

CONSTITUTION OF THE FACULTY SENATE

Article I - Name and Purpose

Section A – Name

The name of this organization shall be the Faculty Senate of the University of Houston—Clear Lake (UHCL).

Section B – Purpose

- 1) The purposes of this organization are:
 - a) to provide the means to share responsibility among members of the faculty for UHCL's academic direction and policy making;
 - b) to work toward accomplishing the mission of UHCL;
 - c) to support to the letter of the law House Bill 199, which created UHCL;
 - d) to represent the faculty of UHCL in all matters (both internal and external) relating to faculty welfare, opportunities, responsibilities, administration; and
 - e) to provide the faculty of UHCL with an effective instrument for communication with all other aspects of the institution and the System.

Article II – Senate Membership and Elections

Section A - Membership

- 1) The membership of the Faculty Senate shall consist of eight full-time, tenured or tenure-track, Senate-eligible faculty members elected from each school, a president and vice president elected from the faculty at large, and the immediate past president. Senators elected from their respective schools must have been members of the UHCL faculty for at least one full year prior to election.
- 2) Excluded from eligibility to serve in the Faculty Senate as an elected faculty representative, are the university president, provost, and all other

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vice presidents, associate vice presidents, deans, associate/assistant deans, any person with administrative responsibility or faculty who participate in faculty merit evaluations or the promotion and tenure process (excluding peer review committees).

Section B – Election and Term of Office

Senators will normally be elected during the spring semester. Terms of office will start August 1, and run for two years until July 31 of the second year.

The tenure-track faculty (excluding those listed in Article II, Section A, 2) of each school will elect their senators to the Faculty Senate. A school will elect four members in odd-numbered years and four members in even-numbered years. If at any point a member of the Senate can not finish the term to which that person was elected, within 30 days the faculty of the senator's school will elect a replacement to complete that term of office.

Article III - Officers of the Faculty Senate

Section A – Officers

The Faculty Senate shall have three officers: a president, a vice president, and the immediate past president. These officers must be full-time tenured faculty at UHCL. The vice president shall have been a member of the Faculty Senate for at least two long semesters sometime prior to election (possibly including the semester when elected).

Section B - Term of Office

Officers shall serve for terms of one calendar year (August 1 through July 31) except that if the president-elect accedes to the office of the president after Oct. 15, he or she will serve until the end of the term of office for which he or she was elected, aided by the acting vice president. If the president-elect accedes to the office of the president prior to or on October 15, he or she shall serve until the next July 31, and the procedure for electing a new president-elect shall be initiated at the next regular meeting of the Faculty Senate.

Section C – Nomination and Election of the president-elect

At the regular spring Faculty Assembly, (to be held no later than March 31) members of the Faculty Assembly will make nominations for president-elect of the Faculty Senate. Within a week of nomination, and after the nominees have accepted their nomination, their names shall be submitted for a secret ballot to all those individuals who are eligible to serve on the Faculty Senate, as described in this Constitution. Faculty will have five working days to cast their votes. A

simple majority of the votes cast will be required for election. If any nominee does not obtain a simple majority, then the two nominees with the largest number of votes will be resubmitted for a second ballot to the same electorate. Additional voting will take place no later than one week after the previous vote and the time allotted for voting will again be five working days.

Section D - Accession to Office

The president-elect of the Faculty Senate automatically becomes president of the Faculty Senate upon the expiration of the term of the president of the Faculty Senate or upon that officer's resignation, ineligibility or removal. The president of the Faculty Senate shall automatically become immediate past president upon expiration of the term of his/her term as president.

In the event of a vacancy prior to the normal expiration of a term, a special election shall be held within thirty days to fill the unexpired term. Pending that election, in the event that the president resigns before his/her term has ended and the president-elect becomes president, the Senator-at-large on the Executive Committee will fill the role of acting vice-president until an election can be held. If the president-elect resigns before his/her term has ended, the Senator-at-large will fill the role of acting vice-president until an election can be held.

Section E - Duties of the Officers

- 1) The president is charged:
 - a. to preside over all meetings of the Faculty Senate;
 - b. to call all meetings of the Faculty Senate;
 - c. to provide an agenda for all Faculty Senate meetings;
 - d. to report to the Faculty Senate at its regular meeting all business transacted by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and any of its standing or ad hoc committees since the most recent meeting of the Faculty Senate;
 - e. to prepare and distribute an annual report to the university community on the accomplishments, activities, and initiatives of the Senate during his/her term;
 - f. to advise the president of the university, the vice presidents, and the deans of the particular schools of the university on matters of general interest to the Faculty Senate;

- g. to transmit information from the president, vice presidents, and the deans of the particular schools of the university to the Faculty Senate;
 - h. to preside over meetings of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee;
 - i. to fulfill any other duties as the Faculty Senate shall in its bylaws direct;
 - j. to cast a vote in the Senate only if that vote makes a difference in the final outcome of a vote.
- 2) The president-elect is charged:
- a. to preside over all meetings of the Faculty Senate in the absence of the president;
 - b. to assist the president in the performance of his/her duties whenever requested;
 - c. to fulfill any other duties as the Faculty Senate shall in its bylaws direct;
 - d. to act as Secretary of the Senate, that is:
 - to maintain the minutes of the Faculty Senate Executive committee, Faculty Assembly, and Faculty Senate Executive sessions and to be responsible for their appropriate distribution. To supervise the distribution of the meeting minutes for the Faculty Senate.
 - to transmit to the appropriate administrative authorities of the University the recommendations and resolutions passed by the Senate,
 - to arrange for orderly conduct of the correspondence of the Senate;
- 3) The immediate past president is charged:
- a. to assist the president in the performance of his/her duties whenever requested;
 - b. to fulfill any other duties as the Faculty Senate shall direct.

Article V - Senate Committees

Section A - Faculty Senate Executive Committee

- 1) The Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) shall be composed of the president, the president-elect, and the immediate past president of the Faculty Senate, the chairs of the four Senate standing committees, and one at-large member elected by the Senate from its membership. If a school is not represented by this membership, the membership of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall be expanded to include a senator from that school elected by the Senate.
- 2) The Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall also act as the committee on committees for the Faculty Senate.
- 3) The Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall serve as the interpreter of the constitution and bylaws, and shall settle any questions that arise under the constitution and bylaws due to conflicting or ambiguous language.

Section B – Senate Standing Committees

- 1) The four standing committees of the Faculty Senate are the Budget Committee, the Research Committee, the Curriculum and Teaching Committee, and the Faculty Life Committee.
- 2) Vacancies

Should the chair of one of the Senate standing committees resign or be removed from office, the president will appoint an interim convener who will call committee meetings until a new chair is elected. This election will take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Faculty Senate.
- 3) Membership of committees
 - a. The Senate will elect the chair of each standing committee during its regularly scheduled May meeting. Chairs will serve one-year terms. Whenever possible, the chair of a committee shall be a tenured Senator who has served on the same committee for at least one academic year prior to being elected as chair.
 - b. Each standing committee will consist of eight Senate members, including the chair. There will be two senators from each school on a committee, and the committee chair will be one of the members representing his or her school. The proposed membership of each

committee will be recommended to the Senate by the Senate Executive Committee, based on the preferences for committee assignments expressed by the senators. The Senate will confirm the final membership of the standing committees.

- c. If a school's Senate-eligible faculty chooses, it may elect its representation on the Faculty Senate Committees. The FSEC will be obligated to abide by the results of these elections in recommending the Faculty Senate Committee memberships.

3) These four committees may create subcommittees as necessary. A subcommittee will be composed only of members of the committee creating the subcommittee.

4) The Budget Committee

The Budget committee works with the University President, Provost, and Vice President for Accounting and Finance, the shared governance Planning and Budget Committee, and other shared governance committees as appropriate.

Responsibilities:

- a. To make recommendations to the university president and provost concerning the allocation of monies for the academic component of the university's annual operating budget
- b. To monitor the preparation, implementation and variances of the university's budget with respect to those priorities, thus insuring resource accountability
- c. To make recommendations concerning funding for faculty compensation and financial support for teaching and research
- d. To monitor space allocation and utilization, including overseeing classroom management and the allocation of space between classrooms and other uses
- e. To monitor the tuition and fees charged to students; and to monitor the operation of the campus bookstore
- f. Other responsibilities as assigned by the Senate and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee

5) The Research Committee

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The Research Committee works with the University President, Provost, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Associate Vice President for Information Resources, Academic Council, and other shared governance committees as appropriate.

Responsibilities:

- a. To develop and monitor the implementation of policies related to the enhancement of research and the university's support for research
- b. To monitor and make recommendations concerning research support functions, including academic computing and telecommunications, the university library, audio-visual services, and other research support services
- c. To assist university administration with recommendations concerning research and scholarly activities, including those involving research institutes and centers, faculty research fund administration, protection of human subjects, student research assistants, and animal care
- d. To develop and monitor policies that affect intellectual property, research resources and research ethics
- e. Other responsibilities as assigned by the Senate and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee

6) The Curriculum and Teaching Committee

The Curriculum and Teaching Committee works with the University President, Provost, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, Academic Council, and other shared governance committees as appropriate.

Responsibilities:

- a. To develop and monitor policies on recruitment and marketing, admissions, enrollment and retention
- b. To develop and monitor policies on curriculum (including core curriculum) and degree requirements
- c. To develop and monitor policies on student scholarships

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- d. To develop and monitor catalog revisions
- e. The approval of new academic programs, the discontinuance of existing programs, and the approval and modification of courses
- f. To develop and monitor policies on honors and awards
- g. To develop and monitor policies on continuing and distance education
- h. To develop and monitor policies on international programs
- i. To develop and monitor policies on educational institutes and centers
- j. To develop and monitor policies on graduate programs and degrees
- k. To develop and monitor policies on teaching improvement and evaluation
- l. To develop and monitor policies on general grading standards
- m. To monitor SACS standards adherence and other accreditations
- n. To develop and monitor policies on core competencies and assessment
- o. To develop and monitor cooperative programs with other educational institutions
- p. Other responsibilities as assigned by the Senate and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee

7) The Faculty Life Committee

The Faculty Life committee works with the University President, Provost, Executive Director of Human Resources, University Council, Academic Council, University Life, and other shared governance committees as appropriate.

Responsibilities:

- a. To develop and monitor policies on issues affecting the life of the faculty of the university community, including faculty search and selection; promotion and tenure; faculty workload and evaluation; faculty dismissal; and faculty retirement issues

- b. To monitor university services to faculty and visitors and recommend ways to improve those services
 - c. To monitor and support university-community relations; fund-raising; and partnership development
 - d. To make recommendations concerning faculty salary and fringe benefit compensation, and other traditional faculty personnel matters
 - e. To encourage support for faculty governance in each of the four schools, and make appropriate recommendations to maintain high levels of faculty morale and high levels of ethical standards at the university
 - f. Other responsibilities as assigned by the Senate and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee
- 8) Senate committees may invite non-senators to attend committee meetings when the presence of the non-senators will provide additional information that may be useful to a committee in its deliberations

Section C - Senate Ad Hoc and Advisory Committees

Ad hoc and advisory committees shall be established by a majority vote of the Faculty Senate in any regular or special meeting and shall consider any subject that the majority considers necessary. The chairperson and membership of any ad hoc or advisory committee shall be appointed by the president of the Faculty Senate, with the advice and consent of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The charge to each committee shall be made by the president of the Faculty Senate, with the advice and consent of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

No ad hoc or advisory committee (with the exception of those described in this Constitution) may continue in existence for more than one year from the date of its creation without the annual approval of a majority of the Faculty Senate in regular or special meetings.

Section D – Standing Advisory Committees

The following will be advisory bodies to the Faculty Senate and its committees. For coordination purposes, their input will be communicated to the Senate and the standing committees through the FSEC.

- 1) The Council of Professors

This is an independent faculty body, but when appropriate its guidance may be sought by the Senate and its committees.

2) The Council of Former Presidents

This advisory committee is composed of all former Senate presidents who are still Senate-eligible faculty members at UHCL.

3) The Lecturers and Adjuncts Advisory Council

This advisory committee will be composed of two lecturers and two adjuncts from each school. Of the four representatives from each school, no two may be from the same program area. The members of this committee will be selected by the faculty senators from their respective schools.

Article VI - Meetings and Procedures

Section A - Regular Senate Meetings

Regular meetings shall be scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month on which classes are scheduled in the academic year. If there is not sufficient business to warrant a meeting the FSEC may cancel a regular meeting during the week before it is scheduled.

Section B - Special Senate Meetings

A special meeting of the Faculty Senate may be called at any time by the president, or upon signed request by one-third of the senators.

Section C - Organization of Senate Meetings

The president shall preside over all meetings and provide an agenda to all members at least four working days prior to the meetings. Only members of the Faculty Senate may address the Faculty Senate. Nonmembers may address the Senate upon invitation of the Senate President. A Faculty Senate member may appeal to the full Faculty Senate a decision to either invite/permit a non-member to speak or to deny a non-member's request to speak.

Section D – Actions of the Senate

Some actions of the Senate are final within themselves and do not go forward in the university or the UH System. However, if an action of the Senate does require additional action beyond the Senate, the Senate action will be forwarded to the responsible party.

Section E - Procedural Rules

a). Voting Procedures

At all meetings of the Faculty Senate a simple majority of the membership of the Senate shall be required for a proposal to pass.

b). Referendum

Upon request of 1/3 of the members present, a proposal shall be submitted for a secret ballot to all those individuals holding a Senate-eligible faculty appointment to the university. A simple majority of those voting shall cause a proposal to pass.

c). Parliamentary Procedure

In all other matters, the most recent edition of the Robert's Rules of Order shall govern meetings.

A parliamentarian, appointed by the president, shall be final arbitrator of the rules.

Article VII – The Faculty Assembly

The president of the Faculty Senate shall call and preside over at least one meeting per long semester of the Faculty Assembly. The Faculty Assembly consists of all tenure-track faculty (excluding those listed in Article II, Section A, 2) members at the university. The Faculty Senate or the Faculty Senate Executive Committee may elect to invite non-members to attend the Assembly. The president of the Faculty Senate will distribute an agenda five working days before the meeting.

Faculty Assembly meetings may also be called at any time by the president of the Faculty Senate upon request of a majority of the Faculty Senate, or upon written request of one-third of all those individuals holding a tenure-track faculty appointment to the university.

The most recent edition of the Robert's Rules of Order shall govern meetings. A parliamentarian, appointed by the president, shall be final arbitrator of the rules.

Article VIII – School Election Coordinators

At the first school faculty meeting of each academic year, the tenure-track faculty (excluding those listed in Article II, Section A, 2) from that school will elect an election coordinator who is a Senate-eligible faculty member. This person will be responsible for conducting the election of the school's faculty senators during the year the person serves as election coordinator. While serving as the election coordinator, this person may not be a candidate for election to the Faculty Senate.

The school election coordinator will serve for one academic year. Should the elected coordinator not be able to serve for the entire year, the faculty of the school will elect a replacement at its next faculty meeting.

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Article IX – Shared Governance Committees

The Faculty Senate will elect the faculty representation to the university's Planning and Budgeting Committee, Facilities and Support Services Committee, and University Life Committee. The faculty representatives to those committees will be elected from the membership of the Faculty Senate. The Senate will elect no more than two persons from each school to any of these three committees

Article X - Removal from Office

Any officer, Faculty Senate Executive Committee member, or standing or ad hoc committee Chairperson may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. This decision must then be confirmed by a majority of the membership of the Faculty Senate in a secret ballot.

Any Faculty Senate Executive Committee member, or standing or ac hoc committee Chairperson, may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the Faculty Senate in a secret ballot.

Failure of a member of the Faculty Senate to attend three scheduled Senate meetings in the two long semesters of a school year will result in automatic removal of the senator from the Senate. Upon the removal of a senator for absences, the seat will be declared vacant and the appropriate school will elect an eligible faculty member to complete the term of office. A senator removed from office due to absences at Senate meetings is eligible to be re-elected to complete the vacated term.

Any Faculty Senate Executive Committee member, or standing or ac hoc committee Chairperson, may be removed from office for cause. Such cause may be failure to fulfill the required responsibilities as outlined in Article V that prevents the committee member or chair from adequately or fairly representing the interests of the Faculty Senate.

Article XI - Amendments

Proposed amendments to this Constitution may be received from any member of the Faculty Senate at a regular meeting. Upon a majority vote of the members, the proposed amendment shall be submitted by the president of the Faculty Senate for a ballot to all those individuals who are tenure-track faculty (excluding those listed in Article II, Section A, 2) at the university. Amendments approved by a 60 percent majority of the ballots returned within five working days of the mailing shall become effective immediately.