Faculty Senate FAQs

Appointment of Secretary (officer) to Senate:

"FSH 1520, Article V, Section 3. Officers. Each year the senate elects a chair and a vice chair from among the elected faculty members of the senate. Also, each year a secretary is appointed by the chair, subject to confirmation by the senate, from among the members of the senate or from the membership of the university faculty. The appointment of a person who is not a member of the senate to serve as secretary does not carry with it membership on the senate.

When and who initiates and handles the elections for FS members going off Senate?
Elections are to be finalized before April 15th. Typically it is up to the current FS members from each respective college/unit to consult and assign someone who will handle the process. Check with your respective college/unit as most colleges/units should have procedures set out in their by-laws (see FSH 1520, Section 6 below). If it is not addressed in the by-laws, it is fine for the FS member to solicit the assistance of the dean's office in sending out secret ballots. However, keep in mind that FS elections should be driven by faculty and all faculty within each college should be involved and have vote.

“FSH 1520, Article V, Section 6. Elections. Regular elections for representatives on the Senate are held before April 15 of each year in which an election is to be held. All elections for members of the Senate are by secret ballot. Appropriate procedures for nominations and elections are developed and approved by a majority vote of the faculty of the college or other unit.”

How long is my term on Faculty Senate?

"FSH 1520, Article V, Section 4. Terms of Office. Elected faculty members of the Senate serve for three years. The academic dean shall serve one year, the staff representatives shall serve for staggered two year terms. The terms of office for student members are as established by the Senate. [See 1580 VI.] Newly elected members take office each year on September 1 or on the official opening date of the academic year, whichever is earlier. To carry out the requirement that approximately one-third of the elected faculty members are to take office each year, the Senate may shorten the initial term of office of faculty representatives elected to fill new positions on the Senate to conform to a balanced rotation plan. When members are elected to fill a vacancy, they take office at the first meeting after the election and serve for the unexpired term of the vacancy. No elected faculty member of the Senate may serve an immediately ensuing term [but see 1580 III-3].”

What if I will be gone for one month, or for more than four months?

Clause A. If it is necessary for a member of the Senate to be absent temporarily (more than a month, but less than four months), the candidate who received the next highest number of votes in the most recent election in the college or unit acts as his or her alternate on the Senate with full vote. If
it is necessary for a member to be absent for more than four months, but less than one year, a special election is held to fill the temporary vacancy. When the Senate member returns, he or she resumes the position on the Senate. If it is necessary for a member to be absent for more than one year, or if the member is unable to complete the term of office for any reason, a special election is held to fill the unexpired term. [See 1580 VI for procedures covering student vacancies.]

**Clause B.** The chair of the Faculty Senate must declare a position vacant if a member is absent from three consecutive meetings unless the member has informed the chair of the Senate in writing that he or she intends to participate fully in the activities of the Senate in the future. When a position is declared vacant, the chair must notify the constituency concerned.”

**What is the Center Senator’s Role?**

“**1520 Article V. Section 2. Structure. A (2). University Centers.** The resident faculty of the university centers in Boise, Coeur d’Alene and Idaho Falls each elects one senator from among its number. Those senators shall have the right to participate and vote in faculty senate meetings by means of available two-way video-audio technology located at the centers. If the available technology fails, telephone conferencing will be used. Senators elected to represent a center have a unique role on senate, which is to provide a voice and vote from the perspective of their centers. That perspective is not intended to be college and/or discipline specific.

**What if I have replaced a member from my college who resigned from Faculty Senate, can I serve again?**

“**1580 Article III, Section 3. Members Completing Unexpired Terms.** A member who has been elected or appointed to complete the unexpired term of another member and has served more than half of that member’s normal term of office is ineligible for membership on the Senate until one year has elapsed.”

**Can you send someone in your place, with vote, if you will miss a meeting?**

You can send someone in your stead, but **not** with vote. Anyone you send to attend in your stead, if it is less than one month, would be considered an alternate (see FSH 1580, V-7 below).

“**FSH 1580, Article V, Section 7. Alternates.** Alternates participate in meetings of the Senate only as permitted by the constitution of the university faculty [see 1520 V-7]. This rule does not preclude a member from having another person attend the meeting in his or her stead as an auditor.”

**Are proxy votes allowed? No**

**How are abstentions handled?**

“**FSH 1580, Article V. Section 11. Voting.** Voting on motions is by raising a hand. Proxy votes are not allowed.” (According to a standing rule of the senate, the chair does not ask how many members abstained from voting on a particular motion, and abstentions are not recorded in the minutes unless a member requests that his or her abstention be recorded.)