

**The University Senate of Michigan Technological
University**

Proposal 27-23

**Proposal to Update Bylaws and Constitution to
Clarify Senate Elections**

(Voting Units: All)

Submitted by: Senate Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee and Senate Election Committee.

I. Introduction

This proposal adjusts language in the Senate Bylaws and Constitution to clarify and streamline election processes. It also amends the senate body to ensure seats for alternate senators for all senators and defines processes for administering their term limits.

II. Rationale

Elections procedures run most smoothly with clear guidelines. Election scrutiny has grown increasingly rigorous. Clarification of Bylaws and Constitution will assist with free and transparent elections.

III. Proposal

Bylaws changes are indicated below with the existing Bylaws text in black and the suggested changes indicated below using track changes (blue text):

Senate Bylaws Changes Suggested

Section 2: Officers

2.1. Qualification of Officers

2.1.1. The President and Secretary shall have tenure.

2.1.2. The Vice President shall be from a unit other than an academic unit.

2.1.3 **New and continuing senators or alternates are eligible to run for Senate Officer positions.**

2.1.4. **If the unit's Alternate Senator is elected to the Vice President or Secretary positions, the unit's Senator will maintain the voting rights and all obligations of the**

Senator and the Alternate Senator/Office will vote only in the event the unit Senator is absent from the meeting.

4.4 Election of Officers

4.4.1. Following the annual March election of senators by the representation units (Const. 4.2.3), Senate officers shall be elected for the next academic year. The election shall be held electronically following the election procedures outlined in Section 4.2 (Bylaws 4.2).

4.4.2. Before the electronic election, the Elections Committee, in consultation with the Executive Committee, shall solicit nominees for Senate officers from and among the continuing senators and senators-elect.

4.4.3. The nominations shall be presented at the first regular Senate meeting in April, with a final call for additional nominations from the floor. After any additional nominations from the floor, the officers for the next academic year will be elected electronically before the final Senate meeting of the current academic year.

4.4.4. In the event that senators-elect cannot participate in the annual spring election, incumbent senators may vote on behalf of their Representation Unit.

4.4.5. A majority vote is needed for the election of an officer. If there are more than two candidates and a majority vote is not obtained, the candidate with the lowest number of votes shall be stricken from the list of candidates and another vote shall be taken until a majority is obtained.

4.4.6. The officers-elect of the Senate shall assume their duties on July 1.

4.4.7 If the unit's Alternate Senator is elected to the Vice President or Secretary positions, the unit's Senator will maintain the voting rights and all obligations of the Senator and the Alternate Senator/Office will vote only in the event the unit Senator is absent from the meeting.

Senate Constitution Changes Suggested

Constitutional changes are indicated below with the existing Constitution text in black and the suggested changes indicated below using track changes:

Article IV — Membership

- A. Number and Composition - Membership in the Senate shall be determined as follows:
 - i. One senator and one alternate elected by and from the academic and research faculty of each academic department.

- ii. One senator and one alternate elected by and from each of the professional staff and research unit representation units.
 - iii. **Four At-large faculty Senators and four At-large Alternates shall be elected by the entire faculty constituency. The election of Senators will take place first and once it has concluded, the election process for Alternates will commence.**
 - iv. **Three At-large professional staff Senators and three At-large Alternates shall be elected by the entire professional staff constituency. The election of Senators will take place first and once it has concluded, the election process for Alternates will commence.**
 - v. Academic department representation units and academic and research faculty senators at-large shall comprise at least 60 percent of the Senate's total membership.
 - vi. Official non-voting liaison members from units designated by the Senate and listed in the Bylaws.
- B. Election and Terms of Office
- i. The term of office of elected senators and alternates shall be three years except as set forth in Paragraph 3 below. After serving for six consecutive years as a senator and/or alternate, an individual shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of one year. The term limit shall be waived on presentation to the Executive Committee a request approved by a majority vote of the constituents of the Representation Unit.
 - ii. The election years shall be distributed as equally as possible among the various representation units and at-large positions.
 - iii. Election of senators shall be held in the spring of each year. The term of office shall commence on July 1. Vacancies in at-large membership created by resignation or otherwise may be filled by appointment by the President of the Senate until the next election, at which time vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired terms by elections.
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 - ii. One senator and one alternate elected by and from each of the professional staff and research unit representation units.

- iii. Four at-large academic and research faculty senators shall be elected by the entire faculty constituency.
- iv. Two at-large professional staff senators shall be elected by the professional staff and research unit constituencies.
- v. Academic department representation units and academic and research faculty senators at-large shall comprise at least 60 percent of the Senate's total membership.
- vi. Official non-voting liaison members from units designated by the Senate and listed in the Bylaws.

B. Election and Terms of Office

- i. The term of office of elected senators and alternates shall be three years except as set forth in Paragraph 3 below. After serving for six consecutive years as a senator and/or alternate, an individual shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of one year. [The term limit for Senators shall be waived upon the approval by the representation Unit and the Executive Committee. The term limit for Senators At-large shall be waived following the closure of a solicitation period in which no other nominees identified. In the absence of new nominees, an election ballot shall be sent out to the constituency to confirm the waiver of the Senator At-large's term limit.](#)
- ii. The election years shall be distributed as equally as possible among the various representation units and at-large positions.
- iii. Election of senators shall be held in the spring of each year. The term of office shall commence on July 1. Vacancies in at-large membership created by resignation or otherwise may be filled by appointment by the President of the Senate until the next election, at which time vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired terms by elections.