

As part of an overall strategy to update the School of Liberal Arts Bylaws to reflect the changing landscape of the School as well as to economize faculty participation in School committees, the ad-hoc Bylaws Review Committee recommends the following action item for consideration by the Faculty:

A clarification for the creation and continuation of ad-hoc committees

Current situation:

The current wording on ad-hoc committees is underdeveloped, vague and open to contradictory interpretations: “The President of the Faculty Assembly and the Dean may appoint ad-hoc committees in consultation with the Agenda Council.”

Proposal:

The committee proposes the following change: “The President of the Faculty Assembly may appoint ad-hoc committees in consultation with the Dean and the Agenda Council. Such committees expire at the completion of their assigned tasks, or at the end of the academic year, whichever comes first. If the committee’s charge has not been fulfilled by the end of the academic year, the next President may reappoint the committee in consultation with the Dean and the Agenda Council.”

Rationale:

As it stands currently, it is not clear whether the President and the Dean must create the committee jointly (the problematic “and” in the phrase) or they may create it of their own volition. The proposed wording clarifies that ad-hoc committees of the Faculty Assembly are the responsibility of the President, and that she or he must consult with both the Dean and the Agenda Council prior to its formation. The proposal also specifies that ad-hoc committees last only during the academic year of any individual President’s term (as required by *Robert’s Rules*), and allows for the next President either to extend an ad-hoc committee’s function during her or his leadership, or to allow it to come to an end.

Known and expected benefits:

Several issues are resolved with this proposal. First, it specifies how ad-hoc committees must be constituted, placing the responsibility specifically on the President of the Faculty Assembly, but limiting such an action by requiring the advice and consent of the Dean and the Agenda Council. Second, it specifies the committee’s term of service, and insists on the prerogative of the incoming President to ask it to continue its work, or let it expire.