

Bylaws for the Women's Caucus

Created: July 2011

Revised: February 2012, November 2012, June 2013, December 2013, August 2016

Mission Statement

The mission of the Women's Caucus is to advocate for positive change on issues of concern to women at the University of Delaware.

Membership

All faculty and staff of the University of Delaware who identify as women are considered to be members of the Women's Caucus.

Objectives

The Caucus will carry out its mission by:

- Raising awareness of women's issues, especially those of gender inequity;
- Promoting the consistent adherence to university policies that advance gender equity;
- Advocating for the adoption of new or revised university policies that advance gender equity;
- Providing a confidential and safe forum for the discussion of issues important to women at the University of Delaware;
- Working in collaboration with other caucuses and groups on issues of common concern.

Governance

The Caucus shall have a Governing Board, charged with leading the Caucus in its activities.

1) Board Membership

- The Board shall be composed of no more than fifteen members. There should be at least two tenured faculty members on the Board.
- Board members are expected to attend board meetings and general Caucus meetings, to participate in conducting official business, and to generally support the work of the Caucus, much of which will take place

in committees.

2) Elections and Terms

- Except for the inaugural Board, members shall serve for staggered three-year terms, with roughly one third of the Board being elected each year.
- Elections will be held by the general Caucus membership each year in the spring, with guidance from the sitting Board.
- Elections shall be announced to the general membership at least one month before the election.
- A Board member will be designated at least three months prior to the election to operate the election. This Board member should not be up for reelection.
- The designated board member will collect nominations and self-nominations and submit the list of candidates to the Board two weeks before the vote is scheduled.
- Each Caucus member may vote for up to as many candidates as there are open positions. Ballots showing more selected candidates are invalid. The candidates with the highest number of votes shall be elected to the Board. In the event of a tie of two candidates for the last open position, both tied candidates shall be elected and the size of the Board shall be expanded to sixteen until the next election. Should more than two candidates be tied for the last open position, a run-off election shall be held as soon as practicable and before June 1st.
- Board terms begin June 1st immediately following the election.
- Individuals may serve for up to two consecutive terms or six years, whichever is longer. If a board member reaches this term limit, following a hiatus of one year, she may run for a new term.

3) Loss of a Board Member

- Should a Board member need to step down from her position, she shall submit a letter of resignation to the Board.
- Should a Board member fail to participate in the majority of Board business for a semester, the Board may vote to remove her with a two-thirds majority. Before such a vote is scheduled, the co-chairs shall encourage the Board member to increase her participation and advise her of the possibility of losing her position on the Board.
- Any vacated position on the Board shall be filled at the next regularly scheduled general election.
- If the chair of a committee leaves the Board, one of the other Board members or a committee member shall step into the chair role.

4) Officers

Each year all vacant officer positions are filled by election with a simple majority vote of the Board at the first Board meeting following June 1st. Officers can be

removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board at any time.

a) Co-Chairs:

- The two Co-Chairs shall serve staggered two-year terms.
- It is preferred that one of the Co-Chairs is a tenured faculty member; the other should be a Caucus member from a different represented group.
- The responsibilities of the Co-Chairs are to call and conduct meetings, to represent the Caucus on the Diversity and Equity Commission, and to serve as spokeswomen for the Caucus.

b) Secretary:

- The Secretary shall serve a two-year term.
- The responsibilities of the Secretary are to keep records of Board and Caucus business, including meeting minutes.

c) Treasurer:

- The Treasurer shall serve a two-year term.
- The responsibilities of the Treasurer are to monitor and manage the financial resources of the Caucus (in collaboration with the Office of Equity and Inclusion), to work with the Co-Chairs to draw up a budget each year, and to submit an annual financial report to the Board.

5) Interim Officer Positions

- Should a Chair, Secretary, or Treasurer need to step down from her position before her term is complete, the Board shall elect a current Board Member to step into that role.
- The position would be considered an “Interim” position until regularly filled.
- The Interim position will have all the rights and responsibilities herein outlined above.

6) Leave of Absence

- Should a Board member require a prolonged leave of absence due to special circumstances but wish to remain on the Board, she may submit a letter requesting such to the Board. The Board shall vote with a simple majority whether to approve the request. If the reason for the request is personal serious illness or childbirth or adoption, a leave of absence for up to four months shall be granted automatically and shall not be subject to Board review.
- If a request is granted, the affected Board member shall be included in all Board written communication and invited to meetings to ease transitioning back, shall not be expected to participate in any Board business during the leave of absence, and shall not be counted toward quorum or majority requirements in any votes during the leave of absence.
- The affected Board member may return to her normal duties at any time

by notifying the Board but no later than the agreed-upon return date. Should she need an extension of the leave of absence, a new request must be submitted to and approved by the Board.

- No Board member shall be on a leave of absence for more than one semester or four months consecutively, including any approved extensions.
- The leave of absence shall count toward the term limit.
- Should an Officer be on a leave of absence, the Board shall elect a current Board member to fill the position on an interim basis for the agreed-upon duration of the leave of absence. Should the Officer choose to return early from the leave of absence, the Interim Officer shall continue in the post for the original agreed-upon period unless both the Officer and the Interim Officer agree otherwise.
- If the affected Board member is the chair of a committee, an interim replacement shall be selected with the same rules as interim officer replacements.

7) Meetings and Conducting Business

- The Board shall meet at least twice each fall and spring semester.
- The Board shall meet with the general Caucus membership at least once each semester.
- Meetings may be called by one of the Co-Chairs or any two Board members.
- In between meetings, official Board business may be conducted by e-mail or conference call.
- A quorum of a simple majority of current Board members is required to conduct official business. A Board member may appoint another board member to act as proxy or register her vote by e-mail if she is unable to vote in person. The presence of a proxy counts for purposes of determining quorum.
- A simple majority vote is required to pass orders of business, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws.

Amending the Bylaws

Any member of the Caucus can propose an amendment to the bylaws. Amendments shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board.