

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

BY-LAWS OF THE FACULTY SENATE, Norman Campus

**A. OFFICERS:**

1. The officers of the Faculty Senate shall consist of a Chair, a Chair-Elect, and a Secretary.
2. The Chair-Elect and the Secretary shall be elected by ballot at a meeting of the Senate in April. The ballot shall seek to have at least two candidates for each office. Candidates must have previously served as members of the Executive Committee. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. In the event of a tie between two candidates, candidates may offer brief remarks in support of their election, and/or may withdraw from the election. Subsequent rounds of voting will be conducted until one candidate achieves a simple majority. If three or more candidates stand for election and no candidate achieves a simple majority, the top two candidates will enter into a runoff election. If there is a tie among run-off candidates, all candidates may offer brief remarks and/or withdraw. Subsequent rounds of voting will be conducted until one candidate of the run-off candidates achieves a simple majority.

If either office is vacated, a replacement shall be elected at the next meeting of the Senate.

3. The Chair-Elect will succeed to the office of Chair whenever it is vacated or when their own successor is elected. The Chair's tenure of office will be from mid-May to the following mid-May.
4. For officers elected between April 1 and January 31, the term of office will be until the following May. For officers elected between February 1 and March 31, the term of office will be until the second May following.
5. Both the Secretary and Chair-Elect shall be *ex officio* members of the Senate unless they are also serving as an elected senator.

**B. MEETINGS:**

1. The Senate shall meet regularly on the second Monday of each month of the regular school year and on call of the Chair, the Chair-Elect, or in a petition, presented to the Chair, signed by five Senate members.
2. Meetings of the Senate are regularly open to attendance by all members of the University Community and representatives of the Press. However, the Senate may go into executive session by a majority vote of the members present.
3. A person not a member of the Senate may speak only by invitation or permission of the Senate. Requests from non-members to speak shall be addressed in writing to the Chair. The Chair will present such requests to the Senate for action.
4. At the beginning of each academic year, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate shall elect a member of the Senate to serve as the Parliamentarian at all meetings of the Senate, as well as the General Faculty, during that year.

**C. QUORUM:**

A majority of the Senate's members shall constitute a quorum.

**D. PROCEDURES:**

1. Voting shall be by show of hands or by electronic means, but five members may require a roll call vote upon any proposition.
2. The presiding officer shall have a vote only in case of a tie.
3. The agenda of each meeting shall be prepared and distributed in advance by the Faculty Senate Officers. Any matter submitted by a member to the Secretary shall be placed upon the agenda of the next regular meeting.
4. In the event that the absence from campus of a significant number of members of the Senate makes holding an in-person meeting impracticable, the Faculty Senate may meet virtually or by electronic means. Virtual meetings are subject to the same procedural rules, including establishing a quorum, with such minor technical adaptations as are necessary to conduct business electronically. For votes normally done anonymously, such as elections of officers, an online voting or survey service may replace paper ballots, subject to the condition that all voting members of the Faculty Senate have access to the appropriate platform(s), that vote outcomes are recorded, and that adequate time for voting is allowed. For votes conducted with such a service, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee will determine and announce a voting period, which should generally allow two business days for responses. Votes may be reviewed and verified by the Faculty Senate administrator. If less than a majority of the Senate submits a vote, the motion will be tabled due to lack of quorum. A summary of the motion and results of the vote will be recorded and reported in the Journal of the Faculty Senate. Electronic discussion contributions are subject to open records requests.
5. In the event that urgent, time-sensitive matters requiring action on the part of the full Faculty Senate arise (i.e., situations that preclude the customary month separating discussion and voting), as determined by a two-thirds majority of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee may offer a motion to the Faculty Senate to be discussed virtually. Meetings should be announced in accordance with open meetings laws. The motion may be voted on during such a meeting in accordance with the bylaws and established procedures. For motions to be adopted before the customary month separating discussion and voting, they must be passed by a two-thirds majority of the Faculty Senate.

**E. COMMITTEES:**

1. The standing committees of the Senate shall consist of:
  - (a) Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the following ten members: the Chair, the Chair-Elect, the Secretary, the Chair of the Faculty Welfare Committee, the Chair of the Committee on Faculty Recruitment, Retention, and Development, and the Chair of the Committee on Faculty Compensation and Benefits, and four at-large members elected by the Faculty Senate in the spring to be widely representative of the University and to serve staggered two-year terms. If a committee elects to have co-chairs, only one may serve as a voting member of the Executive Committee. The committee co-chairs will inform the Chair who is the voting

member each semester. The four elected members may not succeed themselves. At-large members shall be elected by ballot at a meeting of the Senate in May. At-large members should broadly represent the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and professional studies. The ballot shall consist of at least two candidates for each office. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. In the event of a tie between candidates, candidates may offer brief remarks in support of their election, and/or may withdraw from the election. Subsequent rounds of voting will be conducted until one candidate achieves a simple majority. If three or more candidates stand for election and no candidate achieves a simple majority, the top two candidates will enter into a runoff election. If there is a tie among run-off candidates, all candidates may offer brief remarks and/or withdraw. Subsequent rounds of voting will be conducted until one candidate of the run-off candidates achieves a simple majority.

In addition, the Chairs of the University Councils sit as *ex officio* members, without vote, on the Executive Committee. The Immediate Past Chair shall have a vote, with the two most recent past Chairs given *ex-officio* membership on the Executive Committee, without voting privileges. In the event of a tie, the Chair will cast the deciding vote.

**(b) Committee on Committees.** The Senate shall elect a Committee on Committees consisting of five members elected for staggered terms in such a manner that not more than two members will be elected in any one year. They must have been members of the faculty for at least five years and hold tenure.

The Committee on Committees will strive to maintain an open and objective perspective related to filling vacant positions on the various University and campus councils and committees. Members of the Committee on Committees should consider a balanced and broad representation for the entire university and should seek input from chairs of departments, directors, and others who have a wide knowledge and acquaintance of faculty personnel. Final nominations, however, will be made by the Committee on Committees and the Senate. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee may approve vacancies that occur off-cycle.

Current members of the Committee on Committees nor FSEC should not be nominated for vacant positions on the various University and campus councils and committees. A member should recuse him/herself from the selection process for a specific committee if s/he has a personal conflict of interest related to a candidate.

**(c) Faculty Welfare Committee.**

*Charge:* This Committee is responsible to the faculty for policy review and recommendations on questions of tenure, faculty evaluations, professional conduct, promotion, and working conditions. It shall review policies and programs, propose changes and additions, distribute information, and supervise the implementation of Senate recommendations.

The Committee shall report at least yearly to the Senate and, upon approval, to the President and the Provost.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Committee shall:

- (1) Gather information on other policies and programs within the University and in other universities.
- (2) Distribute information to the faculty in simplified form and see that new faculty receive comprehensive information.
- (3) Establish priorities on recommendations for changes and additions.
- (4) Participate in the process of amending the content of the *Faculty Handbook*

and related policies, and make recommendations to the Senate.

*Operating Procedures:* The Committee shall formulate its own operating procedures, which shall include:

- (1) The election of a chair from among the faculty members of the Committee.
- (2) Provision for liaison with all appropriate councils and committees.
- (3) Provision for sub-committees of the Committee to which non-members of the Committee may be appointed if appropriate.

<i>Membership</i>	<i>How Nominated</i>	<i>Term</i>
5 faculty members	To be elected by the Faculty Senate	3 years (staggered terms)

**(d) Committee on Faculty Compensation and Benefits.**

*Charge:* This Committee is responsible to the Faculty Senate for reviewing and recommending policy on questions related to the economic welfare of the faculty, including fringe benefits.

In carrying out this responsibility, the Committee shall:

- (1) Monitor, each year, the entire process by which salary increases are requested and fixed by the University administration, the University Regents, the State Board of Regents, and the State Legislature.
- (2) Gather information on salaries and fringe benefits from within the University and from other universities, put such information into proper form, and make it available to the Senate for the purpose of accurately presenting the economic position of the faculty and the faculty's economic needs to the administration, the boards of regents, the Legislature, and the general public.
- (3) Suggest to the Senate appropriate proposals, strategies, and forums for advancing the economic position and needs of the faculty, both inside and outside the University community.
- (4) Recommend to the Committee on Committees the faculty nominees for the University Employment Benefits Committee.
- (5) Report at least yearly to the Senate and, upon approval, to the President, the Provost, and the Budget Council.

*Operating Procedures:* The Committee shall formulate its own operating procedures, which shall include:

- (1) The election of a chair from among the faculty members of the Committee.
- (2) Provision for a sub-committee of the Committee to which non-members of the Committee may be appointed by the Faculty Senate, if the Senate deems such additions appropriate.
- (3) Provision for liaison with all appropriate councils and committees.

<i>Membership</i>	<i>How Nominated</i>	<i>Term</i>
7 faculty members	To be elected by the Faculty Senate	3 years (staggered terms)

**(e) Committee on Faculty Recruitment, Retention, and Development.**

*Charge:* This Committee is responsible to the Faculty Senate for reviewing and recommending policy and practice on issues related to faculty recruitment, retention, and development.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Committee shall:

- (1) Investigate, discover, and promote best practices for faculty recruiting and retention.
- (2) Gather and review information on the allocation of university resources awards, research grants, prizes, etc.) and advancements (tenure, promotion, named professorships, etc.) relative to metrics of recruitment, retention, and development.
- (3) Suggest to the Senate appropriate proposals, strategies, and forums for advancing the goals of the committee.
- (4) Work with the interested campus stakeholders to set priorities, advance policy, and follow up on the progress of proposed initiatives.
- (5) Report at least yearly to the Senate and, upon approval, the President and the Provost.

*Operating Procedures:* The Committee shall formulate its own operating procedures, which shall include:

- (1) The election of a chair from among the faculty members of the Committee.
- (2) Provision for a sub-committee of the Committee to which non-members of the Committee may be appointed by the Faculty Senate, if the Senate deems such additions appropriate.
- (3) Provision for liaison with all appropriate councils and committees.

<i>Membership</i>	<i>How Nominated</i>	<i>Term</i>
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## 2. Special Committees:

The Senate may at any time create a special committee to study and report upon a specific problem.

## **F. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND PROCEDURE:**

1. Each standing and special committee shall have the authority to select non-Senate members of the faculty to serve as members of the committee.
2. Each special and standing committee shall elect its own chair. However, the Chair-Elect of the Faculty Senate shall function as the Chair of the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees during tenure as the Chair-Elect.
3. Faculty Senate Administrative Manager shall keep a list of all Senate and non-Senate members of special and standing committees.
4. All reports of standing committees shall be distributed to all members of the Senate in advance of the date of the report's consideration.
5. A copy of the Faculty Senate Journal will be uploaded to the institutional repository maintained by University Libraries.

6. The Administrative Manager shall receive and file duplicate copies of every Senate committee's report, one of which may be borrowed by any committee of the Senate or of the general faculty, but which must be returned to the Administrative Manager after the borrowing committee has completed its investigations.

### **G. SENATOR GOVERNANCE:**

1. Upon completion of two consecutive three-year terms in the Senate a faculty member shall be ineligible to serve again for a period of three years.
2. Faculty members serving in the Senate are to act ethically and professionally in fulfilling Senate duties. Faculty Senators are expected to:
  - (1) Act with integrity, honesty, and respect toward colleagues, students, and staff.
  - (2) Uphold academic freedom and shared governance principles.
  - (3) Maintain compliance with Senate policies and procedures, including confidentiality when required by Senate proceedings.
  - (4) Avoid conflicts of interest and disclose any potential conflicts.<sup>1</sup>
  - (5) Engage constructively in debate and decision-making.
3. Procedure for addressing instances of unethical or unprofessional behavior:
  - (1) A motion of 'no confidence' in a Faculty Senator can be brought forward by ten percent or more of Senators (currently six) to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee based on concerns related to potential unethical or unprofessional behavior.
  - (2) A motion review process is conducted in the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The committee will be facilitated by a Past Chair of the Senate.
  - (3) Committee will include 4 members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and 3 additional members of the Senate at large, who were not part of those that brought forward the motion.
  - (4) If a motion of 'no confidence' is advanced for a Faculty Senator who is a sitting member of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, a Past Chair of the Senate will nominate a member of the Senate at large to appoint and chair the review committee. The review committee should be comprised of seven Senators who were not part of those that brought forward the motion.
  - (5) The motion review process includes examination, debate, ballot voting
  - (6) If the motion of no confidence is passed by two-thirds (five of seven) members of the review Committee, the Committee will recommend to the Senate Chair one or more of the following sanctions: Formal reprimand and corrective action plan, temporary suspension from Senate duties, or removal from Senate duties. If removal from Senate duties is the outcome, the Senator is not eligible to serve in the future.
  - (7) Decision of removal from Senate duties may be appealed to OU Faculty Appeals Board.

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<sup>1</sup> Conflict of interest arises when a Faculty Senator's personal interests (e.g., financial gain, professional advantage, external employment) could improperly influence, or reasonably appear to influence, the Senator's judgment, decisions, or actions in the conduct of Senate business.

#### **H. LIAISON WITH THE PRESIDENT**

The President of the University shall present to the first meeting of the Faculty Senate in each new academic year a general message on the state of the University in which he or she shall give recommendations for the furtherance of the progress of the University.

The President shall, within 30 calendar days after receipt of a Senate action, inform the Faculty Senate by written message of his or her disposition of a Senate measure. If disapproving the measure, the President shall, in writing, give the Senate reasons for the action.

Faculty councils shall be utilized by the President of the University in the development of policies on matters of vital interest to the University. These areas include teaching, research and creative/scholar activity, and professional and University service and public outreach, libraries, budgetary planning, faculty personnel, University relations, University community, athletics, University operations, and University projects. In order to give the faculty a voice in determining the faculty membership of major councils, which shall be named by the Faculty Senate resolution, the Faculty Senate shall each year provide a list of nominees from which the President will make his or her appointments for the ensuing year.

#### **I. LIAISON WITH FACULTY SENATE, OU HEALTH SCIENCES**

The Faculty Senate (Norman) shall maintain a liaison with the Faculty Senate (Health Sciences Campus) through an Inter-Senate Liaison Committee composed of the Chairs, Chairs-Elect, and the Secretaries of the two Senates.

The purpose of the Inter-Senate Liaison Committee is to exchange information between the Senates on either campus and concerns and actions of mutual interest and to recommend actions to the respective bodies on each campus. The respective Chairs of the two Faculty Senates should arrange for the meetings of the Inter-Senate Liaison Committee.

#### **J. AMENDMENT**

These rules may be altered or amended at any time provided the proposed amendment shall have been submitted to the Senate one month in advance and a copy of the amendment shall have been distributed to the members of the Senate two weeks in advance of the meeting at which the voting is to take place.