

## **Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty Senate**

### **PREAMBLE**

Realizing that a faculty forms the creative and energizing force of institutions of higher learning, recognizing that this faculty has a responsibility to participate actively in the decision making process affecting all institutional components, believing that security, a sense of freedom, respect for individual dignity and worth are requisites to all human activities, and endeavoring to promote growth and progress benefitting characteristic excellence in higher education, the Mississippi Valley State University Faculty Senate is hereby established.

#### **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of the organization shall be THE FACULTY SENATE.

#### **ARTICLE II - FUNCTION AND AUTHORITIES**

##### Section 1: Function

The Faculty Senate shall, as the representative body of the Faculty undertake studies and make recommendations to the Administration that shall:

- enhance faculty performance, insure academic freedom, academic security and guarantee its involvement in institutional governance
- promote the representation of the faculty in the governance of the university
- encourage active faculty participation in the development of university policies and procedures promote the welfare of the faculty and the university
- discuss and recommend as a Faculty Senate policies affecting the faculty and the university as a whole
- serve a conduit to ensure that all policies and procedures affecting faculty are approved/disapproved by the faculty as a whole before consideration for implementation by the Administration
- Have responsibility for the maintenance of academic freedom and responsibility at the University;
- Be the forum for the formulation of faculty opinion.
- Keep the faculty and Administration fully informed of its activities, in writing
- Maintain such committees as are necessary to serve as an effective voice of the faculty in the shared governance of the University.

##### Section II: Authorities

The Senate shall have the authority and responsibility to act for and on behalf of THE FACULTY. Actions of the Senate shall be effective upon approval of THE FACULTY by a 51% vote of the total membership of THE FACULTY for the approved issue. A majority of Faculty present and voting at a Full Faculty meeting may call for

a written ballot of the entire faculty. Such a ballot shall be attached to a copy of the minutes of the meeting sent to each member of THE FACULTY. Ballots must be returned to the President or the Secretary of The Faculty Senate and the vote counted and announced within a 3 day period of distribution of the ballot.

### **ARTICLE III - COMPOSITION, ELIGIBILITY, MODE OF ELECTION AND TERMS OF OFFICE**

#### Section i: Composition

The Senate shall be composed of one faculty member from each academic department, the library, the College of Undergraduate Studies and the Army ROTC in two categories of membership. The University President and The Vice President for Academic Affairs shall serve as ex-officio, non-voting members of the Senate.

##### Category I: Elected Departmental Members

Each Academic Department shall be entitled to one (1) Senator. The library, College of Undergraduate Studies, and the Army ROTC staff shall be entitled to one (1) Senator each. All such Senators serve as voting members.

##### Category II: Elected Members-at-Large

There shall be five (5) Senators elected at-large from the faculty who will serve as voting members.

#### Section ii: Eligibility for Membership

Persons who have been on the faculty for three (3) regular academic years (six (6) semesters) shall be eligible for membership. The Army ROTC faculty shall be eligible after two (2) regular academic years, since they are 12-month faculty. Faculty holding administrative appointments are not eligible.

##### Category I: Eligibility for Senate President

Senators who have served for at least one (1) academic year (9 months) shall be eligible for nomination for the position of Senate President.

##### Category II: Eligibility for Senate Officers

No two executive officers shall come from the same department.

#### Section III: Terms of Office

All members shall serve for a term of two (2) academic years and the following summer sessions. No members shall be eligible for immediate re-election after having served two (2) consecutive terms (4 years). Members from the various areas will be elected in staggered years. Units within the College of Arts and Sciences will be elected in even numbered years during March of that year (2012, 2014, etc).

Units within the College of Education/Professional Studies will be elected in odd numbered years during March of that year (2013, 2015, etc).

#### Section IV: MODE OF ELECTION

Election of all Senators shall take place during the March faculty meeting each Spring with the current Faculty Senate President presiding. Senators-at-large shall be nominated from the floor. Votes shall be counted immediately before the general faculty after ALL ballots/votes have been cast. Following this procedure, department representatives shall be elected within departments by the 1st Tuesday of the following month (April) at which time the elected senator shall attend the Faculty Senate meeting. Department Chairs shall forward the names of their department's faculty senator to the President of the Faculty Senate seven days prior to the 1st Faculty Senate Meeting. Nomination of all candidates shall be open; voting shall be by secret ballot. Any faculty who feels that he/she cannot serve fully and faithfully for the 2 year term on the Senate should decline nomination. Acceptance of nomination is deemed as a commitment to serve fully and faithfully after winning the election. Any vacancies shall be filled at a subsequent faculty meeting.

### **ARTICLE IV – ORGANIZATION**

#### Section I: Officers Of The Senate

The following officers shall be elected by the Senate: (a) Senate President, (b) Vice President, (c) Secretary, (d) Assistant Secretary, (e) Correspondence Secretary, and (l) Parliamentarian. Vacancies shall be filled by the Senate.

#### Section II: Duties Of Officers

The duties of the Faculty Senate's officers shall be inclusive of all full faculty meeting which will be held 8 times per the academic year – August, September, October, November, January, February and April.

##### A. President

The Senate President shall perform the following duties: (1) act as spokesperson for the Senate; (2) preside over all meetings of the Senate; (3) call special meetings when necessary or at the request of the majority of Senators or any one of the faculty; and (4) act as liaison between Faculty Senate and Administration. The Senate President shall also receive a one course load reduction as compensation for serving in this position.

##### B. Vice President

The Vice President shall perform all the duties of the Senate President should the President be absent or become incapacitated.

##### C. Secretary

The Secretary shall perform the following duties: (1) act as archivist for the permanent records of the Senate; (2) keep accurate minutes of all regular and special meetings of the Senate.

D. Assistant Secretary

The Assistant Secretary shall perform all the duties of the Secretary should he/she be absent and update all facets of the Faculty Senate's webpage.

E. Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian shall maintain order and make sure that meetings are conducted according to Robert's Rule of Order.

F. Senators

It is the responsibility of each Senator to attend meetings of the Senate and, in the event of an absence, to ensure that the Senator's department is adequately represented. Each Senator acts as the voice of the faculty whom s/he serves.

### Section III: MEETINGS

A. Faculty Senate Meetings

1. Meeting Time

The Senate shall meet on the first Tuesday of each academic month at 11 am. Any faculty can request a called meeting by contacting the Senate President. Fifty-one percent (51%) of the faculty senate body shall constitute a quorum. Special meetings shall be called by the Senate President. Occasional conflicts (such as holidays or special University functions) may require rescheduling of Senate meetings by Senate resolution.

The Faculty Senate shall also be afforded time to conduct faculty senate business during both the Fall and Spring Faculty Institutes.

2. Agenda

At least three days prior to any Faculty Senate meeting, the President shall have an agenda published and distributed to THE FACULTY SENATE. Any Senator may submit items for the agenda four (4) days before the Faculty Senate meeting. Faculty members may also submit items to a Faculty Senator in writing of an issue/concern that they feel needs to be addressed/investigated by the Faculty Senate. It is the responsibility of the Faculty Senator to submit this for inclusion on the Faculty Senate's meeting agenda.

B. Full Faculty Meetings

1. Meeting Time

The Full Faculty of the University shall meet on the second Tuesday of each academic month at 11 am with the President of the Faculty Senate presiding. This meeting is open only to persons with full-time appointments as Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, or Instructor whose primary University responsibility is teaching as defined by the University's Office of Human Resources. Minutes of the meetings, excluding the names, will be posted to the Faculty Senate's website in a timely manner.

## 2. Agenda

At least three days prior to any Full Faculty meeting, the President shall have an agenda published and distributed to THE FACULTY SENATE. Any Faculty member may submit items for the agenda three (3) days before the Faculty Senate meeting. Any item submitted by at least ten percent (10%) of the Faculty through petition must be placed on the agenda of the next regular Full Faculty Meeting. Items not on the agenda of a given meeting may not be brought to formal vote at that meeting without unanimous consent of those present. The number of Faculty required for a 10% representation will be disseminated after the first Fall Faculty Senate Meeting and placed on the Faculty Senate's website. Minutes of the meetings, excluding names, will be posted to the Faculty Senate's website in a timely manner.

## **ARTICLE V: Standing Committees of the Faculty Senate**

### Section I: Committee Procedures

The Faculty Senate shall establish committees, both standing and ad-hoc, to study and make reports on matters of concern to the University Faculty. Committees created by the Faculty Senate are committees of the Faculty Senate, receive their authority from the Senate, and shall report to the Faculty Senate. Senate committees shall not act independently of the Senate, and reports from these committees shall be presented to the Senate for consideration. Simple reports or progress reports may be made verbally, but any committee recommendations must be presented in writing. Committee work shall be done as a body and not by action of the Chair, either alone or following consultation with individual members of the committee. Actions taken shall be those of the committee as a whole representing a majority vote. The chair shall be elected from and by the members of that committee unless otherwise noted below. The committee chair shall provide notice of meetings to each member of the committee and the Faculty Senate President and shall keep a record of those in attendance to be forwarded to the Faculty Senate Secretary at the conclusion of each committee meeting. All committees must convene at a minimum of once per semester. The Executive Committee shall present all findings and recommendations approved by the Faculty Senate to the Provost and the University President unless otherwise noted.

### Section II: Standing Committees

#### A. Executive Committee

1. Composition - The Executive Committee shall be chaired by the president and shall consist of the following: The president, vice president, secretary, assistant secretary, and parliamentarian.
2. Function - The Executive Committee shall advise the University's Provost between meetings of the Senate at an agreed upon time. Should this meeting be deemed ineffective by the Faculty Senate, the Executive Committee shall request that this meeting be held with the University's President between meetings of the Senate at an agreed upon time. The committee shall prepare the agenda for distribution to Senate members prior to meetings of the Senate. In addition, the committee shall perform other duties as are assigned to it.
3. Meetings - Regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held once a month, at least three working days before the regular Senate meeting, for the setting of Senate agenda and for other purposes.

#### B. Steering Committee

1. Composition - The current Vice President, acting as Chair, and two former presidents of the Senate, to be appointed by the current Faculty Senate President, plus the President of the Faculty Senate as an ex-officio member.
2. Function - Aid the President of the Faculty Senate when requested. Determine all questions of appropriate jurisdiction. Supervise appropriate revisions of the Faculty Handbook, Constitution, and By-Laws. Work with the offices of that supervise the compilation of the Student Handbook, The Faculty Handbook, The University's Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog, and the Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual to ensure that all documents are reconciled. Review the Constitution and By-Laws of the Faculty Senate every five years.

#### C. Nominating Committee

1. Composition - Four tenured, faculty members shall comprise this committee by voluntary solicitation. One of these four members must be a faculty senate member and the remaining three members can be faculty members from the full faculty. At least one of the three faculty members from the full faculty must be a woman and one member shall be a man with representation from both the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Education/Professional Studies. The faculty senate member will be the chair of this committee. The members of this committee shall represent each of the colleges of the University. This committee will be elected during the April full faculty meeting.
2. Function - This committee shall solicit faculty candidate nominees during April and May of the year of their election for membership on University Committees for the following academic year. The University Committees for which

nominees will be solicited are (1) the tenure and promotion committee, (2) the grievance committee and (3) the faculty appeals committee. The Faculty Senate President shall provide a University Committee list and the number of candidates required for each committee to the Nominating Committee in accordance to the directive of the Office of the University's President. The list of nominees for the University Committees shall be presented for a ballot vote during the September Full Faculty Meeting. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate will tabulate ballots. Results will be disseminated to the Office of the President and the Faculty via email and posted on the Faculty Senate's website.

D. Academic Affairs Committee

1. Composition - The membership of the committee shall be composed of three (3) members elected and approved by the faculty. One member of this committee shall be a faculty senator, one member must be a non-faculty senator from the College of Arts and Sciences, and one member must be a non-faculty senator from the College of Education/Professional Studies. The chair shall be of this committee shall be the faculty senator. The President of the Faculty Senate shall serve as an ex-officio member.

2. Function - The committee shall advise the Senate concerning: Problems and issues with respect to the academic mission of the university; New and revised academic programs; Problems and concerns regarding the academic program review process; University academic priorities; The committee shall advise and be kept informed by the Provost on all matters and issues relating to summer sessions, winter sessions and inter-session, if any.

E. Educational Policy Committee

1. Composition - The membership of the committee shall be composed of three (3) members elected and approved by the Faculty Senate. One member of this committee shall be a faculty senator, one member must be a non-faculty senator from the College of Arts and Sciences, and one member must be a non-faculty senator from the College of Education/Professional Studies. The chair shall be of this committee shall be the faculty senator.

2. Function - The Committee for Educational Policies shall: Serve as a clearinghouse for University educational policies originating from the administration or departments before submission to the Academic Policies Council or any other body. Review, for consistency, existing University and collegial educational policies and recommend appropriate changes. Recommend new policies designed to serve the needs of the institution. Receive, evaluate, and recommend policy proposals and/or revisions from faculty and/or administration where that function is not already included in the formal activities of some other Senate committee. Forward all recommendations concerning graduate studies concurrently to the Provost, the Academic Policies Council and to the Graduate Studies Council.

Conduct hearings and obtain expert testimony to help the Committee form University policy recommendations when advisable. Maintain a file of approved educational policies of the University open for review in the Faculty Senate Office or other approved location. Request changes in educational policy documents having to do with clarity and precision when such changes will help to make said document entries more meaningful. This includes such documents as the University catalog (graduate and undergraduate), the faculty handbook, the student handbook, the policies and procedures manual of Human Resources, or any other University document as it relates to education policies.

F. Curriculum Committee

1. Composition - The membership of the committee shall be composed of three (3) members elected and approved by the Faculty Senate. One member of this committee shall be a faculty senator, one member must be a non-faculty senator from the College of Arts and Sciences, and one member must be a non-faculty senator from the College of Education/Professional Studies. The chair shall be of this committee shall be the faculty senator.

2. Function - The Committee on Curriculum shall: Serve as a clearinghouse for University curriculum changes originating from the administration or departments before submission to the Academic Policies Council or any other body. Recommend approval, modification, or rejection of proposed academic curricula on a semester basis or as submitted to the committee, including use of criteria on the scope, level, and sequence of work, internal and external evaluation, admission requirements, culminating experiences, and qualification of teaching faculty, but excluding cost, need, and allocation of resources. Recommend approval, modification, or rejection of all new courses, all changes to existing courses, and existing courses on a semester basis or as submitted to the committee, including the use of criteria of minimal competency levels at the undergraduate and graduate level, relevancy to program objectives, overlap with existing course, and student demand. Periodically recommend approval or modification of academic advising procedures administrated by the Office of Student Affairs and/or the Office of Academic Affairs including criteria on consistency, assessment of effectiveness, and availability. Periodically review the cumulative experiences of each graduate program, including criteria of relevancy to program objectives, assessment procedures, extent of faculty involvement, and record keeping. Forward all recommendations concerning graduate studies concurrently to the Provost, the Academic Policies Council and to the Graduate Studies Council. Request changes in catalog information sheets having to do with clarity and precision when such changes will help to make the catalog entries more meaningful to prospective readers.

G. Faculty Concerns and Academic Freedom Committee

1. Composition



The membership of the committee shall be composed of the Vice-President of the Faculty Senate as Chair and two (2) Senators, one from the College of Arts and Science and one from the College of Education/Professional Studies, elected and approved by the Faculty Senate. Each member of this committee shall represent different colleges of the university.

## 2. Function

The Committee on Faculty Concerns and Academic Freedom shall:

Investigate complaints of violations of academic freedom of faculty members  
Investigate complaints that question the ethical conduct of a member of the faculty  
All complaints investigated will have been submitted in writing to the faculty Senate President. The Faculty Senate President will present the matter to the full Faculty Senate for consideration and agreement to submission of the complaint to this committee. On matters the committee is charged to examine, information shall be sought for both sides of the question, information shall be sought for both sides of the question, a judgement made and all information shall be presented to the Faculty Senate. There shall be no enforcement or legal sanction of judgements made by the committee of the Faculty Senate. All judgements shall be reported directly to the Provost and the University President by the Faculty Senate's Executive Committee during their regularly scheduled meetings. However, the Faculty Senate President has the authority to call a meeting with the Provost and/or the University President if the complaint is deemed urgent by the Faculty Senate.

## H. Faculty Sabbatical Leave Committee

### 1. Composition

The membership of the committee shall be composed of two (2) Senators elected and approved by the Faculty Senate. One member of this committee shall represent the College of Arts and Science and one shall represent the College of Education/Professional Studies.

### 2. Function

The Committee on Sabbatical Leave shall:

Review applications of those persons who have applied for a sabbatical leave for compliance with the eligibility requirements of the University  
Review the present University policy regarding sabbatical leave along with compensation and recommend new policies designed to serve the needs of the institution and its faculty. Findings will be forwarded concurrently to the Faculty Senate's Educational Policy Committee and the Provost for review and consideration, respectively.

## I. Faculty Handbook Committee

### 1. Composition

The membership of the committee shall be composed of two (2) Senators elected and approved by the Faculty Senate. One member of this committee shall represent

the College of Arts and Science and one shall represent the College of Education/Professional Studies.

2. Function

Review the information contained in the Faculty Handbook,  
Review suggested changes in the Faculty Handbook submitted to the Faculty Senate  
Make recommendations in the Faculty Handbook to the Faculty Senate

J. Information Technology Committee

1. Composition

The membership of the committee shall be composed of five (5) Senators elected and approved by the Faculty Senate. The committee shall be composed of 2 faculty senators, one each from the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Education/Professional Studies, and three members from the faculty at large. The Chair of this committee shall be a faculty senator elected by its members. The Chair of this committee shall also serve as the Faculty Senate's representative on the University's Technology Committee.

2. Function

Make recommendations to the Faculty Senate concerning the development, acquisition, utilization of and training for appropriate computer technology, library, media, and other support services in order to support and fulfill the university's academic mission to study and make recommendations to the Faculty Senate concerning policy about academic resources including computer technology, library and media acquisitions (equipment and materials), and all other academic/research support services in view of the academic programs and educational mission of the university, curricular needs and anticipated growth and development of the University. to provide information and recommendations to the Director of Academic Computing concerning matters of computer policy, needs of the faculty, and use of the computing facilities, including software, hardware and training  
Review, assess and make recommendations of the technologies used and needed to provide efficient and effective distance and online learning courses.  
Recommendations of this committee will be forwarded concurrently to the Faculty Senate's Educational Policy Committee and the Provost for review and consideration, respectively.

Section III: Ad-Hoc Committees

Ad-hoc Committees may be formed by the Faculty Senate upon recommendation of a Senator and after a majority vote.

**ARTICLE VI: Attendance**

Section I: Presence/Absenteeism

Each Senator is expected to be present all scheduled Senate and Senate Committee meetings and shall notify the President when unable to do so for just cause. Senators accumulating four (4) absences (called meetings and excused absences not included) in one academic year shall NOT be eligible to serve out their term. Such Senators, therefore, shall be replaced. The respective Department Chairs shall be informed in writing to send a replacement to serve out the term. Replacement of Senators-at-large shall be done by secret ballot during a general faculty meeting to be convened within thirty (30) days. The Senate President shall communicate to the Administration the Senate's intent to replace such Senators.

## Section II: Removal of Senators

A Senator may be removed from office for cause by a two-thirds vote of the faculty.

Section III: Representation by Proxy. In the event that a Senator may, because of extenuating circumstances and for good cause, be unable to attend the Senate meeting or Senate committee meeting, the Senator may designate a faculty member from the same department as a representative. Written notice of such designation shall be provided to the President or the Secretary of the Senate before the appropriate meeting. This designated representative shall have voting privileges. Senators who send representatives shall be noted as "present by proxy" in Senate records.

## **ARTICLE VII: Amending The Constitution**

By a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, the Faculty may amend this constitution during the academic year either at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Full Faculty, or at a special meeting of the Faculty called, with at least fifteen days of written notice. The following sequence shall be followed in proposing amendments:

- A. An amendment(s) must be recommended by at least ten members of the University Faculty;
- B. An amendment(s) must be submitted, in writing, to the Faculty Senate for its consideration at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Faculty Senate;
- C. The amendment(s) must be voted upon by the Senate at its next regularly scheduled meeting;
- D. The amendment(s) must be submitted, in writing, to all members of the University Faculty, with the recommendation(s) of the Senate attached;
- E. The amendment(s) must be voted upon by the University Faculty. (An amendment so presented to the University Faculty may be amended from the floor at a University Faculty meeting by a majority vote of those in attendance, in accordance with regular parliamentary procedures.)

F. The Constitution shall be considered ratified after an affirmative vote of the faculty and with the written approval of the University President.

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