

**Norfolk State University  
Faculty Senate  
Constitution and Bylaws**

**Updated December 2023**

Article I. Authority

Section I

The Faculty Senate is the representative body of the entire Faculty of Norfolk State University.

Section 2

The Faculty Senate will become operative pursuant to this Constitution and its Bylaws immediately following approval at a faculty meeting.

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of the Faculty Senate is to facilitate faculty-administration communication to promote the best interest of the faculty in the areas of academic freedom, tenure, promotion, salary, and maintenance of quality academic standards. The Faculty Senate is also designed to assist the administration in the effective utilization of faculty talents in the formation and implementation of education policies of Norfolk State University.

Article III. Composition and Membership of the Faculty Senate

Section 1

The Faculty Senate shall be composed of only full-time faculty members.

Section 2

Only faculty, as defined in Article 1 of the Bylaws, may be voting members of the Faculty Senate.

Article IV. Election of Senators

Section 1

All elections of the Faculty Senators shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Election stated in the Senate Bylaws Article II.

Section 2

Elections of Faculty Senators shall be held by February 15 of each academic year.

Section 3

Faculty Senators shall be elected for a two-year term.

Section 4

A Faculty Senator may be re-elected up to two consecutive additional terms.

#### Section 5

Terms of office for senators shall be from August 15 to August 14 of each academic year.

#### Section 6

All vacancies in the Senate shall be filled in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Bylaws Article III.

### Article V. Officers and Their Election

#### Section 1

The Senate shall elect, in April, for a two -year term, a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, and Representatives to State Faculty Senate, and for a two-year term Members to Executive Council. An officer may be elected for no more than two consecutive terms. In the event the officers are not elected per the two-year cycle, their term may be extended to comply with the academic calendar year. The extension of their term may not exceed 6 additional months.

#### Section 2

Senate officers will assume their offices as of August 15. Old and new Senators will attend the August meeting to ensure continuity and a smooth transition.

#### Section 3

Only Faculty Senators who have served during the current academic year and continuing shall be eligible for election to the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and Treasurer.

#### Section 4

The Senate officers, the heads of the standing committees as outlined in the Bylaws, Executive Council members, the immediate Past President, and an ex-officio representative from AAUP shall constitute the Executive Committee.

#### Section 5

The duties of all officers shall be those which are ordinarily assigned to such offices and such additional duties as described in this Constitution and its Bylaws.

#### Section 6

Vacancies in any office of the Faculty Senate shall be filled in accordance with the procedure established in Article III of the Bylaws.

### Article VI. Meeting of the Faculty Senate

#### Section 1

The Faculty Senate shall meet the third Tuesday in each month during the academic year, except May, December, and the summer months of June through July. The Secretary of the Senate will publish and distribute a calendar of all meetings of the Executive Committee and Faculty Senate at the first meeting of the Senate in August and January.

## Section 2

The President or, in his/her absence, the Vice President shall preside over all meetings of the Faculty Senate.

## Section 3

Special meetings may be called by the President of the Faculty Senate upon his/her own initiative, the Executive Committee or the Senate, or at the request of the President of the University. Special meetings must be called if one-third of the Senate membership presents a written petition to the Executive Committee. The President or Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate shall be required to give 48 hours' notice to all Senators as to the time and place of all special meetings.

## Section 4

Notice of all meetings shall be in writing and shall be delivered via campus email.

## Section 5

A quorum of any regular meeting of the Faculty Senate shall be one-third of the total membership to conduct regular business.

## Section 6

Except as specified in the Bylaws, any member of the faculty, any administrative officer, and any student may attend the meetings of the Senate and may express his/her views upon recognition by the presiding officer. Only Faculty Senators, however, may propose a motion or cast a vote.

## Section 7

The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of all regular and special meetings. Copies of the approved minutes will be posted on the NSU website within two weeks of their approval.

## Section 8

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee meets at least twice during the summer, and the President maintains a leadership capacity as needed during this time.

## Article VII. Agenda, Motions, and Resolutions

### Section 1

Items may be placed on the agenda by faculty members, administrative officers, or by student petition prior to a Senate meeting.

### Section 2

Except for motions of a procedural nature and in order to be included on the agenda, all motions or resolutions proposing Faculty Senate action must be in writing.

### Section 3

A motion or resolution to be placed on the agenda must bear the signature of the maker and two supporting or verifying signatures, except in special cases outlined later in this Article. The original motion or resolution is kept on file by the Secretary of the Senate. The distributed agenda copies will contain names of the makers.

### Section 4

Except for motions of a procedural nature, motions or resolutions proposing Senate action may be introduced from the floor without previous inclusion on the agenda only by consent of two-thirds of the members present.

### Section 5

All motions or resolutions, in order to be included on the agenda, must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Senate at least seven (7) days before the meeting at which they are to be introduced.

### Section 6

The agenda shall be sent to each member of the Senate at least two (2) calendar days before a regularly scheduled meeting. In case of special meetings, the Senate President shall inform each Senator at least 48 hours before the meeting.

### Section 7

Resolutions germane to any subject set forth in the agenda may be passed by majority vote of members present and voting. Other matters may be brought up for discussion by a Senator at any meeting, if a two-thirds majority of those present and voting concur.

## Article VIII. Functions of the Faculty Senate

### Section 1

As the representative body of the Faculty, the Faculty Senate has all powers delegated to it by the Faculty. The faculty hereby delegates to the Senate its responsibilities to formulate policies, make recommendations, and select faculty representatives to committees with the exception noted in Section 2 of this Article, Section 1 of Article X, and exceptions required by Virginia State Law. In regard to policy formulation, the Faculty Senate as a legislative body shall have the responsibility for an advisory role in academic matters. Such matters shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following: standards for admission, selection, and retention of students; requirements of granting of degrees; curricular requirements for general education, majors, minors, and professional education. The Faculty Senate has a primary responsibility to make policy recommendations to promote standards for faculty welfare in tenure, promotion, and fringe benefits; development of programs of research, experimentation, and instruction.

### Section 2

Any action of the Senate may be brought before a meeting of the Faculty for review. Actions of the Senate or Senate Committees may be reviewed, modified, or nullified by the faculty in one of two ways: first,

through submission to the general faculty for its consideration by a majority vote of the Senate, or secondly, through a petition for a meeting of the general faculty signed by at least 20% of the members of the general faculty. This petition for a meeting shall explicitly state the matter or matters to be the subject of the petitioned meeting. The petitioned meeting or meetings must be held within two weeks of the distribution of the minutes of the relevant Senate action to the faculty for any Senate action to be modified or nullified. Such modification or nullification shall be effective only by a vote of two-thirds of the faculty at the petitioned meeting or meetings, with at least 51% of the faculty present.

### Section 3

The Faculty Senate shall elect its own officers pursuant to procedures outlined in the Bylaws.

### Section 4

The Faculty Senate shall elect or select its committees and subcommittees and establish whatever rules and procedures necessary for functioning, consistent with this Constitution and Bylaws.

### Section 5

The Faculty Senate may adopt, amend, or repeal any Bylaws, rules, or procedures relating to the conduct of its business and the duties of its officers and committees by a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the Senate.

### Section 6

The Faculty Senate shall transmit its recommendations to the President of the University via the President of the Faculty Senate within five days of Senate approval. In appropriate cases, the Senate shall transmit its recommendations to the Board of Visitors.

### Section 7

The Faculty Senate shall assume the lead role in the periodic revision and editing of the Faculty Handbook which states established policies of the University in all matters relating to the faculty.

### Section 8

The President of the Faculty Senate shall be responsible for officially informing the University President and the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs of the transactions of the Senate and for informally discussing these and related matters with them.

### Section 9

All members of the Faculty Senate shall be responsible for keeping their departmental faculty informed on Senate activities via face to face and electronic communications.

## **Article IX. Amendment**

### Section 1

This Constitution may be changed or amended at a Faculty Senate meeting by two-thirds majority vote of the Senators present and voting. The Constitution as changed or amended shall be presented at a faculty meeting, with at least 51% of the faculty present, for the purpose of approval or disapproval.

## **Bylaws of the Constitution of the Faculty Senate of Norfolk State University**

### Article I. Definition of Faculty

#### Section 1

Only full-time faculty members (including those with released time assignments who teach) may serve as voting members of the Faculty Senate. A faculty member is the holder of the academic rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, or Instructor. These persons are distinguished from administrative faculty and staff members by the fact that their primary responsibility is teaching.

Deans, Assistant/Associate Deans, and Department Chairs are not eligible to serve as voting members of the Faculty Senate or as members of the Faculty Senate standing committees.

#### Section 2

In those cases where the Board of Visitors recognizes a person as a full-time teacher, even though he/she is part-time administrator, such recognition renders the person a full-time faculty member for the purpose of this Constitution.

#### Section 3

Whenever doubt arises as to the status of any individual, the ruling of the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs will be sought for clarification.

### Article II. Election of Senators

#### Section 1

Faculty Senators are to be chosen by the Academic departments. Apportionment of the Faculty Senate seats shall be according to the formula stated in "The Faculty Senate" section of the Teaching Faculty Handbook.

#### Section 2

Election of Faculty Senators shall take place by February 15 of each year. Terms are for two years commencing on August 15 and expiring at midnight on August 14. The terms of the first Faculty Senators will be staggered as follows so that only one-half expire each year. In the Academic department with one Senator, one will be elected every two years. In departments with more than one Senator, one half will be elected every two years.

#### Section 3

Academic departments will select Faculty Senators and alternates according to procedures agreed upon by those constituencies.

#### Section 4

In those cases where two or more small departments have combined to form a constituency, the Senator and the first alternate must come from different departments. If one department refuses to furnish either

Senator or alternate, the other department may supply such even though both Senator and alternate would then come from the same department.

### Article III. Vacancies in the Faculty Senate

#### Section 1

When a vacancy occurs, the Executive Committee shall fill it by notifying the vacant constituency's alternate who then becomes Senator. The constituency is then to select a new alternate. The alternate may attend Senate meetings with voting privileges in the absence of a Senator.

#### Section 2

A seat shall be declared vacant by the Executive Committee of the Senate in the event of three (3) successive unexcused absences by the elected Senator.

#### Section 3

The Executive Committee of the Senate will notify by email the department chairperson of the nonparticipating senator and will urge the department's return to the Senate.

### Article IV. Faculty-Initiated Petitions, Proposals, and Referenda

#### Section 1

At least 20% of the members of the faculty who are eligible to vote in Faculty Senate elections may petition the Executive Committee via the Secretary of the Senate for a meeting of the general faculty to review, modify, or nullify any Senate action in accordance with Section 2 of Article VII of the Faculty Senate Constitution.

#### Section 2

In order to recall their Senator, sixty percent of a department's constituency must vote in favor of recall and notify the President of the Senate by letter of their decision.

#### Section 3

Any officer may be removed before the term of office expires by a two-thirds vote of the Faculty Senate membership. A successor may thereafter be elected for the remainder of the term. If the President has been removed, the Vice President becomes President.

### Article V. Committees and Ad Hoc Committees

#### Section 1

All full-time faculty members are eligible to serve on committees.

Deans, Assistant/Associate Deans, and Department Chairs are not eligible to serve as members of the Faculty Senate standing committees.

## Section 2

The work of the Senate shall be performed by standing and ad hoc committees. All committees will be established by the Faculty Senate at its first regular meeting. The standing committees shall consist of the following: Executive Committee; Constitution and Bylaws; Elections and Nominations; Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures; Faculty Handbook Revision; and Faculty Status, Welfare, and Grievance Advisory.

## Section 3

The **Executive Committee** shall be the Committee on Committees for the Senate. It shall be composed of the officers of the Senate, the heads of the standing committees, Executive Council members, the immediate past President, and an ex officio representative from AAUP. It shall review and approve the agenda for each meeting and serve as Senate liaison with the administration.

## Section 4

The **Constitution and Bylaws Committee** shall maintain an up-to-date edition of the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws, based on changes voted by the Senate and/or Faculty at large, and forward appropriate recommendations for revision to the Faculty Senate for action.

## Section 5

The **Elections and Nominations Committee**, by April 15 of each year, shall plan and coordinate the biennial election of officers of the Faculty Senate, two or three faculty representative(s) to the Executive Council in staggered sequence, and Representatives to State Faculty Senate.

## Section 6

The **Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures Committee** shall monitor and make recommendations for changes in the annual faculty review process and procedures. This committee will meet as the Senate or committee members deem necessary.

## Section 7

The **Faculty Handbook Revision Committee** shall review, make recommendations, and maintain (in appropriate format) changes approved at all levels of the University governance, related to information outlined in the Faculty Handbook. This committee shall also periodically review the Faculty Handbook.

## Section 8

The **Faculty Status, Welfare, and Grievance Advisory Committee** shall review and make policy recommendations related to faculty appointment, tenure, promotion, salary, fringe benefits, and related matters. The committee will provide assistance to faculty members seeking advice in respect to filing grievance within the University. The Committee will also address issues related to shared governance, including assisting with interpretation of University policies and procedures as needed. This committee also serves as liaison with the AAUP representative on campus. This committee will meet as the Senate or committee members deem necessary.

## Section 9

The Senate shall establish whatever rules and procedures it deems necessary for the functions of all committees, consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws.

## Article VII. Amendments of Bylaws

### Section 1

These Bylaws or any portion thereof may be repealed or amended by two-thirds majority vote of the voting members of the Faculty Senate.

### Section 2

In cases not covered by the Constitution or Bylaws, the parliamentary procedure to be followed in conducting Faculty Senate meetings will be Robert's Rules of Order.

### Section 3

The President of the Faculty Senate shall appoint a Parliamentarian to serve at the pleasure of the Faculty Senate.

Rev Spring (Apr) 2018