

University of Illinois
UNIVERSITY SENATES CONFERENCE

Bylaws

Approved April 21, 2015

Based on the framework of *Robert's Rules of Order* and actions taken by the Conference, these *Bylaws* outline the operating rules and authority for the University Senates Conference. The Conference draws its authority from the University of Illinois *Statutes*, and *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, which supersede any provision herein in case of conflict. As a cross-senate body, the Conference also derives authority from its relationship with the campus senates, who elect its members.

1 NAME

- 1.1 As authorized by the *Statutes*, Article II, Section 2 b, this body shall be known as the University Senates Conference.

2 OBJECT AND FUNCTIONS

- 2.1 OBJECT: The Conference advises the President and, through the President, the Board of Trustees, on matters of university-wide concern, coordinates actions of the campus senates, and facilitates communication among the senates.

2.2 FUNCTIONS

2.2.1 Advice:

- 2.2.1.1 The USC advises, or may authorize its executive committee to advise, the Board of Trustees (through the president), other administrative officials, and the senates on matters of university-wide concern. It is a special concern of its executive committee to aid in maintaining harmonious relations among such officers and the units of the University.
- 2.2.1.2 The USC advises the president concerning changes in *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*.
- 2.2.1.3 The USC advises the Board of Trustees on proposed changes to the *Statutes*.
- 2.2.1.4 The USC advises the president on the appointment of the university officers.
- 2.2.1.5 The USC may comment on certain senate actions.
- 2.2.1.6 The USC advises on the proposed transfer of any line of work from one campus to another.
- 2.2.1.7 The USC advises on the creation of new units.
- 2.2.1.8 The USC advises on the establishment of procedures for a new campus.
- 2.2.1.9 The USC advises on changes in academic organization, including unit termination.

2.2.2 Transmission:

- 2.2.2.1 The USC reviews and classifies all senate actions and transmits certain actions to appropriate university officials or groups.
- 2.2.2.2 Items of policy affecting one campus only are transmitted to the Board of Trustees. These items are classified "I" in USC minutes.
- 2.2.2.3 Items affecting more than one campus are transmitted to the other campus if not yet approved there, then to the Board of Trustees. These items are classified "II" in USC minutes.
- 2.2.2.4 A senate proposal for a change in the Statutes is transmitted to the other senates if not yet approved there, then to the Board of Trustees. These items are classified "III" in USC minutes.
- 2.2.2.5 A proposal of the Board of Trustees for a change in the Statutes is transmitted to the senates. These items are also classified "III" in USC minutes.
- 2.2.2.6 The Conference will inform the Senates of approved amendments to the General Rules.
- 2.2.2.7 The USC may refer certain senate actions to appropriate university bodies.

2.2.3 Coordination. The USC coordinates among university officials and the senates.

- 2.2.3.1 The USC aids in maintaining harmonious relations among the president, other administrative officials, and the several senates on matters of university-wide concern.
- 2.2.3.2 The USC assists the senates to communicate with each other.
- 2.2.3.3 The USC seeks to promote agreement or consistency among the senates.

3 MEMBERS

- 3.1 The University Senates Conference shall comprise twenty members. The basic representation shall be two members from each senate. Additional members shall be apportioned to each senate, at least one from each senate, in numbers proportional to the number of faculty members on each campus.
- 3.2 The Conference Secretary shall recalculate the apportionment every five years. Each senate shall elect its own representatives from its membership.
- 3.3 The term of office shall be three years beginning on the first day of the academic year following the election. Approximately one-third of the Conference members from each senate shall be elected annually.
- 3.4 Senators whose senatorial terms expire before their Conference terms expire shall complete their Conference terms.

- 3.5 Any faculty senator or faculty senator-elect shall be eligible for election to the Conference.
- 3.6 Each senate is encouraged to elect the chair of its senate executive committee, or other primary senate leader, among its representatives to the USC. If not elected, they may attend USC as non-voting *ex officio* members at their senate's expense.

4 OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS

- 4.1 The Conference officers shall be a chair and a vice chair, who shall be elected for one year terms by and from the Conference. The Conference Chair guides and coordinates the work of the Conference, and serves as its official spokesperson. In consultation with the Conference executive committee, the Chair sets the agenda for each Conference meeting. The Vice-Chair performs such duties as may be assigned by the chair, and represents the Conference in the absence of the Chair.
- 4.2 Executive Committee. The executive committee of the Conference shall consist of two members from each senate: the Conference chair, the Conference vice chair, and four additional members elected annually by and from the Conference. The Conference authorizes the Executive Committee to act on behalf of the Conference between scheduled meetings after individual consultation with as many members of the Conference as possible. It is a special concern of the Conference executive committee to aid in maintaining harmonious relations among the University officers and the units of the University.
- 4.3 Nominations and Elections
 - 4.3.1 The Chair of the University Senates Conference will appoint a three person Nominating Committee to be announced no later than the third from the last meeting of the academic year, including summer session. Each senate shall be represented on the Nominating Committee. The Chair of the Nominating Committee, to be designated by the USC Chair, shall be a continuing member of the Conference.
 - 4.3.2 The Nominating Committee will present a slate of nominees for Chair, Vice Chair, and Executive Committee to the Conference as soon as possible after the Conference has been informed of the results of annual senate elections to the Conference. In developing the slate, the Committee will contact each member of the sitting Executive Committee and as many other members as possible for suggestions and advice, and will determine in advance the willingness of all nominees to serve if elected.
 - 4.3.3 Nominees for Chair, Vice Chair, and at least one member of the Executive Committee from each campus will be persons who have served as members of the Conference in the current year. The Chair and Vice Chair, who shall be elected for one-year terms, shall not be from the same senate. The Chair shall not be from the same senate in two consecutive years.

- 4.3.4 The Nominating Committee is also responsible for preparing a slate of nominees for the Conference's standing committees, as specified in Article 6 below.
- 4.3.5 At the organizational meeting, the outgoing Chair will preside and call for nominations from the floor in addition to the Nominating Committee's slate. The election for contested offices will be by secret ballot provided by the secretary of the Conference.
- 4.3.6 In the election at the organizational meeting, only members for the following year who are present may vote. The Conference may authorize members who attend by telephone or videoconference to vote, subject to provisions of the Illinois Open Meetings Act.
- 4.3.7. As soon as possible after the election, the outgoing Chair will inform the President, the Secretary of the Board of Trustees, the campus senate offices, and the members of the Conference of the newly elected officers.

5 MEETINGS

- 5.1 Ten regular meetings will be held per year, with additional meetings as needed. All guests and visitors shall be introduced at the time of their arrival, and their presence recorded in the minutes. Minutes will be taken by the USC secretary, approved by the USC, and deposited in the University Archives.
- 5.2 Quorum. A quorum for Conference meetings shall consist of a physically present simple majority of the total membership of the Conference.
- 5.3 At any open meeting at which a quorum is physically present, Conference members unable to be physically attend may attend and vote by other means.
- 5.4 Meetings of the Conference shall ordinarily be open to the public. Accredited representatives of the news media may observe Conference meetings. The Conference reserves the right to close its sessions where the matters being considered fit within one of the specific exemptions stated in the Open Meetings Act [5 ILCS 120/2(c)]. The specific exemption must be cited before closing a session.

6 COMMITTEES

6.1. Standing Committee Membership

(a) Membership in the standing committees will be determined by election by the Conference following the Nominating Committee's preparation of a slate of members. The Nominating Committee will prepare the slate so as to apportion the representatives of each Senate among the standing committees as evenly as possible. Floor nominations will be requested prior to the full Conference's election of the final slate.

(b) Members will be elected for two-year terms, staggered to insure overlap and continuity within the standing committees over time. Changes to standing committee assignments of any member before the term is over may be made upon the approval of the Conference.

(c) Each standing committee will elect its own chair

(d) The USC Chair will not normally serve as a regular member of any standing committee, but is encouraged to attend the meetings of any of the committees in order to keep apprised of their activities. The USC Chair is not eligible to serve as chair of any of the standing committees.

6.2 Standing Committee Relations with Board and University Officers

(a) The Chair or another representative member of each standing committee should attend the meetings of its parallel committee of the Board of Trustees and report to the rest of the Conference on those meetings.

(b) The Chair of each standing committee should invite University Officers whose duties are relevant to the committee charge to meet with the committee at least once a year.

6.3. Standing Committee Charges

(a) Statutes and Governance Committee

The Statutes and Governance Committee reviews amendments to the *General Rules* and amendments to *Statutes* as approved by the senates. Where versions forwarded by the senates differ, the Committee is charged with proposing compromise language to the USC. The committee also may draft similar documents or amendments for consideration by the USC. In addition, this committee will consider more general governance issues, particularly those concerning the relation of the Conference to the President and the Board of Trustees, and the relations of the Conference to the respective campus senates.

(b) Academic Affairs and Research Committee

The Academic Affairs and Research Committee reviews policies related to academic and research issues that cross the campuses such as, for example, cross-campus transferability of credit or proposals for collaboration across the campuses.

(c) Finance, Budget and Benefits Committee

The Finance, Budget and Benefits Committee reviews the University Administration budget in order to assist the University Senates Conference in advising the President on University Administration budget priorities and policies. This committee also

promotes the faculty role in overseeing University policies on faculty employment and benefits.

(d) Hospital and Health Affairs Committee

The Hospital and Health Affairs Committee reviews any proposals pertaining to the University of Illinois Medical Center or university medical programs operating in other locations.

6.4. *Ad Hoc* Committees

The Conference shall charge such *ad hoc* committees as it deems necessary for clearly defined purposes of a temporary nature.

7 PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Conference in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order the Conference may adopt.

8 AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

- 8.1 Any member of the Conference may propose an amendment to these *Bylaws*, except that no amendment may conflict with the *University of Illinois Statutes* or the *University of Illinois General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*.
- 8.2 Proposed amendments must include a brief written rationale for the proposal, and must clearly show both the original wording and text that is proposed for addition, deletion, or revision.
- 8.3 Proposed amendments must be distributed in writing to the full Conference at least three calendar weeks before the meeting at which the vote on adoption will be taken. No proposed amendment shall be adopted without the approval of at least two-thirds of those voting, a quorum being present.
- 8.4 The Conference will promptly inform the President and each of the senates of any amendments made to these Bylaws.

ADDENDUM: FUNCTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATES CONFERENCE
According to the University of Illinois *Statutes and General Rules Concerning University
Organization and Procedure*

To clarify the meaning and method of the execution of the Conferences Functions (i.e., Bylaws Sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2, and 2.2.3), and their several sub-sections, this addendum provides quotations of the relevant authorizing language from the Statutes or the *General Rules*. To ensure currency of this document, the Secretary of the Conference is authorized and directed to update the Addendum when any of the material quoted from the *Statutes* or *General Rules* is amended.

The Conference functions as an advisory, a transmitting, and a coordinating body. For purposes of simplification, the functions of the USC are presented here under the headings “Advice,” “Transmission,” and “Coordination.” Not all functions fit conveniently into one of the three categories. For example, some USC responsibilities are both advisory and coordinative.

A. Advice

1. The USC advises the president concerning changes in *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure* [Statutes, Article I, Section 6].

“*The General Rules* supplement the *Statutes*. *The General Rules* are subordinate to the *Statutes* and deal with administrative organization, with the powers, duties, and responsibilities of officers of the University, and with university employment policies, property, and other matters. *The General Rules* are adopted by the Board of Trustees acting on the advice of the president of the University. The board reserves the right to make changes in *The General Rules* after consultation with the president. Before providing such advice or consultation, the president shall consult with the University Senates Conference, with due regard for the provisions of Article XII, Section 5. However, consultation with the Conference is not required when because of exceptional circumstances a proposed action of the Board of Trustees would authorize a deviation from *The General Rules* for a specific transaction.”

[Statutes, Article XII, Section 5.]

“*The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure* shall contain rules and regulations governing patents, copyrightable works, recordings, sponsored periodicals, and the acceptance of contracts, gifts, and grants for research, and the procedures to be followed.

Proposed changes in *The General Rules* related to patents, copyrightable works, or recordings shall be sent to the University Senates Conference which shall move as expeditiously as practicable and, if necessary, reconcile the views of

the senates and advise the president and through the president the Board of Trustees before such a rule change is adopted.”

[*The General Rules*, Article VII, second paragraph.]

“The *General Rules* are adopted by the Board of Trustees acting on the advice of the president of the University. The board may make changes in the *General Rules* after consultation with the president of the University. Before providing such advice or consultation, the president shall consult with the University Senates Conference, which shall give due regard to the provisions of Article XII, Section 5 of the University of Illinois *Statutes*. However, consultation with the Conference is not required when because of exceptional circumstances a proposed action of the Board of Trustees would authorize a deviation from the *General Rules* for a specific transaction.”

2. The USC advises the Board of Trustees on proposed changes to the *Statutes* initiated by the board [*Statutes*, Article XIII, Section 8b].

“The Board of Trustees may initiate proposals to amend the *Statutes*, but the board shall not finally adopt any such proposal without first seeking the advice of the president, the senates, and the University Senates Conference. Any proposal to amend the *Statutes* which is initiated by the Board of Trustees shall be transmitted through the president to the University Senates Conference and transmitted by the Conference, with its recommendations, to the senates for consideration and advice. The proposed amendment shall be placed promptly on the agenda of each of the senates. If the senates do not agree in their advice concerning the proposed amendment, the Conference shall endeavor to promote agreement; where agreement cannot be achieved within a reasonable period of time, the Conference shall send the advice of the senates and its own recommendations to the president for transmission to the Board of Trustees and shall simultaneously notify the senates of its action. A senate may record and send its further comments to the president for transmission to the Board of Trustees.”

3. The USC advises the president on the appointment of the university officers [*Statutes*, Article I, Section 3].

“The university officers are identified in *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*. Prior to recommending to the Board of Trustees the initial appointment of any university officer except the president and the chancellors the president shall seek the advice of the University Senates Conference. On the occasion of the reappointment of any university officer, the University Senates Conference may submit its advice if it so elects.”

[*General Rules*, Article I, Section 2(b).]

“In addition to the president, the University officers are the vice presidents, including the vice president for academic affairs, the vice president/chief financial officer, the vice president for research, the vice president for health affairs, the vice presidents/chancellors, the university counsel, the secretary of the University, all of whom report directly to the president, and such additional administrative officers as shall be designated by the president after consultation with the University Senates Conference. Prior to recommending to the Board of Trustees the initial appointment of any university officer except for the president and the vice presidents/chancellors, the president shall seek the advice of the University Senates Conference. On the occasion of the reappointment of any University officer, the University Senates Conference may submit its advice if it so elects.

4. The USC advises on matters of university-wide concern [*Statutes*, Article II, Section 2c].

“The Conference may act and may authorize its executive committee to act as an advisory group to the Board of Trustees (through the president), the president, other administrative officials, and the several senates on matters of university-wide concern. It shall be a special concern of the Conference executive committee to aid in maintaining harmonious relations among such officers and the units of the University.

5. The USC may comment on certain senate actions [*Statutes*, Article II, Section 2b].

“The University Senates Conference shall review all matters acted upon by each senate. The Conference shall determine whether senate actions requiring implementation or further consideration by officials or other groups within the University have been referred to the appropriate officials or groups. The Conference itself may make any original or additional referral it deems advisable, and may append its comments and recommendations. ...”

[*Statutes*, Article XIII, Section 8a, first paragraph.]

“... The proposed amendment [to the *Statutes*] shall be referred to the University Senates Conference for its consideration and transmission to the other senates for action; the Conference may append its comments and recommendations.”

6. The USC advises on the proposed transfer of any line of work from one campus to another [*Statutes*, Article III, Section 1c].

“The transfer of any line of work or any part thereof from one campus to another shall be made on the recommendation of the senates and chancellors of the campuses involved, the University Senates Conference and the president upon approval by the Board of Trustees.”

7. The USC advises on the creation of new units [*Statutes*, Article VIII, Section 1].

“a. *Departments*. The formation of a new department or similar academic unit within a school or college may be proposed by the faculty or executive officer of that school or college. The president shall submit the proposal for the new unit together with the advice of the faculty of the school or college of each higher unit, of the appropriate senate and chancellor and of the University Senates Conference to the Board of Trustees for action.

b. *Intermediate Units*. An academic unit of intermediate character, such as a school organized within a college, may be proposed by the faculty or the executive officer of the higher unit. The president shall submit the proposal for the intermediate unit together with the advice of the higher unit, of the appropriate senate and chancellor, and of the University Senates Conference to the Board of Trustees for action.

c. *Colleges and Independently Organized Campus Units*. A college or other independently organized campus unit, such as a school, institute, center, or similar campus unit not within a school or college, may be proposed by the appropriate senate or chancellor. The president shall submit the proposal for the unit together with the advice of the senate and chancellor and the University Senates Conference to the Board of Trustees for action.

d. *Units Organized at the University Level*. Units organized at the university level, such as institutes, councils and divisions, may be formed for the development and operation of teaching, research, extension, and service programs which are statewide or intercampus in their scope and which cannot be developed under a campus administration. Such an organization may be proposed by a senate, a chancellor, the University Senates Conference, or the president. The president shall submit the proposal for the new organization together with the advice of the senates and chancellors and the University Senates Conference to the Board of Trustees for action.

e. *Campuses*. The formation of a new campus may be proposed by the president, by a senate, or by the University Senates Conference. The president shall submit the proposal for the new campus together with the advice of the senates and chancellors and the University Senates Conference to the Board of Trustees for action. If the proposal is adopted, the University Senates Conference shall serve as an advisory body to the president in developing procedures to implement the action of the board.”

8. The USC advises on the establishment procedures for a new campus (see 7e above).
9. The USC advises on changes in academic organization, including unit termination [*Statutes*, Article VIII, Section 2].

“From time to time, circumstances will favor changes in academic organization such as the termination, separation, transfer, merger, change in status (e.g., department to school), or renaming of the academic units specified in Section 1. The procedures for the various changes shall be the same as those specified for formation of such a unit, except that the proposal may originate in the unit(s) or at any higher administrative level. The advice of each unit involved shall be requested. For transfer, merger, separation, and change in status, the procedures shall be those applicable to the type of unit which would result. ...”

B. Transmission

1. The USC reviews all senate actions and transmits certain actions to appropriate university officials or groups.

a. Items of policy affecting one campus only are transmitted to the Board of Trustees [*Statutes*, Article II, Section 1b]. These items are classified "I" in USC minutes.

“Each senate may exercise legislative functions in matters of educational policy affecting the University as a whole or its own campus only. No such senate action shall take effect until it has been submitted to the University Senates Conference as provided in Article II, Section 2, and either approved by the Board of Trustees itself or approved in a manner agreed to by the board.”

b. Items affecting more than one campus are transmitted to the other campus if not yet approved there, then to the Board of Trustees [*Statutes*, Article II, Section 2b, first paragraph]. These items are classified "II" in USC minutes.

“... Should the Conference find a matter acted upon by one of the senates to be of concern to another senate, it shall refer the matter and the action to that senate. ...”

c. A senate proposal for a change in the *Statutes* is transmitted to the other senates if not yet approved there, then to the Board of Trustees [*Statutes*, Article II, Section 1f]. These items are classified "III" in USC minutes.

“Each senate may propose amendments to these *Statutes* through the University Senates Conference to the president and the Board of Trustees as provided in Article XIII, Section 8.”

[*Statutes*, Article XIII, Section 8a, first and second paragraphs.]

“Initiation by a Senate. ... The proposed amendment shall be referred to the University Senates Conference for its consideration and transmission to the other senates for action; the Conference may append its comments and recommendations.

... If every senate acts affirmatively on the proposed amendment and concurs as to its text, the Conference shall send the proposed amendment to the president for transmission to the Board of Trustees and shall simultaneously notify the senates of its action; the Conference may append its comments. ...”

- d.** A proposal of the Board of Trustees for a change in the *Statutes* is transmitted to the senates [*Statutes*, Article XIII, Section 8b]. These items are also classified "III" in USC minutes.

*“Any proposal to amend the *Statutes* which is initiated by the Board of Trustees shall be transmitted through the president to the University Senates Conference and transmitted by the Conference, with its recommendations, to the senates for consideration and advice.”*

- e. The Conference will inform the Senates of approved amendments to the *General Rules*.

- 2. The USC may make referrals of certain senate actions [*Statutes*, Article II, Section 2b, first paragraph].

“The University Senates Conference shall review all matters acted upon by each senate. The Conference shall determine whether senate actions requiring implementation or further consideration by officials or other groups within the University have been referred to the appropriate officials or groups. The Conference itself may make any original or additional referral it deems advisable, and may append its comments and recommendations. ...”

C. Coordination

- 1. The USC aids in maintaining harmonious relations [*Statutes*, Article II, Section 2c].

“The Conference may act and may authorize its executive committee to act as an advisory group to the Board of Trustees (through the president), the president, other administrative officials, and the several senates on matters of university-wide concern. It shall be a special concern of the Conference executive committee to aid in maintaining harmonious relations among such officers and the units of the University.”

- 2. The USC assists the senates to communicate with each other [*Statutes*, Article II, Section 2b, second paragraph].

“The University Senates Conference shall assist the senates to communicate with one another, with university and campus administrative officials, and with the Board of Trustees (through the president), and may develop and implement procedures to enhance such communication.”

3. The USC seeks to promote agreement or consistency between the senates [*Statutes*, Article II, Section 2b, first paragraph].

“... If two or more senates have acted differently on a subject, the Conference shall attempt to promote agreement or consistency. Where agreement or consistency cannot be effected within a reasonable period of time, the Conference shall transmit the related actions of the senates together with its own recommendations to the appropriate officials or groups within the University and shall simultaneously notify the secretary of each senate of its action. Any senate may record and transmit its further comments to the same addressees and to the Conference.”

[*Statutes*, Article XIII, Section 8a, second paragraph.]

“... If the senates do not agree as to the proposed amendment, the Conference shall endeavor to promote agreement of the senates. Where agreement cannot be effected among all senates within a reasonable period of time, but the text of a proposed amendment has been agreed upon by all but one of the senates, the Conference shall send that proposed amendment, the recommendations of the dissenting senate, and its own recommendations to the president for transmission to the Board of Trustees and shall simultaneously notify the senates of its action. A senate may record and send its further comments to the president for transmission to the Board of Trustees.”

[*Statutes*, Article XIII, Section 8b.]

“... If the senates do not agree in their advice concerning the proposed amendment [an amendment to the *Statutes* originally proposed by the Board of Trustees], the Conference shall endeavor to promote agreement; where agreement cannot be achieved within a reasonable period of time, the Conference shall send the advice of the senates and its own recommendations to the president for transmission to the Board of Trustees and shall simultaneously notify the senates of its action. A senate may record and send its further comments to the president for transmission to the Board of Trustees.”

4. The USC helps keep track of certain senate actions [*Statutes*, Article II, Section 2b].

“The University Senates Conference shall review all matters acted upon by each senate. The Conference shall determine whether senate actions requiring implementation or further consideration by officials or other groups within the University have been referred to the appropriate officials or groups. ...”