

Date: September 5, 2022

Submitted by: Faculty Senate Constitution Task Force, Shaun Schmidt, Chair, Ext 2265

SUBJECT: FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION REPLACEMENT

Description: *The Faculty Senate Constitution Task Force is recommending to replace the existing constitution with an updated version as attached below. The current version is also attached for comparison. As there are a substantial number of changes being recommended in language and organization of the document a side by side comparison is not realistic.*

Major changes include:

- 1) *The addition of a preamble.*
- 2) *Clarification of the duties of the Faculty Senate as found in Section I.B.*
- 3) *The Faculty Senate will have the “final say” on most matters brought before it. In Section I.D. the relationship between Faculty Senate and General Faculty has been adjusted.*
- 4) *In section II the eligibility to vote for and serve on Faculty Senate has been stated more clearly.*
- 5) *Section II.A. specifies administrative reassigned time, thus clarifying eligibility to vote for Faculty Senators.*
- 6) *Section II.C. creates a constituency of University-Wide Faculty that includes all eligible faculty who do not report to a Dean of the College, one of the Schools, or University Libraries.*
- 7) *Section II.D. establishes that each electoral unit listed in this section be guaranteed one Faculty Senator.*
- 8) *Section II.E. separates the Faculty Senate representation of the School of Law Faculty and the School of Law Librarians which is consistent with the Faculty Handbook Section I.III.B. The Faculty Handbook Language excludes the Law Librarians as Law Faculty, but allows the Law Librarians to participate as General Faculty.*
- 9) *Section III.C. defines the process for the faculty census used to determine representation.*
- 10) *Classes of Senators has been established in Section III.D to ensure equal turnover of Senators each year.*
- 11) *In Section IV.B. the reassigned time for the Secretary of Faculty Senate has been increased to one-quarter from one-eighth.*
- 12) *Constitutionally mandated duties on the officers are defined in Section IV.C. (Additional duties are defined later in the Standing Rules, see Section V.I.)*
- 13) *A quorum is established for Faculty Senate in Section V.C.*
- 14) *Proxy voting is clearly stated as not allowed for Faculty Senate in Section V.C. and in the respective Standing Committee descriptions in Section VI., part 5 of each.*
- 15) *Requirements for publishing standing committee agendas has been moved from the same section as the Faculty Senate, Section V.F. to the respective committee description in Section VI., part 5 of each.*

- 16) *The requirement for publishing agendas has been lessened from six days to five days for the Faculty Senate and the subcommittees as found in Sections V.F, VI.E.5, VI.F.5, and VI.G.5. (as proposed).*
- 17) *Standing Rules are established in Section V.J. which are meant to be the operational guide for the Faculty Senate.*
- 18) *The Executive Committee is expanded to include the Chairs of the three subcommittees once elected at the start of the fall semester as found in Sections VI.D.3 and VI.D.4*
- 19) *Section VI.F.5. sets consistent voting requirements for the Academic Affairs Committee.*
- 20) *Section VI.A.3. codifies the Graduate Council as a subcommittee of the Faculty Senate with two independent charges.
The Graduate Council description is found in VI.G.
The Graduate Council as found the in the Faculty handbook will need to be removed as a separate action item.*
- 21) *In section VI, committee sections have been edited to be in a parallel presentation:*
 - Committee Name*
 1. *Committee ownership*
 2. *Committee charge*
 3. *Committee composition*
 4. *Terms of service for members*
 5. *Constitutionally mandated rules*
 6. *Timeline for sunset of the committee*
 7. *Other as needed*
- 22) *In Section VI.D.5. the requirements for creation of a faculty committee or task force are codified for Faculty Senate.*
- 23) *In Section VI.E.3. the composition of the Electoral Committee is defined.*
- 24) *In section VI.F.2., the Academic Affairs Committee is given faculty oversight for curricular changes from units outside of the college or one of the schools.*
- 25) *Minor editorial changes throughout to affect a consistent style.*

Rationale: At the completion of the Spring 2018 semester the Faculty Senate established the creation of this task force to “investigate any aspects of the Faculty Senate to determine any strengths and weaknesses. Given any weaknesses, the Task Force will research alternatives and where appropriate bring forward to the Faculty Senate recommendations for changes.” Much of the work of this task force has been previously reported to the Faculty Senate by way of meeting minutes. What is attached below is a revised constitution which maintains the strengths of the Faculty senate, but addresses some of the weaknesses as it is currently manifested.

The revised Faculty Senate Constitution clarifies the charge of the Faculty Senate, the relationship between Faculty Senate and General Faculty, the duties of the officers, and the standing committee structure and function. It codifies faculty representation for faculty outside of the College, one of the Schools, or University Libraries as a new constituency, University-Wide Faculty. It provides an independent, faculty driven pathway for curricular oversight of graduate programs. It also establishes

Standing Rules for the Faculty Senate which will guide the collective workings, expectations, and procedures for improved continuity of the operations of the Faculty Senate.

Financial Implications: *An additional one-eighth release time for the Faculty Senate Secretary.*

Proposed Effective Date: *This constitution will become effective starting with the 2023-24 Faculty Senate.*

Request for Action: *Approval by FS/ Gen Fac / WUBOR*

Approved by: *Faculty Senate on date 2-20-2023*

Approved by General Faculty on 3-1-2023

Approved by Washburn University Board of Regents

Faculty Senate Constitution

Adopted by the Board of Regents - March 11, 2005 Replaced March 23, 2023

I. PURPOSE AND DUTIES OF THE FACULTY SENATE

A. The Faculty Senate, as the agent of the General Faculty of Washburn University, speaks on behalf of that body to the University community.

B. The Faculty Senate shall consider policies on University matters including academic issues and matters which affect more than one of the Major Academic Units.

C. As the agent of the General Faculty, the duties of the Faculty Senate thus include, but are not limited to:

1. providing a forum for the expression of faculty opinion.
2. exercising primary responsibility in curricular matters, academic programs and standards, changes in graduation requirements, new degrees, new majors or academic programs, elimination of existing degrees or major programs, creation of new academic departments, and recommending changes to the faculty handbook, subject to the oversight of the University President and the Board of Regents.
3. advising the University President on matters of university policy, including budgetary policies, faculty retention, matters which affect more than one of the Major Academic Units, and standards for student admission and retention.
4. advising academic deans regarding standards and procedures for faculty evaluation.
5. working to promote and maintain academic freedom.

6. overseeing the membership and function of all committees of the Faculty Senate and receiving, reviewing, remanding, approving or disapproving recommendations from the standing committees of the Faculty Senate.

D. To these ends, the Faculty Senate, as agent of the General Faculty, is empowered to act on behalf of the General Faculty of Washburn University in matters described in I.C. The actions of the Faculty Senate may be reviewed, revised, recalled, or endorsed by the General Faculty. Any action by the Faculty Senate concerning changes in graduation requirements, new degrees, academic majors, or programs; elimination of existing degrees or major programs; or creation of new academic departments will be brought before the General Faculty for a vote. In addition, the Faculty Senate can choose by majority vote to bring any action of the body before the General Faculty for a vote. Any action of the Faculty Senate may be challenged by the petition of not less than twenty members of the General Faculty or 10% of the students currently enrolled. Such challenge must be presented as a signed written petition and presented to the Secretary of the General Faculty who will place it on the General Faculty agenda for action.

II. ELIGIBILITY AND MEMBERSHIP

A. Faculty Eligibility: Only full-time faculty on an annual contract are eligible to vote for and to serve on the Faculty Senate excluding those faculty serving more than half time in administrative capacities and faculty on authorized leave of absence or sabbatical during such period of leave. Any eligible faculty member may put his or her name forward for election.

B. The School of Law, School of Business, School of Applied Studies, School of Nursing, and each division within the College of Arts and Sciences shall elect representatives to the Faculty Senate in proportion to the number of eligible faculty in each unit, with one senator selected to represent each ten faculty members (numbers with 0-4 as the ones digit shall be rounded down, numbers with 5-9 as the ones digit shall be rounded up in each voting unit). Representation will be based on the number of faculty in each unit at the start of the spring semester.

C. In addition, five at-large members of the Faculty Senate will be elected by all eligible faculty. No more than two of these may come from any one School or the College.

D. The Librarians of Mabee Library/CRC shall elect one member of the Faculty Senate for every ten of their number. The Librarians of the Law Library shall also elect one member of the Faculty Senate for every ten of their number.

E. The Vice President for Academic Affairs or his or her designee shall serve as a non-voting member of the Faculty Senate.

III. ELECTIONS

A. The Senate will establish a standing Electoral Committee to supervise elections, including any necessary modifications of designated voting units to reflect changing faculty numbers.

B. Elections to the Faculty Senate will be held annually in April, with half of the membership selected in each election. Members shall serve for a term of two years.

C. The Electoral Committee will oversee elections of at-large members to the Faculty Senate. Nominations for the at-large members of the Faculty Senate will be submitted to the Electoral Committee at least three weeks in advance of the election and will be publicized two weeks before the election.

D. Each electoral unit will decide on its own mechanism of voting for the Faculty Senate, subject to the oversight of the Electoral Committee.

E. Members of the Faculty Senate are eligible to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms, but may be re-elected after an absence of at least one year from the Faculty Senate.

F. Should any member of the Faculty Senate prove unable to serve out a full term for any reason, a special election will be held in that member's electoral unit to select a replacement for the remainder of the term.

IV. ORGANIZATION

A. The Faculty Senate will meet each year within two weeks of elections, and at that meeting will elect from among its members the officers of the Senate: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Parliamentarian.

B. The President of the Faculty Senate shall ordinarily receive one-quarter reassigned time and clerical support from the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate shall ordinarily receive one-eighth reassigned time.

C. The President and Vice President of the Faculty Senate shall serve as the faculty representatives to the Board of Regents, and shall be prepared to report to the Board on issues before the Faculty Senate.

D. The Vice President of the Faculty Senate will serve as President in the case of absence or incapacity of the President of the Faculty Senate.

E. An Executive Committee shall be established, consisting of the President, Vice President, and Secretary of the Faculty Senate, and enough additional members elected by that body from among its members to ensure that every Major Academic Unit is represented. That Executive Committee will be charged with arranging meeting times and establishing agendas for each meeting. The Executive Committee shall also serve as a Committee on Committees for the Faculty Senate.

F. Agenda items can originate with the Executive Committee or any other member of the Faculty Senate or can be proposed to the Executive Committee by any member of the faculty or University community.

G. Agendas for each Faculty Senate meeting will be distributed to all members of the Faculty Senate six days in advance of any scheduled meeting time and made available to the University community. Academic Affairs Committee agendas, Faculty Affairs agendas and Graduate Council agendas which contain items which constitute first reading for Faculty Senate will be distributed to all members of the applicable committee six calendar days in advance of any scheduled meeting time.

V. MEETINGS

A. During the course of the summer, the Executive Committee shall be empowered to act provisionally on an emergency basis on behalf of the full body, subject to the approval of the full Faculty Senate when it reconvenes.

B. Meetings of the Faculty Senate are open meetings. Speaking privileges before the Faculty Senate shall be granted to anyone recognized by the President of the body, or whose right to speak is supported by a majority vote of the body. The University President and the President of the Washburn Student Government Association (W.S.G.A.) shall have the right to speak before the Faculty Senate.

C. Actions of the Faculty Senate will be taken by majority vote of members present, with the exception of amendments to the Senate Constitution. All actions of the Faculty Senate, however, require the presence of a quorum, defined as at least half the elected representatives.

D. Each matter considered as new business shall be presented to the Faculty Senate as an agenda item in the form of two readings and may not occur on the same date. The first presentation of the matter shall be considered its first reading. Items coming to the Faculty Senate from the Graduate Council, Faculty Affairs, Academic Affairs, Electoral, or All-University Committees will be taken up as second reading.

E. Minutes of all meetings of the Faculty Senate will be distributed to all members, to the University President, to the Secretary of the Board of Regents, the Secretary of the General Faculty, and to the President of W.S.G.A. by the Faculty Senate Secretary. Minutes will also be posted on the University web site by the Faculty Senate Secretary.

F. The President of the University shall have the right to non-concur with any action of the Faculty Senate, but in exercising this right, shall state the reasons for nonconcurrence in a letter to the Secretary of the Faculty Senate. The Board of Regents shall then be notified of the action of the Faculty Senate and the nonconcurrence of the University President, along with the stated reasons for nonconcurrence. A final determination of the matter shall be in the hands of the Board of Regents, and until such time the status quo shall prevail.

VI. COMMITTEES

A. In addition to the Executive Committee, the Faculty Senate will establish from its own membership the following committees: an Electoral Committee, to oversee elections of the Faculty Senate; an Academic Affairs Committee, to review and make recommendations on

matters of curricula and programs; and a Faculty Affairs Committee, to review and make recommendations on faculty issues. The Graduate Council will report to the Faculty Senate and make recommendations on graduate curricula excluding those of the School of Law.

B. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, in its capacity as Committee on Committees, will be empowered to create, as deemed necessary, ad-hoc committees, and to oversee faculty representation on faculty committees.

C. Faculty representatives on faculty committees, other than the Electoral, Faculty Affairs, and Academic Affairs Committees, need not be members of the Faculty Senate. At least one faculty representative on each faculty committee must be a member of the Faculty Senate, by special appointment of the Executive Committee, if necessary.

D. The Faculty Affairs Committee is charged with promoting the general welfare of faculty members. While the scope of the committee is general in nature, the more prominent interests are:

1. Teaching loads and extracurricular duties
2. Retirement, tenure, and sabbatical leaves
3. Faculty grievances
4. Dismissal criteria
5. Salary and faculty benefits
6. The academic sabbatical program

Membership of the committee consists of one Faculty Senate member from each Division within the College of Arts and Sciences, one from the School of Business, one from the School of Law, one from the School of Nursing, one from the School of Applied Studies, and one member from the University libraries, each elected for a one-year term by the Faculty Senate from its ranks. The committee selects its own chairperson. If possible, all faculty members of the Faculty Affairs Committee should be senators. However, if a Major Academic Unit has three or fewer senators, or Mabee Library/CRC has only one senator, the Faculty Senate President may request the relevant unit(s) elect a non-senator to the Academic Affairs Committee or Faculty Affairs Committee to ensure adequate representation from this (these) unit(s). If appointments of non-senators must be made, the minimum proportion of the faculty members of the Faculty Affairs Committee that will be senators is 2/3.

E. The Academic Affairs Committee is charged with evaluating carefully and making recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding: (1) all new undergraduate programs (majors, degrees, certificates and emphasis/concentration areas) or major revisions (those that fall into categories 3-5 below) proposed by any Major Academic unit of the University; (2) new undergraduate academic programs or major revisions (those that fall into categories 3-4 below) to such programs that originate from units other than Major Academic Units (e.g., Interdisciplinary, Leadership, Honors program, etc.); (3) policies that redefine standing university criteria (e.g., minimum number of hours to graduate 119 vs. 124 hour degree, 6 hour vs. 12 hour minor, General Education criteria); and (4) academic or programmatic changes to undergraduate programs requiring financial investments beyond the unit (i.e., new university

funding). (5) Changes that directly affect other units (e.g., deleting/adding correlated courses) at the undergraduate level will be reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee as action or informational items. The primary concern of the committee shall be consistency of the proposed program with applicable University-wide guidelines and regulations, potential impact of the program on other established programs in the University, and financial implications of such new or revised programs. The Executive Committee may also delegate other matters to this committee. Faculty representatives on this Committee must be members of the Faculty Senate.

The following items should be channeled through the ACADEMIC UNIT's faculty governance process and would not come through the General Faculty Governance process (i.e., Academic Affairs, Senate, General Faculty and the Washburn Board of Regents) unless at least one of the five criteria is also present:

- A. Changes to the minor
- B. New courses, course modifications, changing of course descriptions, credit hours or course numbers
- C. Deleting unused course numbers
- D. Changes to certificates
- E. Changing prerequisites
- F. Number of credits in the major (within the University established minimum/maximum levels)
- G. Changing the advising process
- H. List of potential electives within the unit for a major

The Academic Affairs Committee shall consist of two (2) Faculty Senate members from each Major Academic Unit other than the School of Law, and a Senate representative of Mabee Library/CRC. Each member will be elected to a one-year term by the Faculty Senate from its ranks. The committee selects its own chairperson. Decisions of the Academic Affairs Committee require the affirmative vote of six of the nine members; six members shall constitute a quorum to conduct business. The VPAA or his/her designee will serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member. If possible, all faculty members of the Academic Affairs Committee should be senators. However, if a Major Academic Unit has three or fewer senators, or Mabee Library/CRC has only one senator, the Faculty Senate President may ask the relevant unit(s) to elect a non-senator to the Academic Affairs Committee or Faculty Affairs Committee to ensure adequate representation from this (these) unit(s). If appointments of non-senators must be made, the minimum proportion of the faculty members of the Academic Affairs Committee that will be senators is 2/3.

F. The Graduate Council voting membership will consist of one faculty member from Mabee Library and at least one faculty member from each School and the College (excluding the School of Law) with a maximum of one faculty member from each graduate program. Committee members shall be faculty who regularly teach or support graduate courses in the programs. The major academic units that offer graduate degree programs and Mabee Library will determine their own procedures for electing or appointing their representatives to the Graduate Council. Each representative will serve a two-year term. The Graduate Council will elect a Chairperson annually who will also serve as a member of the Faculty Senate. The Dean of the Office of Graduate Programs and Academic Outreach, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and a representative from the School of Law will serve as non-voting ex-officio members of the

Council. Decisions of the Graduate Council will require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members; two-thirds of the members shall constitute a quorum to conduct business. Actions taken by the Graduate Council will serve as the first reading of such action for the Faculty Senate and must be submitted to the full Faculty Senate in writing at least one week prior to a second (final) reading by the Senate.

The Graduate Council reports to the Faculty Senate and is charged with evaluating and making recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding (1) all new graduate programs (majors,

degrees, certificates and the like) proposed by any major academic unit of the University; (2) major revisions to existing programs (such as a change in major designation or the addition of a major or concentration); and (3) new graduate academic programs or revisions to such programs that originate from units other than major academic units. The primary concern of the Council shall be consistency of the proposed program with applicable University-wide and external accreditation guidelines and regulations including admission criteria and procedures, potential impact of the program on other established graduate programs in the University, and financial implications of such new or revised program. Joint programs including School of Law are subject to this review. All programs exclusively to the School of Law are not.

The Office of Graduate Programs and Academic Outreach will collaborate with the Office of Institutional Research to provide appropriate data regarding graduate programs, respond to requests for information, and assume other administrative duties deemed appropriate by the Graduate Council, Faculty Senate, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Office of Graduate Programs and Academic Outreach also will collaborate with Enrollment Management on generating information on student recruitment, financial aid, and graduation.

G. Faculty, Presidential, and Advisory Committees will be organized as follows:

1. Faculty committees - including, but not limited to, the Research Committee, Interdisciplinary Studies Committee, Promotion and Tenure Standards Committee, Honors Advisory Board, Graduate Committee, and General Education Committee - will be structured as standing committees of the Faculty Senate, with membership consisting of faculty elected by the academic units. Students or staff might also be added to these committees at the discretion of the Faculty Senate. Faculty committees will report their actions to the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate has the right to receive, review, remand, approve, or disapprove recommendations from these committees. Changes to the charge or membership structure of these committees will be made by action of the Faculty Senate.
2. Other University Committees are Presidential Committees and Advisory Committees

a. Presidential Committees - including, but not limited to, the Athletic Committee, Honorary Degree Committee, Institutional Review Board, and University Facilities Planning Committee - will be selected by the President of the University, though the President may choose to consult with the Faculty Senate when selecting faculty members to serve on Presidential Committees. These committees report their actions to the University President. Changes to the charge or membership structure of these committees are made at the discretion of the University President.

b. Advisory Committees - including, but not limited to, with administrative offices advised by each committees parenthetically noted, the Electronic Technology Committee (VPAA/VPAT), Assessment Committee (VPAA/VPSL), Board of Student Publications (VPAA/VPSL), Student Financial Aid Committee (Dean of Enrollment Management), International Education Committee (Director of International Programs), Committee on Undergraduate Retention (VPAA/VPSL/Dean of Enrollment Management), Committee on Undergraduate Probation and Reinstatement (VPAA/VPSL/Dean of Enrollment Management), and the Library Committee (Dean of Mabee Library) will typically include at least one member of the Faculty Senate. Advisory Committees will report their actions by minutes both to the Secretary of the Faculty Senate and to the appropriate administrative official. Changes to the charge or membership structure of these committees would be made by the President of the University in consultation with the Faculty Senate.

H. Each Faculty Committee shall elect a chair from among its own members

VII. AMENDMENTS

A. Amendments to the Constitution of the Faculty Senate can be proposed by any eligible faculty member as defined by Article II, A.

B. Amendments to the Constitution of the Faculty Senate require a two-thirds vote of Faculty Senate members present and voting and ratification by a majority vote of the General Faculty present and voting for passage.

Changes to Faculty Senate Constitution:

24 January 2008

VI. E. Second paragraph alters the make up of the Academic Affairs Committee, establishes a quorum and specifies the number of votes required to approve items brought before the committee. (Amendment approved by vote of the General Faculty)

29 January 2015

II. B. Specifies rounding method for determining the number of faculty in a unit or area.

11 June 2015

VI. D. Second paragraph makes Faculty Affairs and Academic Affairs Committee membership clearer, and to have a contingency plan for representation in the case there are not enough senators from a Major Academic Unit or Mabee Library/Curriculum Resource Center (CRC, non-Faculty Senate members may be appointed to serve. Approved by General Faculty 30 April 2015. Approved by Washburn Board of Regents 11 June 2015.

VI. E. Second paragraph now allows for representatives who are not senators to be elected from an area or unit to Academic Affairs when there are not enough senators from that unit or area to

serve on both the Academic Affairs and Faculty Affairs Committees. Approved by General Faculty 30 April 2015. Approved by Washburn Board of Regents 11 June 2015.

26 January 2017

IV. B. Add wording assigning the Secretary of the Faculty Senate one-eighth reassigned time.

27 April 2017

V.A. Delete item indicating meeting agendas must be distributed to members of Faculty Senate one week in advance of scheduled meeting and add the item as IV.G. indicating a six-day advance notification. Approved by General Faculty 27 April 2017.