

# Constitution of the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum

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Southern Connecticut State University

Version 2.0

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## **Preamble**

As a permanent, autonomous standing committee of the Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) Faculty Senate, the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum (UCF) is charged with improving the overall quality of the undergraduate curriculum. The UCF shall be guided by the academic mission of the University; carry out its charge collegially; maintain open communication with the University community; balance promptness with thorough review; and act in a timely, impartial and consistent manner in its deliberations and notification process.

## **Article I: Functions**

The UCF shall initiate or receive and evaluate proposals to uphold and raise the academic standards of SCSU and shall recommend approval or non-approval to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Specifically, the UCF shall concern itself with:

- A. All proposals for new and revised majors, minors or concentrations, and programs, whether based in a single department, more than one department, or independent of any department.
- B. All proposals for new or revised courses and related matters (e.g. cross-listing of courses).
- C. Creating, maintaining, and communicating to the University community the evaluative criteria for new and revised course and program proposals.
- D. Proposals concerning major changes to the University's general education program shall be ratified by a simple majority as long as 50% plus one of the full-time faculty vote, with the referendum to be conducted by the Senate Elections Committee.
- E. Policy for the undergraduate curriculum.
- F. Creation of additional faculty bodies or delegation of some of the above activities to such bodies; the work of these bodies on behalf of the UCF shall be conducted according to standards set by the UCF.
- G. Oversight of program review and assessment for all undergraduate programs.

## **Article II: Members and Terms**

### A. Members

The UCF shall consist of voting members who represent the following SCSU constituencies:

1. Department Representatives  
There shall be one faculty Representative and one Alternate elected from each academic department.
2. Faculty Members-at-Large  
There shall be five Faculty Members-at-Large, elected by a general faculty election vote conducted by the Senate Election Committee. All full-time faculty members are eligible to be elected as Representatives.
3. Other University Units  
There shall be one Representative and one Alternate from each of the following areas, to be chosen through a process determined by each unit:
  - a. Academic Advisement
  - b. Registrar's Office
  - c. Library Services
  - d. Student Affairs
  - e. Office of Academic Affairs
4. Ex-Officio Non-Voting Liaisons  
There shall be one ex-officio non-voting liaison from each of the following areas, to be chosen through a process determined within each area:
  - a. The Faculty Senate
  - b. The Graduate Council
5. Students  
The Student Government Association shall have the opportunity to send one Representative and one Alternate, chosen through a process determined by the Student Government Association.  
  
There shall be an opportunity to include additional student Representatives if other student constituencies request and receive approval for representation from the UCF.
6. Additional Representation  
The UCF shall have the authority to extend representation to other constituent units of the University with the approval of the Faculty Senate. Any constituent unit that wishes to receive representation must fulfill either of the

following two conditions: a) offer a major OR b) offer courses with its own subject code prefix AND have either a Chair or Director.

Any program that meets either a or b above may apply for UCF membership by providing a rationale explaining why that program is not otherwise represented sufficiently in the UCF. There shall be one Representative and one Alternate from each approved program in keeping with Department Representatives above.

#### B. Observers

Any faculty member, administrator, or student shall be welcome to attend UCF meetings.

#### C. Terms

1. New members shall take office during the first UCF meeting of the academic year.
2. Members shall serve three-year terms, with one-third of the members chosen each year.

### **Article III: Structure**

#### A. The Chair

The UCF shall be led by a Chair to be elected by all voting UCF members at the last UCF meeting of the academic year. Those eligible to be elected as Chair include the current Chair, a faculty Representative or Alternate, or a Faculty Member-at-Large. The newly-elected Chair shall assume the responsibilities of the position on the first day of the academic year. The Chair shall serve a one-year term with a limit of three consecutive terms. The UCF Chair may be removed from office by a process consistent with the current policy for removal of the President of the Faculty Senate. The Chair shall:

1. Direct proposals and inquiries to the appropriate committee or person, or decide that the matter does not properly come before the UCF. If a proposer disagrees with the Chair's decision, then the Chair's decision shall go to the full UCF for a final disposition.
2. Appoint members of the standing committees each year, other than the Steering Committee, the Writing across Curriculum Committee (WACC) and the LEPC. The members of the WACC and LEPC shall be selected according to the procedural guidelines of those committees. The Steering Committee shall consist of the Chairs of the six standing committees. To the extent it is

compatible with the effective working of the committees, the UCF Chair shall accede to the preferences of members for committee service.

3. Preside at meetings of the UCF and chair the Steering Committee.
4. Appoint members of ad hoc committees.
5. Represent the UCF to other University bodies.
6. Communicate decisions of the UCF to the faculty senate, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the University at large.

#### B. Standing Committees

The UCF shall consist of a Steering Committee and six other standing committees. Every member shall serve on at least one standing committee.

Standing Committees shall evaluate curricular proposals submitted to them for consistency with the SCSU mission, University-wide standards, UCF guidelines and other impacts on the undergraduate curriculum.

Each standing committee shall have a chair, selected by the members of that committee in accordance with that committee's bylaws, to serve a one-year term with a limit of three consecutive terms.

Each committee shall issue procedural guidelines to define the way it operates. These guidelines shall be approved by the full UCF.

The actions of UCF standing committees shall stand unless challenged in the UCF. If an action is challenged, it may be overturned by a majority vote of the UCF.

1. The **Steering Committee** shall:
  - a. Consist of the chairs of the six other standing committees and the Chair of the UCF.
  - b. Set agendas for the UCF.
  - c. Evaluate UCF policies and procedures.
  - d. Act in the place of the UCF when the UCF cannot meet. Any action shall be subject to consideration by the full UCF.
  - e. Be responsible for providing communication about UCF proceedings to UCF members, Department Chairs, and the University community at large.

2. **Notifications Management Committee (NMC)** shall:
  - a. Receive and evaluate proposals for new courses and program revisions. Primary responsibility for new course and program revision review shall lie with the School Curriculum Committees. Review by NMC and UCF shall normally be routine and expedient.
  - b. Receive and evaluate proposals for course revisions. Primary responsibility for course revision review shall lie with the Department Curriculum Committees. Review by School Curriculum Committees, NMC and UCF shall normally be routine and expedient.
  - c. Meet regularly with School and/or Department Curriculum Committees to communicate standards, eliminate redundancy, and ensure consistency and efficiency in the evaluation and approval process.
  - d. Encourage collaboration and mediate conflicts across and between schools and departments regarding proposals and other curricular issues.
  - e. Make recommendations to the UCF regarding University standards and policies in curricular matters such as course levels, credit hours and method of delivery.
  - f. Ensure that appropriate parties are notified of pending or approved courses.
3. **New Programs and Innovations Committee (NPIC)** shall:
  - a. Receive and evaluate new program proposals and ensure that they are ready for consideration by the full UCF.
  - b. Receive and evaluate suggestions and proposals on curricular innovations and help to prepare proposals for consideration by the full UCF.
  - c. Receive and monitor proposals for Special Topics courses.
  - d. Encourage, recommend, or propose policies for curricular innovations.
  - e. Provide assistance to departments and individuals in preparing proposals.
4. **University-Wide Impact Committee (UWIC)** shall:

- a. Receive and evaluate new and revised course proposals having University-wide impact.
  - b. Receive and evaluate proposals and make recommendations concerning courses and issues that have University-wide impact and mediate conflicts connected with those issues.
  - c. Encourage dialogue and support faculty activities related to University-wide curricular issues.
5. **Program Review/Assessment Committee (PRAC)** shall:
- a. Define and apply UCF assessment standards and procedures in support of departments undergoing academic program assessment.
  - b. Evaluate program review reports prepared by departments, meet with department representative(s) and present findings in reports to UCF.
  - c. Report to the UCF membership on the progress of the assessment process.
  - d. Periodically review and revise as needed, the standards for department program review.
  - e. Provide assistance to departments and individuals in conducting program reviews.
  - f. Educate faculty through open meetings.
6. **Writing Across the Curriculum Committee (WACC)** shall:
- a. Oversee and administer the Writing across the Curriculum Program together with the WAC Director.
  - b. Support the development of a culture of writing at Southern Connecticut State University.
  - c. Act as a liaison to the ongoing national conversation regarding writing across the curriculum.
  - d. Make proposals to the UCF regarding all-University writing requirements.
  - e. Establish goals, guidelines and recommendations for designated Writing Intensive courses.

- f. Receive and evaluate new and revised proposals for designated Writing Intensive courses.
- g. Mediate issues involving designated Writing Intensive courses.
- h. Provide assistance to departments and individuals in preparing proposals for designated Writing Intensive courses.
- i. Provide assistance to departments and individuals in designing and implementing writing components for individual courses.
- j. Report regularly to the University community regarding “Writing across the Curriculum” issues.

7. **Liberal Education Program Committee (LEPC)** shall:

- a. Oversee and administer the LEP together with the LEP Director.
- b. Ensure a smooth transition from the University Requirement (UR) program to the LEP.
- c. Work with faculty in proposing liberal education courses and reworking existing courses to meet the guidelines of the LEP.
- d. Assist the UCF in the interpretation of the various goals’ purposes and key elements of the program.
- e. Respond to problems and issues that arise with the implementation of the LEP.
- f. Ensure that assessment and review of the LEP are carried out in an effective and timely manner.
- g. Periodically review and propose revisions to the existing LEP based on the committee’s review and/or input from faculty.

C. Ad Hoc Committees

- 1. The UCF shall establish and charge ad hoc committees as needed.
- 2. The Chair of UCF shall appoint members and chairs of ad hoc committees after consultation with the Steering Committee. Members of ad hoc committees need not be members of UCF.

3. Such committees shall cease to exist upon completion of their charge, or by action of the UCF.

#### **Article IV: Voting**

- A. Voting on all UCF matters shall be open to all UCF Representatives, including Faculty Members-at-Large.
- B. If a Representative is absent, the corresponding Alternate shall have the same voting privileges as the Representative.
- C. Voting in Standing and ad hoc committees of the UCF shall be open to all members of those committees, including members of ad hoc committees who are not members of UCF.
- D. The UCF Chair shall vote last, and only when the chair's vote is a deciding vote.

#### **Article V: Amendments**

The UCF shall have the authority to amend this Constitution.

- A. All recommendations for changes to the Constitution shall be discussed by the full UCF.
- B. Proposed amendments shall require discussion at two meetings of the UCF during the same semester and shall be approved by a vote of three-quarters of those present. A quorum for approval of a constitutional amendment shall be two-thirds of the UCF membership.
- C. Notifications of approved amendments shall be sent to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Faculty Senate, and to the entire University faculty within one month of UCF approval.
- D. Constitutional amendments approved by UCF shall be subject to approval by the Faculty Senate and the President of the University.

#### **Article VI: Faculty Referenda on UCF Action**

- A. Any faculty member may petition the UCF to conduct a faculty-wide referendum with respect to any action taken by the UCF. Signatures of a minimum of 40 faculty (full and/or part-time) are required for this petition.
- B. The Elections Committee of the Faculty Senate shall conduct the referendum, with a minimum of 240 faculty votes or 50% plus one of those voting, whichever is greater, required for rescinding any UCF action.