

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 shall be forwarded to the President of the university and the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. 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 limited to, the following:

- a) Academic Standards;
- b) The approval of and requirements for new undergraduate and graduate degree or certificate programs;
- c) 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;

- d) Faculty workload and faculty development;
- e) Faculty tenure, promotion, and tenure review procedures;
- f) Faculty evaluation and merit recognition procedures;
- g) Faculty grievances;
- h) Rules and regulations applying to non-tenure-track/tenure-track/tenured faculty;
- i) University planning and budgeting;
- j) Academic support services;
- k) Student affairs;
- l) Policies and procedures concerning the evaluations of administrators.

2.1 Responsibilities of Senators

- a) Regular attendance at faculty senate meetings
- b) Offering regular reports and updates to college faculty of the proceedings of the senate

3.0 MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Eligibility

All faculty members with full-time academic contracts are eligible to be members unless they:

- a) are Deans or higher administrators;
- b) are division chairs.

3.2 Election of Senators

- 3.2.1 Each academic division (as defined by the presence of a division chair) shall be entitled to select one member of their eligible number to serve as a faculty senator for a three-year term.
- 3.2.2 Each academic college shall also elect a single at-large senator who meets the eligibility qualifications laid out in section 3.1 for a three-year term.
- 3.2.3 Election Procedure and Replacement of Senators

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 Faculty Senate shall be responsible for initiating election of Faculty Senate Representatives each year. In April of each Spring the President of Faculty Senate shall notify each academic division whose representative's term is up to initiate an election to select a new senator. The President shall also notify the dean of each college that an election must be held if the term of the at-large delegate is due to expire.

The constituent divisions and colleges (for the at-large senator) 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.

If a faculty senator resigns from the senate by advising the President of the Senate in writing of his/her desire not to be a member, the President of the Senate shall direct the affected division or college to elect another eligible faculty member to serve.

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 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.

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 of the senate.

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 VPAA and President.

- 7.3 Quorum Rules: For purposes of formal action by the Faculty Senate or any of its committees, a quorum of one half of the members plus one 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

Regulation of committees can be found in the Faculty Senate bylaws appended to this document.

8.1 The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary/Parliamentarian. 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, including the approval of new degrees, programs, and certificates.

8.3 Academic Standards

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

8.4 Core Curriculum Assessment

The core curriculum assessment committee oversees the University core curriculum 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 Welfare Committee*

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

- a) External faculty awards
- b) Faculty engagement and professional development.

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.

8.9 *The Faculty Resources and Guidance Committee*

The Committee for Faculty Resources and Guidance will develop, implement, distribute, and maintain the Faculty Senate Faculty Handbook and other resources/guides for university faculty.

8.10 *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.*

9.0 AD HOC COMMITTEES

The Faculty Senate may form *ad hoc* committees as needed.

10.0 REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

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 VPAA 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. At the discretion of the senate a copy will be sent to the President as well.

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. If the VPAA disagrees with the senate they 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. Amendments to the constitution should proceed for the purpose of update and revision. The constitution, its amendments, and bylaws should be regularly reviewed.