

Constitution of the Faculty Senate

Preamble

ACCEPTED AS GIVEN THAT faculty, being experts in their fields and pedagogy, thusly know best the needs, wants, programs, departments, divisions, and all other traditional academic aspects of a college or university, that the representatives of the several faculty shall constitute and be the composition of the Representative Senate of the Faculty of Texas A&M University-Texarkana. The Terms “Senate of the Faculty ,” “Faculty Senate,” or “Senate” may be used interchangeably for all business conducted by the Representative Senate of the Faculty of Texas A&M University-Texarkana. This constitution is the expressed will of the Faculty and its Senate.

1.0 PURPOSE

As a deliberative body, the Faculty Senate serves as a forum where faculty members express their views on issues of concern. The Senate is a recommending body. All recommendations are forwarded to the President of the University. No Texas A&M University-Texarkana officer, body, or agent shall exercise control over the Faculty Senate, or senators, recommendations, requests, duties, obligations, or charges.

Given that faculty, being experts in their fields and pedagogy, thusly know best the needs, wants, programs, departments, divisions, and all other academic aspects of a college or university, the weighted sentiments, resolutions, and recommendations of the faculty as expressed through their representatives should and must be considered with utmost seriousness and gravity.

Senators are faculty representatives and, as such, they express the concerns of the faculty. Senators are not responsible nor shall be deemed liable for the issues brought forward in the senate forum.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SENATE

The Faculty Senate shall have responsibility for recommending policies and procedures with regard to all undergraduate and graduate academic programs, to all matters concerning university planning and budgeting, and to all matters of faculty welfare. This shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 2.1 Academic standards;
- 2.2 Requirements for undergraduate and graduate degree or certification programs;
- 2.3 New undergraduate and graduate courses and curricula;
- 2.4 Non-traditional means of earning course credits; evaluation guidelines for transfer credits from other post-secondary institutions and for credits from training programs or work experience;
- 2.5 Faculty workload, and faculty development;
- 2.6 Faculty tenure, promotion, and tenure review;

- 2.7 Faculty evaluation and merit recognition;
- 2.8 Faculty Grievances;
- 2.9 Rules and Regulations of non-tenure-track/tenured faculty
- 2.10 University planning and budgeting;
- 2.11 Academic support services;
- 2.12 Student affairs;
- 2.13 Policies and procedures concerning evaluations of administrators.

Given that Faculty, being experts in their fields and pedagogy, thusly know best the needs, wants, programs, departments, divisions, and all other academic aspects of a college or university, Policy, Procedure, and Rule changes made without the advice and consent, or direct recommendation, resolution, or sentiment of the Faculty as expressed through their representatives should and must only address those areas, issues, and concerns of University operations not under the purview of this section.

3.0 MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Eligibility

All tenured and tenure-track faculty with full-time academic contracts, with the majority of members being tenured faculty, are eligible to be members unless they:

- (A) are Deans;
- (B) are one-half time or more administrators; or,
- (C) resign by advising the President of the Senate in writing of his / her desire not to be a member. The term “full-time faculty” status shall also be defined as including librarians who have faculty rank.

3.2 Election of Senators

The total number of senators shall be no more than twenty-five percent of the total number of full-time, non-clinical faculty for the university, to be allocated per each constituent college thusly: two for the college, and one for every eight full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member of that college (i.e., three representatives for up to fifteen, four representatives for up to twenty-three, five representatives for up to thirty-one, six for up to thirty-nine, etc.), who shall be elected by their respective colleges. The make-up of the representative body of the Faculty Senate shall consist of individuals that will serve three-year terms for no more than two consecutive terms; with one-third of the members being selected each year on a rotating basis so that both newly elected faculty members and returning faculty members will represent their respective colleges each year.

The President of the Faculty Senate shall call for election of new members of the representative body of the Faculty Senate during the month of April of each year. The President of the Faculty Senate shall be responsible for initiating college election of Faculty Senate Representatives each year.

The constituent colleges reserve the right to replace senators who are unable to perform their duties as senators for reasons including but not necessarily limited to the following-death, long-term illness, resignation or termination from the University, promotion or demotion to ineligible status, or resignation from the Senate. The President of the Senate reserves the right to confirm such replacements, or if such are found by the President to be inappropriate, the President shall notify the constituent college in writing detailing constitutional or by-law

specific justifications for refusal to confirm.

3.3 Executive Committee

3.3.1 *Apportionment*

The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate shall be comprised of the following officers: Faculty Senate President, Vice-President/President-Elect, and Secretary/Parliamentarian. In the event one or more colleges are not represented within the executive committee additional member(s) from the representative body shall be added.

3.3.2 *Terms of Office and Elections*

The elected representatives shall make up the representative body of the Faculty Senate and shall, as soon as practical after the election of the representatives from each college, meet and nominate at least two members for the Office of Vice-President/President-Elect and two members for the office of Secretary/Parliamentarian.

The representative body of the Faculty Senate and the newly elected representatives will elect a new Faculty Senate Vice President/President elect and additional executives (if necessary) from eligible senators at the last meeting of the Spring semester.. The offices of the executive committee will be elected by the representative body of the Faculty Senate to serve a one-year term.

3.3.3 *Duties of the Executive Committee*

The Executive Committee constitutes the officers of the Senate directing all Senate activities with the authority to discuss all issues of concern to the faculty. However, any substantive rule issue must be brought before the representative body of the Faculty Senate.

4.0 MEETINGS OF THE SENATE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

4.1 The Executive Committee shall meet regularly from September through December and February through May. The Senate President or any member of the Executive Committee may call a special meeting at other times, including June through August, or change the date of scheduled meetings.

4.2 The President of the Senate or a majority of members of the representative body of the Faculty Senate shall call meetings of the representative body of the Faculty Senate as needed to consider policy issues

5.0 OFFICERS OF THE SENATE

5.1 *The President*

The Faculty Senate President shall preside over all meetings of the Executive Committee. The Faculty Senate President shall also transmit to the President of A&M University-Texarkana all decisions, recommendations, and resolutions enacted by the Senate.

5.2 *The Vice President/President-Elect*

In the absence of the Faculty Senate President, the Vice President shall assume the duties of the presiding officer. The Vice President shall also agree to serve the following year as President of the Faculty Senate according to term eligibility. The Vice President is responsible for maintenance of the Faculty Senate web page.

5.3 The Secretary/Parliamentarian

The Secretary/Parliamentarian shall prepare and distribute an agenda three working days prior to each scheduled meeting, shall keep written minutes of each meeting, and shall distribute the minutes of the Executive Committee to the administration, faculty, and staff within seven days following the completion of each meeting. Additionally, the Secretary/Parliamentarian shall be responsible for ensuring all actions undertaken by the Senate shall comport firstly with Texas A&M University System Procedures and Policies, and secondly with this constitution. The Secretary/Parliamentarian shall assist the President, or the Presidents' designated presiding officer, in conducting the business of meetings, and be responsible for interpreting the procedure of meetings, which shall follow Roberts Rules of Order and Faculty Senate By-Laws, customs, and norms.

5.4 Initial Election of Officers

The representative body of the Faculty Senate shall elect the officers of President, Vice-President, Secretary/ Parliamentarian from those who are actively involved in the representative body of the Faculty Senate.

6.0 REPLACEMENT OF INACTIVE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

If a member of the Executive Committee misses two consecutive scheduled meetings or four scheduled meetings during a one-year period, the Executive Committee may remove the member by a three-fourths vote.

In such a case of removal or if a member resigns, the President of the Senate shall institute the proper procedures, according to the rules of apportionment, to replace the member before the next scheduled meeting.

In the event a member of the executive committee is not fulfilling position duties as specified in the constitution, the representative body of the faculty senate will review the procedures with the committee member. If actions are not taken to address the concerns of the representative body, a replacement may be recommended by a three-fourths vote.

7.0 PROCEDURES

7.1 All meetings of the representative body of the Faculty Senate and Executive Committee shall require written and signed notification of time, place, and agenda to the administration, faculty, and appropriate staff at least three days prior to the meeting.

7.2 All standing committees shall send the committee decisions/recommendations to each member of the Faculty Senate for review via email. Upon notification, all senate members have the right to object to a decision/recommendation of a standing committee within 5 business days.

7.2.1 If an objection is made by a member of the Faculty Senate the decision/recommendation of the committee shall be placed on hold and will be presented as an action item during the next Faculty Senate meeting. For time sensitive matters, the provost may request a called or special meeting of the Faculty Senate to consider action.

7.2.2 If there is no objection from members of the Faculty Senate the decision/recommendation will be sent to the Vice-President/VPAA.

7.3 Executive Committee Quorum: For purposes of formal action by the Executive Committee, a quorum of one half of the members plus one (a committee of three members require two, committee of four or five members requires 3) shall be required to adopt a motion.

7.4 Meetings of the Senate shall be open to any visitor except that, in cases where the privacy of an individual is likely to be at issue, the Senate may, by majority vote, restrict a meeting to the voting membership only.

7.5 Members of the faculty, administration, staff, or student body may request hearings before the Senate through the President of the Senate.

7.6 The Faculty Senate may require the presence of any member of the faculty, administration, staff, or student body to answer questions in formal hearings before the Senate.

8.0 STANDING COMMITTEES

8.1 *The Executive Committee*

The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary/Parliamentarian. Issues other than those specifically relegated to the undergraduate and graduate standing committees may be brought before the Executive Committee or before the representative body of the Faculty Senate as a whole. The Executive Committee shall appoint standing and ad hoc committees. The Executive Committee shall meet regularly with the university president to discuss matters of mutual concern and to propose resolution of problems and differences with the university administration.

Issues this committee will consider include those which Faculty Senate would normally address within regularly scheduled meetings. When decisions are needed between scheduled meetings the executive committee is authorized to make the decision on behalf of the Faculty Senate.

8.2 *Curriculum Committee*

The curriculum committee oversees proposed changes to University curriculum requiring external approval or the approval of more than one college.

8.3 *Academic Standards*

The academic standards committee oversees proposed changes to academic standards such as admission to the university.

8.4 Academic Assessment

The academic assessment committee oversees the University academic assessment policies and procedures.

8.5 Educational Technology

The educational technology committee oversees the University educational technology issues.

8.6 Academic Rules and Procedures

The Academic Rules and Procedures committee oversees recommendations pertaining to Academic Rules and Procedures.

8.7 Faculty Status Committee

The Faculty Status Committee considers issues that affect the welfare of the faculty. Such concerns include, but are not limited to, the following

- 8.7.1 Faculty ethics
- 8.7.2 Faculty responsibilities
- 8.7.3 Faculty salaries
- 8.7.4 Faculty workload
- 8.7.5 Faculty evaluation
- 8.7.6 Guidelines for research
- 8.7.7 Retirement

The Faculty Status Committee of the Faculty Senate consists of one member of the Senate from each college who are appointed by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate. Committee members must be eligible for Senate membership. The Faculty Status Committee reports to the Faculty Senate. Recommendations by the Senate are sent to the President for action.

8.8 The Committee for Faculty Research Enhancement and Professional Development (FRED)

The Committee for Faculty Research Enhancement and Professional Development will receive, review, and recommend proposals each month that merit funding or other support. The President of the Faculty Senate appoints a chair of the FRED committee each year from current senators. The chair of the FRED committee is responsible for the selection of committee members. FRED committee members must be tenure-track or tenured faculty.

9.0 Ad hoc committees – The Faculty Senate may form adhoc committees as needed.

9.1 Faculty Senate committees may from time to time call upon the expertise of non-Faculty Senate personnel for input; these may be from faculty, staff, administration, or the student body. Such inputs will be of an advisory nature only.

10.0 REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Action taken by the Faculty Senate and Executive Committee shall be reported to the Vice President/VPAA on the "Faculty Senate Recommendation" for; the Vice President/VPAA will report the information to the President. Additionally all academic recommendations must be submitted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. At the end of each resolution passed by the Senate and / or the Executive Committee, there shall be a designated place for the signatures of the President of the Faculty Senate and the Vice President/VPAA, A&M University-Texarkana who will sign the resolution, indicating approval or disapproval, and if not approved, shall in writing provide rationale for disregarding the carefully considered, reasoned, and weighted advice and consent, direct recommendation, or sentiment of the Faculty; and the date of the action.

The Vice President of the University shall notify the Faculty Senate by return of this signed and dated document of the approval or disapproval of all resolutions. Resolutions approved by the Vice President/VPAA of the University shall become an official statement of university rule or procedure. If a resolution requires action by the Board of Regents, it shall become official only upon approval by the Board of Regents.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs of the University may set aside immediately any rule or procedure which in his / her opinion works against the welfare of the university. The Vice President/VPAA of the University shall inform the Faculty Senate of such action in writing, and in detail provide rationale for disregarding the carefully considered, reasoned, and weighted advice and consent, direct recommendation, resolution, or sentiment of the Faculty and its Senate.

11.0 AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by a three-fourths vote of the Faculty Senate, officers excluded. Amendments to the constitution should proceed for the purpose of update and revision. The constitution, its amendments, and bylaws should be regularly reviewed.

Final Approval of this constitution will be sought by the Faculty Senate on the 24th of April 2015. Current senators will complete service as previously elected. In the transition to the modified constitution the two term three year limits will apply in all cases (i.e. a senator who came in under the old constitution and is on their first term will complete their term and is eligible to serve one more term, a senator who is completing their second term under the old constitution will not be eligible for immediate re-election). This constitution is the amended of that originating 21 April 2008 (as amended 2012). It supplements TAMUSPolicy12.04 (amended).

As directed, Faculty Senate Sub-Committee.

Ratified by the Senate, April 24, 2015