

# Proposed Faculty Senate Rule for Electronic Meeting and Voting

*(Change from Temporary to Permanent)*

**Rationale:** The Temporary Electronic Voting Policy adopted by the WSU Faculty Senate in February 2021 was limited to the Spring 2021 semester and has now expired:

*“In the current remote working environment, the WSU community has become increasingly aware of the necessity for electronic voting within the Faculty Senate. As they currently stand, Faculty Senate rules do not allow for electronic voting under any circumstances. The Rules Committee proposes a temporary cessation of this limitation, allowing for electronic ballots to be distributed securely (via Qualtrics) to Senate members for issues or occasions when an expedited vote is necessary and electronic voting during the Faculty Senate meeting cannot occur for the Spring 2021 semester. When necessary, ballots will be distributed to Senators who attended meetings where discussions or presentations were made regarding the voting issue. This proposed temporary policy change does not include a change to the prohibition of proxy voting.”*

Since conditions that may require remote participation continue, we propose the permanent rule change below, adapted for WSU from the revised 2020 Robert’s Rules<sup>1</sup>.

## **New Electronic Meeting and Voting Proposal**

### **Authorization of Electronic Meetings:**

It shall be the decision of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee in collaboration with the University Provost and/or President to determine the need to conduct Faculty Senate meetings electronically/virtually for the health and safety of members and/or for the inclusion of the University faculty at large.

### **Addition to the Rules of the Senate (changing the temporary policy to permanent)**

#### **Electronic Meetings:**

Electronic meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be conducted through use of Internet meeting services designated by the President that support anonymous voting and support visible displays identifying those participating, identifying those seeking recognition to speak, showing (or

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<sup>1</sup> “[W]hen electronic meetings are authorized—which, in the case of a board or other assembly, always requires a bylaw provision—additional rules should be adopted to govern their conduct” (Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, 2020).

permitting the retrieval of) the text of pending motions, and showing the results of votes. These electronic meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be subject to all rules adopted by the Faculty Senate, which may include any reasonable limitations on, and requirements for, Faculty Senate members' participation. An anonymous vote conducted through the designated Internet meeting service shall be deemed a ballot vote, fulfilling any requirement in the bylaws or rules that a vote be conducted by ballot.

1. **Login information.** The Faculty Senate Liaison shall send by e-mail to every member of the Faculty Senate the time of the meeting, the URL and codes necessary to connect to the Internet meeting service, and, as an alternative and backup to the audio connection included within the Internet service, the phone number and access code(s) the member needs to participate aurally by telephone.
2. **Signing in and out.** Senators shall identify themselves as required to sign in to the Internet meeting service, and shall maintain Internet and audio access throughout the meeting whenever present, but shall sign out upon any departure before adjournment. Participants should display their name rather than phone number or id when possible.
3. **Quorum calls.** The presence of a quorum shall be established by the Faculty Senate Liaison at the beginning of the meeting. Thereafter, the continued presence of a quorum shall be determined by the online list of participating members, unless any member demands a quorum count. Such a demand may be made following any vote for which the announced totals add to less than a quorum.
4. **Technical requirements and malfunctions.** Each member is responsible for his or her audio and Internet connections as well as their own devices; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.
5. **Forced disconnections.** The Faculty Senate President may cause or direct the disconnection or muting of a participant's connection if it is causing undue interference with the meeting. The decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that can be made by any member, shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the minutes.
6. **Assignment of the floor.** To seek recognition by the Faculty Senate President, a participant shall activate the raised hand feature on the Internet meeting service or its equivalent for other platforms. The Faculty Senate President or their delegate will monitor order in the case of multiple participants seeking recognition.
7. **Interrupting a member.** A member who intends to make a motion or request that under the rules may interrupt a speaker shall use the raised hand feature on the internet meeting service, its equivalent for other platforms, or communicate the intent for motion in the chat feature; and shall thereafter wait a reasonable time for the Faculty Senate President instructions before attempting to interrupt the speaker by voice.
8. **Motions submitted in writing.** A member intending to make a main motion, to offer an amendment, or to propose instructions, shall, before or after being recognized, post the motion in writing as designated by the Recording Secretary for this purpose.
9. **Display of motions.** Motions coming before the Faculty Senate will be e-mailed to the Faculty Senate President prior to the meeting for electronic display. The Recording Secretary shall communicate any amendments, or revisions to the motion, via the Internet meeting service chat feature.
10. **Video display.** The Faculty Senate President and any participant recognized to speak shall activate their camera while speaking whenever possible.

**Electronic Voting:**

Votes shall be taken by the voting feature of the Internet meeting service, using the anonymous feature when secret ballot is called, unless a different method is ordered by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee or required by the rules. When appropriate, other permissible methods of voting are by electronic roll call or by audible roll call. The Faculty Senate President announcement of the voting result shall include the number of members voting on each side of the question. When necessary, secure ballots will be distributed via the designated secure tool to Senators who attended meetings where discussions or presentations were made regarding the voting issue. Electronic proxy vote is prohibited.

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