

Southern Connecticut State University
Faculty Senate
CONSTITUTION

I. Functions

The Faculty Senate shall be the representative body of the faculty, 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 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 Senate Secretary and the Rules Committee shall be subject to approval by the Senate.
- C. The Senate shall consist of the following:
 - 1. Full-time faculty (not on special appointments) representatives 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 Senate. No more than one of these part time representatives shall come from any one department.
 - 3. The Immediate Past President of the Senate.
 - 4. The President of the University, as an ex-officio, nonvoting 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 department(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 Secretary of the Faculty Senate 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 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. Elections shall be by secret written 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 presenting 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 last regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring semester. 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 call the 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 will preside.
- d. If the President is unable to complete the term, the Immediate Past President shall preside over the Senate and the chair of the Elections Committee shall hold an election for a new president. In the absence of the Immediate Past President and the chair of the Elections Committee, the election shall be conducted by a member of the Executive Committee according to the following order. Academic Policy, Finance, Personnel Policy, Rules, Student Policy, Technology. 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. 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.

4. Treasurer of the Senate

- a. She/he shall be elected to a one-year term as the second order of business at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring semester. Voting shall be by secret written 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.

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 calls to such meetings must be issued at least one week in advance and the purpose stated.
- C. With the consent of the Senate visitors may be afforded the privilege of the floor.
- D. 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

Approved minutes of the meetings shall be posted on the Faculty Senate website.

VI. Faculty Referendum

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

VII. Faculty Initiative for Senate Action

- A. The Senate shall be bound to consider for enactment proposals which:
 - 1. have been petitioned for 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.
- B. Any faculty member may petition the Faculty Senate to conduct a faculty-wide referendum with respect to any action taken by or refusal to act upon by the Senate. Signatures of a minimum of 40 faculty (full- and/or part-time) are required for this petition and for a referendum to take place. The conditions in VI must also be met.

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.
 - 3. Two-thirds or more of those present must vote to approve the changes.
- B. Recommended changes in the Constitution, approved by the Faculty Senate, shall be presented to the faculty for a vote following the procedure in section VI.
- 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 provided that the conditions in VIII A, 1 and 2 have been met.