

**Southern Connecticut State University**  
**Faculty Senate**  
**Constitution**

**I. Functions**

The Faculty Senate is the representative body of the faculty, deriving its authority from the faculty and the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Its primary function is to serve as the agency by which the faculty can actively participate in the governance and policy-making decisions of the University on the basis of the principle of shared authority. The Faculty Senate has as its goal a University community that promotes to the fullest the free transmission of knowledge and pursuit of truth. To this end, the members of the Faculty Senate are responsible for representing their constituent units and are entitled to propose new policies and procedures and revisions to existing policies and procedures of the University. The Faculty Senate shall consider such proposals and take appropriate action.

**II. Membership**

A. The Faculty Senate shall consist of the following:

1. Representatives from the full-time faculty (not on special appointments), athletic trainers, and coaches elected from within each voting unit as specified below, at the rate of one for every fifteen full-time members (including special appointments) or fraction thereof, with an additional representative for each succeeding fifteen full-time members (including special appointments) or fraction thereof. There shall be no minimum size for a voting unit.
2. Four representatives elected by and from the part-time faculty following election procedures of the Faculty Senate. No more than one of these part-time representatives shall come from any one department.
3. The immediate Past President of the Faculty Senate.
4. The President of the University, as an *ex officio*, nonvoting member.

B. The full-time members of each department (Athletics, Counseling, Library Services, and each academic department) shall be entitled to representation as a voting unit. Two or more departments may opt to form a single voting unit and elect one or more Senators to represent it, provided a majority of the members of each department agree. Any department may opt to terminate its membership in a previously agreed-upon voting unit by notifying the other department(s) in the unit. Any department that joins with another department, or that alters a previous arrangement with another department, shall notify the Secretary of the Faculty Senate in writing by February 1. Changes in such affiliations shall become effective at the beginning of the following academic year.

C. All members of the bargaining unit shall be eligible to serve in and to vote for members of the Faculty Senate. All full-time members shall have the right to proportional representation in the Faculty Senate by their voting unit, as specified above. All part-time members shall have the right to representation in the Faculty Senate as specified above, and shall be considered a single voting unit.

- D. The Faculty Senate Secretary shall certify the members of voting units at the beginning of each academic year. The Faculty Senate Rules Committee shall act as an appeals board for a change in representation. These actions of the Secretary and the Rules Committee shall be subject to approval by the Faculty Senate.

### III. Officers

- A. The officers of the Faculty Senate shall be President, immediate Past President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
1. President
    - a. The Faculty Senate President shall be elected by the Faculty Senate as the first order of business at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring semester. The Faculty Senate President shall take office with the beginning of the following academic year.
    - b. The Faculty Senate President may be reelected, but shall serve no more than three consecutive terms. Any Senator who will be a Senator in the following academic year is eligible to be elected as President.
    - c. In the absence of the Faculty Senate President, the immediate Past President shall preside over the Faculty Senate. If the immediate Past President is unable to preside, the Faculty Senate Secretary shall call the Faculty Senate to order to elect a presiding officer (*pro tem*). If the President, the immediate Past President, and the Secretary are not present, then a member of the Executive Committee shall preside.
    - d. If the Faculty Senate President is unable to complete the term, the immediate Past President shall preside over the Faculty Senate and the Chairperson of the Elections Committee shall hold an election for a new President. In the absence of the immediate Past President and the Chairperson of the Elections Committee, the election shall be conducted by a member of the Executive Committee according to the following order: Academic Policy Committee Chairperson, Finance Committee Chairperson, Personnel Policy Committee Chairperson, Rules Committee Chairperson, Student Policy Committee Chairperson, and Technology Committee Chairperson. If the vacancy occurs before the Executive Committee is elected, a member of the past Executive Committee shall preside as specified in the previous sentence.
  2. Past President
    - a. The Past President shall remain a voting member of the Faculty Senate one year after the end of the final term as President, even if that member's term as Senator has expired, and the member has not been re-elected. If the President of the Faculty Senate is re-elected, the office of Past President shall be vacant.
  3. Secretary
    - a. The Secretary shall be appointed annually by the Faculty Senate President from among the members of the Faculty Senate subject to the majority approval of the Executive

Committee.

- b. If the Secretary is unable to complete the term, the Faculty Senate President shall appoint a replacement from among the members of the Faculty Senate subject to the majority approval of the Executive Committee.

4. Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer shall be elected to a one-year term as the second order of business at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring semester. The Treasurer shall take office with the beginning of the following academic year.
- b. The Treasurer may serve successive terms, but shall serve no more than three consecutive one-year terms. Any Senator who will be a Senator the following academic year is eligible to be elected as Treasurer.
- c. If the Treasurer is unable to complete the term, the Faculty Senate President shall appoint a replacement from among the members of the Faculty Senate subject to the majority approval of the Executive Committee.

B. Removal of Officers

1. A motion to remove any Faculty Senate officer from office shall be introduced by a petition presented to the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate bearing the signatures of not less than 25% of the Faculty Senate membership. The petition shall state the grounds for removal of the officer(s).
2. A motion to remove any Faculty Senate officer from office shall be presented at the next regular or special meeting of the Faculty Senate, but may not be voted upon until the following regular meeting. This motion shall require the affirmative votes of two-thirds of the total Faculty Senate membership for passage.

**IV. Meetings**

- A. Meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be open to the public to the extent required by law.
- B. Regular meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be held at least monthly during the academic year. The dates and times of the meetings shall be determined by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate and shall be posted on the Faculty Senate website.
- C. Special meetings may be called by the Faculty Senate President as the need arises. Special meetings shall be called by the President or by the Faculty Senate Secretary at the request of at least one-quarter of the Faculty Senate membership. The calls to such meetings must be issued at least one week in advance and the purpose stated.
- D. The approved minutes of Faculty Senate meetings and President's reports presented at Faculty Senate meetings shall be posted on the Faculty Senate website.

**V. Faculty Referendum**

- A. The Elections Committee shall conduct faculty referenda of the full-time faculty (not on special appointments) at the direction of the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate may also include part-time faculty and/or faculty on special appointments by a majority vote before a faculty referendum. All referenda require a minimum of 200 faculty votes to be valid and the results are decided by a simple majority of those voting.

## **VI. Faculty Initiative for Faculty Senate Action**

- A. The Faculty Senate shall be bound to consider for enactment proposals which:
  - 1. Have been petitioned for by a minimum of 40 faculty members (full- and/or part-time), or,
  - 2. Have been recommended by the bargaining unit at a meeting announced and open to all members of the bargaining unit.
- B. Any faculty member may petition the Faculty Senate to conduct a faculty-wide referendum on any action taken by the Faculty Senate or proposal on which the Faculty Senate has refused to act. Signatures of a minimum of 40 faculty members (full- and/or part-time) are required for this petition and for a referendum to take place. Such petitions must specifically state the action desired. The conditions in Section V must also be met.

## **VII. Changes in the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws**

- A. Revising the Faculty Senate Constitution is a four-step process, requiring announcement, approval by the Faculty Senate, approval by the University Faculty via referendum, and approval by the University President.
  - 1. A vote to propose changes to the Faculty Senate Constitution may be taken either at a regular or special meeting of the Faculty Senate, provided:
    - a. The Faculty Senate membership has received written notice of each of the proposed changes and the forthcoming vote at least one week prior to the meeting; and
    - b. Two-thirds or more of the Faculty Senate membership is present.
  - 2. A two-thirds majority vote of the Faculty Senate membership present is needed to approve the proposed changes.
  - 3. Recommended changes in the Faculty Senate Constitution that are approved by the Faculty Senate shall be presented to the faculty for a vote following the referendum procedure in Section V.
  - 4. Recommended changes in the Faculty Senate Constitution that are approved by a faculty referendum shall be presented to the University President for approval.
- B. Changes in the Faculty Senate Bylaws may be made at either a regular or special meeting of the Faculty Senate, with the approval of a two-thirds majority of the Faculty Senate membership provided that the conditions in Section VII, Parts A.1 and A.2 have been met.