

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
Faculty Senate
CONSTITUTION

I. Functions

The Faculty Senate shall be the representative body of the faculty¹, deriving its authority from the faculty as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Its primary function shall be 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. Each member of the Senate shall be responsible for proposing changes in the policies and procedures of the University leading to this end. The Senate shall consider such proposals and take appropriate action.

II. Membership

- A. All members of the instructional faculty bargaining unit shall be eligible to serve in and to vote for members of the Senate. All full-time members shall have the right to proportional representation in the Senate by department or by grouping of departments, as specified in below. All part-time members shall have the right to representation in the Senate, and shall be considered a single unit.
- B. The Senate Rules Committee shall annually certify the members of voting units, and shall act as an appeals board for a change in representation. These actions of the Rules Committee shall be subject to approval by the Senate.
- C. The Senate shall consist of the following:
 - 1. Full-time faculty representatives elected from within each voting unit as specified below, at the rate of one for each fifteen members or fraction thereof, with an additional representative for each succeeding fifteen members 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 Senate. No more than one may come from any department.
 - 3. The Immediate Past President of the Senate.
 - 4. The President of the University, as an ex-officio, non-voting member.
- D. 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, to elect one or more Senators to represent them, provided a majority of members of each department so agree. Any department may opt to terminate their membership in a previously agreed-upon voting unit, by so notifying the other departments(s) in the unit. Any department that joins with another, or that alters a previous arrangement shall so 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.
- E. Prior to April 1 the Chair of the Rules Committee shall notify each voting unit and the Faculty Senate Elections Committee 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 of the Senate 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. A full-time faculty member having responsibilities in more than one voting unit shall indicate in writing to the Senate, by February 1, if he or she wishes to change his or her voting unit.
- F. Voting units for full-time faculty members shall use the following election procedures:

¹ Faculty means full and part-time faculty unless otherwise specified.

1. Elections shall be by written secret ballot with a majority vote of ballots cast by the voting unit required for election.
 2. The Faculty Senate Rules Committee shall serve as an advisory committee to the Senate in all questions concerning elections of Senators.
- G. 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. The Faculty Senate Rules Committee shall serve as an advisory committee to the Senate in all questions concerning elections of Senators.
- H.
1. Approximately one third of the members shall be elected each year.
 2. Elected members shall serve a term of three years, taking office at the beginning of the academic year, except as specified in H.3 or H.4 or I.
 3. In any given year, the Senate may assign two-year terms to some Senate seats. Such assignments may be made only to improve the rotational balance of the Senate or of a particular voting unit.
 4. The term of office of any senator representing a voting unit whose structure has changed pursuant to Article D shall be deemed to terminate as of the beginning of the next academic year.
- I. 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 (F or G) at the time such vacancies occur.
- J. Recall of Senate members by their voting unit shall require a two-thirds vote by secret written ballot of the total voting unit.

III. Officers

- A. The officers of the Faculty Senate shall be President, Immediate Past President, Treasurer, and Secretary.
1. President of the Senate
 - a. She/he shall be elected by the Senate as the first order of business at the first meeting in May of each year. The election shall be conducted by the Chair of the Elections Committee, or, if the Chair is a candidate or nominator, the Elections Committee elects a person to conduct the election. Voting shall be by secret written ballot with a majority vote required for election. If a majority vote is not received on the first ballot, a run-off vote will be conducted between the top two vote getters. The secret ballot for electing a president shall be conditioned upon having more than one candidate. The Chair shall appoint teller(s) to collect and count the ballots. The President shall take office with the beginning of the following academic year.
 - b. The President of the Senate may succeed himself or herself, 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 of the Senate.
 - c. In the absence of the President, the Immediate Past President shall preside over the Senate. If the Immediate Past President is unable to preside, the Secretary of the Senate shall be empowered to call the Senate to order to elect a presiding officer (pro-tem).
 - d. If the President is unable to complete the term, the Immediate Past President shall preside over the Senate and hold an election for a new President. In the absence of the Immediate Past President, the election shall be conducted by a member of the Executive Committee according to

the following order: Elections, Academic Policy, Finance, Personnel Policy, Rules, Student Policy. 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.

e. The duties of the office are those normally associated with that position.

2. Immediate Past President

a. She/he shall remain as a voting member of the Senate one year after his/her term as President has expired, even if his/her term as senator has expired, and he/she has not been re-elected. If the President of the Senate is re-elected the office of Immediate Past President shall be vacant.

3. Secretary of the Senate

a. She/he shall be appointed annually by the President of the Senate from among the members of the Senate.

b. The duties of the office are those normally associated with that position.

4. Treasurer of the Senate

a. She/he shall be elected to a one-year term as the second order of business at the first meeting in May of each year. Voting shall be by secret ballot if there is more than one nominee; a majority vote is required for election. The Treasurer shall take office with the beginning of the following academic year.

b. The Treasurer of the Senate may succeed himself/herself, 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 of the Senate.

c. The duties of the office are those normally associated with that position.

B. Removal of Officers

A motion to remove from office any Senate Officer shall be introduced by a petition bearing the signatures of not less than 25% of the Senate membership. The petition shall state the grounds for removal of the officer(s).

A motion to remove from office any Senate Officer may be introduced at any regular or special meeting of the 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 Senate membership for passage.

IV. Meetings

A. Regular meetings of the 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 Senate and shall be published.

B. Special meetings may be called by the President of the Senate as the need arises. Special meetings shall be called by the President, or by the Secretary of the Senate, at the request of at least one-quarter of the Senate members. The call to such meetings must be issued at least one week in advance and the purpose stated.

C. All meetings of the Senate shall be open unless the meeting or portion thereof is declared closed by a vote of the Senate.

D. With the consent of the Senate, visitors may be afforded the privilege of the floor.

E. While a substantive 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, and shall prevail provided one-fourth of the senators present concur. 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; (b) each vote from the part-time voting unit shall be assigned a weight of fifteen.

V. Minutes and Reports

Approved copies of the minutes of the meetings shall be mailed to members of the faculty. The central place for the filing of minutes shall be the University Library.

VI. Faculty Referendum on Senate Action

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

VII. Faculty Initiative for Senate Action

The Senate shall be bound to consider for enactment proposals which:

- 1. have been petitioned for by a minimum of 40 faculty (full and/or part-time), or,
- 2. have been recommended by a meeting of the instructional faculty bargaining unit, announced and open to all members of that group.

VIII. Changes in the Constitution and By-Laws

- A. Recommendations for changes in the Constitution shall be made at a regular or special meeting of the Faculty Senate, provided:
 - 1. The Senate members have received written notice of each of the proposed changes, and the forthcoming vote, at least one week prior to the meeting; and
 - 2. The vote takes place when two-thirds or more of the Senate membership is present, and two-thirds of those present vote to approve the change.
- B. Recommended changes in the Constitution, approved by the Faculty Senate, shall be presented to the faculty for a vote. Changes in the Constitution shall be made when 2/3 of those voting approve the change(s).
- C. Changes in the By-Laws may be made at a regular or special meeting of the Faculty Senate with the approval of two-thirds majority of the Senate membership.

By-Laws

A. Membership in Voting Units¹

1. Given below are qualifications which restrict the meaning of the terms "full-time faculty member", "voting unit member", and "department member". These qualifications shall be used in resolving questions of membership in any department or voting unit and shall be observed universally in all matters of University Senate business, including membership in the Senate, participation in Senate activities, and service on University committees that come within the Senate's purview.
 - a. A full-time faculty member is any member of the teaching faculty who has a full-time appointment at the University and who teaches, and/or has administrative responsibilities equivalent to, at least six semester hours per semester in some one department.
 - b. Every full-time faculty member shall be designated as a member of one, and only one, voting unit, and this unit shall be one in which he /she teaches, and/or has administrative responsibilities equivalent to, at least six semester hours per semester.
 - c. Every full-time faculty member shall be considered a member of one, and only one, department, and shall correspondingly be designated as a department member, with respect to that department.
 - d. If a full-time faculty member has responsibilities of more than six semester hours per semester in a department, he/she shall be considered a member of that department, unless he/she has an agreement in writing with the department in question that he/she is on loan to that department.
 - e. If a full-time faculty member has responsibilities of six semester hours per semester in each of two departments, he/she must choose which of these he/she wishes to be considered a member of, and must communicate this decision in writing to each of the departments concerned and to the appropriate dean(s). An application for promotion or tenure shall constitute such a communication. Having made such a choice, a faculty member may not alter his/her choice until at least three years have elapsed and until he/she makes application and receives written permission from the department and appropriate dean(s) involved.
 - f. Any full-time department member may transfer to another department provided that he/she communicates his/her decision in writing to the departments and a appropriate dean(s) involved and receives their permission. Having made such a choice, a faculty member may not alter his/her choice until at least three years have elapsed, or teaching assignments change.
 - g. A part-time member is any member of the teaching faculty who has a part-time appointment at the University and who teaches, is a counselor, or a librarian.
2. Realignments and Required Elections
 - a. Prior to April 1, the Rules committee, having counted the members of each voting unit, shall report to the Senate on the current and prospective status of any alignments of departments into larger voting units..
 - b. Prior to April 30 departments and /or voting units shall hold elections for Senator(s) in the number required to represent the new constituency according to the Constitution (II.C .a.). The names of those elected shall be reported in writing to the Secretary of the Senate, who shall inform the Chairperson of the Rules Committee of these election results by May 15. Changes in representation created by the election shall be effective at the beginning of the following year.

¹ Interpretation: Membership in the Senate and representation therein shall include only full-time teaching faculty, librarians and counselors and part time teaching faculty.

B. Quorum

1. Not less than 50% of the voting membership plus one constitute a quorum at any meeting. The Secretary of the Senate shall determine whether a quorum is present at the beginning of each meeting.
2. Absentee ballots shall not constitute a part of a quorum.

C. Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, 1915, shall govern the proceedings of the Senate unless otherwise provided herein.

D. Voting

1. While a substantive 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, and shall prevail provided one-fourth of the Senators present concur. The subsequent proportional vote shall be by roll-call, with each Senator's vote being weighed as follows: (2) 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; (b) each vote from the part-time voting unit shall be assigned a weight of fifteen.
2. Absentee ballots must be in writing, and must carry a statement (a) of the specific issue, and (b) indicating yes, no, abstention, or the name of the person voted for.
3. The election of the President shall be by written secret ballot with a majority of those voting required for election. If a majority vote is not received in the first ballot a run-off vote will be conducted between the top two vote-getters. The election of the Treasurer shall follow the same procedure as the election for the President of the Senate.
4. Upon the request of any member, voting on any substantive motion shall be by secret ballot. The chair shall appoint tellers to conduct the ballots.

E. Order of Business

The order of business at regular meetings of the Senate shall be:

1. Minutes of the preceding meeting
2. Orders of the Day
3. Reports of Standing Committees
4. Reports of Special Committees
5. Old Business
6. New Business

Any member of the University Community shall have the right to request consideration of additional items for the agenda, in writing, to the Secretary.

F. Rules of Procedure

The following rules shall govern the normal business of the Senate. Any or all of these may be suspended at the discretion of the Senate.

1. Committee reports shall be in two parts:
 - a. The first part shall report to the Senate what items were discussed and should include any material which will inform the Senate on the issues. This part of the report shall be offered for acceptance, and may simply be accepted by the chair if there is no objection from the floor.
 - b. The second part shall present the recommendations of the Committee in a clear, unambiguous form. This part shall be offered for adoption. It may be presented as a single motion or as several separate motions, at

the discretion of the Committee Chairperson. All committee reports shall be written, reproduced, and delivered to Senators at least two days prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered.

2. The Orders of the Day, insofar as possible, shall be written, reproduced, and delivered to Senators at least two days prior to the meeting at which they are to be presented.
3. At the same time as any major policy statement or document developed by the Senate, or any Senate committee, is to be communicated to the administration or the Board of Trustees, it shall be reproduced in its final form and delivered to all Senators.

G. Senate Committees

There shall be the following Standing Committees of the Senate:

1. Executive Committee

a. Membership

President of the Senate (Chairperson)
Secretary of the Senate (Secretary)
Treasurer of the Senate
Chairpersons of the other Standing Committees
Immediate Past President of the Senate

b. Purpose

To establish a calendar of Senate meetings.
To establish the agenda of each Senate meeting.
To continually review policies and procedures.
To maintain liaison with the administration of the University.
To initiate and carry out steps consistent with Senate policy.

2. 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.

3. Personnel Policy Committee

Purview: all matters of policy pertaining to personnel represented in the Senate; e.g., promotion, tenure, sabbatical, salary, fringe benefits.

4. Student Policy Committee

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

5. Finance Committee

Purview: all matters of fiscal policy relating to the University; e.g., budget, priorities within budget, long-range planning.

6. 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 promulgation of information of nominees or referendum issue, tabulation of ballots, promulgation of voting results.

7. Rules Committee

Purview: all matters dealing with the internal operations of the Senate and the interaction of the Senate and Faculty; e.g., election of Senators, certification of voting units, constitutional questions, all matters of information on committees serving the university community. To compile an annual directory of committee memberships. To request and receive annual reports from all university committees on behalf of the Senate membership. To review committee guidelines for membership and procedures and to insure, if appropriate, the equality of representation for all departments and adequate communication to all faculty of committee decisions. To review requests made to the Senate by university committees and make recommendations to the Senate or other appropriate committees of the Senate.

8. Technology Committee

Purview: all matters dealing with technology as it impacts on faculty in their teaching and research; e.g., hardware/software acquisition, technical support, ongoing communication with other committees and offices involved with technology, long range planning relative to academic technology.

Prior to the first meeting of the Senate, the incumbent Secretary shall distribute forms to all Senators on which they can list their preferences for committee service. Any Senator may request to serve on more than one committee of the Senate.

The President of the Senate, following the preferences of Senators will take into consideration as much as possible the principle of continuity of membership and shall assign the membership of each committee from among the Senators. Each Senator, with the exception of the President and the Secretary, shall be appointed to at least one standing committee. The President and the Secretary may serve on standing committees other than the Executive, if they so choose. No standing committee shall have fewer than three Senators assigned to it.

The President shall designate one member of each standing committee as chairperson pro tem. It shall be the duty of this person to arrange a time and place at which the committee can hold its initial meeting, and to chair this meeting until the committee has elected its permanent chairperson.

The committee chairperson shall be elected from the committee membership; a committee member shall be ineligible to be elected if he/she (a) is the President, or (b) is the Secretary, or (c) is chairperson of another standing committee.

Each committee member shall have an equal vote in electing the chairperson and in all other committee business.

The Senate may establish, or direct the President to establish, ad hoc committees to perform specific tasks. The chairperson and members of such committees should normally be appointed by the President from among the Senators. An ad hoc committee ceases to exist when its mandate is completed.

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, or the Senate; his/her membership on the Executive Committee terminates when the ad hoc committee has completed its mandate.

At the end of each academic year, each standing committee of the Senate shall submit to the President of the Senate a brief written report, including a description of the tasks it undertook, an evaluation of the results of its work, and recommendations of any further work which might need to be done on these tasks. At the beginning of each academic year the chairperson of each committee shall distribute the committee report of the previous year to all Senators.

H. Accountability of Senators

An attendance roster will be present on the Senate Web page. At the end of each month, the Secretary of the Faculty Senate shall update the roster with the month's attendance at Faculty Senate standing committee meetings.

Members may be excused from Faculty Senate meetings by the Faculty Senate President (or his/her designee), and from standing committee meetings by the committee chair, and will be noted on the attendance roster by the letter (E).

At the beginning of each academic year, the Faculty Senate President will advise all faculty of the availability of the attendance roster on the Senate Web page.