda, provided that such items are submitted in writing prior to preparation and distribution of the agenda."

Governance was established in November, 1979. Its 28-page report of January, 1981 (XGV.81.1) contained broad ranging insights and suggestions for changes. Interestingly, the Ad Hoc Committee's commentary noted many of the issues that still haunt the Senate today. In regard to the Council, it noted: "In addition to continuing to set the agenda for Senate meetings, the Executive Council will also be charged with initiating and shaping the work of the Senate." (3.21, p. 14). Its reasoning was that the

...Council should not merely respond to problems that have already arisen, but should help the Senate undertake the study of long range problems and itself take a formative role in determining in which direction the University should go. If the Senate is to be the responsible organization in shaping the policies of this University, it is crucial that the...Council be an initiator in suggesting to the Senate problems that should be studied.... Only if faculty become involved at the early stages of problem solving will they be able to have a truly effective role in shaping university policy.

Although the report covered many issues and contained many suggestions later discussed by Council and the full Senate, only a limited number were moved forward for implementation. Relating to the Council's role, on April 11, 1983, the Senate approved revisions to the *Bylaws* to add the words "initiate and guide the work of the Senate" as the first item on the list of the Council's duties. Notably, these documents did not prescribe any changes in the way that the Council should treat member-initiated agenda items. Thus, in the absence of any historical or legislative record regarding member-initiated business, the language authorizing the Council to "initiate and guide" the work of the Senate was limited to identifying important issues for Senate consideration. It did not extend the scope of authority of the Council to exercise any additional discretion or control over the agenda.

The Senate Council was retitled as the "Senate Executive Committee" in December 2001. This change grew out of a recommendation made by the Fifth Senate Review Commission which had stated ". . . the current title of 'Senate Council' should be changed to 'Senate Executive Committee.' The change in title more closely reflects the function of the committee and is also in keeping with titles used by other CIC and University of Illinois campuses." USSP researched the titles at other CIC institutions and determined that there was not a consistency among such titles. Instead, USSP noted that other areas on campus (colleges, departments, etc.) typically referred to their top committee as the "executive" committee and this reasoning would support the change from Senate Council to Senate Executive Committee.