



SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY
Policies and Procedures

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Date Amended: 02/08/08
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SUBJECT: FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION

I. **PURPOSE:** To provide for a Faculty Senate to represent the Faculty in matters relating to formulation of University Policies.

II. **POLICY:**

PREAMBLE: The mission of the Faculty Senate is to ensure that Southern Utah University promotes quality education, honors scholarly pursuits in all their forms, and protects academic freedom for all faculty members and students.

A. **ARTICLE I. Responsibility of the Faculty Senate.**

Under the authority and direction of the sitting University President, the Faculty of Southern Utah University is "authorize[d] . . . to determine the general initiation and direction of instruction and of the examination, admission, and classification of students." Further, the Faculty is obligated to pursue achievement and excellence "in fulfillment of the institution's role as established in the statewide master plan for higher education." [Utah Code Section 53B-2-106 (2)(c)].

Subject to the authority and approval of the University President, the Board of Trustees, and the Utah State Board of Regents, the University faculty is authorized to:

Formulate and propose educational policy as well as rules and regulations to promote or enforce such policies;

Formulate and propose curricula, new courses of study and relations between schools and colleges;

Play a meaningful role in the academic quality of the University, by taking primary responsibility for course content and materials, formulating and proposing degree requirements and curriculum; and participating in Faculty Senate and other committees charged with initiating and directing and making decisions relating to the general academic operations of the University including budget decisions, faculty and administrative appointments.

The Faculty has two avenues to fulfill these assigned responsibilities: through (1) the departments and colleges/schools and through (2) the Faculty Senate. Those faculty responsibilities that pertain to a specific academic program or to a subset of faculty are handled in the affected department(s) and college(s)/school(s).

The Faculty Senate will represent the faculty in any recommendation or proposal put forth to or from administration, student body officers, staff, the faculty (either collectively or as a smaller group), or other entities which are



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vital to the functioning of Southern Utah University and which are not readily dealt with at the department or college/school level. Therefore, policies of the institution regulating the faculty responsibilities listed above shall recognize and include Senate representation if no duly established departmental or college/school procedure has purview over it.

B. ARTICLE II. Senate Organization

1. **Senate Membership.** The Senate shall consist of duly elected faculty members, (as defined in Southern Utah University Policy 6.0 "Definition of Faculty"), from each of the recognized colleges/schools of the University, and from among those faculty not associated with any of the recognized colleges/schools (i.e., at-large faculty).
2. **Apportionment of Seats Among the College/Schools.** The Senate shall consist of Faculty members elected from the recognized colleges of the University, and an at-Large Senator or Senators. The definition of faculty is given in Article II Section 1. The at-large Senator or Senators shall be elected from among those with Faculty academic rank who are not assigned within an established college (such as Library staff with academic rank). When possible, at least 1/2 of the senators from a given college/school, or from the full-time, at-large faculty must be tenured.
3. **Census to Determine Senate Representation.** The number of seats per college/school and from the at-large faculty shall be based on the faculty roster in effect on the first day of classes in the spring semester. Colleges/schools will attempt to insure that representation among the various departments and divisions within a college/school is as evenly distributed as possible. On the first day of Spring semester of each academic year, the Provost of the University shall furnish the Senate President with a faculty roster to be used for determining the number of senators each college/school shall have on the Senate. The Senate President, in consultation with the Senate Executive Committee, shall notify the appropriate deans of the number of seats each college/school is eligible to fill and how many seats must be occupied by tenured faculty during the ensuing academic year. Written notification to the deans shall occur prior to March 1.
4. **Eligibility for Senate Election.** To be eligible for election to the Faculty Senate, faculty members must be full-time faculty as defined in Article II Section 1; they must not have served on Senate more than



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the last full academic year; and they must be in, at least, their second year of full-time employment at the University, thus taking office no earlier than the beginning of their third year. Senators completing a term of office longer than one year will not be eligible for re-election until one (1) academic year has elapsed. No faculty person shall serve as a Senator for consecutive elected terms, but may be elected again following the lapse of one (1) academic year.

5. **Senatorial Terms of Office.** Terms of elected senators shall be three (3) years with the following exceptions. To insure continuity of the Senate, colleges/schools make every effort to elect approximately one-third (1/3) of their senators each year. In a newly constituted college/school, as near as possible, one-third (1/3) of the newly elected senators shall serve a one (1) year term, one-third (1/3) of the newly elected senators shall serve a two (2) year term, one-third (1/3) of the newly elected senators shall serve a three (3) year term. In the event that the number of senators from a given college/school or the at-large group is increased due to university growth, to maintain the continuity of the Senate, it shall be the responsibility of the senior senator/s from that college/school or the at-large group, in conjunction with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, to determine whether the initial term of the newly elected senator shall be for one (1), two (2), or three (3) years.
6. **Resolution of Questions.** Questions of eligibility of-Faculty members for service as elected Senators or for the right to vote for members of the Senate shall be determined by the Executive Committee of the Senate.
7. **Election of Senators.** The elections of senators shall be conducted during the Spring semester prior to the April Senate meeting. The respective college/school faculties shall nominate and elect from the eligible faculty members as defined in Article II Section 1 within the college/school. The respective college/school faculties shall vote by secret ballot. Those tenured faculty members who receive a simple majority of the votes shall be deemed elected until at least ½ of the total Senate seats for each college/school are occupied by tenured faculty. The remainder of available seats will be filled by those faculty members who receive the greater number of votes in the election regardless of their tenure status. The senior retiring senator of the college/school shall conduct elections and shall transmit the results of the election to the newly elected senators and the Senate President.



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The Senate President shall notify the Administration and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee of the results of the elections.

The Senate President shall be elected according to the By-Laws of the Constitution.

The elected Faculty Senate officers shall assume their respective offices and designated duties at the April Meeting of the Faculty Senate.

8. **Organizational Meeting.** At the April Senate meeting of each academic year, the Faculty Senate shall vote-in the Parliamentarian, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Senate, and also ascertain which of the Faculty Senate committees are in need of a chairperson, and fill vacant spots. Chairpersons of standing committees are elected and chairs of other committees may be appointed. In addition, where Senate representation is required on other committees across campus, the Faculty Senate President will select senators to fill those roles. When the need for the formation of a new standing or ad-hoc committee is recognized, such a committee will be constituted by a Senate vote. Additionally, an existing committee whose purpose is no longer evident can only be disbanded by Senate vote.
9. **Resignations.** Senators desiring to resign shall do so in writing, and such resignation shall not be effective until the Executive Committee has been notified in writing.
10. **Removal of Senators from Office.** Elected senators may be removed from office only by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the entire Senate. The senator under consideration for removal may not vote on the issue. A motion for removal shall not come to the floor of the Senate until after an investigation and report has been completed by an ad hoc committee appointed by the Senate and the results of the investigation presented to the Senate during a regularly scheduled meeting. Voting shall be by secret ballot.
11. **Filling Vacated Senate Seats.** Senate seats vacated by resignation, incapacity, or removal shall be filled for unexpired terms according to procedures provided in the By-Laws.
12. **Proxies and Unexcused Absences.** An elected senator unable to attend regularly scheduled Senate meetings may designate a proxy



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representative, either tenured or non-tenured. The senator must sign an affidavit granting the proxy voting privileges. Any senator on sabbatical may appoint a proxy for the entire duration of the sabbatical. A proxy may not designate another proxy for any reason. The signed affidavit must be submitted to the Senate Secretary at the beginning of the Senate meeting. The Senate Secretary shall maintain a file of proxy affidavits. After two consecutive unexcused absences to a regularly scheduled meeting by a senator (absences in which no proxy was designated), the Secretary of the Senate shall notify the senator. After three unexcused absences, the Senate seat shall be deemed "vacated" and procedures for filling a vacated Senate seat shall begin.

C. ARTICLE III. Organization of the Senate Composition.

The Executive Committee, or the Officers of the Senate, shall consist of the President of the Senate, the Vice-President (President Elect) of the Senate, the Parliamentarian of the Senate, the Secretary of the Senate, the Treasurer of the Senate and the Past President of the Senate, all of whom shall be voting members of the Senate. The Senate shall conduct its business through its committees, as described in the By-Laws.

1. Responsibilities. The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility of directing the affairs of the Faculty Senate including discussion of appropriate issues, accepting agenda items from faculty senate members, and setting the agenda for each regularly scheduled meeting of the Faculty Senate. In addition to the above enumerated duties, the Executive Committee shall:

Serve as a liaison to standing, university, or ad hoc committees as determined by the Executive Committee and Perform other official Faculty Senate duties as assigned.

2. President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall be a tenured faculty member of Southern Utah University. The President is elected to a three-year term by the faculty at large by secret ballot according to the By-Laws of the Constitution. The first year the individual serves as Vice President, the second year as President, and the third year as Past President, acting in an advisory capacity to the President. While serving as the Faculty Senate President the individual's teaching load is reduced by two classes (6 Semester Hours) per year.



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3. Other Officers. The Parliamentarian, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Senate shall be elected from the Senate membership and shall serve a term of one year and may be reelected.

D. ARTICLE IV. Operations.

1. Presiding Authority. The Senate Presiding Officer shall be its President. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President of the Senate shall preside. In the absence of both officers, the Parliamentarian shall chair the Senate.
2. Senate Meetings. The Senate shall hold at least one (1) regular meeting at a stated time each month, August through April. In addition, special meetings shall be convened by the President of the Senate or, in the President's absence, the Vice-President of the Senate:
 - a. When requested by the President of the University;
 - b. When requested by written petition of at least ten (10) percent of faculty members at the University;
 - c. When requested in writing by twenty-percent (20%) of the senators; or
 - d. When approved by the Senate during a regular meeting.

Senate meetings are open to all faculty, administrators and other interested persons except as specified in the By-Laws.

3. Senate Agenda. The Executive Committee shall prepare an agenda for each meeting of the Senate, and shall furnish copies of this agenda at least four (4) days prior to the meeting to all faculty members and designated administrators. Petitions by ten (10) percent of the members of the faculty shall be sufficient to cause any matter to be placed on the agenda of the next scheduled Senate meeting provided the petition is received at least seven (7) academic days before the meeting. Matters not on the agenda may be considered by the Senate at any meeting with the consent of a majority of those senators present.
4. Minutes of Senate Meetings. Minutes of all Senate meetings shall be recorded by the Secretary and distributed to the President of the University, Executive Secretary, members of the Senate and to the University archives. Minutes shall be available for examination by any Senator or interested Faculty member. The Secretary also shall maintain a file of Senate Committee reports.



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5. Annual Report. The President of the Senate shall make an annual written report to the President of the University and the University Faculty.
6. General Faculty Meetings. Meeting of the general Faculty of the University may be called by the President or Vice-President of the Senate, or upon petition by one-third (1/3) of the Faculty of the University, to review any action taken by the Senate or its Committees. Such petition shall specify the items to be considered.
7. Rules of Procedure. Rules of procedure for the Senate and its committees shall be set forth in the Constitution and in the By-Laws of the Senate. Adoption of the By-Laws or changes in the By-Laws shall be accomplished by simple majority vote of all members of the Senate. A quorum of the Senate shall be one-half (1/2) or more of its members. No motion shall carry unless it receives a simple majority of votes cast by a quorum present unless stated in this Constitution.

E. ARTICLE V. Amendments.

Amendments to the Constitution may be initiated by written petition signed by twenty-one (21) Faculty members of the University. Such petition shall contain the exact wording of the proposed amendment. Proposed amendments shall be voted upon by the Senate, with approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the eligible voting members of the Senate necessary for approval of the amendment. Voting shall be by secret ballot. Approved amendments shall then be presented to the University Faculty for ratification. Voting by the faculty shall be by secret ballot, and a statement of the wording of the proposed amendment shall be included on the ballot. Ratification of amendments requires the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Faculty casting ballots and shall go into effect thirty (30) days after the completion of the vote.

The Board of Trustees, acting according to its regular procedures, shall retain the right to veto any amendment, which has been ratified by the faculty.

Amendment of the By-Laws of the Senate shall be according to the procedures established by the Senate, and such procedures shall be enunciated in the By-Laws.



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F. ARTICLE VI. Adoption of the Constitution.

This Constitution shall be considered adopted by a vote of two thirds (2/3) of the members of the Senate and the subsequent two thirds (2/3) vote of the entire faculty voting on the same, both of which voting procedures shall be by secret ballot, transmittal of the approved Constitution by the President of the University to the Board of Trustees, and adoption of the Constitution by the Board of Trustees according to its own procedures.

G. ARTICLE VII. Academic Freedom

The Faculty Senate accepts the definition of academic freedom as found in Southern Utah University Policy 6.6.