

XIII Votes of No Confidence in Administrators Passed by Senate Vote 12-6-17

The Faculty Senate recognizes the “vote of no confidence” as a procedure – to be used in extreme cases only - through which faculty may freely express extreme discontent with administrators. Academic units should exercise their own discretion in submitting confidential ballots to the provost to contest the continuance of a highly contested dean. The Faculty Senate shall serve as the body through which campus-wide votes are taken to contest the continuance of the provost, university vice presidents, or the university president.

Regarding unit deans, the faculty of an academic unit may undertake a vote of no confidence and submit this directly to the provost if it seeks to contest the continuation of a dean. The Faculty Senate affirms the right of units to undertake such processes but will not participate in validating the process. The Faculty Senate strongly encourages units to conduct balloting via anonymous, fair, and inclusive means, and to give voice to all eligible faculty, according to the established norms and customs of each unit. Regarding a no confidence vote in the provost or members of the president’s cabinet (i.e. the university’s vice presidents), the results of this vote would be transmitted by the Faculty Senate Chair to the University President. Such a vote would be convened by the Senate, in executive session, with 2/3 majority support required of all senators (after a “real time” meeting where the merits of calling for such a vote are deliberated, even if the actual vote is conducted remotely). If a “no confidence vote” motion receives the support of 2/3 of the senate, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee would convene an anonymous, fair and inclusive balloting procedure, giving the opportunity to vote to all full-time faculty with at least three years’ of continuous full-time service at American University. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall validate that balloting was conducted via anonymous, fair, and inclusive means, and that all eligible faculty had an opportunity to participate, before the Senate Chair transmits the results to the University President.

Regarding a no confidence vote in the president, the results of this vote would be transmitted by the Senate Chair to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Such a vote would be convened by the Senate, in executive session, with 2/3 majority support required of all senators (via a convened “real time” meeting where the merits of calling for such a vote are deliberated, even if voting is conducted remotely). If a “no confidence vote” motion receives the support of 2/3 of the Senate, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee would convene an anonymous, fair and inclusive balloting procedure, giving the opportunity to vote to all full-time faculty with at least three years’ of continuous full-time service at American University. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall validate that balloting was conducted via anonymous, fair, and inclusive means, and that all eligible faculty had an opportunity to participate, before the Senate Chair transmits the results to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

These procedures supplement the Senate’s practice and right – in extreme cases - to conduct its own votes on these and related issues.