

Rationale for Proposed Changes to the EIU-UPI Bylaws for Spring 2014 Election

Context

After voting to review our current bylaws, the EIU-UPI Executive Board created an *ad hoc* Bylaws Revision Committee: Fern Kory (Chair), Joan Stack (Unit B ASP), Tim Shonk (Unit A), Paul Kory (Unit B ACF), Marita Gronvoll (Unit A), Thomas Costello (Unit A). The changes reflected in the attached document are a result of the deliberations of this committee and discussions of their recommendations during Executive Board meetings.

According to our current bylaws, “[n]on-substantive changes in wording may be made at the discretion of the Executive Board” (Article X “Amendments,” section 1), but substantive changes must be put to a vote of the membership, then approved by the Local Executive Board (sec. 2). Most of the **non-substantive** changes reflected in the revised version of our bylaws (available on [chapter website](#)) were made to regularize inconsistent or inexact wording. For example, we now acknowledge the need for “unit and department representatives”; in the previous version only the term “department representatives” was used. Contrariwise, in situations where two phrases were used to refer to the same process, we have used one consistently. In the revised version, our Chapter President must have the “advice and consent of the Executive Board” for appointments. In the previous version, some of these appointments were made “in consultation” with the Executive Board.

Proposed Revision #1: Voting Status of Executive Board members (III.1.a-d in *Revised Bylaws*)

Identify elected members of the Chapter Executive Board as voting members. Identify appointees as non-voting members. As a result of this change, a quorum for an Executive Board meeting would require the presence of at least four elected officers and/or representatives.

Rationale

The current bylaws (III. 1) create an Executive Board with *up to* 14 members—four officers and two at-large representatives elected by the membership, another 5-7 members appointed by the Chapter President (“with the approval of the Executive Board”), and the past president of EIU-UPI, who is an *ex officio* member.

Current Makeup of the Executive Board

- 4 *elected* Officers: President, Vice President, Executive Assistant, Treasurer
- 2 *elected* At-large Representatives
- 0-2 *appointed* Representatives (*as needed*—goal is representation of all units)
- 4 *appointed* Committee Chairs: Grievance, Legislative, Membership, Balloting
- 1 *appointed* Secretary
- 1 *ex officio* Immediate past President

Only the past president is explicitly described as a non-voting member (III.e). A quorum for an Executive Board meeting is described as “four voting members” (VIII.2.e).

In current practice, all 5-7 appointed members of the Executive Board are assumed to be voting members, so it is theoretically possible that an Executive Board meeting could be called (VIII.2.b) and “Chapter policy decisions” (III.2) made without the participation of any elected officers or representatives. By explicitly identifying only elected members of the Executive Board as voting members, we assert the responsibility of officers and representatives to make policy decisions on behalf of the membership with the benefit of information and guidance provided by appointed members.

Proposed Revision #2: Election of Constituency Representatives (III.1.d in Revised Bylaws)

Replace current system in which two “at large” representatives are elected to the Chapter Executive Board (III.1.d) and representatives from a specific unit are appointed if none are elected to these positions or another office (III.1.g). In new system, a representative is elected from each constituency group: Unit B Academic Support Professional (ASP), Unit B Annually Contracted Faculty (ACF), and Unit A Tenured/tenure-track Faculty.

Rationale

At present, two at-large Executive Board members (and all chapter officers) are elected by the membership without reference to their unit. If chapter elections do not result in representation for all units, the bylaws stipulate that omissions are remedied by *appointment* of 1-2 additional members to the Executive Board (III.1.g).

By increasing the number of elected representatives by one, we eliminate the need to appoint representatives and guarantee each unit an elected representative with a vote.

This proposed change also results in a consistent number of Executive Board members (13) and an odd number of voting members (7), which reduces the likelihood of tie votes.

Makeup of the Executive Board with Proposed Changes

7 Voting (Elected) Members

4 Officers: President, Vice President, Executive Assistant, Treasurer

3 At-large Representatives

6 Non-Voting (Appointed or ex officio) Members

4 Standing Committee Chairs: Grievance, Legislative, Membership, Balloting

1 Secretary

1 Immediate past President

Proposed Revision #3: Executive Board Vacancies Policy (II.4.c-d in Revised Bylaws)

Change process by which vacant Executive Board positions so that long-term vacancies in positions of Executive Assistant, Treasurer, and Unit Representatives are filled by election.

Rationale

Under the current bylaws, the Chapter President “in consultation with the Executive Board, shall decide whether a vacancy [in the position of Executive Assistant or Treasurer] shall be filled for the duration of the term by appointment, by special election, or by appointment followed by special election” (II.4.c). In the revised version, these options only apply to vacancies “of one year or less”: “Vacancies of more than one year shall be filled by special election” (*revised* II.4.c). The same language would also be used to describe the process by which vacancies in unit representatives are handled (*revised* II.4.d).

Note: If the membership and the Local Executive Board approve of these proposed changes, the revised bylaws will contain a proviso (along lines recommended by *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*) “that amendments relating to the election and status of officers and members of the Executive Board govern subsequent elections and subsequent Executive Boards.” (IX.3).