

Bylaws and Election Committee: 2025-2026 Annual Report

Committee Membership

Bobby Benim, Parliamentarian

David Paradis, BFA Chair-Elect

Shelly Miller, BFA Immediate Past Chair

Andy Cowell, Shared Faculty Governance Advisor

Adam Norris, Executive Committee At-large Member

Tony Kong, Executive Committee At-large Member

Glenda Walden, Elected Committee Member

Vicki Grove, Faculty Resource Member

There were two vacant seats that were not filled during the fall standing committee elections.

Meetings

The committee met 5 times in the fall semester and 5 times in the spring semester.

Updated Bylaws and Standing Rules Documents

Outside of elections, the first major order of business this semester was to post updated Bylaws and Standing Rules documents on the BFA website. The versions that were posted were a few years old. After this was done, we were able to see what modifications were needed.

Motions introduced and passed

The committee introduced four motions this semester, three of which modify the Bylaws and/or standing rules.

1. The first motion, *Amendment to Bylaws and Standing Rules, Article VI, Section 1*, updated the Bylaws and Standing Rules so that the scheduling of assembly meetings would be more flexible. This was needed to accommodate the new academic calendar on campus. Going forward, the Executive Committee has the ability to schedule assembly meetings in a more flexible way. This motion also modified the Standing Rules so that the calling of special meetings by members of the assembly has more structure. Before, there was mention of this ability by assembly members, but no procedure was provided. This motion was introduced in assembly on November 6 and approved by a two-third majority on December 4. Any change to the Bylaws requires a two-thirds majority to pass.
2. The next motion, *Adding Representation for CMDI*, updated the assembly representative structure for CMDI. Now, each of the seven departments in CMDI has its own representative. This motion was introduced in assembly on March 5 and approved by a two-thirds majority on April 2. Any addition of seats to the assembly requires a two-thirds majority to pass.
3. The largest motion we introduced this semester, *Proposed Changes to the BFA and Standing Rules 2026*, did a number of things intended to update the Bylaws and Standing rules in terms of aligning with changes made a year ago, as well as to bring them in line with the actual current status of the BFA. Specifically, the motion:
 - a. Updated Article I, Section 1(f) regarding the number of faculty who may serve from a unit to remove contradiction with Article I, Section 1(d) which was updated a few years ago.
 - b. Article I, Section 2 had been updated in consecutive years, and the first change accidentally undid the changes made first that prevented folks with administrative appointments from being an officer or at-large ExCom member. This new motion reinserted that restriction.
 - c. Updated Article I, Section 4 to clarify that in most cases, each member of the chair triumvirate becomes an at-large member upon assuming the role of chair-elect.
 - d. Updated Article III, Sections 1 and 3 to clarify who the BFA officers are and provides language for when an outgoing Immediate Past Chair can run for Chair-Elect again (must wait a year). Mildly reduced requirements for Chair-Elect nominee eligibility.
 - e. Updated Bylaws and Standing Rules so that any reference to "Bylaws Committee" or "Nominations and Elections Committee" was changed to "Bylaws and Elections Committee."

- f. Removed Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee from the Bylaws and Standing Rules. This committee had not been staffed in many years, and faculty compensation is a part of the BPC, FAC, and TFAC charges.

This motion was introduced on April 2 and approved following the April 23 assembly meeting with a two-thirds majority.

4. The last motion we introduced, *Improving Representation for Large Units*, provides a formula for large departments and non-departmentalized schools to have more than one representative on the BFA. This change was motivated by the fact that 70% of the assigned assembly seats are assigned to the College of Arts & Sciences, but only 47% of the Boulder Faculty Senate is rostered in the College of Arts & Sciences.

The formula that was settled on is the following: for any department or non-departmentalized school, let N be the number of faculty senate members in that unit. N is then divided by 45, and if that division is not even, the result is rounded up to the next whole number. The result of this process is the number of assigned assembly seats for that unit. Based on faculty senate numbers as of February 1, 2026, this is how assembly seats would change for units with greater than 45 members:

- Business (173 faculty) would go from 2 to 4 representatives.
- The following units would go from 1 to 2 representatives:
 - Music (84 faculty)
 - Computer Science (70 faculty)
 - The Law School (68 faculty)
 - Mechanical Engineering (62 faculty)
 - Physics (57 faculty)
 - Psychology/Neuroscience (57 faculty)
 - The Library (57 faculty)
 - School of Education (55 faculty)
 - Civil Engineering (51 faculty)
 - Aerospace (50 faculty)
 - Electrical, Computer & Energy Engineering (47 faculty)

This would result in at most 13 additional seats on the assembly. Language was added to the motion to note that units do not have to fill the additional assembly seats if they

choose not to. This change would reduce the representation of the College of Arts & Sciences to just 59% of the assigned seats on the assembly.

This motion was introduced to the assembly on April 23, and it will be voted on following the September assembly meeting.

In AY 2026-2027, the Bylaws and Elections Committee will continue to investigate this issue by considering changes to how at-large seats are allotted. Currently, between 8 and 10 of the 14 at-large seats must reside in Arts & Sciences, which is in conflict with the previously noted fact that only 47% of the Faculty Senate resides in the College of Arts & Sciences.

Elections

Early in the fall semester, the usual elections for BFA standing committees were held, with both internal and external elections. During external elections, elections were also held of open Boulder campus seats on CU Faculty Council standing committees.

In the middle of the spring semester, elections for at-large seats on the BFA were held, where 14 people ran for seven open seats.

Lastly, at the end of the spring semester, an election was held for Chair-Elect, where Deb Palmer was elected as the next Chair-Elect.

Ongoing

Going into AY 2026-2027, in addition to looking at the previously mentioned distribution of at-large assembly seats, the committee will be looking into possible modifications to the Bylaws and Standing Rules around representative decorum. Currently, neither the Bylaws nor the Standing Rules addresses representative decorum, and a preliminary investigation shows that Robert's Rules only addresses this in the context of assembly and committee meetings. Remember that the BFA relies on the latest addition of Robert's Rules of Order for matters that are otherwise not addressed in the BFA Bylaws and Standing Rules.

A concern was raised that there have been incidents over the years where representatives may have had poor behavior in interactions with university staff. Some questions to answer around this:

1. Should the assembly be able to address this with censure or possible removal from the assembly for repeated offenses?

2. What would these mechanisms look like, and how can we be sure that the rights of individual representatives are not violated?
3. In the most extreme case where the representative with poor behavior is the BFA chair, how can they be removed from their position if that is deemed necessary by the BFA? In both Assembly meetings and Executive committee meetings, since the BFA Chair is the presiding officer, they must recognize someone in order for them to introduce a motion, so there is a large practical hurdle in place if the assembly ever felt it was necessary to remove a sitting BFA Chair. That is, there is currently no practical way for a representative to introduce a motion of no confidence in the BFA Chair if the BFA Chair does not want to allow it.

Here is the committee membership heading into next year:

Bobby Benim, Parliamentarian

Deb Palmer, BFA Chair-Elect

Alastair Norcross, BFA Immediate Past Chair

Andy Cowell, Shared Faculty Governance Advisor

Adam Norris, Executive Committee At-large Member

Glenda Walden, Elected Committee Member

Vicki Grove, Faculty Resource Member