

**University Council
Resolution to Revise the University Council Bylaws
UC Resolution 2023-24A**

University Council Cabinet	November 27, 2023
AP Faculty Senate Review & Comment	
Staff Seante Review & Comment	December 14, 2023
Faculty Senate Review & Comment	February 8, 2024
Undergraduate Student Senate Review & Comment	
Graduate & Professional Student Senate Review & Comment	
First Reading, University Council	February 5, 2023
Approved, University Council	
Approved, President	
Effective Date	Upon Approval

WHEREAS, based on a three-year review by the President’s Committee on Governance, a restructuring of the university’s system of shared governance was codified in a new University Council Constitution and Bylaws, which was approved by University Council (UC Resolution 2021-22A) on March 21, 2022, and subsequently by the Board of Visitors on June 7, 2022, and became effective at the beginning of the 2022-23 academic year; and

WHEREAS, that resolution mandated a review of the new system of shared governance after the first and second years of implementation; and

WHEREAS, based on observations and experience during the first year of implementation, the attached set of recommendations is proposed to amend the University Council Bylaws, which will be followed by recommendations to amend the University Council Constitution; and

WHEREAS, amendments to the University Council Bylaws require an affirmative vote of a majority of the University Council members and approval by the president of the university;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that University Council Bylaws be revised as outlined in the attached document, to become effective upon final approval by the president of the university.

Proposed Changes to University Council Bylaws

Article I. Meetings of University Council, Paragraph 1

Existing:

1. Regular meetings of the University Council shall be held on the first and third Mondays of each month from the opening of the Fall Semester until the end of the academic year in May. The chair may cancel or postpone regular meetings for cause.

Reason/rationale: Other university events, such as spring break or BOV meetings, sometimes fall on the first or third Monday. Flexibility is needed to schedule UC meetings on alternative Mondays to avoid delays in the approval of resolutions coming to UC.

Proposed:

1. Regular meetings of the University Council ~~shall typically will~~ be held on the first and third Mondays of each month from the opening of the Fall Semester until the end of the academic year in May. ~~The chair may cancel or postpone regular meetings for cause.~~ Regular meetings may be canceled or postponed for cause when deemed appropriate by the chair.

Article I. Meetings of University Council, Paragraph 6 (and for all other occurrences of “fifty percent plus one”)

Existing:

6. Quorum is defined as fifty percent plus one of the total membership of the University Council, excluding non-voting members and vacant positions. A quorum must be present at the actual time of any vote. In the absence of a quorum, a meeting can be held but no votes taken or decisions reached. This definition of a quorum will be applied to all bodies within the Virginia Tech system of shared governance.

Reason/rationale: Simple majority is more commonly used and the default in Robert’s Rules of Order.

Proposed:

6. Quorum is defined as ~~fifty percent plus one~~ simple majority of the total membership of the University Council, excluding non-voting members and vacant positions. A quorum must be present at the actual time of any vote. In the absence of a quorum, a meeting can be held but no votes taken or decisions reached. This definition of a quorum will be applied to all bodies within the Virginia Tech system of shared governance.

Article II. Meetings of the University Council Cabinet

Existing:

1. Regular meetings of the University Council Cabinet shall be held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month from the opening of the Fall Semester until the end of the academic year in May. The chair may cancel or postpone regular meetings for cause.

Reason/rationale: Refer back to the proposed change to Article I, Paragraph 1. If variance from the first and third Mondays for UC meetings is permitted, similar flexibility is needed in the scheduling of UC Cabinet meetings to avoid delays in bringing matters forward to University Council. Similarly, the ability for UC Cabinet to conduct electronic votes can reduce delays in the resolution approval process.

Proposed:

1. Regular meetings of the University Council Cabinet ~~shall typically will~~ be held ~~on the second and fourth Mondays of each month~~ one week prior to University Council meetings from the opening of the Fall Semester until the end of the academic year in May. ~~The chair may cancel or postpone regular meetings for cause.~~ Regular meetings may be canceled or postponed for cause when deemed appropriate by one of the co-chairs.
- ~~1.2.~~ The University Council Cabinet may conduct electronic votes when deemed appropriate by one of the co-chairs.

Article III. Policy Review and Recommendation Process, Section 1. Overview

Existing:

Section 1. Overview

“ . . . All resolutions will follow the formatting template provided by the Office of Vice President for Policy and Governance.”

Reason/rationale: To specify that the official resolution proposal template should also be used. Also see the proposed change to Article III, Section 2 below.

Proposed:

Section 1. Overview

“ . . . All resolutions and resolution proposals will follow the formatting templates provided by the Office of the Vice President for Policy and Governance.”

Article III. Policy Review and Recommendation Process, Section 2. Communication

Existing:

Section 2. Communication

The secretary of the University Council will notify senate presidents and the University Council Cabinet three times about the status of all resolutions: the “Draft Notice” after a resolution has been drafted and uploaded; the “First Reading Notice” after a resolution has been revised based on the commission discussion at first reading; and the “Second Reading Notice” after a resolution has been approved or disapproved by the commission. For resolutions from Senate Commissions, a fourth notice, the “Senate Vote Notice,” will be sent to the presidents of the other senates and members of the University Council Cabinet to inform them of the result of the vote. Commission chairs should try to schedule two weeks between the “Draft Notice” and the first reading of a resolution.

Reason/rationale: To simplify terminology so that it more accurately describes the stage in the approval process for a resolution. Also see the proposed change to Article III, Section 3 below.

Proposed:

Section 2. Communication

A “Resolution Proposal” is a one-page executive summary of a potential resolution. A Resolution Proposal is submitted to the secretary of University Council by the respective commission chair utilizing the template provided by the office of the Vice President for Policy and Governance. After a “Resolution Proposal” has been deemed appropriate to the commission charge by the University Council Cabinet, ~~the~~ the secretary of the University Council will notify senate presidents and the University Council Cabinet ~~three times~~ about the status of all resolutions: ~~the “Draft Notice” after~~ when a resolution has been drafted and uploaded for first reading by the commission; ~~the “First Reading Notice” after a resolution has been revised based on the commission discussion at first reading;~~ and the “Second Reading Notice” and after a resolution has been approved or disapproved by the commission (“Commission Action Notice.” For resolutions from Senate Commissions, ~~a fourth~~ an additional notice, the “Senate Vote Notice,” will be sent to the presidents of the other senates and members of the University Council Cabinet to inform them of the result of the vote. ~~Commission chairs should try to schedule two weeks between the “Draft Notice” and the first reading of a resolution.~~

Article III, Section 3. University Council Cabinet Evaluation . . .

Existing:

Section 3. University Council Cabinet Evaluation of Resolutions for Adherence to Commission Charges

Upon receipt of a “Draft Notice,” the University Council Cabinet will review each resolution for agreement with the appropriate commission charge. If the University Council Cabinet determines that a resolution does not fall within the purview of a commission, senate

leadership and/or commission chairs can present the resolution to the University Council to determine if the resolution is appropriate for the commission charge. A two-thirds affirmative vote of members of the Council present and voting, provided that a quorum has been reached, is required to reverse the decision of the University Council Cabinet.

Reason/rationale: Currently, it is necessary for a commission to draft an actual proposal for review by UC Cabinet before the Cabinet determines whether the matter fits within the scope of the respective commission. Because it is the role of the UC Cabinet to determine whether a resolution topic is within a commission's purview, but not to critique the actual resolution, it would expedite the process if the commission instead were required to submit to UC Cabinet a form (resolution proposal) that describes the concept for the resolution. Moreover, it would save considerable work on the part of the commission, which would not have to make the effort to draft an actual resolution if the UC Cabinet were to determine that the topic is not within the commission's purview. The commission/senate can still appeal a negative determination by UC Cabinet to the full University Council.

Proposed:

Section 3. University Council Cabinet Evaluation of Resolutions for Adherence to Commission Charges

Upon receipt of a "~~Draft Notice~~Resolution Proposal," the University Council Cabinet will review each resolution proposal for agreement with the appropriate commission charge. Typically, the University Council Cabinet will respond within two weeks. If the University Council Cabinet determines that a resolution proposal does not fall within the purview of a commission, senate leadership and/or commission chairs can present the resolution to the University Council to determine if the resolution is appropriate for the commission charge. A two-thirds affirmative vote of members of the Council present and voting, provided that a quorum has been reached, is required to reverse the decision of the University Council Cabinet.

Article III, Section 4. Policy Review Process, Paragraph a.

Existing:

- a. Once a resolution is ready for review by a commission, the commission chair shall upload the resolution into the shared governance workflow management system and notify the secretary of the University Council that they have done so.

Reason/rationale: Clarification of the process/work flow.

Proposed:

- a. After approval of the resolution proposal by University Council Cabinet~~Once a resolution is ready for review by a commission~~, the commission chair ~~shall~~may prepare and upload the draft resolution into the shared governance workflow management system. After uploading a draft resolution, the commission chair shall~~and~~ notify the secretary of the University Council that they have done so.

Article III, Section 4. Policy Review Process, New Paragraph g.

Reason/rationale: Under the former governance system, it was the commission (i.e., the commission chair or designee) that presented a resolution to University Council for first reading and second reading/vote. The new UC bylaws are silent on this issue. To avoid confusion, it is better to state explicitly in the UC bylaws the ongoing intent that it should still be the role of the commission to present a resolution (once it has been approved by the respective senate, if it is a senate commission) to University Council for first reading and second reading/vote.

Proposed:

g. Resolutions are presented to University Council by the respective commission chair or their designee.

Article III, Section 7. Senate Comments on Resolutions

Existing:

Section 7. Senate Comments on Resolutions

Senates have the right to issue recommendations on all resolutions, can offer comments as soon as the “Draft Notice” is received, and have until one week after a commission approves a resolution to submit recommendations. However, as a practical matter, only recommendations received after the “Draft” and “First Reading” notices are likely to impact commission discussions or the nature of the resolution.

Reason/rationale: To bring this section into alignment with the proposed change to Article III, Section 2 above.

Proposed:

Section 7. Senate Comments on Resolutions

Senates have the right to issue recommendations on all resolutions, and can offer comments or submit recommendations from the time a as soon as the “Draft Notice” is received draft resolution is uploaded to the shared governance workflow management system, and have until one week five business days after a commission approves a resolution to submit recommendations. However, as a practical matter, only recommendations received after the “Draft” and “First Reading” before the “Commission Action” notices are likely to impact commission discussions or the nature of the resolution.

Article VII. Commissions, Section G. Commission on Research

Existing:

G. Commission on Research (COR)

Membership:

- Chair will be elected by the Faculty Senate
- Senior vice president for research and innovation (advisor)
- One representative from the Office of the Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs
- Research and innovation senior associate vice president
- One dean selected by the Council of College Deans
- One department- or division-level administrative representative appointed by the president
- One representative of research-related interdisciplinary programs, groups, or centers appointed by the president
- One faculty representative from each of the university's thematic research institutes appointed by the respective institute director
- One faculty representative of the university's research investment institutes, collectively appointed by the respective institute directors
- Two faculty senators elected by the Faculty Senate (including the chair)
- One faculty representative from each of the academic colleges elected by the faculty in each of the colleges
- One representative from and elected by the Library Faculty Association
- One non-*ex officio* A/P faculty representative elected by the A/P Faculty Senate
- One representative in the postdoctoral associate rank elected by persons in that rank**
- Two representatives working in research faculty appointments as defined in the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook (excluding postdoctoral associates) elected by persons in those ranks**
- One staff senator elected by the Staff Senate
- Two graduate and professional student senators elected by the Graduate and Professional Student Senate
- One undergraduate student senator elected by the Undergraduate Student Senate

**The nomination and election process for these positions will be conducted by the Office of Research and Innovation, which will report election results to the secretary of University Council.

Reason/rationale: The addition of the Associate Vice President for Advanced Research Computing as an ex officio (by virtue of position) voting member was requested by the commission because of the relevance of that role to the commission's work. Currently, the incumbent attends COR meetings in an unofficial capacity.

Proposed:

G. Commission on Research (COR)

Membership:

- Chair will be elected by the Faculty Senate

- Senior vice president for research and innovation (advisor)
- One representative from the Office of the Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs
- Research and innovation senior associate vice president
- Associate Vice President for Advanced Research Computing
- One dean selected by the Council of College Deans
- One department- or division-level administrative representative appointed by the president
- One representative of research-related interdisciplinary programs, groups, or centers appointed by the president
- One faculty representative from each of the university's thematic research institutes appointed by the respective institute director
- One faculty representative of the university's research investment institutes, collectively appointed by the respective institute directors
- Two faculty senators elected by the Faculty Senate (including the chair)
- One faculty representative from each of the academic colleges elected by the faculty in each of the colleges
- One representative from and elected by the Library Faculty Association
- One non-*ex officio* A/P faculty representative elected by the A/P Faculty Senate
- One representative in the postdoctoral associate rank elected by persons in that rank**
- Two representatives working in research faculty appointments as defined in the Virginia Tech Faculty Handbook (excluding postdoctoral associates) elected by persons in those ranks**
- One staff senator elected by the Staff Senate
- Two graduate and professional student senators elected by the Graduate and Professional Student Senate
- One undergraduate student senator elected by the Undergraduate Student Senate

**The nomination and election process for these positions will be conducted by the Office of Research and Innovation, which will report election results to the secretary of University Council.

Article VIII. University Standing Committees, Section G. Employee Benefits Committee

Existing:

- One administrative and professional faculty representative elected by the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs

Reason/rationale: Clarifies that the representative should be a member of the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs, not merely an at-large member of the administrative and professional faculty (who is not necessarily a member of the commission) elected by the commission.

Proposed:

- One administrative and professional faculty representative ~~elected by~~ from the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs elected annually by the commission.

Article VIII. University Standing Committees, Section H. Faculty Honorifics Committee

Existing Membership:

- Executive vice president and provost (also representing the Commission on Faculty Affairs)

Reason/rationale: Correction. The executive vice president and provost is not a member of the Commission on Faculty Affairs and thus does not represent CFA on the Faculty Honorifics Committee. This does not change the status of the executive vice president and provost as a member of the committee. Note that the committee is chaired by the executive vice president and provost (or designee).

Proposed Membership:

- Executive vice president and provost ~~(also representing the Commission on Faculty Affairs)~~
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Article VIII. University Standing Committees, Section A.

Existing Membership:

A. Academic Support Committee

Chair: The faculty representative from the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies

Membership:

- One faculty representative from the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies selected annually by the commission (this person will also be the committee chair)
- Two provost area representatives selected by the executive vice president and provost
- One assistant/associate dean selected by the Council of College Deans
- Vice president for student Affairs or designee
- One faculty representative from each of the academic colleges elected by the faculty in each of the colleges
- One faculty senator elected by the Faculty Senate
- One administrative and professional faculty representative elected by the A/P Faculty Senate
- One staff representative elected by the Staff Senate
- One undergraduate student representative from the Commission on Undergraduate Student Affairs elected annually by the commission
- One graduate or professional student representative from the Commission on Graduate and Professional Student Affairs elected annually by the commission

Reason/rationale: To add the university registrar as an ex officio (i.e., by virtue of position) member of the committee because of the registrar's knowledge and experience with matters under the scope of this

Revised by UC Cabinet on 2/12/24 based on FS comments – Ready for UC 2nd reading on 2/19/24

committee. The registrar currently attends meetings as an advisor, and this change would recognize appropriately the role of the registrar and formalize the registrar as a voting member of the committee.

Proposed Membership:

A. Academic Support Committee

Chair: The faculty representative from the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies

Membership:

- **The university registrar**
 - One faculty representative from the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies selected annually by the commission (this person will also be the committee chair)
 - Two provost area representatives selected by the executive vice president and provost
 - One assistant/associate dean selected by the Council of College Deans
 - Vice president for student Affairs or designee
 - One faculty representative from each of the academic colleges elected by the faculty in each of the colleges
 - One faculty senator elected by the Faculty Senate
 - One administrative and professional faculty representative elected by the A/P Faculty Senate
 - One staff representative elected by the Staff Senate
 - One undergraduate student representative from the Commission on Undergraduate Student Affairs elected annually by the commission
 - One graduate or professional student representative from the Commission on Graduate and Professional Student Affairs elected annually by the commission
-



**2023-2024
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Division of Information Technology
540/231-6381; latawnya@vt.edu

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Vice President for Finance
540/231-8688; callan9@vt.edu

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fwk95@vt.edu

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540/231-9532; young7@vt.edu

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Denise Crawford, Chair
Division of Human Resources
540/231-3852; kdenise@vt.edu

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Tasia Persson, Chair
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tpersson@vt.edu

Elections and Nominations

Judy Taylor, Chair
Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs
540/231-9595; taylor1@vt.edu

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Seminar*

Amanda Hill, Chair
Campus Planning, Infrastructure, and Facilities
amandahill@vt.edu

Policies and Issues

Amber Robinson, Chair
College of Science
540/231-7078 ; hamber08@vt.edu

ADHOC COMMITTEES

Staff Senate

<http://www.staffsenate.vt.edu/>

December 14, 2023

To: Vice President of Policy and Governance

The Staff Senate Committee on Policy and Issues has reviewed and approves UC Resolution 2023-24A.

One thing we would like to note for consistency of language in this document, perhaps Article II. 1. Should read "Regular meetings of the University Council Cabinet will be held...". This would align with the language change that is proposed for Article I. 1.

We have no further comment.

**Thank you,
Amber Robinson, Chair Staff Senate Policies and
Issues Committee**

February 8, 2024

Faculty Senate Comment on Resolution UC 2023-2024A

The Faculty Senate approves of Resolution UC 2023-24A (Resolution to Revise the University Council Bylaws). We offer the following comments and suggestions for revisions to the resolution.

Article I. Meetings of University Council, Paragraph 1

Regular meetings of the University Council ~~shall~~ will be held typically on the first and third Mondays of each month from the opening of the Fall Semester until the end of the academic year in May. The chair may cancel or postpone regular meetings for cause.

Suggested Revision:

Regular meetings of the University Council will typically be held typically on the first and third Mondays of each month from the opening of the Fall Semester until the end of the academic year in May. ~~The chair may cancel or postpone regular meetings for cause.~~ Regular meetings may be canceled or postponed for cause when deemed appropriate by the chair.

Article II. Meetings of the University Council Cabinet

1. Regular meetings of the University Council Cabinet will be held ~~on the second and fourth Mondays of each month,~~ typically one week prior to University Council meetings from the opening of the Fall Semester until the end of the academic year in May. The chair may cancel or postpone regular meetings for cause.
2. The University Council Cabinet may conduct electronic votes in lieu of meeting when deemed appropriate by one of the co-chairs.

Suggested revision:

1. Regular meetings of the University Council Cabinet ~~will typically be held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month, typically~~ one week prior to University Council meetings from the opening of the Fall Semester until the end of the academic year in May. ~~The chair may cancel or postpone regular meetings for cause.~~ Regular meetings may be canceled or postponed for cause when deemed appropriate by the co-chairs.
2. The University Council Cabinet may conduct electronic votes ~~in lieu of meeting~~ when deemed appropriate by ~~one of~~ the co-chairs.

Note:

We are suggesting this revision to decouple meeting and voting (i.e. the University Council Cabinet may conduct electronic votes without canceling a meeting to expedite the resolution process).

PROPOSED ADDITIONAL REVISION**Article III. Policy Review and Recommendation Process, Section 1. Overview (Para. 7)**

All resolutions will follow the formatting template provided by the Office of Vice President for Policy and Governance.

Suggested revision:

All resolutions and associated documents will follow ~~the~~ formatting templates provided by the Office of Vice President for Policy and Governance and as approved by the University Council Cabinet.

Note:

We are suggesting this revision to enhance the clarity and transparency of the documents and processes described in subsequent sections of the University Council Bylaws.

Article III. Policy Review and Recommendation Process, Section 2. Communication

After a “Resolution Proposal” has been approved by the University Council Cabinet, the secretary of the University Council will notify senate presidents and the University Council Cabinet ~~three times~~ about the status of all resolutions: ~~when~~ a resolution has been drafted and uploaded ~~for first reading by the commission;~~ the “First Reading Notice” ~~after a resolution has been revised based on the commission discussion at first reading;~~ and the “Second Reading Notice” ~~and~~ after a resolution has been approved or disapproved by the commission (“Commission Action Notice.” For resolutions from Senate Commissions, ~~a fourth and additional~~ notice, the “Senate Vote Notice,” will be sent to the presidents of the other senates and members of the University Council Cabinet to inform them of the result of the vote. ~~Commission chairs should try to schedule two weeks between the “Draft Notice” and the first reading of a resolution.~~

Suggested revision:

A “Resolution Notice” is a one-page executive summary of potential resolution. A commission chair shall submit a “Resolution Notice” to the secretary of the University Council. After a ~~“Resolution Proposal”~~ “Resolution Notice” has been ~~approved by~~ deemed appropriate to the commission charge by the University Council Cabinet and the commission has prepared a “Draft Resolution,” the secretary of the University Council will notify senate presidents...

Note:

Commission chairs have voiced frustration with drafting an entire resolution prior to UCC approval. FS PPC feels that a summary of a potential resolution should suffice for UCC’s determination of charge fit. To minimize confusion, we propose that this form be called a “Resolution Notice” and that the resolution draft be called a “Draft Resolution” here and throughout UC Bylaws.

Article III, Section 3. University Council Cabinet Evaluation of Resolutions for Adherence to Commission Charges

Upon receipt of a “Resolution Proposal,” the University Council Cabinet will review each resolution ~~proposal~~ for agreement with the appropriate commission. ~~Typically, the University Council Cabinet will respond within two weeks.~~ If the University Council Cabinet determines that a resolution ~~proposal~~ does not fall within the purview of a commission, senate leadership

and/or commission chairs can present the resolution to the University Council to determine if the resolution is appropriate for the commission charge. A two-thirds affirmative vote of members of the Council present and voting, provided that a quorum has been reached, is required to reverse the decision of the University Council Cabinet.

Suggested revision:

Upon receipt of a “~~Resolution Proposal~~ [Notice](#),” the University Council Cabinet will review each ~~resolution proposal~~ [“Resolution Notice”](#) for agreement with the appropriate commission. ~~Typically, The University Council Cabinet will respond within two weeks.~~ If the University Council Cabinet determines that a ~~resolution proposal~~ [“Resolution Notice”](#) does not fall within the purview of a commission, senate leadership and/or commission chairs can present the [“Resolution Notice”](#) to the University Council to determine if the [“Resolution Notice”](#) is appropriate for the commission charge. A two-thirds affirmative vote of members of the Council present and voting, provided that a quorum has been reached, is required to reverse the decision of the University Council Cabinet.

Note:

An additional step might be included in the appeal process: prior to senate leadership and/or commission chairs presenting an appeal to UC, they might first be given an opportunity to visit the University Council Cabinet and state their case.

Article III, Section 4. Policy Review Process, Paragraph a.

~~After approval of the resolution proposal by University Council Cabinet,~~ Once a resolution is ready for review by a commission, the commission chair shall upload the resolution into the shared governance workflow management system and notify the secretary of the University Council that they have done so.

Suggested revision:

~~After the approval of the resolution proposal,~~ [a “Resolution Notice” by University Council Cabinet,](#) the commission chair [may prepare a “Draft Resolution”](#) ~~shall~~ and upload it to the shared governance workflow management system. [After uploading a “Draft Resolution,” the commission chair shall](#) notify the secretary of the University Council that they have done so.

Article III, Section 7. Senate Comments on Resolutions

Senates have the right to issue recommendations on all resolutions, can offer comments as soon as the “~~Draft Resolution Proposal Notice~~” is received ~~and the draft resolution is drafted by the commission~~, and have until ~~one week~~ **five business days** after a commission approves a resolution to submit recommendations. However, as a practical matter, only recommendations received ~~after the “Draft” and “First Reading”~~ **before the “Commission Action”** notices are likely to impact commission discussions or the nature of the resolution.

Suggested revision:

Senates have the right to issue recommendations on all resolutions, can offer comments as soon as the ~~“Draft Resolution Proposal Notice”~~ **“Draft Resolution”** has been uploaded to the shared governance workflow management system, and have ~~until~~ **five business days** after a commission approves a resolution to submit recommendations. However, as a practical matter, only recommendations received **before the “Commission Action”** notice are likely to impact commission discussions or the nature of the resolution.

Note:

Language might be modified here to indicate that commissions should receive comments after the “Draft Resolution” has been uploaded and before commission approval of a resolution (or the “Commission Action Notice”). This note is made in consequence of commissions receiving comments shortly after uploading “Resolution Proposals,” as well as receiving comments after commission approval of a resolution.

Article VIII. University Standing Committees, Section A.

Change to include the University Registrar among the membership of the Academic Support Committee.

Note:

The eligibility requirements for chair of the Academic Support Committee may be too restrictive given that faculty members on CUSP are elected by their colleges, except for one faculty representative elected by the senate, and one faculty member elected by the senate who serves

as commission chair. (Currently, the Academic Support Committee is without a chair due to lack of volunteers.)

On behalf of the Faculty Senate, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on this resolution.

Respectfully,

Joe Merola, Faculty Senate President