

Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws

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Establishing Shared Governance

The Board of Regents of Washington State University, in the exercise of its general powers vested by law to enact laws, regulations, and policies necessary to govern the university, and acting upon the recommendations of the system president, of recognized student and faculty groups, and the administration, does hereby establish a Faculty Senate with powers, duties, and responsibilities as indicated herein.

ARTICLE I - POWERS AND JURISDICTION

Section 1: Purpose

The purpose of the Faculty Senate is to exercise the legislative powers delegated to it and to make recommendations to the president, to appropriate administrative officials of the University, and through the president, to the Board of Regents on matters affecting the general welfare of Washington State University and its educational, research, and service activities.

Section 2: Powers and Duties

In its role in shared governance with the university administration and the Board of Regents, the Faculty Senate will have legislative powers and the power of recommendation.

A. Legislative Powers

The Faculty Senate shall serve as the legislative body of the faculty in all matters requiring faculty action or approval of curricular and educational policies of Washington State University including:

1. Standards of admission.
2. Curricula and courses to be offered and the amount of credit for each course.
3. Standards of scholarship.
4. Requirements for graduation.
5. The academic calendar.

B. Power of Recommendation

The specific duties of the Senate shall also include, but not be limited to, the formulation of recommendations to the system president and appropriate administrative officials of the University regarding the following:

1. Development and review of plans and policies to strengthen the educational program of the University.
2. Review of the budget of the university to assess its general conformity with policies and priorities established or endorsed by the Senate.
3. Review of the master plan for the physical and educational development of the university.
4. Protection and enhancement of academic freedom of members of the university community.
5. Preservation and extension of academic responsibility of members of the university community.
6. Promotion of the general welfare of the university community.
7. Review of policies concerning the university's relations with its supporting community throughout the state of Washington.
8. Review of policies concerning the university's relations with outside agencies.

9. Review of rules and procedures of the university concerning the conduct of its members.

The *Faculty Manual*, available on the Faculty Senate website, contains more detailed information on these topics.

ARTICLE II - COMPOSITION, TERM, ELECTIONS, AND VACANCIES

Section 1: Eligible Appointments

The Faculty Senate represents all faculty; however, the primary appointment of the faculty representatives in and to the Faculty Senate should be as WSU faculty members. Faculty from the tenure track or the career track are eligible to participate in Senate provided they have a faculty appointment greater than or equal to 0.5 FTE and are not serving in an administrative position. For this purpose, a faculty member is considered to be serving in an administrative position if they have any of the following: an appointment at the associate dean level or higher, an appointment at the associate vice chancellor level or higher, or a 50% or greater appointment in a dean's, chancellor's, provost's, vice president's, or president's office. Participation in the Senate is defined as voting for senators or serving as a senator, a Senate committee member, or a Senate officer. Eligibility requirements stated here are used in apportionment to determine the number of senators allocated to each campus and college.

Section 2: Elected Members

The Senate shall consist of representatives from the eligible faculty. Faculty are elected through the colleges and campuses. Apportionment is given in Section 5 below.

Section 3: *Ex Officio* Members

The president, the provost, the vice presidents, the assistant vice presidents, and the vice provosts of WSU, and the president and vice president of the Associated Students of Washington State University (ASWSU) or their representatives, are *ex officio* non-voting members of the Senate. The president of the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) is an *ex officio* voting member of the Faculty Senate.

Section 4: Executive Session

The provision for *ex officio* and/or nonvoting members shall not preclude the right of the elected voting members of the Senate to meet in executive session.

Section 5: Apportionment

A. Constituencies

Two tenure-track faculty members shall be elected to represent each major constituency. The major constituencies are defined as each degree-granting college, the faculty of the Library, and the faculty of the Honors College. Additional Faculty Senate tenure-track seats dedicated to the major constituencies shall be allocated by the following formula: the number of eligible tenure-track (see Article II, Section 1) faculty minus 50, divided by 25, with fractional positions at 0.5 and above rounded up to the next highest integer, and below 0.5 rounded down to the next lowest integer.

Career-track faculty in each degree-granting college and the Honors College, shall have 2 seats per college, plus additional representation as determined by the following formula: the total number of eligible career-track faculty (see Article II, Section 1) minus 50, divided by 50, with fractional positions at 0.5 and above rounded up to the next highest integer, and below 0.5 rounded down to the next lowest integer.

Four tenure-track seats in the Faculty Senate are designated for representation by the eligible faculty from each of the campuses of Everett, Vancouver, Tri-Cities, and Spokane; one seat is allotted to each campus. Additional tenure-track representation for each of these campuses shall be determined by the following formula: The number of eligible tenure-track faculty (see Article II, Section 1) divided by 50, with fractional positions at 0.5 and above rounded up to the next highest integer, and below 0.5 rounded down to the next lowest integer.

Four career-track seats in the Faculty Senate are designated for representation by the faculty from each of the campuses of Everett, Vancouver, Tri-Cities, and Spokane; one seat is allotted to each campus. Additional career-track representation for these campuses shall be determined by the following formula: The number of eligible career-track faculty (see Article II, Section 1) divided by 50, with fractional positions at 0.5 and above rounded up to the next highest integer, and below 0.5 rounded down to the next lowest integer.

B. Subconstituencies

By majority vote a constituency may allocate its quota of senators to subconstituencies consisting of single departments, groups of closely related departments, or other subdivisions. However, the entire quota or any portion thereof may be elected at large.

C. Reapportionment

Each year the executive secretary of the Senate shall be responsible for the reapportionment of Faculty Senate seats at least 60 days prior to the election of Senate members and for determining the number of senators to be elected from each constituency. Elections of senators are expected to be completed by May 1 of every year.

Section 6: Qualifications for Election

A. Term

Faculty senators shall be elected for a term of three years and shall be eligible for reelection.

B. Term Limit

Senators are normally limited to two consecutive terms. If the members of a constituency recommend extension of a candidate beyond six (6) years (2 consecutive terms), the expectation is that the extension is for one (1) year. The constituency has the option to recommend extended appointments of up to three (3) years in exceptional circumstances.

C. Staggered Terms

Approximately one-third of the faculty senators shall be elected each year.

D. Appointment Status

The qualifications to run for election to a senate seat are the same as those listed in Article II, Section 1 with the additional requirements that the faculty track of the candidate match the faculty track designated for the senate seat and that the faculty member belong to the constituency or subconstituency represented by that seat; see paragraph B of Article II, Section 1 for faculty with joint appointments and paragraph C for faculty with appointments outside of any constituency.

E. Nomination

Each constituency, subconstituency, or campus may nominate faculty candidates by such means as it chooses. A candidate may also be nominated by a petition signed by 20 percent of the eligible voters within their constituency, or within their subconstituency if the constituency is subdivided.

F. Validation

For a member of the faculty to be elected to membership in the Senate, a minimum of 40 percent of the eligible voters in the electing category for that position must vote.

Section 7: Eligibility to Vote

A. Appointment Status

The qualifications to vote in a senate election are the same as those listed in Article II, Section 1 with the additional requirements that the faculty track of the voter match the faculty track designated for the senate seat and that a faculty member vote in the senate election matching their constituency or subconstituency; see paragraph B for faculty with joint appointments and paragraph C for faculty with appointments outside of any constituency.

B. Joint Appointments

Faculty members with an appointment split among two or more constituencies or subconstituencies shall vote in the electing unit of the major appointment. If the appointment is split evenly, the faculty member shall inform the Executive Secretary of the Senate in writing by November 1 of each year as to the constituency or subconstituency in which they wish to vote. Whatever the terms of the appointment, no faculty member may vote in more than one unit in any given year.

C. Appointment Outside of Constituency

Any career-track or tenure-track faculty member eligible to serve in the Senate (Article II, Section 1), not covered by existing constituencies as described in this Article, may petition the Senate for assignment to a constituency with the consent of that constituency. Faculty members so assigned shall be counted in subsequent totals of constituency personnel for purposes of seat allocations and shall be eligible to vote in such constituencies.

Section 8: Election Procedure

A. Time of Election

Regular Senate elections shall be held during the Spring semester, with the expectation that elections be completed by May 1. Senators elected at these times shall assume the duties of their office on the following August 16. Terms end August 15 for retiring senators or officers.

B. Manner of Election

Subject to the limitations set forth in this Article, the Senate shall have the power to determine the time, place, and manner for constituencies to hold senatorial elections.

C. Vacancy

Senators who are unable to regularly attend Faculty Senate meetings on a temporary (less than one semester) basis may appoint a proxy from the same constituency to attend in their place. The proxy must be an individual who has served on WSU Faculty Senate previously. Should the use of a proxy become necessary, this must be communicated to the Faculty Senate Executive Secretary at least 24 hours in advance whenever possible.

D. Recall of Senators

1. Any senator may be recalled from a Senate position as the result of a special election initiated by a recall petition signed by 20 percent of their electorate. The recall petition shall be filed with the Executive Secretary of the Senate.
2. In the special election so initiated, the senator shall be recalled if at least 50 percent of those eligible to vote for this position cast a ballot, and if a majority voted in favor of recall.

E. Special Elections of Senators

The executive secretary will initiate procedures for a special election to fill the vacancy of a Faculty Senate seat within one week after notice of the vacancy is received. The new senator will begin serving immediately upon validation of their election and will serve out the remainder of the term of the senator who vacated the seat.

ARTICLE III - ORGANIZATION

Section 1: Regulations

The Faculty Senate shall have the power to organize itself and to make all regulations necessary for its own proceedings.

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Senate in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws and any special rules of order the Senate shall adopt.

Section 2: Officers

The officers of the Faculty Senate shall include a chair, a chair-elect, a past chair, and an executive secretary. The officers are elected non-voting members of the Senate, except in the event where the presiding officer needs to cast the deciding vote to break a tie. If a person elected to an officer position is already a senator, the seat thereby becomes vacant and shall be filled as specified in Article II.

A. Election of Officers

1. No later than two weeks prior to the last regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year, the Senate shall nominate candidates for the offices of chair-elect, and, when appropriate, executive secretary.
2. Regular elections for these offices shall take place no later than at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year.
3. In the event of an unscheduled vacancy for chair-elect or executive secretary, a special election for a replacement shall be conducted expeditiously during the academic year.
4. All elections of officers shall take place via electronic survey of currently serving senators. If no candidate secures a majority, a run-off election shall be conducted between the two candidates with the highest number of votes.
5. For a member of the faculty to be elected to an officer position, a minimum of 40 percent of the senators must vote.
6. Following regular elections, newly elected Senate officers shall assume their duties on August 16. Following a special election, a newly elected officer shall assume their duties immediately after the election is validated.
7. Upon taking office, the chair shall appoint a parliamentarian.

B. Recall of Officers

1. Any officer may be recalled from their position as the result of a special election initiated by a recall petition signed by 20 percent of the senators. The recall petition shall be filed with the Principal Assistant to the Senate.
2. In the special election so initiated, the officer shall be recalled if at least 50 percent of the senators cast a ballot, and if a majority voted in favor of recall.

C. Chair-Elect, Chair, and Past Chair

The chair-elect shall be selected by the Senate for a one-year term.

The chair-elect shall succeed to the chair position on August 16. If a vacancy occurs in the office of the chair, the chair-elect shall assume that office.

The chair shall normally succeed to the past chair position on August 16. Should the immediate past chair be unable or decline to serve, past chairs will be offered the position in reverse chronological order of their service. Should no past chair be willing and able to serve, this position will remain vacant for the year.

D. Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary shall be selected by the Senate for a three-year term and shall be eligible for reelection. The Senate has the option to recommend extending an appointment for one (1) year in exceptional circumstances.

The Executive Secretary shall be responsible for operations of the Senate Secretariat, and the duties shall include, but not be limited to, the preparation and distribution of agenda materials for the Senate and its committees, the certification of election results, the processing of petitions, and the preparation and distributions of records of Senate actions.

Section 3: Senate Meetings

1. At the last regularly scheduled meeting of each academic year the Senate shall establish a regular time for its meetings to be held the following academic year.
2. The chair will serve as the presiding officer for meetings of the Senate. If the chair is unable to preside, the chair-elect shall preside. If neither the chair or chair-elect are able to preside, the past chair shall preside.
3. Special meetings of the Senate may be called by the chair or upon request of twenty senators.
4. The regular meetings of the Senate shall be open to the University community, but the Senate may choose to meet in closed executive session in conformance with the laws of the state of Washington.
5. At any meeting, half the number of elected senators plus two shall constitute a quorum.
6. Unless otherwise stipulated in the Constitution and Bylaws, all actions of the Senate shall be adopted by a majority of those present and voting. In the case of a tie vote, the presiding officer shall cast the deciding vote.
7. Unless there is a decision to the contrary, actions of the Senate shall be made public.
8. The executive secretary of the Senate shall take attendance of the members at each meeting and shall issue an annual report on this matter to each of the constituencies.

9. Non-senators may not participate in senate debate unless the rules are suspended by a two-thirds majority vote. Non-senators may offer clarifying information at the invitation of the senate chair.

Section 4: Committees

The Faculty Senate standing committees and their subcommittees have been assigned functions by the Senate to enable the Senate to carry out its purposes. All Senate standing committees are responsible to the Senate; their subcommittees are responsible to the parent committees. Both the standing committees and their subcommittees may in some cases also report committee views to administrative officers of WSU. The official year for the Faculty Senate extends from August 16 to August 15 of the following year. Except for the stipulations herein provided, the Senate shall have the power to determine the number and size of its committees and the terms of office of committee members.

A. Responsibilities

1. Committee and subcommittee members are expected to participate in work to fulfill the function of the committee/subcommittee, attend committee/subcommittee meetings, and respond in a timely way to communications.
2. Committees and subcommittee chairs are expected to lead the committee/subcommittee in filling its function, attend Steering meetings, and respond to requests and communications from the Senate Executive Committee and principal assistant. Chairs not fulfilling these responsibilities may be removed by the Senate Executive Committee.

B. Standing Committees.

All standing committees are subject to modifications and to such rules and regulations as the Senate may prescribe. All standing committees, and their composition and functions, are listed on the Senate website. Committee composition, function and membership are approved by vote of the Faculty Senate.

C. Committee on Committees

The standing committees of the Senate shall include a Committee on Committees. The duties of the Committee on Committees include: 1) The Committee recommend to Senate faculty for membership on Senate standing committees and subcommittees; recommendations are voted on by the Senate. 2) The Committee may assist with recommendations for Senate and ad hoc committees, joint committees, and provost and president committees; recommendations for Senate ad hoc committees are voted on by Senate; recommendations for joint, provost, and president committees are made through the Senate Executive Committee to the appropriate office. 3) The Committee recommends names to Steering for the Legislative Representative position. The chair-elect of the Senate will serve as the chair of the Committee on Committees.

D. Steering Committee

The standing committees of the Senate shall include a Steering Committee.

1. The duties of the Steering Committee shall include matters relating to the Senate agenda, referral, voting, and procedures for Senate elections. The Steering Committee shall also act as an emergency advisory council to the President, and it may serve as a Summer Executive Committee to carry out functions delegated to it by the Senate.

2. The chair, past chair, chair-elect, and executive secretary of the Faculty Senate shall be members and officers of the Steering Committee. The chair of the Senate shall also be the chair of the Steering Committee. Additional Steering Committee members shall include the chairs of all standing Faculty Senate committees (not including subcommittees, along with one tenure-track and one career-track representative from each non-Pullman campus, excluding Global Campus).
3. Each member of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate shall have one vote in the Steering Committee. Each non-Pullman campus shall have one vote in the Steering Committee. Each of the standing Senate Committees shall have one vote in the Steering Committee. If more than one member of a committee or campus is voting in the Steering Committee, their votes shall be evenly apportioned to the one vote assigned to that committee or campus. The Legislative Representative and the Faculty Regent shall be *ex officio* members of the Steering Committee. These are non-voting roles.

D. Election of Committee Members and Officers

1. The Senate shall have the power to elect its own committees. Members of Senate standing committees and subcommittees, except where indicated otherwise, are elected by the senate on the basis of recommendations from the Committees on Committees and from the Senate floor.
2. No *ex officio* members of Senate standing committees or Senate-elected subcommittees may serve as chairs of those committees.
3. No individual may serve as chair of a Senate standing committee and its Senate-elected subcommittee at the same time. Senate subcommittees may include members who are not members of the parent committee.
4. Chairs shall be elected by committee or subcommittee members. Chairs, unless otherwise indicated, are elected by April 25 for the following year by the committee or subcommittee from among those whose terms continue throughout the year and by those whose terms begin August 16.
5. Terms of retiring members or officers end on August 15. Newly elected members or officers assume office on August 16.
6. Vacancies on Senate committees and subcommittees will be filled by election by the Senate.

E. Qualifications for Committee Membership

1. Any faculty member eligible for participation in the Senate (see Article II, Section 1) may be elected by the Senate to any of its committees or subcommittees. Subcommittees may include members who are not members of the parent committee.
2. Faculty Members elected to Senate committees and subcommittees normally will serve three-year terms. Committee terms are staggered such that, for any committee, one-third of the terms end each year.
3. Any voting committee member absent from three consecutive committee meetings shall, upon a vote of that committee, cease to be a member. The executive secretary of the Faculty Senate shall be informed without delay when a vacancy occurs in this manner.

4. Committee membership is normally limited to two consecutive terms. Faculty who have served on a committee for two terms, can reapply to the same committee after a one (1) year break. They can apply for a different committee without taking a break. If the Committee on Committees recommends extension of a candidate beyond six (6) years (2 consecutive terms), the expectation is that the extension is for one (1) year. The Committee on Committees has the option to recommend extended appointments of up to three (3) years in exceptional circumstances. The Committee on Committees shall identify a member whose appointment is longer than two (2) consecutive terms to the Faculty Senate.
 5. Academic Affairs Committee, Graduate Committee, Professional Health Sciences Committee, and the Library Committee must have student representation equivalent in number to at least twenty-five percent of the voting faculty members.
 6. All committees should optimally have representation from at least three geographic areas.
- F. Meetings of Senate-elected Committees and Subcommittees
1. At any meeting a simple majority of voting faculty members shall constitute a quorum.
 2. Committees may conduct business over email. As is the case for meetings, a simple majority of voting faculty members shall constitute a quorum.

G. Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees for the purpose of working on specific issues may be established by a vote of the Senate. Any ad hoc committee shall persist for one year following the date of the vote authorizing the committee unless extended by Senate vote.

H. Participation of Committee Chairs in the Faculty Senate

Chairs of Senate standing committees who are not members of the Senate shall be regarded as *ex officio* non-voting members of the Senate and will be expected to participate fully in its proceedings concerning matters within the jurisdiction of their respective committees.

Section 5: Relations with External Agencies

A. Legislative Representative

1. Based on nominations from the Committee on Committees, the Senate Steering Committee shall recommend to the Senate a faculty member for the position of Legislative Representative. Senate shall vote to elect the Representative. The legislative representative; will also serve as a member of the state-wide Council of Faculty.
2. This election should be conducted every three years, prior to the beginning of the new legislative session (i.e., in fall) to allow for overlap between, and the mentoring/training of, the new and current Legislative Representatives (should the latter not be re-elected), and to allow for the planning and coordination of the extensive travel and time commitments in Olympia required of this position.
3. The legislative representative may be re-elected.

B. Faculty Regent

1. When prompted by the Office of the Governor, the Steering Committee will nominate three (3) to five (5) faculty to be considered by the governor of the state of Washington for the position of faculty regent. Full-time faculty and emeritus faculty are eligible for nomination.
2. Candidates should have demonstrated substantial university-level leadership experience and a broad understanding of the university system and institutional complexity.
3. Submission of candidate portfolios will follow the instructions provided by the Office of the Governor.

C. Representatives to Other External Agencies

1. The Senate shall elect other representatives as needed in furtherance of the powers listed in Article I, Section 2B of the Constitution and Bylaws.
2. Representatives to external agencies may be re-elected.

ARTICLE IV – PETITION AND REFERENDUM

Section 1: Individual Petition.

Any member of the university community may in his or her own right bring any matter of university concern to the attention of the Senate through a Senate member, through a Senate committee chair, or through the executive secretary of the Senate.

Section 2: Formal Petition

A matter of university concern may also be introduced for Senate consideration by a petition signed by five percent of the faculty members eligible for election to the Senate, or by five percent of the undergraduate student body, or by five percent of the graduate student body, or by any combination of percentages of these three groups which totals five percent. Matters introduced by such petitions shall be acted upon by the Senate within 60 academic days, excluding summer sessions.

Section 3: Pathway for Petition with a Motion for Vote

1. Development of a petition begins by downloading the motion template from the Faculty Senate website at [LINK] Insert the name for the maker and second (if necessary) of the motion. Enter the title of the motion, the preamble or introduction, and the text of the motion. The Faculty Senate Principal Assistant will enter the date and motion number.
2. The motion form is submitted electronically to the Faculty Senate Principal Assistant. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee has the authority to request the maker of a motion to explain the motion at the next scheduled Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting. This allows the maker of the motion to answer questions posed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and may result in returning a motion to the maker, with instructions, to clarify the text or concepts expressed.
3. The Faculty Senate Steering Committee directs placement of petitions with motions on the agenda for full Senate consideration. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee will facilitate forwarding the motion to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee for placement on the agenda.
4. The Faculty Senate Principal Assistant posts the agenda and motions to be considered 1 week in advance of the full Senate meeting.

5. In circumstances requiring more expedient action, such as the last Senate meeting of a year, discussion items may be moved to action items through Senate vote and direction.

Section 4: Referendum.

A. Petition

Any action of the Senate shall be submitted to a referendum vote of the faculty eligible for election to the Senate upon submission of a referendum petition signed by at least one-third of the faculty members eligible for election to the Senate.

B. Majority Vote

To reject an action by the Senate shall require a majority of the votes cast in the referendum on the issue, provided that at least 50 percent of the eligible faculty vote thereon.

C. Notice

The executive secretary of the Senate must be informed in writing of the intention to submit a referendum petition within two weeks following notice by the Senate of its action, and the completed petition must be filed with the executive secretary within six weeks of such notice. Senate actions under challenge by referendum petition shall be suspended pending the results of the referendum vote.

ARTICLE V: Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws

Members of the Senate, standing committees, or the Steering Committee may submit proposed amendments of the Constitution and Bylaws in writing to the Executive Secretary for presentation at a regular meeting. Amendments presented at a previous meeting shall be adopted by a two-third majority of those present and voting.

Ratified by RIS: March 16, 1971.

Revised: May 31, 1974; July 11, 1975; January 9, 1976; July 16, 1976; March 25, 1977; November 24, 1978

Restructured: June 3, 1983.

Revised: February 20, 1986; March 6, 1986; February 26, 1987; April 14, 1987; October 20, 1988.

March 30, 1988; November 17, 1989; March 15, 1990.

Restructured: January 17, 1992.

Revised: February 16, 1995.

Revised: October 13, 2005

Revised March 10, 2011

Revised on April 12, 2012

Revised on February 13, 2014

Amended October 6, 2016

Amended 11.02.17

Amended March 7, 2019

Amended November 5, 2020

Amended February 2, 2023

Amended January 16, 2025

Amended March 12, 2026