# Bylaws frequently asked questions

3/15/2022

**What are the main changes to the bylaws?**

These slides outline the main changes.  
 [SP2022 AS Presentation Bylaws Revision Highlights](https://sac.edu/President/AcademicSenate/SiteAssets/Pages/AY-2021-22-Meeting-Materials/SP2022%20AS%20Presentation%20Bylaws%20Revision%20Highlights%202_17_22.pptx)

**Why would we want to change the bylaws?**

Some aspects of the current bylaws either need to be corrected, lack clarity or simply benefit from review and amendment. The current (2014-15) bylaws dictate that they should be reviewed annually for amendments. That review is overdue.

**What needs to be corrected or clarified in the bylaws?**

Corrections and clarifications that are needed include

1. Start date of officer and Senator terms
2. Explicit term limit
3. Explicit election cycle
4. Removing inaccurate LHE example
5. Correcting who should oversee elections
6. Adding a table of contents

**Why would anything else need to be changed?**  
The guiding principles for the proposed changes are:

* Create a more inclusive leadership culture in Senate, particularly those underrepresented in Executive Committee
* Create more opportunities and intentional mentoring and support for those interested in leadership
* Define clear communication channels between Senate Executive Committee, faculty co-chairs, and Senators
* Clear expectations and duties for Senate Executive Committee Officers

**Where can I find the actual text of the proposed bylaws?**  
The Academic Senate sent out the [full text of the draft proposed bylaws](https://sac.edu/President/AcademicSenate/SiteAssets/Pages/AY-2021-22-Meeting-Materials/Draft_3_8_2022_BYLAWS%20OF%20THE%20ACADEMIC%20SENATE%20OF%20THE%20FACULTY%20OF%20SANTA%20ANA%20COLLEGE.docx) to senators (and all faculty) at the last Senate meeting on 3/8/22. No changes will be made to this draft until the 3/22/22 Senate meeting.

You can also review the [current bylaws from 2014-2015](https://sac.edu/President/AcademicSenate/Documents/Constitution%20and%20By-Laws/By%20Laws%20Approved%202014-15.pdf).

**Why would we replace the President-Elect and Past-President positions with Vice Presidents?**  
Although there are advantages and disadvantages of having VPs versus Past President/President Elect. The duties of the Past President weren't enough to justify that being an officer position. Having multiple officer positions which could potentially serve as a low-barrier entry for multiple potential future candidates for president-- providing for increased leadership opportunities and meaningful elections. A disadvantage of the current President-Elect position is that the faculty elected in April of one year didn't become the President until about a year and a half after faculty elected them.

Anyone serving on the executive team should be prepared to run as a candidate to become president given that they will have a high-level understanding of how committees function and the administrative direction of the college.

**Why do the VP’s have those names, “Vice President of Culture and Engagement” and “Vice President of Community Operations”?**

The creation of these two roles was intended to give officers substantial duties related to shaping the culture and building community within the Academic Senate. The idea for two Vice Presidents came directly from East Los Angeles College’s Senate structure, though we have adopted the roles to this campus to meet our needs. Instead of “first” and “second,” we settled on named aspirational titles to reduce hierarchies and highlight their important roles on the Executive Team.

* Vice President of Culture and Engagement: Culture “is the values, beliefs, traditions, behavioral norms, linguistic expression, knowledge, memories, and collective identities that are shared by a group of people and give meaning to their social environments.” ([CCCCO DEI Gossary of Terms](https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/Files/Communications/vision-for-success/8-dei-glossary-of-terms.pdf)) We see this role as essential to shaping the Senate culture, particularly in their participation in the Inclusivity advisory group. This position will also have a prominent role serving on committees around campus.
* Vice President of Community Operations: This position serves as a bridge and liaison between the Executive Team and the faculty committee chairs, a vital role in promoting community building. We include the term “operations” in the title to indicate its clear operational role in finances and in conducting regular communications as a liaison between the committees and Executive Team.

**Do the proposed bylaws reduce the quality or amount of mentoring for new leaders?**

AS Vice Presidents or other officers who decide to run for President will have the advantage of name-recognition, experience and their institutional knowledge in their favor for being elected while not precluding other candidates who faculty might decide to elect.

**Do the proposed bylaws hinder new candidates from pursuing leadership roles?**  
No, the proposed bylaws explicitly document the term limit for President to one two-year term. That creates a regular vacancy at every election for other officers, Senators or other faculty to run for President.

The proposed bylaws take it step further with a Faculty Leadership & Engagement work group to solicit nominees for the officer positions and other faculty leadership roles.

**Why only hold elections in odd years?**  
The elections for the past decade or so have always only been in alternating years. In the past, elections have been in even-numbered years, but the bylaws did not explicitly state that. The proposed bylaws make it clearer to faculty who might not know the history which years are elections held.

This change also makes the transition to a new election cycle simpler as it allows the current President to finish out their term.

**Why can’t someone hold two Senate and officer positions simultaneously?**  
The point about “Individuals may occupy only one voting position on the Academic Senate” makes explicit that officers should not simultaneously serve as a Senator for their division. This relates to the guiding principle "Create a more inclusive leadership culture" by avoiding concentration of authority in one person and creating opportunities for more faculty to serve in leadership roles. We believe that more access points for leadership positions will encourage more faculty to take on leadership roles.

Although we believe that this proposal was a good faith effort to create a more inclusive leadership culture, to reach agreement, a member of the task force is proposing an amendment to remove this sentence.