



Constitution of the Faculty Senate

1. PREAMBLE

1.1. To fulfill its mission effectively, the University needs a mechanism for meaningful and continuing cooperation between the faculty and administrative officers of the institution in shared governance. In order to foster mutual trust and respect and to produce cooperative efforts that enhance the stature of the university and its programs, formal and systematic lines of communication are needed to ensure full discussion of important matters and adequate reaction from one constituency to another.

1.2. Final authority for implementing the policies of the institution resides with the University president. It is a basic premise of this document that the faculty has the right and obligation to participate fully and actively in the determination of those policies that pertain to academic matters and faculty welfare. The Faculty Senate herein constituted provides, therefore, for meaningful and formal participation by the faculty in matters of University governance that are related to its right and proper concerns.

1.3. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate of East Tennessee State University shall interpret and/or clarify the Constitution and By-laws of the Faculty Senate as needed.

*Revised April 7, 2017 – added “shared governance” and 1.3
Revised, May 1995*

2. ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Faculty Senate of East Tennessee State University.

Revised, May 1995

3. ARTICLE II: PURPOSE & FUNCTIONS

3.1. The purposes and functions of the Faculty Senate of East Tennessee State University shall be as follows:

1. To serve as the primary vehicle of faculty participation in the shared governance of the University.
2. To serve as the forum for the determination and the expression of the representative opinion of the University faculty.

3. To serve as a means for reciprocal communication among all segments of the University (administration, faculty, students, and staff) concerning University problems, goals, programs, and policies.
 4. To serve as a forum for the initiation, formulation, discussion, and implementation of academic and related policies of concern to colleges, schools, or other academic units.
 5. To make recommendations to the appropriate University administrator on matters of University policy and procedure in areas of concern to the faculty, including the following:
 - a. Those matters about which the faculty is expected to take the initiative (e.g. curricula; academic policies; degree programs; faculty appointments; dismissal, retention, promotion and tenure; and academic freedom and responsibility).
 - b. Those matters about which the administration is expected to take the initiative (e.g. policies regarding use of University facilities; allocation of financial resources; research administration; student life; and selection of major University academic administrative officers). The Faculty Senate shall expect to receive prompt notice of impending actions or decisions of the University president, or of other administrative officers, which could result in changes in University policy about which the faculty could be expected to have reasonable concern. The Senate shall discuss such actions or decisions and make recommendations to the appropriate administrator before these are put into effect. Similarly, the Senate shall expect to receive prompt notice of actions taken by the president to implement the Senate's recommendations. If such recommendations are not implemented, the president should offer an explanation for the decision.
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4. ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

4.1. **Term of Office.** The term of office for an elected member of the Senate shall be three (3) years with the exception that:

1. The term of the president shall be automatically extended for up to three (3) years to ensure uninterrupted progression into the office of past president. At the end of this extended term of office, the affected school, college, or academic unit shall elect a senator to complete any remaining years of the normal term.

4.2. **Representation.** Each college, school, or equivalent academic unit with its own faculty shall be entitled to elect three (3) Senators. Additional Senate members shall be elected by and within the various colleges, schools or equivalent academic units in the following manner:

1. A college, school or equivalent academic unit shall be entitled to one additional representative for every twenty-five (25) faculty members. The number of senators eligible shall be determined from the records of the Vice President of Academic Affairs at the beginning of each Spring Semester. In cases where new Senate representation is awarded to a college, school or academic unit, the Senate may determine with the consent of a simple majority of the unit's

senators to utilize staggered terms. Terms of the new senators then would initially be established by drawing lot for terms of one, two, and three years, as appropriate.

- a. Any college, school or equivalent academic unit with a minimum of five faculty members organized after the adoption of this Constitution shall attain Senate representation in the first Senate election following its organization.
- b. By two-thirds vote of those present at any regularly scheduled meeting, the Senate may grant senatorial representation to divisions or academic units not covered in this section. If a college, school or academic unit loses faculty so as to affect Senate representation, the first position to become vacant will not be filled.

2. The University Libraries shall be entitled to elect at least one (1) senator.

4.3. Elections.

1. Elections shall be held each year by secret ballot prior to the first meeting of the Senate in the fall term. The term of office shall begin with the first Senate meeting in the fall.
2. Elections shall be supervised and conducted by the Committee on Faculty Elections or by senator(s) that the committee designates. The rules and regulations stated in the Senate By-Laws will be followed. (See By-Laws 1.5.1.4.)

Revised April 7, 2017 - Representation
Revised: April 6, 2009

5. ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS

5.1. The Faculty Senate constitutional officers shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Chief Operating Officer (COO). The president shall be elected for a single two (2)-year term. The vice president, secretary, and treasurer are to be elected annually from the membership of the Senate by secret ballot at the last spring meeting of the sitting Senate.

5.1.1. **President:** The president shall be the presiding officer of the Senate, shall chair the Executive Committee and shall be an ex officio member of all other Senate committees. The President shall be the faculty representative to senior administrative level committees.

5.1.2. **Vice President:** The vice president shall substitute in the absence of the president, assuming all duties of that office, and shall serve in other capacities as the president may direct. A vice president elected to serve during the second or announced final year of the President's term shall serve with the expectation of ascending to the office of the President with the next election for a full two (2)-year term.

5.1.3. **Secretary:** The secretary shall perform the following functions:

1. Keep and maintain the minutes of any regular or special meetings of the Senate.
2. Keep the official attendance records of all meetings.
3. Prepare and maintain the official membership list of the Senate.
4. Maintain a permanent and public collection of all of the records of the Senate.

5.1.4. **Treasurer:** The treasurer shall be the official financial record keeper for the Faculty Senate.

5.1.5. **Chief Operating Officer:** The COO shall substitute for the Secretary and/or the Treasurer when either cannot perform his/her duties and other duties as noted in the by-laws.

Revised April 7, 2017 – President, COO – updated duties

Revised: April 6, 2009

6. ARTICLE V: FACULY SENATE COMMITTEES

6.1. As noted in the By-Laws, the Senate shall establish committees to study and make reports on matters of concern to the University faculty. Committees created by the Senate become committees of the Senate, receive their authority from the Senate, and shall report their findings and make their recommendations to the Senate.

6.2. **Policies and Procedures of Senate Committees.** Senate Committees shall not act independently of the Senate, and all accomplishments of these committees shall be presented to the Senate for consideration. Committee work shall be done as a body and not as individual members of the committee. Actions taken shall be those of the committee as a whole representing a majority vote. Minority reports and recommendations may be submitted to the Senate if desired by dissenting committee members. A majority of the committee membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business of the committee.

6.3. **Standing Committees.** The Standing Committees of the Senate shall be the Executive Committee and such other committees as identified in the By-Laws. The Executive Committee shall appoint members to the standing Senate committees according to the procedures established in the By-Laws. The Senate standing committees shall be maintained at full membership and shall file reports in writing with the secretary of the Senate at least seven (7) workdays prior to the last regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year.

6.4. **Executive Committee.** The Executive Committee shall be composed of the following members:

1. The officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chief Operating Officer
2. The immediate past president of the Senate
3. Faculty member of the ETSU Board of Trustees

4. Chair of Faculty Concerns and Grievances committee
5. Three at-large members who shall be elected by the Senate from its membership by secret ballot each year after the new members of the Senate are seated. No at-large member shall be elected to the Executive Committee from a single college, school or equivalent academic unit that already has more than two (2) voting members.
6. In the event the President appoints a designee to serve as the representative of ETSU's faculty to any external body(ies) of faculty, the designee will be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee.

Revised April 7, 2017 – updated composition of Executive Committee

7. ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

7.1. The Faculty Senate shall hold at least one regularly scheduled meeting each month during the fall and spring semesters at such time as specified by the membership of the Senate.

7.2. Summer meetings and special meetings may be called by the Executive Committee or by the Senate president upon petition of at least one-fourth of the Senators. Notification of summer or special meetings shall be made, in hardcopy or electronic format, to all members of the Senate at least three (3) workdays prior to such meetings.

7.3. Except for closed meetings, all meetings of the Senate shall be open to anyone who wishes to attend. The Senate may go into closed meeting by approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present.

7.4. A majority of the elected membership of the Faculty Senate shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business of the Senate.

Revised April 7, 2017 – updated language for consistency
Revised: April 6, 2009

8. ARTICLE VII: Amendment Procedure

8.1. **Initiation.** This constitution may be altered by a procedure begun in either of the following ways:

1. By a petition signed by one-fifth (1/5) of the full-time faculty members.
2. Through a proposal supported by one-third (1/3) of the Faculty Senate members.

8.2. **Ratification.** Any amendments shall be ratified in the following manner:

1. An amendment must receive a favorable vote by a majority of faculty senators voting in an official Senate meeting to be held no sooner than one week after the initiatory procedure has been completed
2. The proposed amendment will then be distributed to the full-time faculty for review and evaluation.
3. Any such amendment must receive a favorable vote by a majority of the full-time faculty members voting thereon.