

**Southern Connecticut State University**  
**Faculty Senate**  
**Bylaws**

**I. Membership in Voting Units<sup>1</sup>**

- A. This section defines the terms *full-time member*, *part-time member*, *voting unit member*, and *department member*. These definitions shall be used to resolve questions of membership in any department or voting unit and shall be observed universally in all matters of Faculty Senate business, including membership in the Faculty Senate, participation in Faculty Senate activities, and service on University committees that come under the Faculty Senate's purview. For the purpose of determining the number of Senators from each unit, the following standards will be applied:
1. A full-time member is any member who has a full-time appointment at the University and is covered by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) bargaining unit. Full-time members include full-time teaching faculty, full-time counselors or full-time counseling faculty, full-time librarians or full-time library faculty, and full-time coaches and non-instructional athletic trainers.
  2. Every full-time teaching faculty member shall be designated as a member of one, and only one, voting unit (a single academic department or a group of two or more academic departments). Every full-time program director, counselor, librarian, coach, or non-instructional athletic trainer shall be designated as a member of one, and only one, voting unit (e.g., Counseling, Library Services, or Athletics).
  3. A full-time faculty member who has responsibilities of more than six semester hours per semester in a department shall be considered a member of that department, unless there is an agreement in writing with the department that the faculty member is on loan to that department, but will remain in a different home department.
  4. A full-time faculty member who has responsibilities of six semester hours per semester in each of two departments must choose to be assigned to one of the two departments and must communicate this decision in writing to both affected departments and to the appropriate Dean(s). An application for promotion or tenure shall constitute such a communication. Having made such a choice, the faculty member may not alter this choice without written permission from the affected departments and appropriate Dean(s).
  5. Any full-time department member may transfer to another department provided that a request is communicated in writing to the affected departments and appropriate dean(s) involved and permission is received from the departments and dean(s). Having made such a change in home department, the faculty member may not alter this choice without written permission from the affected departments and appropriate Dean(s).

<sup>1</sup> Interpretation: Membership in the Faculty Senate and representation therein shall include only full-time and part-time teaching faculty, counselors, counseling faculty, librarians, library faculty, coaches, and non-instructional athletic trainers.

6. A part-time member is any member who has a part-time appointment at the University and is covered by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) bargaining unit. Part-time members include part-time teaching faculty, part-time counselors or part-time counseling faculty, part-time librarians or part-time library faculty, and part-time coaches and non-instructional athletic trainers.
7. The Faculty Senate Secretary shall be notified of any changes in a full-time faculty member's voting unit by February 1.

**B. Realignments of Voting Units**

1. Prior to April 1, the Faculty Senate Secretary, having counted the members of each voting unit, shall report to the Faculty Senate on the current and prospective status of any realignments of voting units.

**II. Election of Senators**

- A. Prior to April 1, the Faculty Senate Secretary shall notify each voting unit and the Faculty Senate of vacancies in the Office of Senator for the following academic year. Each voting unit, thus notified, shall elect a Senator prior to April 30 and shall inform the Secretary in writing of the names of those elected. All changes in representation other than the filling of vacancies arising during mid-year shall be effective at the beginning of the following academic year.
- B. Voting units for full-time members shall use the following election procedures:
  1. Elections shall be by secret written ballot with a majority vote of ballots cast by the voting unit required for election. Abstentions shall not count as ballots cast.
- C. The voting unit for part-time faculty shall use the following election procedures:
  1. The Faculty Senate Elections Committee shall conduct the election.
  2. There shall be no more than one Senator elected from any department.
  3. Those candidates with the highest vote counts shall fill vacant part-time seats.
- D. Term of office
  1. Elected members shall serve a term of three years, taking office at the beginning of the academic year, except as specified in Section II, Parts D.2, D.3, or E.
  2. In any given year, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee may assign two-year terms to some Faculty Senate seats. Such assignments may be made only to improve the rotational balance of the Faculty Senate or of a particular voting unit.
  3. The term of office of any Senator representing a voting unit whose structure has changed pursuant to Section II: Membership in the Faculty Senate Constitution shall be deemed to terminate effective with the beginning of the next academic year.

- E. Vacancies arising during the term of office of a Senator shall be filled by elections of the voting unit involved, by the above-mentioned procedure (Section II, Parts B or C) at the time such vacancies occur. The term of a Senator elected to fill a premature vacancy shall be for the remainder of the vacated term, unless the vacancy occurs with one semester or less remaining; in that case, the term of the newly elected Senator shall be the remainder of the semester plus a regular three-year term.
- F. Recall of a Senator by a voting unit shall require a motion to recall made in the affected unit, followed by a two-thirds vote by secret written ballot of the total voting unit membership.
- G. The Faculty Senate Rules Committee shall serve as an advisory committee to the Faculty Senate in all questions concerning the election or recall of Senators.

### **III. Accountability of Senators**

- A. Senators are expected to attend Faculty Senate and Standing Committee meetings regularly. An attendance roster as part of the meeting minutes will be present on the Faculty Senate website.
- B. Senators may be excused from attending Faculty Senate meetings by the Faculty Senate President (or designee) and from Standing Committee meetings by the Committee Chairperson (or Co-chairperson).
- C. Senators are expected to read the documents on the agenda before each Faculty Senate or Standing Committee meeting, keep their departments well-informed of matters being discussed at the Faculty Senate, and participate at Faculty Senate and Standing Committee meetings.
- D. Given the importance of a quorum when conducting Faculty Senate business, departments shall be notified by the Faculty Senate Secretary prior to the end of each semester when their Faculty Senate representative has been absent without being excused for at least three of the Faculty Senate or Standing Committee meetings for that semester.

### **IV. Quorum**

- A. All official Faculty Senate business including voting requires a quorum. Fifty percent (50%) of the voting membership constitutes a quorum. The Faculty Senate Secretary shall determine whether a quorum is present.

### **V. Rules of Order**

- A. The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the Faculty Senate except when it is inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order the Faculty Senate may adopt. The Faculty Senate President shall appoint a member of the Faculty Senate to serve as Parliamentarian for the body, subject to the majority approval of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The Parliamentarian: (a) must be knowledgeable about parliamentary procedure; (b) bring a copy of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, to all Faculty Senate meetings; (c) provide recommendations to the President regarding the conduct of Faculty Senate meetings; and, (d) advise Faculty Senate members about the use of parliamentary procedure.

### **VI. Order of Business**

- A. The order of business at regular meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be:
  - 1. Announcements relevant to the Faculty Senate
  - 2. Approval of the minutes of the preceding Faculty Senate meeting
  - 3. Faculty Senate President's report
  - 4. Reports of Faculty Senate Standing Committees
  - 5. Reports of Faculty Senate Special Committees
  - 6. Unfinished business
  - 7. New business
  - 8. Guest speaker(s): the placement of the guest speaker(s) within the order of business may be changed at the discretion of the Faculty Senate President.
  
- B. Any member of the University community shall have the right to request consideration of additional items for the agenda. Requests must be made in writing to the Faculty Senate Secretary at least 48 hours prior to the meeting at which they are to be presented, and shall be forwarded to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for consideration.
  
- C. Guest speakers normally shall be invited to speak and/or take questions for a predetermined period of time at Faculty Senate meetings. The University President and Provost shall be invited to address the Faculty Senate during at least one meeting each academic year.
  
- D. The order of business may be changed by agreement of a simple majority of the Faculty Senate.

## **VII. Rules of Procedure**

- A. The following rules shall govern the normal business of the Faculty Senate. Any or all of these may be suspended at the discretion of the Faculty Senate.
  - 1. The Orders of the Day including minutes of the preceding meeting and resolutions, insofar as possible, shall be written, reproduced, and delivered to Senators at least 48 hours prior to the meeting at which they are to be presented.
  
  - 2. The Faculty Senate President's report shall summarize items of current relevance to the business of the Faculty Senate, including the status of Faculty Senate resolutions. Standing Committee written reports shall summarize to the Faculty Senate items that were discussed in committee meetings and include any material that will inform the Faculty Senate on the issues. Additional information may be presented orally during the Faculty Senate meeting. The reports shall be offered for acceptance and may simply be accepted by the Faculty Senate President if there are no objections from the floor.
  
  - 3. The Faculty Senate shall consider and discuss recommendations and resolutions from Standing Committees, Ad-Hoc Committees, All-University Committees, the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum, and the Graduate Council; petitions from at least 40 faculty members (full- and/or part-time); and petitions resulting from a meeting of the instructional faculty bargaining unit, announced and open to all members of that group.
  
  - 4. Resolutions which are approved by the Faculty Senate shall be forwarded to the University President. Resolutions may be for information or for approval by the University President.

Resolutions which seek to establish policy or change Faculty Senate documents or policies that were previously approved by the University President, or which seek funds, resources, or cooperation from the University Administration shall be sent as resolutions for approval. Other resolutions that provide information or state a position shall be for information. The University President shall respond to resolutions for approval with *approve* or *disapprove*. In the case of disapproval, the University President shall include a written explanation. The University President shall note resolutions for information. All resolutions presented to the University President in writing shall receive a written response within fifteen (15) business days.

5. Faculty Senate members shall have the right to participate in meeting discussions, make motions and vote on motions. The University President is an *ex officio*, nonvoting member of the Faculty Senate with the right to participate in Faculty Senate discussions. Visitors and liaisons to the Faculty Senate from the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum, Graduate Council, Student Government Association, and Graduate Student Affairs Committee may participate in Faculty Senate discussions when recognized by the Faculty Senate President unless there is an objection from the floor. In the case of an objection, the guest may be recognized by a majority vote of the Faculty Senate. Visitors and liaisons to the Faculty Senate may not vote on Faculty Senate motions.

### **VIII. Voting**

- A. Voting and debate will follow the guidelines in Robert's Rules of Order. The Faculty Senate President and Faculty Senate Secretary shall independently count votes and must agree upon the result.
- B. While a motion is on the floor, or immediately subsequent to a vote on such a motion, any Senator may call for a proportional vote on that matter. This procedural motion shall be non-debatable. The motion for a proportional vote shall prevail provided one-fourth of the Senators present vote in favor of the motion. The Faculty Senate President and Faculty Senate Secretary shall independently count the votes regarding the call for a proportional vote and must agree upon the result. The subsequent proportional vote shall be by roll-call, with each Senator's vote being weighted as follows: (a) each vote from a full-time voting unit (single department or group of departments) shall be assigned a weight equal to the number of full-time members in that unit divided by the number of Senators to which the unit is entitled; and, (b) each vote from the part-time voting unit shall be assigned a weight of fifteen.
- C. The election of the Faculty Senate President and Faculty Senate Treasurer shall be by written secret ballot with a majority of those voting required for election. The election shall be conducted by the Chairperson of the Faculty Senate Elections Committee, or if the Chairperson is a candidate or nominator, the Elections Committee shall designate a member to conduct the elections. The Chairperson or designee shall appoint the teller(s) to collect and count the ballots. If a majority vote is not received in the first ballot, a run-off vote shall be conducted between the two individuals who received the most votes. A secret ballot for electing a Faculty Senate President and Faculty Senate Treasurer shall be waived if there is not more than one candidate.
- D. Upon the request of any Senator, voting on any motion shall be by secret ballot. At least two members of the Faculty Senate Elections Committee shall conduct the ballot. In the absence of members of the Elections Committee, the Faculty Senate President shall appoint tellers to conduct the ballot.

**IX. Faculty Senate Committees**

- A. The Faculty Senate shall have the following standing committees:
1. Executive Committee
  2. Academic Policy Committee
  3. Elections Committee
  4. Finance Committee
  5. Personnel Policy Committee
  6. Rules Committee
  7. Student Policy Committee
  8. Technology Committee
- B. Regular meetings of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall be held at least bi-weekly during the fall and spring semesters. Special meetings may be called by the Faculty Senate President as the need arises.
1. Membership:
    - President of the Faculty Senate (Chairperson)
    - Secretary of the Faculty Senate (Secretary)
    - Chairperson (or Co-chairpersons) of the other Faculty Senate Standing Committees
    - Immediate Past President of the Faculty Senate
  2. Purpose and Purview:
    - To establish a calendar of Faculty Senate meetings.
    - To set the agenda for each Faculty Senate meeting.
    - To continually review policies and procedures.
    - To maintain liaison with the Administration of the University.
    - To initiate Faculty Senate action.
    - To preserve and interpret Faculty Senate documents.
    - To determine eligibility to Faculty Senate All-University committees.
    - To assign work to each Faculty Senate Standing Committee.
    - To advise the Faculty Senate President and other members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee on matters of the Faculty Senate.
    - To communicate a policy statement or document to the University Administration or Board of Regents that has not been discussed by the Faculty Senate due to time constraints; communications of this nature shall be written and distributed to all Senators prior to the next Faculty Senate meeting.
    - To accomplish Faculty Senate business in a timely manner, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee may assign work to any Standing Committee as needed including work that is outside the purview of the assigned committee.
    - To provide clarifications, interpretations and rulings, and make decisions, as described in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty Senate.
- C. During the first Faculty Senate meeting of the academic year, all Senators (with the exception of the

Faculty Senate President, Secretary, Treasurer, and University President) shall choose a Standing Committee assignment. The Faculty Senate President and Secretary may serve on Standing Committees if they so choose; the Treasurer serves as the Chairperson of the Finance Committee. It is recommended that all Standing Committees shall have no fewer than six members, except the Elections Committee, which shall have no fewer than three members. To ensure an equitable distribution of membership, the Faculty Senate President may reassign any Senator to another Standing Committee. After each Standing Committee has been formed, a Chairperson (and if deemed necessary, a Co-chairperson) shall be elected from the committee membership. A Chairperson (or Co-chairperson) may serve successive terms, but shall serve no more than three consecutive terms. If a Standing Committee has Co-chairpersons, both may attend Executive Committee meetings but only one shall be designated to vote. A committee member shall be ineligible to serve as Chairperson or Co-chairperson of a standing Committee if the member is: (a) the Faculty Senate President; (b) the Secretary; or, (c) Chairperson (or Co-chairperson) of another Standing Committee. Each committee member shall have an equal vote in all committee business. During the fall and spring semesters, Standing Committees shall meet during those weeks when the Faculty Senate does not meet.

1. The Faculty Senate Standing Committees and their purviews include the following:
  - a. Academic Policy Committee
 

Purview: All matters of policy pertaining to academic matters; e.g., academic philosophy, academic standards, accreditation, degree programs, grading system, special academic programs, etc.
  - b. Elections Committee
 

Purview: All matters dealing with University-wide elections and referenda; e.g., notification of existence of vacancies and of qualifications for voters and for nominees, collection and certification of names of nominees, collection and distribution of information of nominees or referendum issue, tabulation of ballots, distribution of voting results, etc. The Faculty Senate Elections Committee may also run elections for other University Committees when directed to do so by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee in response to a request from the University Administration.
  - c. Finance Committee
 

Purview: All matters of fiscal policy relating to the University and Faculty Senate; e.g., University and Faculty Senate budget, long-range planning, the use and balances of contractually provided and other travel funds, etc. The committee shall maintain liaison with the University Budget and Planning Committee and with the Administration on all finance-related matters of the University. The Treasurer of the Faculty Senate shall serve as the Committee Chairperson.
  - d. Personnel Policy Committee
 

Purview: All matters of policy pertaining to personnel represented in the Faculty Senate; e.g., promotion, tenure, sabbatical, salary, fringe benefits, etc.
  - e. Rules Committee
 

Purview: All matters dealing with the internal operations of the Faculty Senate and the interaction of the Faculty Senate and faculty; e.g., election of Senators, constitutional

questions, all matters of information on committees serving the University community. The committee shall request and receive annual reports from All-University Committees on behalf of the Faculty Senate and make recommendations to the Faculty Senate based upon those reports. The committee shall also act as an appeals board which reviews committee membership guidelines and procedures, and insures equal representation for all voting units.

f. Student Policy Committee

Purview: All matters of policy pertaining to students; e.g., admissions, academic standings, grading system. The committee shall maintain liaison with student government and other student organizations involved with student policies.

g. Technology Committee

Purview: All matters dealing with technology as it impacts faculty in their teaching and research; e.g., hardware/software acquisition, technical support, long range planning relative to academic technology, etc. The committee shall maintain liaison with other technology committees and groups on campus as well as the University Information Technology department.

D. Special Committees include, but are not limited to, the following: Faculty Senate Ad-hoc Committees, All-University Committees, the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum, and the Graduate Council.

1. Faculty Senate Ad-hoc Committees are those that are established by the Faculty Senate to perform specific tasks. The Chairperson and members of such committees shall be appointed by the Faculty Senate President in consultation with the Executive Committee. An Ad-hoc Committee ceases to exist when its mandate is completed as determined by the Executive Committee. Ad-hoc Committees are normally selected from among the Senators, but may include members of the general faculty. When appropriate, the Chairperson of an ad-hoc committee may become a temporary member of the Executive Committee at the discretion of the Executive Committee; this temporary membership on the Executive Committee is terminated when the Ad-hoc Committee has completed its mandate as determined by the Executive Committee.
2. All-University Committees are those that the Faculty Senate has established to perform specific ongoing tasks. The Faculty Senate shall determine the purpose of each All-University Committee, committee eligibility and length of term for its members. Faculty serving on All-University Committees shall be elected by the full-time faculty in elections administered by the Elections Committee. Elections for All-University Committee vacancies shall be held before the end of each spring semester. If necessary, special elections shall be administered by the Elections Committee to fill any vacancies that remain after the first election. School/College restrictions for All-University Committees shall be removed in special elections that are held after the first special election.
3. The Undergraduate Curriculum Forum is a permanent, autonomous Standing Committee of the Faculty Senate charged with improving the overall quality of the undergraduate curriculum. The UCF derives its authority from the faculty and is led by elected members of the faculty.
4. The Graduate Council is a permanent, autonomous Standing Committee of the Faculty Senate



charged with improving the overall quality of the graduate curriculum. The Graduate Council derives its authority from the faculty and is led by elected members of the faculty.

**X. Revisions to the Bylaws**

- A. Revisions of the Bylaws shall be initiated by the Executive Committee or a motion made by a Senator.
- B. Revisions to the Bylaws shall be approved according to the guidelines specified in the Faculty Senate Constitution.