

University at Buffalo Faculty Senate

Resolution 2026.4.21.6

Originating Committee: Bylaws

Date Forwarded by FSEC to Senate: April 14, 2026

Date of First Reading: April 21, 2026

Date of Second Reading: May 12, 2026

Action at Second Reading: Passed (Yea, 62, Nay: 0)

Background

As described more fully in the Bylaws Committee report and resolution titled *Proposed Charter amendment to allow electronic meetings*, the Faculty Senate and its committees moved to electronic meetings in March 2020 due to the COVID pandemic.

Under the Faculty Senate's parliamentary authority, *Robert's Rules of Order*, explicit authorization in the governing documents is required to move meetings into a virtual space.

Adoption of that resolution would allow electronic meetings in the future, but actions taken at past electronic meetings are still invalid by reason of no quorum. In these cases, *Robert's Rules* allows the Senate to ratify actions taken at an electronic meeting when electronic meetings are not authorized. *See Robert's Rules* sec. 10:54.

Recommendations

The Bylaws Committee recommends that a resolution be adopted ratifying all actions taken in an electronic meeting from March 2020 to present.

Procedure

This is a normal Senate resolution and follows the normal procedure for resolutions.

The normal procedure for resolutions adopted by the Faculty Senate is set out in Section 5 of the Standing Orders of the Faculty Senate. Resolutions should normally be drafted by an appropriate Senate committee. The committee should also draft "a suitable rationale for the resolution." Standing Orders 5(A)(i). The committee submits the proposed resolution to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee "shall consider whether the draft resolution and its rationale have been sufficiently perfected to be submitted to the Senate." Standing Orders 5(A)(ii). This will normally not include extensive discussion of the merits. However, if the Executive Committee believes further work is required, "it shall be resubmitted to the committee from which it came, or submitted to another committee." *Id.*

After Executive Committee review, the proposed resolution is placed on the Faculty Senate agenda for two meetings, usually two successive meetings. “At the first meeting, there shall be discussion on the issues involved, but no vote. At the second meeting the resolution may be amended and/or voted on.” Standing Orders 5(A)(iii).

If, in the judgment of the Senate Chair or the Senate as a body, “the matter is urgent and requires haste,” the procedure may be accelerated. Standing Orders 5(B). “In that case, there shall be a formal ruling or motion suspending these procedures *and that ruling or motion shall appear in the Minutes.*” Id. (emphasis added).

Submitted,
John Beatty, Bylaws Committee Chair

Resolution to ratify actions taken at electronic meetings before the Charter was amended to allow the same

Resolved, the Faculty Senate ratifies all actions taken by the Faculty Senate and its committees from March 2020 to today that were in absence of a quorum because the meeting where they were taken was held as an electronic meeting before provisions for electronic meetings had been authorized by amendment to the Charter.