

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES
(Final; Action)

CC.26.03 Election of the 2025-2026 Presiding Officer of the Senate

BACKGROUND

The Presiding Officer of the Senate shall be a member of the Senate electorate, but not a current senator, and shall be elected as prescribed in the Senate *Bylaws*. The Presiding Officer of the Senate shall chair all Senate meetings. In the absence of the Presiding Officer of the Senate from the chair, the Presiding Officer's designee shall preside. The Presiding Officer's designee must meet the same eligibility criteria as the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer of the Senate may not make or second motions, participate in debate, or vote on any matter, except in the event of a tie. In this event, the Presiding Officer of the Senate may cast the deciding vote, even if the Presiding Officer of the Senate is not a voting member of the Senate. (Article VI, Section 7 of the Senate *Constitution*)

The Presiding Officer of the Senate or the Presiding Officer's designee shall preside at Senate meetings. (Part A.1 of the Senate *Bylaws*)

The Presiding Officer of the Senate shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the Senate Executive Committee and is expected to attend meetings of the Senate Executive Committee. (Part D.1.c.1.o of the Senate *Bylaws*)

NOMINATIONS

Nominations for the Presiding Officer of the Senate shall be made by the incumbent Committee on Committees. Nominations may also be made by others and must be accompanied by consent to serve from the person nominated. The nominator shall provide a brief biographical sketch of each nominee. (Part A.7.d of the Senate *Bylaws*)

The Senate Committee on Committees nominates the following members of the Senate electorate for a one-year term as Presiding Officer of the Senate ending in 2026. A statement of interest is included.

Alex Belanger	Undergraduate Student (LAS)
H. George Friedman, Jr	Professor Emeritus (ENGR)
Rurik Tywoniw	Research Assistant Professor (LAS)

2024-2025 COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES
Chaya Sandler, Chair

Alex Belanger
Kent Choquette
Linda Herrera
Myles Johnson
Prasanta Kalita
Robin Kar
Lilah Leopold
Carol Symes
Jenny Roether, *ex officio*

STATEMENTS OF INTEREST

Alex Belanger (Undergraduate Student, LAS)

Alex is interested in serving as the Presiding Officer of the Senate because he views it as the best way for him to leverage his experiences to contribute to the rich history of shared governance on campus. Alex has unique experiences that lend themselves to this role. He served as the Parliamentarian for the Illinois Student Council in his freshman year, and he served as the Deputy Speaker the following year for the same organization. As Parliamentarian, he chaired the Ethics Board and opined on questions of parliamentary procedure. As Deputy Speaker, he chaired the Committee on Operations and the Ad Hoc Committee on Policies & Procedures. While at this university, Alex has chaired over fifty committee meetings and several Student Congress meetings. In addition to this, Alex has served as a Senator in the UC Senate and is serving on the Chancellor Search Committee.

H. George Friedman, Jr (Professor Emeritus, ENGR)

H. George Friedman has served as Presiding Officer for most of three academic years, and before that as Parliamentarian of the Senate.

Rurik Tywoniw (Research Assistant Professor, LAS)

Professor Rurik Tywoniw wishes to serve as Presiding Officer of the Senate because of his commitment to shared governance at the university. With a foot firmly in both civil service and research as a specialized faculty, Professor Tywoniw has a vested interest in ensuring that the Senate functions to serve the entirety of the electorate and beyond. Part of achieving functioning shared governance is the orderly operation of Senate meetings and the provision of clear communication between Senate executive leadership and the Senate body. Professor Tywoniw has over 20 years of experience using Robert's Rules of Order, beginning with participation in SkillsUSA Chapter Business Procedure competitions in high school and even winning a gold medal at the national level in 2004. He has since utilized this knowledge as a presiding officer of various groups, including as secretary of the Japan Exchange and Teaching Alumni Association of Chicago, where parliamentary procedure is employed.