UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC SENATE BYLAWS: RESPONSIBILITIES, RULES, AND PROCEDURES

SG 1.01

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- University Academic Senate / Provost

Responsible Office:
Provost Office

POLICY

PROCEDURES

SG 1.01. University Academic Senate Bylaws: Responsibilities, Rules, and Procedures

1. Mission Statement
The University Academic Senate (UAS) is the highest faculty governance body. It has the authority to deal with any academic issue or faculty concern. It makes recommendations to the Provost and/or the President (BOT 3.1.4).

1.1. The University Academic Senate (UAS) affirms the principles of open discussion, frequent and timely communication, and fair processes that lend legitimacy to decision-making. These principles include involving individuals in the decisions that affect them, explaining the thinking that underlies decisions once they have been made, and stating expectations and standards clearly.

1.2. The UAS functions within the broad grant of authority delegated to it by the Board of Trustees. It deals with academic issues and faculty concerns in a variety of ways:

1.2.1. Acting for the faculty by participating in the formation of policy within the framework of

shared governance;

1.2.2. Making reports on behalf of the faculty to the Board of Trustees, consistent with Board procedures;

1.2.3. Charging standing committees of the Senate and creating task forces in order to investigate matters within the scope of its responsibilities;

1.2.4. Receiving proposals initiated by a variety of individuals and groups, including its members, other members of the faculty, standing committees and task forces, administrators, the governing bodies of each College and the University Libraries, and the Student Senate;

1.2.5. Consulting informally and developing greater coordination and cooperation with university stakeholders.

1.3. The UAS is composed of members elected by and from the regular tenured and tenure-track faculty members selected by and from the affiliate faculty, members selected by and from the Student Senate, and designated administrators who are non-voting members ex officio (BOT 3.1.4). It strives to balance the principle that shared governance is the responsibility of regular tenured and tenure-track faculty with the reality that many policies formulated through shared governance affect many colleagues who are not regular tenured and tenure-track faculty.

1.4. Shared Governance policies are developed collaboratively by the UAS and the Provost. These policies complement and are not in conflict with those approved by the Board of Trustees or the Senior Leadership Team.

1.5. Each College and the University Libraries forms a governing body that develops policies for the academic units it represents, consistent with policies and guidelines established by the UAS, and serves as an advisory body to its Dean.

2. Responsibilities of the University Academic Senate

2.1. The UAS is responsible for dealing with academic issues or faculty concerns. Members of the UAS represent their constituents: having sought the counsel and advice of colleagues, UAS members will be free to exercise their own judgment on matters before them.

2.2. The UAS shares responsibility for formulating policies and procedures in the areas specified below. It exercises that responsibility by voting to make recommendations to the Provost. Recommendations arise from the appropriate governance bodies in accordance with established policies and procedures. Where no established policies and procedures exist,

proposals shall be submitted to the UAS unless otherwise specified. The areas in which the UAS shares responsibility are the following:

2.2.1. Curriculum, including all new program proposals, courses in General Education and Honors, degree requirements, academic policies and procedures, and any proposal that involves academic credit.

2.2.1.1. The New Program/New Academic Unit Council reviews prospectuses for new academic programs, majors, minors (if involving the creation of new courses), or degrees (SG 2.05).

2.2.1.2. The University Curriculum Committee acts for the UAS in performing the final curriculum review at the university level. However, upon the vote of the ECS or any of the standing committees of the UAS, the UAS shall perform the final review of new academic program proposals and requirements for academic degrees.

2.2.2. Academic organization, including colleges, schools, departments, institutes, centers, libraries, or academic service units, insofar as it contributes to the working conditions of the faculty and/or to the quality and integrity of academic programs; in other respects, however, it is not the proper domain of the UAS.

2.2.2.1. The New Program/New Academic Unit Council reviews proposals for new academic units (SG 2.05).

2.2.2.2. Where no established policies and procedures exist, proposals shall be submitted to the Provost, who will review them and consult the Chair of the UAS about how to address them. The Chair will report to the ECS when such proposals are made.

2.2.3. Faculty personnel policy, including the appointment, promotion, tenure, dismissal, and leaves of the regular tenured and tenure-track faculty; and criteria for positions that are to be accorded academic rank.

2.3. The UAS may vote to offer advice regarding budget matters, assessment, accreditation, academic policies and procedures, and other academic issues or faculty concerns.

2.4. The UAS may vote to express its endorsement of policies, events, and initiatives that support and advance the university's mission and values.

3. Responsibilities of the Executive Committee of the Senate

The Executive Committee of the Senate (ECS) serves as the clearing house for matters to be presented to the UAS. Such matters are discussed by ECS before its recommendations are made to the Senate (BOT 3.1.4).

3.1. The ECS has the authority to act for the UAS within the range of the Senate's responsibilities. Decisions reached by the ECS shall be considered tacitly ratified if the duly

informed UAS membership does not petition for a meeting within one academic week after ECS decisions are reported to the UAS membership. The ECS shall convene a meeting of the UAS within one academic week upon petition by one-fourth of the members of the UAS. If such a meeting is called, the ECS shall be bound to proceed according to the decision of the UAS.

3.2. The ECS may vote to offer advice regarding academic issues or faculty concerns that, in its judgment, do not need to be presented to the UAS. In such matters, the ECS does not act for the UAS, and it shall report to the UAS any recommendations it makes.

3.3. The ECS may provide advice and counsel to the President and/or to the Provost regarding university affairs. Such consultation is informal and is not voted upon.

3.4. The ECS serves as a nominating committee for membership of all committees, task forces, and boards that are elected by the UAS.

3.5. The ECS may arrange faculty forums as needed. At these forums, the Chair of the UAS will describe matters currently under discussion in shared governance and will invite responses to the discussion at hand. Members of the faculty are invited to raise other concerns for discussion at these forums.

4. Membership of the UAS and the ECS

4.1. The UAS and ECS include members from the regular tenured and tenure-track faculty, the affiliate faculty, the student body, and the administration as provided for in BOT 3.1.4.

4.2. During the Winter semester the ECS shall regular tenured and tenure-track faculty membership for the UAS for the following year based on the appropriate faculty count.

4.3. During the Winter semester each College and the University Libraries elects regular tenured and tenure-track faculty members to serve three-year terms. Election results for the UAS and its standing committees are reported to the ECS by March 15. The newly elected members begin their terms at the end of the Winter semester. The Student Senate selects student members at the end of the Winter semester or early in the Fall semester. 4.4. The Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee (AFAC, SG 1.02.l) selects designated affiliate faculty members of the ECS and the UAS at the end of the Winter semester.

4.4. The Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee (AFAC, SG 1.02.l) selects designated affiliate faculty members of the ECS and the UAS at the end of the Winter semester.

4.4.1. The chair of the Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee, who must have affiliate status, serves as the designated affiliate faculty member of the ECS and as one of two affiliate faculty members of the UAS.

4.4.2. The Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee selects the second designated affiliate faculty member of the UAS, who must have affiliate status, from among the members of the committee; if it is unable to do so, the committee will select the UAS member from the affiliate faculty at large, with preference given to those with experience on the committee and/or in other relevant roles.

4.5. The Student Senate selects student members at the end of the Winter semester or early in the Fall semester.

5. Officers of the UAS

5.1. The UAS elects the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the UAS from the newly constituted membership of ECS, as provided for in BOT 3.1.4, in the last week of Winter semester.

Any member of the UAS may nominate candidates for Chair and Vice-Chair from the newly constituted membership of the ECS, who must have regular tenured or tenure-track status.

Nominations for Chair or Vice-Chair should be made by noon on Friday of the second to last week of Winter semester.

Candidate statements for all accepted nominations for Chair or Vice-Chair should be distributed to the full Senate at least four days prior to the vote.

The votes for Chair and for Vice-Chair occur separately. Candidates not selected for Chair may be automatically added to the vote for Vice-Chair, but a separate vote for Vice-Chair must still occur. Ballots are secret unless a vote of the full Senate determines otherwise.

If there are no candidates who have already accepted nomination for Chair or Vice-Chair and shared a candidate statement at the time the vote needs to be taken, then nominations for Chair or Vice-Chair can be made from the floor and voted on sequentially until both positions are filled.

5.2. The Chair of the UAS presides at meetings of both the UAS and the ECS and makes decisions on parliamentary and procedural questions in fulfillment of the provisions of these Bylaws, subject to approval of a majority of the Senate.

5.3. The Vice-Chair assists with the governance responsibilities of the Chair and presides over meetings in the absence of the Chair. If for any reason the Chair is unable to serve a full term, the Vice-Chair will become the Chair for the unexpired term. If the Vice-Chair becomes Chair, or for any other reason is unable to serve a full term, the ECS will nominate and elect one of its members during a regular meeting to serve as Vice-Chair for the unexpired term.

5.4. The UAS may, by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the total voting membership of the UAS, remove the Chair and/or the Vice-Chair for the duration of the unexpired term; a vote to

remove a particular officer may not take place, however, more than once in any semester.

5.5. The Chair of the UAS is responsible for communicating all recommendations passed by the UAS to their addressees. If the recommendation requests action, the Chair will work to ensure that it receives a timely response. If a recommendation is not accepted, the Chair will seek an explanation. If a substantial change to a recommendation is requested, the Chair must then present this request to the UAS.

5.6. If any recommendation of the UAS differs substantially from a recommendation that the President plans to present to the Board of Trustees, then the Chair of the UAS is charged by the UAS with the responsibility of informing the Board of the position of the UAS.

5.7. Other responsibilities of the Chair of the UAS include but are not limited to: representing the established policies and positions of the UAS to administrators, to the press, to student organizations, and, consistent with Board policies, to the Board of Trustees; communicating with members of the faculty or with other university stakeholders about academic issues or faculty concerns; regulating access to official UAS communication channels, including email addresses, distribution lists, and websites; maintaining UAS records and archives. The ECS shall post a detailed list of the responsibilities of the Chair and Vice-Chair on the Faculty Governance website.

6. Meetings of the UAS

6.1. The UAS shall meet at least once in the Fall and the Winter semesters, respectively, and at additional times if a petition is signed by one-fourth of its membership, or at the call of the ECS.

6.2. Meetings of the UAS are open.

6.3. A majority of the total voting membership of the UAS shall constitute a quorum.

6.4. Decisions of the UAS shall be determined by the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members in attendance at a duly constituted meeting except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

6.5. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the UAS in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

6.6. Voting may be by voice vote, show of hands, or by secret ballot at the discretion of the presiding officer. Voting shall be by secret ballot if requested by ten percent of the members present.

6.7. A regular tenured and tenure-track faculty member who is unable to attend a meeting of the UAS should send an alternate so long as the alternate comes from the represented

College or the University Libraries and no contrary rules are adopted by the represented group itself. In the case of a prolonged absence involving several meetings, the represented College or the University Libraries should designate the alternate. An affiliate faculty member of the UAS should send an alternate from the Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee, who may have either regular tenured and tenure-track or affiliate status.

6.8. Proxy votes are not allowed at meetings of the UAS.

7. Meetings of the ECS

7.1. The ECS shall schedule at least eight meetings per semester at not less than weekly intervals in the Fall and the Winter semesters, respectively. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair and must be called on petition of four members.

7.2. Meetings of the ECS are restricted to members of the ECS, their alternates, and others whom the ECS may invite. The proceedings of ECS meetings are not secret. The ECS shall post instructions for requesting invitations to attend its meetings on the Faculty Governance website.

7.3 A majority of the total voting membership of the ECS shall constitute a quorum.

7.4. Decisions of the ECS shall be determined by the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members in attendance at a duly constituted meeting except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

7.5. At its first meeting of the academic year, the ECS will discuss rules of procedure for its meetings and decide whether strict adherence to Robert's Rules of Order is desirable. Robert's Rules shall govern the ECS in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with the procedures agreed upon by the ECS.

7.6. A regular tenured and tenure-track faculty member who is unable to attend a meeting of the ECS should send an alternate so long as the alternate comes from the represented College or the University Libraries and no contrary rules are adopted by the represented group itself. In the case of a prolonged absence involving several meetings, the represented College or the University Libraries should designate the alternate. The affiliate faculty member of ECS should send an alternate from the Affiliate Faculty Advisory Committee, who may have either regular tenured and tenure-track or affiliate status.

7.7. Proxy votes are not allowed at meetings of the ECS.

8. The Agenda of Meetings of the ECS and the UAS

Copies of agendas and approved minutes of all meetings are posted on the Faculty Governance website. Agendas are sent out electronically to committee members one week prior to meetings, and minutes are usually posted and distributed electronically within two

weeks following a meeting (BOT 3.1.4).

8.1. All matters to be presented to the UAS are discussed and placed as items on the UAS agenda by the ECS.

8.2. The ECS Agenda

8.2.1. The Chair of the UAS sets the agenda for meetings of the ECS. At the request of three members of the ECS, an item must be placed on the ECS agenda.

8.2.1.1. The ECS agenda, accompanied by documents relevant to agenda items, is distributed to members of the ECS electronically at least one week (five weekdays) prior to the meeting. The agenda is also published in advance on the Faculty Governance website.

8.2.2. Requests for matters to be presented to the UAS may come from any constituency, organization, or member of the campus community. Individual grievances, however, are not the proper domain of the UAS or the ECS. The ECS shares responsibility with the Provost for deciding whether the matter is an academic issue or faculty concern that should be dealt with by the UAS; if so, the ECS decides whether the matter should be referred to a standing committee. If the matter is not referred to a standing committee, the ECS may investigate the matter itself and may request information and assistance from appropriate offices and persons.

8.2.3. The standing committees of the UAS report to the ECS and make recommendations relative to their respective charges. The standing committee chairs, or their designees, will meet with the ECS to explain committee reports and respond to questions. The ECS shares responsibility with the Provost for deciding whether a committee's recommendations address an academic issue or faculty concern that should be dealt with by the UAS; if so, the ECS decides whether the committee's report adequately addresses all aspects of the matter and specifies precisely the action to be taken. If the ECS finds the report lacking or inappropriate, it will be routed back to the standing committee with a request for further clarification. The ECS may compose specific motions to facilitate deliberation of the matter by the UAS.

8.2.4. When a matter receives the support of the ECS, it will be placed as new business on the UAS agenda either as a main motion or as a report requiring further action by the UAS. The ECS may vote to place an item on the UAS agenda with its recommendation to the UAS to support the item.

8.2.4.1. The ECS may vote to place one or more items on a consent agenda for consideration at a UAS meeting. An item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately on request from any UAS member, either prior to the meeting by advance communication with the Chair or during the meeting itself. Items not removed are adopted by unanimous consent without deliberation. Removed items may either be considered

immediately after the consent agenda or placed elsewhere on the UAS agenda at the discretion of the body.

8.3. The UAS Agenda

8.3.1. The Chair of the UAS prepares the agenda for each UAS meeting in consultation with the ECS.

8.3.1.1. The UAS agenda, accompanied by documents relevant to agenda items, is distributed to members of the UAS electronically at least one week (five weekdays) prior to the meeting. The agenda is also published in advance on the Faculty Governance website.

8.3.2. If a motion is made to add an item to the agenda during a UAS meeting, opposition by ten percent of the members present is sufficient to block this action on the grounds of insufficient notice.

8.4. The approved minutes of ECS and UAS meetings are published on the Faculty Governance website, normally within two weeks of the meeting.

9. Approval of Policies

Faculty members may petition for a referendum if there is strong opposition to an action taken by UAS (BOT 3.1.4). Referendum procedures are appended in section 11 below.

9.1. A policy recommendation takes effect when it has been published on the University Policies site or in another official document, unless another effective date has been specified.

9.2. If a policy recommendation of the UAS is not accepted, the UAS may reconsider the recommendation in order to address any objections that have been raised.

10. Bylaws Amendments

10.1. The UAS shares responsibility for amending these Bylaws with the Provost. A proposed amendment shall be submitted to the ECS as a matter to be presented to the UAS. Any proposed amendment must be consistent with the format and organization of these Bylaws. If the proposed amendment receives the support of the ECS, the ECS will place it as an item on the UAS agenda.

10.2. If in the course of its deliberations the UAS alters the proposed amendment substantially, it shall either be referred back to the ECS for further consideration or held over to be considered as Old Business at the next meeting of the UAS.

10.3. A policy recommendation to amend the Bylaws shall be decided by the affirmative vote of an absolute majority of the voting members of the UAS (i.e., a majority of the entire voting membership). The recommendation takes effect when it has been approved by the Provost and published as a Shared Governance (SG) Policy on the University Policies site, unless

another effective date has been specified.

11. Referendum procedures

11.1. Referendum activities can be initiated by means of petition as described below.

11.1.1. Petition forms entitled "Petition for Faculty/Student Senate Referendum" are available at the Provost’s Office. Persons circulating the form will place the following information on the form: (i) the UAS action to be subjected to referendum; (ii) the rationale for overruling the UAS action; (iii) the name of the person circulating the petition.

11.1.2. Persons eligible to sign the petition include all regular tenured and tenure-track faculty and all members of the Student Senate. Faculty signers must indicate the unit to which they are appointed. Student signers must be members of the Student Senate.

11.1.3. Within 25 working days of the date of the UAS meeting at which the action was taken, the signed petitions are filed with the President, who is requested to appoint a task force (11.2.1.) to count and validate petitions and initiate referendum procedures if enough appropriate signatures are filed.

11.1.4. In order to initiate referendum procedures, the number of valid signatures on the petitions must be at least one-third of the sum of (1) the number of regular tenured and tenure-track faculty and (2) the number of members of the Student Senate.

11.2. Forum and Referendum Procedures

11.2.1. The task force is responsible for establishing the machinery for carrying out the referendum. The task force shall be composed of two members of the faculty and a Student Senate member, and will be assisted by all necessary clerical support.

11.2.2. The task force is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate and open forums on the issue at hand are held prior to the referendum. Advocates on various sides of the issue should be enlisted.

11.2.3. All persons who are eligible to sign the petition (11.1.2.) are eligible to vote in the referendum. Procedures for voting shall be adequately publicized by the task force.

11.3. The result of the referendum will be interpreted by the President. The President's decision regarding the issue on which the referendum was based will be explained in writing within two weeks of the referendum to the Chair of UAS and to the faculty and Student Senate.