

ASA Meeting Schedule Workgroup Report (4/12/2023 ASA meeting)

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Proposal 1:

Formalize Leadership Notification and Discussion of ASA Membership Duties/Responsibilities

The workgroup proposes that, as a part of the work of the elections and balloting committee, in coordination with the Communications Director, a formal notification process be followed at the conclusion of general ASA elections or upon the appointment of an ASA member to fill a vacancy. For all academic staff, this notification should go to the direct supervisor and the division head. For instructional academic staff, notification should also be sent to the current department chair and college dean, in the event that they are not specifically the direct supervisor or division head.

This notification shall include the name of the ASA member, their elected term, a schedule of planned ASA meeting dates and times, and a general description of the duties and responsibilities of an ASA member.

Rationale:

Inconsistent practice and procedure around scheduling of ASA members for duties during scheduled ASA meetings can lead to difficulty and a lack of representation for that ASA member's constituency. While communication between a candidate and their supervisor around duties and availability for shared governance work is expected to be ongoing, a formal method of ensuring that all supervisors are aware of consistent information may help alleviate this issue.

Proposal 2:

Formalize Collection of Proxies at May Organizational Meeting

The workgroup proposes that, at the May Organizational Meeting, a formal process be utilized that asks each member to notify the Chair of their preferred contact status over the summer, and to affirm whether they give their proxy to another member for business conducted over the summer (this proxy may be general or limited in nature, according to the agreement between the elected member and their chosen proxy).

Rationale:

While there is no way to predict what business may arise between May and September, ASA can either plan for such business constructively or leave all such business to become an urgent or emergency matter. An understanding of each member's availability and willingness to respond to messages, as well as having any potential full or limited proxies in place at the beginning of summer, allows for ASA to conduct any necessary business expeditiously while still ensuring representation and voice for all constituents.

Current by-laws (Chapter I, Article VIII, Section 7) allow for members to authorize another elected member to serve as proxy for up to two (2) consecutive scheduled ASA meetings.

When business must be conducted outside the academic year, current practice includes following the Conducting Business Over Email process (Chapter I, Article VIII, Section 6), but members not on contract or not otherwise available at a given point may not have formally given a proxy to another member.

Proposal 3:

Additional Meetings for Business Outside the Academic Year

The workgroup proposes that, in addition to meetings held on “designated Wednesdays of each month, September through May”, a meeting be planned for the second Wednesday in June and the second Wednesday in August, with a specifically planned cancellation notification to all ASA members no less than six (6) days in advance of the meeting date in the event that there is no business to add to the agenda outside of standard committee reports.

Rationale:

Current by-laws (Chapter I, Article VIII, Section 1) state that ASA meets only September through May. However, hundreds of academic staff on campus serve on year-round contracts, with issues of concern and note arising throughout the year. Furthermore, university leadership, when making decisions which affect academic staff, continues to meet and work toward those decisions throughout the summer. In order to have an effective voice for all academic staff on campus, ASA representation is necessary at all levels throughout the year.

The current meeting schedule means that every issue that arises after early May must be treated as an emergency, even when the issue could otherwise be addressed in a routine manner. An updated schedule including two regularly planned meetings in the summer allows for such business to be conducted efficiently, while still allowing for proxies to be used in the event that an ASA member is unavailable. The workgroup notes that this proposal would not change the required number of members to reach a quorum, and that current by-laws already allow for proxies for up to two consecutive meetings.