

Transparency Guidelines for UUA Committees, Task Forces, Working Groups and the UUA Board of Trustees

May 2017

Rule G-2.1 of the bylaws of the UUA requires openness in the functioning of the UUA elected and appointed committees and task forces and the UUA Board, including its committees and working groups. These guidelines are intended to assist in fulfilling this requirement. They are prepared by the Open UUA Committee, which was created by the UUA Board to clarify and implement the Rule (see **Charge** below).

The [Rule](http://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/bylaws) [http://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/bylaws] requires that all the UUA Board and all UUA committees and task forces:

- (a) provide advance notice of dates and locations of regular business meetings and make agendas, reports, and minutes available promptly;
- (b) provide avenues for comment on issues on the meetings' agendas;
- (c) accommodate observers at regular business meetings with the exception of executive sessions.

Reporting Requirement

Any reports by elected committees, and those appointed by the Board or Administration shall be posted on the web as part of the board packet or on their committee page.

Web Postings

Agendas, notices, minutes and documents can most easily be provided through the UUA web pages. Just send the information to your committee's staff liaison, who has been trained in how to update the web site. The agenda gives notice to people who may wish to comment on potential actions.

Information About Your Committee

It is important to have the charge to your committee on your web page, so that people can know what you do. You must also have an email address where your committee can be reached. It is best to use an address like openness@uua.org that is forwarded to a member of your committee. Just submit the name of your committee and the email address where you want messages sent. This will fulfill (b) above for people not at the meeting.

In-Person Meetings

If you meet in person, you must accommodate observers. This means that there is space in the meeting room for observers where they can see and hear. Some opportunity to speak must be given on request. The extent of guest participation in the meeting shall be at the discretion of the chair. Executive sessions shall be noted in the agenda, except in case of an emergency matter, and scheduled at the end of meetings whenever possible. You may ask for observers to make reservations so that you know how many need to be accommodated.

Conference Call Meetings

Meetings by phone shall make provision for observers. Observers will not be reimbursed for the cost of their calls. If you go into executive session for one of the permissible

reasons for confidentiality, you may set up a separate conference call to handle those matters. Any non-confidential decisions made during executive session discussions must be noted in a subsequent open meeting.

Meeting Evaluations

Include in your meeting evaluations questions about your compliance with the transparency guidelines.

Email Lists

It is preferable, but not required, to set up an email list which anyone can join, but where posting is restricted to members of the committee. Contact your staff liaison to set up the list. They can also provide the settings needed to permit only members to post.

Transparency

The important thing to remember is the motivation for the transparency rule: to keep our members informed and to engage them in the work of the Association. The Open UUA Committee will monitor progress in implementing the Rule, and will report to the UUA Board. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact us at openness@uua.org. You can also find information on our [web page](http://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/ouc) (<http://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/ouc>).

OPENNESS IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Charge adopted October 17, 2004

"The Openness Implementation Committee is charged to clarify and implement the functional application of Rule G-2.1 to the UUA Board and all UUA committees, commissions and task forces. The Committee will:

- a. In collaboration with committee, commission or task force leadership, create a clear, detailed process for each group to establish effective openness practices and policies
- b. Provide a mechanism for congregations and individuals to submit comments about adherence to this policy
- c. Report no less than annually to the Board of Trustees

Open UUA Committee (Name changed in 2010):

Cheri Cody (Chair), The Rev. Christian Schmidt, and Rev. Shawna Foster