

## BYLAWS OF THE FACULTY SENATE

(As adopted January 23, 1992; amended May 28, 1992, April 22, 1993, April 6, 1995, June 22, 1995, Sept.25, 1995, March 4, 1999, October 21, 1999, November 21, 2002, October 20, 2005, April 17, 2008, Feb. 2012, November 2013, March 2014, May 2015, April 2017)

### ARTICLE I. FACULTY SENATE

#### SECTION 1. MEMBERSHIP

##### A. Voting Members

1. Voting members of the Faculty Senate consist of Elected Senators.
2. All members of the Faculty who hold the academic rank of instructor, lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor (except those just finishing their second consecutive elected term) are eligible for election to the Senate from the unit in which they hold faculty status.
3. The President of the University, Vice Presidents, the Academic Deans, and the Department Heads (who hold voting status on the Council of Department Heads) are not eligible for election to the Senate.
4. Faculty holding part-time, temporary appointments, or honorary titles are not eligible for election to the Senate.

##### B. Non-Voting Members

1. The Chairperson of the Council on Staff Affairs serves as a one year term as a non-voting participant.
2. The President of the Student Government Association and one other student appointed by the Student Government Association serve one-year terms as non-voting participants.
3. The VSU Retiree Association will appoint one person to serve a one year term as a non-voting participant.

#### SECTION 2. TERMS OF SERVICE

- A. The term of an Elected Senator is three years.
- B. Elected Senators cannot serve more than two (2) successive full terms.
- C. Terms of service on the Faculty Senate begin on August 1 and end on July 31.
- D. A person filling an unexpired term is eligible for election to two (2) successive full terms.
- E. Terms of Elected Senators are staggered in a manner determined by the Committee on Committees so that approximately one-third (1/3) of the Elected Senators are replaced each year.

### SECTION 3. ELECTION OF SENATORS

- A. On or before November 1, the Committee on Committees will notify the University units of the need to elect persons to fill elected Faculty Senate vacancies of elected Senators. Elections must take place before the first Monday in February, except as specified herein. All elections to the Senate are conducted according to the latest revision of Robert's Rules of Order. Proxies will be permitted for the duration of such elections, provided that the faculty member is absent for illness or university-related business and that the faculty member submits the proxy in writing to the Dean or Director before the start of such elections. No faculty member may hold more than one (1) proxy for another faculty member.
- B. The names of the new Elected Senators will be forwarded by the Deans, Directors, or Heads of the units to the Chairperson of the Committee on Committees.
- C. The Committee on Committees will certify the election of each Elected Senator and prepare a Faculty Senate roster for the President of the Faculty Senate and present it no later than the end of May. This roster will be entered in the Faculty Handbook for the coming year. For the election of Senators, one counter will be appointed by the Dean of the College and one counter will be an elected Senator appointed by the Committee on Committees.
- D. To certify an election, the counters for each College and Odum library should send the ballots to the chair of the Committee on Committees by the day following the election. The Committee on Committees will recount the ballots. Unless an error in the count that would change the outcome of the election is found, the Committee on Committees will certify the election no later than one week after it occurs. The Committee on Committees will keep the ballots for 31 days after the election.
- E. Procedural challenges to elections should be made within 30 days of the election to the chair of the Grievance Committee, who will inform the chair of the Committee on Committees. If a challenge is filed with the Grievance Committee, the person elected during the challenged election serves until the matter is resolved by the Grievance Committee. If a new election is necessary, the Grievance Committee chair notifies the chair of the Committee on Committees, who notifies the School. The Committee on Committees will supervise the new election if requested by the Grievance Committee.
- F. If an Elected Senator is unable to complete the term of office, the following procedures are to be observed.
  - 1. The Elected Senator will inform in writing the President of the Faculty Senate no later than fourteen (14) days before the effective date of resignation.
  - 2. Within five (5) working days of receiving the letter of resignation, the President will ask the Chairperson of the Committee on Committees to call for a special election in the resigning Elected Senator's unit.
  - 3. Within five (5) working days, the Chairperson of the Committee on Committees will request that the Dean, Director, or Head of the appropriate unit schedule the election of a person to fill the unexpired term. The faculty will be given ten (10) days advance notice of the election.
- G. Elected Faculty Senate members are expected to attend all Faculty Senate meetings. Two (2) absences by a member of the Faculty Senate from Senate meetings within one (1) academic year shall automatically remove the member from the Senate.
- H. A member of the Faculty Senate who duly designates a proxy for a Senate meeting shall not be counted as absent if the proxy is in attendance at the meeting. Faculty senators must attend a

minimum of four meetings per year. Faculty senators on a leave of absence beyond one semester will be removed from their position.

- I. If an Elected Senator is removed from the term of office, the following procedures are to be observed.
  1. The Elected Senator will be informed in writing by the President of the Faculty Senate no later than seven (7) days before the effective date of removal and no later than seven (7) days after the final absence.
  2. Within five (5) working days of receiving the letter of removal, the President will ask the Chairperson of the Committee on Committees to call for a special election in the removed Elected Senator's unit.
- J. Within five (5) working days, the Chairperson of the Committee on Committees will request that the Dean or Head of the appropriate unit schedule the election of a person to fill the unexpired term. The faculty will be given ten (10) days advance notice of the election.
- K. Except for the President, a person elected to fill an unexpired term will complete the remaining term of the Senator being replaced and will assume all the senatorial responsibilities of that person.
- L. All senators will be appointed and serve as a faculty senate representative on a statutory or standing committee. In the case of standing committees, this position will most likely be a leadership role as stated in Article II, Section 3, part H of these bylaws.

#### **SECTION 4. OFFICERS OF THE SENATE**

##### **A. President**

1. No later than the last meeting of the Senate in the spring semester, the Senate shall elect a President by a majority vote of those present.
2. The President shall serve a one year term beginning in the fall semester. When elected the President will serve the one year term as both President and Senator. In the event of a Senator's election to the presidency, the Senator shall complete the one year term provided for this office without regard to the length of time remaining in the Senator's elected term. If the President's Senate term expires while serving as an officer of the Senate, the Senator's seat will be filled by routine election as in Article I, Section 3.
3. The President of the Faculty Senate shall be the presiding officer of the Senate. In the President's absence, the Vice President/President Elect shall preside. The presiding officer shall conduct meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order and may vote only to break a tie.
4. The President chairs the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate.
5. The President writes the Senate's annual report, which is submitted to the General Faculty and the President of the University on or about July 1 of each year.
6. If the office of President comes vacant, the Vice President will assume the office of President.

##### **B. Vice President/President-Elect**

1. No later than the last meeting of the Senate in the spring semester, the Senate shall elect a President by a majority vote of those present.

2. The Vice President/President-Elect shall serve a two year term beginning in the fall semester. When elected the Vice President/President-Elect will serve a one year term as Vice President. The second year the Vice President/President-Elect will serve a one year term as President of the Faculty Senate. In the event of a Senator's election to the vice presidency/president-elect, the Senator shall complete the two year term provided for this office without regard to the length of time remaining in the Senator's elected term. If the Vice President's Senate term expires while serving as an officer of the Senate, the Senator's seat will be filled by routine election as in Article I, Section 3.
3. In the absence of the Faculty Senate President, The Vice President/President-Elect shall assume the duties of the presiding officer.
4. The Vice President/President-Elect makes reports of all actions taken by the Senate, which are submitted to the President of the University, and the General Faculty at its bi-annual meetings.
5. The Vice President/President-Elect arranges for meetings of the Senate, schedules the room, and oversees details of the meeting.
6. If the office of Vice President/President-Elect becomes vacant, a special election will be by the Senate to fill the office. An announcement of such election will be made in a regular Senate meeting when the office becomes vacant, and the special election will be held at the next regular meeting.

#### C. Secretary

1. No later than the last meeting of the Senate in the spring semester, the Senate shall elect a President by a majority vote of those present.
2. The Secretary shall serve a one year term beginning in the fall semester. When elected the Secretary will serve the one year term as both Secretary and Senator. In the event of a Senator's election to Secretary, the Senator shall complete the one year term provided for this office without regard to the length of time remaining in the Senator's elected term. If the Secretary's Senate term expires while serving as an officer of the Senate, the Senator's seat will be filled by routine election as in Article I, Section 3.
3. The Secretary reviews and approves detailed minutes of the Senate recorded by the administrative assistant assigned to that task, who after approval sends copies of minutes to members of the faculty and the President of the University, no later than ten (10) days following each Senate meeting.
4. The Secretary acts as liaison to the administrative assistant assigned to record minutes and update the Faculty Senate web page to ensure that all meeting agendas, minutes, reports, and other correspondence are posted on the Faculty Senate web page in a timely manner.
5. The Secretary will send a written notice of the regular Faculty Senate meetings and distribute to the Senators and General Faculty via email the Faculty Senate meeting agenda and accompanying documentation no less than one (1) week before the scheduled meeting of the Faculty Senate.

6. If the office of Secretary becomes vacant, a special election will be by the Senate to fill the office. An announcement of such election will be made in a regular Senate meeting when the office becomes vacant, and the special election will be held at the next regular meeting.

#### D. Parliamentarian

1. No later than the last meeting of the Senate in the spring semester, the Senate shall elect a Parliamentarian by a majority vote of those present.
2. The Parliamentarian shall serve a one year term beginning in the fall semester. When elected the Parliamentarian will serve the one year term as both Parliamentarian and Senator. In the event of a Senator's election to Parliamentarian, the Senator shall complete the one year term provided for this office without regard to the length of time remaining in the Senator's elected term. If the Parliamentarian's Senate term expires while serving as an officer of the Senate, the Senator's seat will be filled by routine election as in Article I, Section 3.
3. The Parliamentarian settles questions regarding the proper application of Robert's Rules of Order.
4. If the office of Parliamentarian becomes vacant, a special election will be by the Senate to fill the office. An announcement of such election will be made in a regular Senate meeting when the office becomes vacant, and the special election will be held at the next regular meeting.

### **SECTION 5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

- A. The Executive Committee of the Senate is composed of the President, the Vice President/President-Elect, the Secretary, and Parliamentarian of the Faculty Senate.
- B. The immediate past President of the Senate serves in a non-voting capacity.
- C. The Executive Committee is chaired by the President of the Senate who arranges meetings of the Executive Committee. In the absence of the President, the Vice President/-President Elect will preside.
- D. All faculty senate executive committee members may be exempt from serving on standing committees in a leadership role, as described in Article II, Section 3, part H of these bylaws.

### **SECTION 6. COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES**

- A. The Chair of the Committee on Committees will, at the second Faculty Senate meeting of the spring semester, submit no more than two (2) names for each of the two (2) committee vacancies, and, after other nominations have been called for from the floor, the vote will be taken in accordance with Article I, Section 9 of these Bylaws. Nominations from the floor for a vacancy within a particular unit can be made only by Elected Senators from the unit.
- B. The persons elected will assume their duties on the following August 1.

## **SECTION 7. MEETINGS OF THE FACULTY SENATE**

- A. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate will determine dates and times for Faculty Senate meetings. The dates and times for Faculty Senate meetings for the forthcoming year will be distributed no later than the last spring semester meeting of the Faculty Senate.
- B. Special meetings of the Faculty Senate may be called by the Executive Committee upon the request of the President of the Faculty Senate or upon the written request of at least 25 percent of the Senators.

## **SECTION 8. CONDUCT OF FACULTY SENATE MEETINGS**

- A. The order of business at Faculty Senate meetings will be as follows:
  - 1. Call to Order.
  - 2. Approval of Minutes.
  - 3. Unfinished Business.
  - 4. New Business.
  - 5. General Discussion.
  - 6. Adjournment.
- B. With the exception of special meetings of the Faculty Senate, the following procedures will be used for all reports, recommendations, proposals, and other items submitted to the Faculty Senate for its regularly scheduled meetings.
  - 1. Committee reports, recommendations, and proposals must be submitted in writing to the President at least four (4) weeks before the next scheduled meeting of the Faculty Senate.
  - 2. Upon receipt of these materials, the President will call a meeting of the Executive Committee for the purpose of setting the agenda for the next scheduled meeting of the Faculty Senate.
  - 3. Debate on any one question will be limited to 30 minutes.
  - 4. During General Discussion, any Senator may bring an issue to the floor for Faculty Senate consideration.
    - i. With approval by vote of a majority of the Faculty Senate, a member of the General Faculty, student body, staff, or administration will be allowed to speak before the Faculty Senate for a specific purpose for no more than five (5) minutes.
    - ii. Except for proposals contained in the report from the Academic Committee, the Faculty Senate may amend from the floor any recommendation or proposal.
    - iii. Normally, the report from the Academic Committee will be voted on in its entirety by the Faculty Senate. Any Senator, however, may request that a specific proposal be detached from the report for individual consideration.
  - 5. If a question passes the Faculty Senate, the decision is sent to the President of the University by the President for approval within five (5) days of passage. A minority report may be filed by a Senator who does not vote with the majority. The President of the University will inform the

Executive Committee of action taken on the matter within 30 days of receiving the Faculty Senate's recommendation.

6. If a vote is not taken on a question, it will be held over to the next scheduled meeting or remanded to the appropriate committee for consideration.
  7. If a question does not receive a favorable vote from the Faculty Senate, it will be dropped until resubmitted.
- C. A complete and permanent set of minutes for each Faculty Senate meeting will be kept by the President.
1. A copy of the Faculty Senate minutes will be sent to members of the faculty and the President of the University no later than ten (10) working days after the Faculty Senate meeting.
  2. The Secretary will ensure the administrative assistant assigned to record minutes downloads a copy of the Senate minutes on the Faculty Senate webpage for review by the general University population within ten (10) working days after the Faculty Senate meeting.
  3. By the end of summer semester, the minutes, together with all other documents, will be downloaded on the Faculty Senate webpage.

## **SECTION 9. VOTING PROCEDURE**

- A. Voting will be by show of hands unless otherwise ordered by the Senate. Voting for the election of the Faculty Senate officers and members for the Committee on Committees, however, will be by paper ballot.
- B. Any Senator may request a paper ballot vote on any issue.
- C. Proxies will be allowed for Senators who are unable to attend Faculty Senate meetings and will be given only to another Senator. Proxies must register with the President prior to the meeting. No person may represent more than one (1) other Senator at a meeting.

## **ARTICLE II. COMMITTEES**

**SECTION 1.** All committees, with the exception of the Grievance Committee, will meet at least twice a semester during the academic year and at least once during the summer, if necessary.

**SECTION 2.** The Committee on Committees will review all Standing Committees annually to determine whether overlap or duplication exists among the committees and will report to the Faculty Senate at its last meeting of the spring semester.

## **SECTION 3. MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

- A. General faculty from each College of the University and Odum Library will fill 12 positions on each committee so that, wherever possible, each school of the University and the Odum Library is proportionally represented. If enough members from one college or unit are unavailable, additional members from another college or unit may be appointed.
- B. No fewer than one (1) student recommended by the President of the SGA will sit on each committee.
- C. No fewer than two (2) Senators selected by the Committee on Committees will sit on each committee.

- D. One (1) Council of Staff Affairs (COSA) member recommended by the President of COSA will sit on each committee. The COSA members of standing committees are considered voting members
- E. Terms of committee members will be staggered.
- F. Membership of Standing Committees may include persons appointed by the Committee on Committees in *ex officio* capacity, maintaining an appropriate balance to meet the overall goals of Faculty Senate.
- G. As soon as all committee vacancies are filled, the Committee on Committees will prepare a membership list of Statutory and Standing Committees for inclusion in the Faculty Handbook for the coming year.
- H. Committee chairpersons and chairpersons-elect must be Elected Senators and are to be selected by the Committee on Committees for a term of one (1) year, except as provided in VSU Statutes or elsewhere in these Bylaws. The terms of the chairpersons may be renewed.
- I. Standing Committees may create sub-committees, which may include non-committee personnel. The Committee on Committees will be informed by each committee chairperson of the membership of subcommittees.
- J. Specific Standing Committees and Their Responsibilities.
  - 1. Academic Scheduling and Procedures Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to the University calendar, class scheduling, final examination scheduling, University catalogs and bulletins, Honors Day, and commencement.
  - 2. Athletic Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to University intercollegiate athletics.
  - 3. Educational Policies Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to advising, undergraduate admissions and retention, public services, and registration; and to hear undergraduate petitions for exceptions to academic policy, including graduation.
  - 4. Faculty Scholarship Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to both graduate and undergraduate faculty development, research, and the use of animal and human research subjects; to receive and review research and development proposals; and to allocate research and development funds.
  - 5. Library Affairs Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to the Odum Library and its use, and to review and make recommendations related to library allocations.
  - 6. Diversity and Equity Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to ethnic, religious, and gender minorities; and to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to quality support programs for students with special needs including, but not limited to, those with physical impairments, behavior disorders, and learning disabilities.
  - 7. Student Affairs Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to such student services as financial aid, housing, health services, counseling services, mail services, and food services; as well as student communications and affairs, in general.
  - 8. Environmental Issues Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to environmental issues, as they relate to recycling, facilities use, campus beautification, and traffic planning.



9. Academic Honors and Scholarship Committee: to review and recommend college-wide scholarships and honors for students and to arrange for appropriate presentations, including Honors' Day.
10. Technology Committee: to develop and review policies and procedures relating to technology issues and to interface with other statutory and standing committees when such issues overlap their charge.
11. Internationalization and Globalization Committee: to initiate, develop and review policies and procedures to strengthen the institution's internationalization and globalization efforts, interacting with other statutory and standing committees when such issues overlap their charge.

#### **SECTION 4. SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

- A. The Faculty Senate may create Special Committees of the Faculty Senate to deal with matters not within the jurisdiction of an existing Statutory or Standing Committee of the Faculty Senate.
- B. Any member of the Faculty Senate, General Faculty, classified staff, administration, or student body may request in writing to the President the creation of a Special Committee.
- C. The President will place the request for a Special Committee on the agenda of the next Faculty Senate meeting.
- D. Upon Faculty Senate approval of the request, the President will instruct the Committee on Committees to create a Special Committee in accordance with whatever guidelines the Faculty Senate may establish.
- E. Special Committees will operate for no longer than one (1) academic year unless the Faculty Senate renews the mandate of the Special Committee.

#### **SECTION 5. APPOINTMENT AND ELECTION TO COMMITTEES**

- A. Unless otherwise specified by the Statutes of the University, terms of appointed and elected Standing Committee members are three (3) years.
- B. Terms of committee members and chairpersons begin on August 1 and end on July 31.
- C. The terms are staggered by the Committee on Committees in a manner so that approximately one-third (1/3) of the appointed and elected membership is replaced each year.
- D. On or before April 10 the Committee on Committees will notify the Student Government Association (SGA) of the number of student vacancies on standing Committees. The list of student appointments must be submitted to the Committee on Committees no later than three business days after the April SGA meeting.
- E. During spring semester, the Committee on Committees will request members of the faculty and classified staff to indicate the Standing Committees on which they wish to serve. The Committee on Committees will make the necessary appointments to fill vacancies.
- F. On or before November 1, the Committee on Committees will notify the University units of the need to elect representatives to fill Statutory Committee vacancies. Elections must take place before January 15.
- G. No later than midterm spring semester, the Committee on Committees will distribute the names of the tenured faculty. The faculty will vote to fill the vacancies on the Grievance Committee. Those

faculty receiving the largest number of votes will be elected. Prior to this election, the Committee on Committees will have appointed and announced the Grievance Committee Chair.

1. Senators will be eligible for election.
  2. Serving faculty may be re-elected.
- H. A member of a committee who finds it necessary to resign must provide the committee chairperson written notification no less than seven (7) days in advance of the effective date of resignation. Within seven (7) days of notification, the chairperson will notify the Committee on Committees of the resignation.
1. The Committee on Committees will appoint replacements to fulfill appointed terms of committee membership.
  2. Within five (5) working days of notification, the Committee on Committees will notify the appropriate University unit of the need to schedule a special election for a replacement to fulfill an elected term of office. The appropriate University unit will be notified no less than ten (10) days in advance of the scheduled election.

## **SECTION 6. PROCEDURES FOR STATUTORY COMMITTEES, STANDING COMMITTEES, AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES.**

- A. On or before October 1, Statutory Committees, Standing Committees, and Special Committees will discharge the following responsibilities.
1. They will set the schedule of their regular meetings and so inform the Committee on Committees. The schedule of committee meetings is published by the Committee on Committees and inserted in the Faculty Handbook.
  2. They will submit to the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate a report containing an assessment of their charge and the goals they wish to achieve in the coming year.
  3. They will submit written rules governing their procedures to the President of the Faculty Senate and the Secretary who will ensure they are placed on the Faculty Senate Webpage.
- B. Except for the Grievance Committee, all proposals, recommendations, reports, and any other material presented for a committee's consideration must be submitted to the committee's chairperson in accordance with the committee's written procedures.
- C. Except in the case of executive sessions of the Grievance Committee and its Hearing Panels, all committee meetings are open.
- D. Each committee will decide whether or not guests of the committee will be heard and under what conditions.
- E. Committees will keep substantive minutes or recordings of their deliberations. Copies of committee minutes or recordings, reports, proposals, recommendations, and all other documents are to be downloaded on the Faculty Senate webpage no later than two (2) weeks after a committee meeting.
- F. Each committee will prepare an annual report and submit it to the President of the Faculty Senate by April 30.

## **ARTICLE III. AMENDMENTS**

### **SECTION 1. BYLAWS**

- A. A Senator must send a copy of the proposed amendment to the President of the Faculty Senate one (1) month before the next regular meeting of the Faculty Senate.
- B. The President of the Faculty Senate will send a copy of the proposed amendment to each Senator no less than one (1) week before the next regular meeting of the Faculty Senate.
- C. At the next regular meeting, the President of the Faculty Senate will read the proposal and call for preliminary debate limited to ten (10) minutes for all proponents and ten (10) minutes for all opponents.
- D. Ratification by the Faculty Senate requires an absolute majority.