

UUA Elections Task Force Report

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Objectives:

The Task Force focused on several main objectives.

- Coalesce around some selection and election recommendations with the Presidential Search Committee, Election Campaign Practices Committee, and the Moderator Search Committee reports as a grounding frame.
 - The recommendations will include bylaw changes, rules changes, suggestions for the UUA Board and suggestions for the Administration.
 - Determine the main values that everything needs to be filtered through to ensure that the recommendations and proposals are ones of integrity and are grounded in dismantling white supremacy and oppression.
 - Make recommendations for the on-ramping, selection, and election of the UUA Board, Moderator(s), and President(s).
 - Recommend proposals and bylaw or rule changes for the role and inner functioning of the Election Campaign Practices Committee (renamed Care and Responsibility for Elections Committee), Presidential Search Committee, Moderator Search Committee, and UUA Board including individual board members.
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Values:

We began our work by first focusing on the values that need to underlie both our process and the recommendations for the on ramping, selection and elections processes

Ten values rose to the forefront in no particular order:

1. Neutrality- what is it? Who? Enforced how? Calling back into covenant - who/what does this?
2. Diversities in identities and social positions highly valued to find the most qualified leaders
3. Set up elected folks for success
4. Process of discernment should be productive for Association i.e. spiritual
5. Iterative - tradition bound and ever evolving
6. Clear pathways to leadership - necessary qualities, experience, and how we teach/recruit. Enough information about jobs/planned trajectory
7. Transparency - openness, accessibility and clarity of process
8. Decision making de-centers white supremacy and other forms of oppression - calendar, recruiting, training, how ballots are distributed - real consensus and collaborative leadership
9. Democratic and informed engagement
10. Humane process - noting the toll of leadership and work involved

Roles - President, Moderator and Board:

We then looked at the roles of President, Moderator and the Board and asked how these values play out into them.

The Moderator(s) Role and Job Description

The discussion started from the job description that was worked on already by the UUA Board in January 2019 and the premise that the moderator nomination is made by a moderator search committee that the Board selects and they have to approve/affirm each candidate.

Chief among the responsibilities we expect the moderator role to model our vision of shared and collaborative leadership we have for our faith and in that regard they will implement that role in shared leadership with the board.

Duties of the co-moderators were identified as:

Ensure leadership and coordinating

- Acting as chief governance officer of the Association, including overseeing governance and bylaw change processes, receiving complaints, and addressing conflicts of interest;
- *Setting the tone for the Board and General Assembly*
- Holding a long-term and balcony view of changes, needs and opportunities within the Association.
- Board meetings, including setting agendas and facilitating;
- Providing General Assembly leadership, including coordinating preparing business session agendas, business sessions, and debate;*
- Engaging in regular communication and partnering with UUA staff (President, Executive Vice President, Treasurer, Executive Assistant) about how staff support the work of the Board and the Board supports the work of the staff; Strategy Partners
- Representing the UUA in public communications, attendance at key meetings and summits, and participating in fundraising functions;
- Caring for and tending to volunteers in other contexts (e.g. UUA committees), including attending committee meetings.
- Finances and Budgets - Financial Statements, Budget Review, Support of Financial Advisor and Financial Secretary
- Communication with committees so designated by the UUA Board
- Provide support and guidance to the UUA Board Members
- Anti-racism and Anti-Oppression lens and expertise around governance
- Co-leadership structure requires an ongoing high level of communication between one another with quarterly evaluation and assessments.

*Things that could be delegated are not starred and things that are starred are the sole responsibility of the moderator

President's Role and Description

The key determinations that came out of this conversation were that:

1. The role and description of the President was outlined in general by the description crafted by the Presidential Search Committee although there needs to be some shifts since the UUA Board is moving away from strict Carver Policy Governance and towards more collaborative models of leadership
 - a. Serves as the Executive, with responsibility for interpreting and implementing the Association's Ends as set by the Board (and the General Assembly)
 - b. Accountable to the Board
 - c. Acts as head of the UUA staff
 - d. Effectively manages and deploys the resources of the Association in service of the Ends
 - e. Serves as ex officio, non-voting member of the UUA Board
 - f. Acts as the prophetic voice and the face of Unitarian Universalism (in collaboration with the rest of the Association Staff, the UUA Board, and other UU institutions and individuals.)
 - g. Extends and strengthens UU institutions
 - h. Provides leadership for the Association's Ends of transforming power, privilege, and oppression
2. The description needed to be redone every time that there is a search committee based on the vision set by the board and the general assembly/association
3. The UUA Board should affirm the job description that the Presidential Search Committee develops

UUA Board's Role and Description

The UUA Board only has four main responsibilities under Policy Based Governance

1. Setting strategic direction for the Association
2. Fiduciary Responsibility of the Association
3. Support and Hold Accountable the President and Executive Vice President or the Administration
4. Maintenance of the Board's internal process and culture

(Otherwise known as Foresight, Oversight and Insight)

The UUA Board also has three legal duties:

- a. Duty of Care - take care of the UUA by ensuring prudent use of all assets including people, good will and facility

- b. Duty of Loyalty - ensure that the activities of the UUA are first and foremost, advancing its mission. The board should recognize and disclose conflicts of interest and make decisions that are in the best interest of the UUA not the best interests of an individual board member or another person or for-profit corporation
- c. Duty of Obedience - obey all applicable laws and regulations, follows its on bylaws and follows the stated mission and purpose

Because the UUA is a member based faith organization with many moving parts the UUA board is accountable to the General Assembly, congregations/covenanted communities, UU Professional Organizations and Religious Professionals themselves, UU adjacent organizations, its own committees, the committees elected by the General Assembly and individual Unitarian Universalists.

The UUA Board also has 15 committees that are board appointed committees that are directly accountable to the UUA Board and are appointed by the Appointments Committee and are reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. Those include the Moderator Nominating Committee. All open positions due to a vacancy are selected by the Appointments committee to fulfill the remainder of the term and again are approved by the UUA Board.

The Presidential Search Committee has 2 members of the committee that are chosen by the Appointments Committee and 5 chosen by the Nominating Committee which is elected by the General Assembly. All of the candidates selected by the Nominating Committee (PSC and otherwise) are vetted for Conflict of Interest and Ethical Concerns by the UUA Board before the candidates are put on the slate for nomination.

Moderator and President Selection and Election Roles and Committees:

We then focused on Selection and Election and as a part of selection paid particular attention to on-ramping. There are overall proposals, bylaws and rules recommendations, and recommendations for committees that are not bylaw or rule bound. These recommendations and proposals will be organized in two different ways. The first is by committee and process and the second is organized by type of suggestion - bylaw, rule, and proposal recommendation.

ALL-Board, Staff, Search/Nominating Cmtes, and Care and Responsibility of Elections Committee (CARE) Recommendations

1. Neutrality

For all parties involved a covenant of neutrality is important. This means the full UUA Board, the Moderators, all members of the nominating and search committees, and all members of the Care and Concern for Elections Committee will be neutral. All UUA staff will be neutral and will not use associational resources in the campaigns and no endorsements except for immediate family. Additional procedures and rules will be crafted for the Board to look at by the CARE committee and the Administration. The Administration will craft procedures and rules regarding staff participation and the CARE committee will craft the accountability measures that will be used.

2. Covenenting

A covenant should be created between the UUA Board, CARE (Care and Responsibility of Elections Committee) , Search Committees and Administration

3. Lack of continuity and information and practice related to our UUA elections. A conversation needs to happen between GAPC, CARE and the moderator(s) and potentially the candidates themselves. We saw in the last election a disconnect between what was doable and what had been planned around GA booth access, tech deadlines, candidates' forums, etc.

Recommendations Presidential and Moderator Search Committee - General Duties and Composition

- All search committees are neutral
- Description and Role is redone every time there is a search cycle - duties, qualifications, money, etc. and is affirmed by the UUA Board.
- Search Committees should include at least two elders that are widely respected within UU Communities of Color and other marginalized identities, at least one elder of color, and at least one former member of the UUA staff.
- Search committees conduct "recruitment interviews" with people considering being candidates before they submit applications, as an additional way of assisting a broader diversity of candidates making the decision to run and helping others see that maybe this is not the time
- Search committees use a modified consensus basis and all decisions made by the committee are the unanimous consensus of all the members of the committee
- Search committees establish group norms and dynamics from the start
- Staff Candidates: Clear boundaries are set
- The bylaws state that the Presidential Search Committee must nominate at least two candidates, or team(s) of candidates that share 1 FTE (Full Time Equivalent), to be elected at GA
- The recommendation from the Presidential Search Committee is that the committee should nominate at least three candidates as opposed to two
- Moderator Search Committee nominates at least one candidate (individual or team), to be elected at GA

Secretary Job Duties and Recommendations

- Secretary supervises the process of producing and counting ballots
- Secretary certifies nominations;
- The Secretary is an ex officio member of the CARE committee and is the liaison between the CARE committee and the UUA Board
- Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the board informed in the elections process overall especially any major hiccup, challenge or learning happening during the campaign.
- The board makes decision and the board's decision is final around certifying financials.
- The CARE team, Secretary and COO talk through any number of decisions from small to large that at times the Moderator and Legal Counsel have been a part of.

The biggest need here was to work through a couple of major points.

1. The Secretary shall decide all (and the Secretary's decision shall be final?) accountability concerns.
2. Campaigns themselves get hyper focused on a couple of decisions and can be confused around who all to engage
3. Wanted to ensure that the CARE team is empowered to set the tone and holding the decisions for discernment and connections and build relationships with the candidates and the culture and build in the dimensions of accountability and care.

UUA Board Job Duties and Responsibilities

- The UUA board needs to call an annual leadership pipeline strategy conversation (see more below)
- Final authority needs to rest with the board and not just with any one elected officer
- Secretary is the supervisor of Elections with Full Accountability to the Board
- The Board makes the decision and the board's decision is final around certifying financials
- It is up to the board how the secretary position is held and shared.

Care and Responsibility for Elections (CARE) Committee (formerly ECPC)

- Election Care, Process and Accountability Body - expanded and strengthened ECPC
- The committee serves as a spiritual leadership and clearness body both during elections and in non-election years.
- The committee holds the candidates, bodies and individuals engaged in the selection and election process accountable and engages them in covenanting together.
- They also call bodies and individuals back into covenant and let everyone association wide know that neutrality and agreed upon confidentiality is the expectation from the beginning.
- The committee needs to expand from 3 to 5 members and also needs to be a funded committee to do the vital work of their charge.
- The committee also selects members with UUA Board support to form a Spiritual Leadership and Clearness Council (described below).
- The Care and Responsibilities for Elections Committee is going to come up with a revised charge, rules and practices based off these new understandings and will propose them to the board. The CARE would retain all the governance functions it has around managing the elections process plus the strengthened ability to enforce against violations of campaign governance, plus manage and encourage the spiritual dimensions of the process.
- Spiritual support for non-elected candidates: this is something that CARE will begin thinking about and will share a proposal for
- Formal Complaint Process and Accountability measures proposal is being developed by the CARE committee with an accountability mechanism. One possible accountability measure is that when neutrality is violated by people then you can be removed from your role.
- Potentially could be helpful in regard to the Board Elections as well.
- Broad affirming language of the CARE team role in overseeing the process and determining disputes and the Board holds ultimate authority.

Spiritual Leadership and Clearness Council - Elders Council

- This is an Elders Council (broad sense of Elders) to support candidates in their discernment and not a formal committee
 - Council members chosen by the CARE Committee and is under the CARE Committee
 - Elders council - wisdom and experience
 - Discernment and support for candidates for all offices plus could suggest folks to apply
 - The Care and Responsibilities of Elections Committee is going to discuss and include what makes sense for them in their suggestions to the UUA board.
 - Potentially could be helpful in regard to the Board Elections and in the Leadership Pipeline Work
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Moderator and President Election Process Recommendations:

Who Votes:

- Voting is open to delegates from congregations and covenanted communities based on bylaws and rules spelled out in the bylaws.
- The following religious professionals may also be delegates: ministers in preliminary or final fellowship with the Association and employed at least half time by certified congregations; emeritus/a ministers; community ministers who maintain active involvement and affiliation with a congregation and Directors of Religious Education having achieved Credentialed Religious Education - Master Level status and employed by a congregation.
- Individual proxy voting - Individual non-church UUs can register to vote for President and Moderator. Their votes would be counted as proxy delegates like a church or covenanted community and the number of delegates would be allocated according to UUA bylaws and proportioned at large by who they voted for. That means that if 201 people register that counts as 5 delegates, 500 counts as 10 delegates and over 500 one for each additional 50 people.
- We are encouraging identity-based groups to become covenanted communities so that they are individually able to have voice and vote in the election process

Delegates including certification:

- All congregational delegates are named and certified by their congregations by February 1st based on prior year membership with their congregational certification. For congregations that have grown substantially their delegate number can be adjusted
- CARE sending info to congregational delegates
- Non-church voters register on April 1st and CARE sends information to them

Campaign Finances and Fundraising:

- The campaigns for President and the Moderator will be publicly financed by the UUA.

- They will receive a budget of \$20,000 from the UUA and that is the amount that the candidates must stay within.
- The candidates will be expected to share reports including financial reports to the CARE committee and the UUA Board.
- All fundraising will be towards a shared UUA fundraising campaign and not for their individual campaigns. The candidates will receive support and mentorship from the UUA Stewardship and Development Office and will ensure that whichever candidate gets selected they have an understanding of how Stewardship and Development within the UUA works and relationships with the staff.

Campaign visits and engagement:

- We would like for candidates travel and number of events to be the same and restricted. The Care Committee will work to determine which events the Candidates will present at. Most likely they will be regional gatherings/forums, professional associations meetings, General Assembly and online engagement set up by the UUA Board of Trustees and Staff.
- Additionally there will be discernment opportunities and Q&A sessions with the UUA Board and Staff.
- The CARE committee will help the candidates discern, meet with those closest to the position and work with the UUA Staff to ensure that candidates campaign materials are available to delegates in advance of the election.
- CARE is also charged with holding the candidates accountable and respectful regarding visits, engagement, resource spending, and more.

Petition Process:

- To honor the integrity of the process that the search committees and our faith has gone through we recommend that that the number of petitions needed should be raised to 75 congregations from at least 3 regions to become a candidate for President and Moderator.
- All candidates that are on the ballot through a petition process would have all of the rights, responsibilities and accountabilities of the other candidates.

Calendar:

- Prior GA - GA around discernment, values, vision
- Fall - candidates apply/discern and meet with the UUA board/Staff and the selection committee has the ability to nominate another candidate if someone has to drop out
- Feb 1 - congregations certify delegates based on prior year membership (unless substantial growth)
- Feb 16th - CARE begins communications with delegates
- March 1 - Campaign begins - nominations announced, campaign begins, CARE (Care and Responsibility of Elections Cmte) sends info to delegates
- April 1 - non-church voters register, petitions are due (75 congregations and at least 3 regions)
- End of April - CARE sends info to non-church delegates
- June 1st - voting begins

- GA - voting completed and overlap with predecessor
- Sept 1 - take office

Moderator Election and Position Recommendation

Moderator Whole Term 6 years
 1st 2 years Moderator Elect - Vice Moderator
 3 years Moderator
 Last Year Past Moderator

Past Moderator Chairs Leadership Development Working Group - 1 year board member and 2 years off board with Leadership Pipeline Portfolio

2 years the board would have a moderator and moderator elect and 1 year the board would have the Moderator and Past Moderator

Leadership On Ramping: Vision Clarification and Leadership Development:

Vision and Strategy Discernment General Assembly/Conference

Each general assembly before a Moderator and President election there is a General Conference to do deep discernment as a faith movement about our vision, theological underpinnings, assessment and strategy for how our faith is living into dismantling oppression and white supremacy internally and in the larger world. The Board then takes this into their October retreat that coincides with an Annual Leadership Pipeline Strategy Conversation.

Annual Leadership Pipeline Strategy Conversation

The UUA Board, Appointments Committee, Nominating Committee, the UUA Advisory Council and key UUA staff come together to discuss what is happening in the UUA at large, what we need to focus on around the leadership pipeline, and make some suggestions for who could serve denominationally. This is also a space for the Board to communicate clearly and for everyone to be driven by a common covenant.

Leadership Development Working Group

The Leadership Development Working Group is charged with helping support and deepen the denominational leadership pipeline considering the context of the moment. The Working Group will be led by the former Moderator(s) (Past Moderator, on the board for year 1) or a recently sun-setted UUA Board Member. The committee is a committee of the UUA Board and will be made up of Board members, National Advisory Council Members, and other selected or appointed members (either by the UUA Board itself or the Appointments Committee - TBD).

Leadership Pipeline Cohort

The idea here is that there would be a “fellowship” or cohort of 25-50 UU emergent leaders that would engage in a two-year learning journey that deepens their knowledge of UU theology, history and

understanding of the denomination and system. The program would be online and in person and would include mentorship, connection to networking and opportunities. After completion there is a network of peer to peer accountability and this body is where the vast majority of our denominational appointed and elected leaders would come from. There would also be a space for existing UU leaders to connect, deepen, learn and grow in their development.

Nominating and Appointments Committee

- We talked about what it meant to diversify leadership and what it means to have some clear and accountable conversations between the UUA Board, Nominating Committee and Appointments Committee.
- We also shared a recommendation that the UUA Board Review all slates to ensure ethical and conflict of interest concerns are met (which is in the charge actually - it just has not always been followed).
- That we would love for both bodies to receive nominations broadly but also directly from identity, professional and relational groups

UUA Board Recommendations: Bylaws, Rules, and Practice Recommendations:

These are the UUA Board specific recommendations that require UUA Board Discussion and Action in March and April.

Bylaws Recommendations

In general all bylaws that are process oriented or have dates need to move to the rules

President - Candidates for President can serve as a team provided that they run as a team and share 1 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) position

Mandated Neutrality - for everyone involved in the election in an elected or appointed position (conflict of interest)

Here are the bylaws that need to have changes made to them based on the recommendations above

Article IV General Assembly

51B Section C-4.7 Voting

52B Section 4.8 Delegates

Article V Committees of the Association

70B Section 5.7 Presidential Search Committee

Article VII Officers of the Association

117B Section 8.9 President

126B Section 8.18 Compensation

Article IX Nominations and Elections

132B Section 9.5 Nomination of President and Moderator

133B Section 9.6 Nomination by Petition
134B Section 9.7 Qualifications of Nominees
136B Section 9.9 Supervision of Elections
137B Section 9.10 Conduct of Elections at Large
138B Section 9.11 Counting of Ballots

Rules Recommendations

The rules need to consist of the process oriented and all dates will move to the rules if they need to be kept.

Here are the rule changes that need to have changes made to them based on the recommendations above

Rule IV General Assembly
186B Section C-4.7 Voting
187B Section C-4.9 Accreditation of Delegates
237B Rule G-4.9.1 Number of Delegates
240 Rule G-4.9.3 Mailing of Credential Cards
241B Rule 4.9.4 Issuance of Duplicate of Credential Cards
242B Rule 4.9.5 Alternate Delegates
243B Rule G-4.9.6 Delegate Status

Rule VI Board of Trustees
192B Section 6.4 Election of Trustees

Rule IX Nominations and Elections
197B Section 9.13 Rules for Nominations and Elections
266B Rule G-9.13.1 Preparation and Mailing of Ballot
267B Rule G-9.13.2 Order of Names on Ballot
268B Rule G-9/13/3 Write Ins Prohibited
269B Rule G-9/13/4 Absentee Ballots
271B Rule G-9.13.6 Campaigns for Elective Office
272B Rule G-9.13.7 Length of Campaigns for President and Moderator
273B Rule G-9.13.8 Campaign Finances Disclosures and Limitations
274B Rule G-9.13.9 Separation of Campaigns from Conduct of Official Business
275B Rule G-9.13.10 Election Campaign Practices Committee

Committee Practice Recommendations

Description and Role of each committee and position needs to be reviewed every year by the search committees and affirmed by the UUA Board.

Board Policy and Practice Recommendations

Budget, Reporting and Financial Authority

- Funding for the ECPC (changing to CARE) with increasing staffing to 5 people- UUA Board, Administration and CARE need to sit down and figure this out
- Budget increase for the next PSC so that the PSC can conduct as many interviews as needed

- The communication link to the UUA and expense approvals for the Search committees needs to be figured out
- Compensation either directly or creatively for moderators

Moderator Search Committee

- Moderator search committee needs to form a year longer than it currently is and have a direct board liaison
- Board recruit potential applications for moderator i.e. UUA Board and current Moderator(s) take more responsibility for the process

Leadership Development Practice Recommendations

- Vision Strategy Discernment General Conference/General Assembly - each year before a President or Moderator election the General Assembly is more like a General Conference to do deep discernment work around vision and purpose
- Annual Leadership Pipeline Strategy Conversation - Each year the UUA Board, Nominations Committee, Appointments Committee and National Advisory Council meet to discuss leadership pipeline and get on the same page
- Leadership Development Working Group
- Leadership Pipeline Cohort

UUA Staff Policy and Practice Recommendations and Discussions

- UUA Staff- what needs to be run by the COO and what doesn't? Dual messaging at times - over caution and at times not reaching out when it was important to.
- Internal repository for information and best practices coming out of this cycle - submissions by GAPC, UU GA Office, GAPC tech crews, UUA IT staff, all Leadership Council-level staff, ECPC, UUA Board Secretary, the UUA Board and the search committees
- Editor of the UU world, through editorial decisions regarding the candidates and how they were covered, also exerts influence in the election process in ways that should be considered in a review and evaluation of the current process. A deeper conversation with the UU World staff is necessary around all aspects of the on ramping, selection and election recommendations
- Who manages the money when there is a candidate that is staff- the moderator or who??