

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE FACULTY OF SOUTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

PREAMBLE

The well being of a university depends on the academic quality and commitment of its faculty. Commitment comes from meaningful involvement and participation in the conduct of the university. The purpose of this Constitution is to enable faculty to participate in the achievement of the goals of Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

ARTICLE I. Authority of the Faculty Senate

This organization shall be called the Faculty Senate of Southwestern Oklahoma State University and shall have the power to make recommendations to the Administration, the Faculty, and the Student Government Association on all matters relating to the best interests of the University. The normal channel for recommendations to the administration shall be through the office of Provost.

ARTICLE II. Election and Tenure of Senators

- Section 1.** The apportionment of the Faculty Senate shall be determined as follows: The College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Professional and Graduate Studies, the College of Pharmacy, and the College of Associate and Applied Programs-Sayre Campus (all subsequently referred to as the *academic units*) shall each elect one Senator for every seven (or major fraction thereof) of its full-time faculty members receiving an annual contract. The Library shall elect one Senator. The Student Government Association President, or Vice President in the President's absence, shall hold non-voting ex officio status in the Faculty Senate. No person shall be represented in more than one college.
- Section 2.** Each of the academic units shall determine by two-thirds vote of each of its faculties its own method for electing Senators and determining their specific constituencies pursuant to Senate guidelines. Each academic unit shall notify the Faculty Senate President (hereafter referred to as *President*) in writing of the method used in the selection of its Senator(s). Additionally, the academic unit must complete a Faculty Senate Election Report form and send it to the President to certify the election of each new Senate representative.
- Section 3.** Senators shall be full-time faculty members with a minimum of four years full-time faculty experience at Southwestern Oklahoma State University unless this provision shall deprive any academic unit of its full representation. Faculty holding administrative positions of Dean or above, including Associate and Assistant Deans, are not eligible for Senate membership. If it is discovered that an elected Senator does not meet the requirements, the President shall notify the appropriate academic unit head and request that a qualified Senator be

elected. In the event that it is discovered that an unqualified Senator is found to be serving on the Senate, the individual's years of service at the time of discovery (not at the time of election) shall be used to determine eligibility to continue as a Senator.

- Section 4.** Senators shall hold their offices for a term of three years, except when changed for the purpose of creating staggered terms under provisions of Section 8. The term of newly elected Senators shall begin with new business at the May meeting. Senators shall be subject to recall by two-thirds majority vote of the members of their constituencies. If a vacancy occurs, it shall be filled within a period of one month by electing a Senator for the remainder of the term of office. If an individual serves as President during the final year of his/her Senate term, the term will be extended by an additional year during which he/she will serve a 4th year as past-President. If a Senator is elected President-elect in the final year of term, he/she will serve three additional years.
- Section 5.** A Senator must authorize in writing a voting substitute at any meeting. The authorization must be delivered by the substitute to the President and requires the signature of the absent Senator. The substitute must come from within the academic unit that elects the Senator.
- Section 6.** In the event that a Senator misses three meetings without a voting substitute within the ten-month academic year, the President shall notify the academic unit in writing of the Senator's absences. The notification shall include the dates of absences.
- Section 7.** Senators may call meetings of their constituents to discuss Senate business.
- Section 8.** The Senate may provide a plan to adjust terms of office so that one-third of the Senate is elected each year. This plan may include the election of some new Senators for an initial term of fewer than three years.

ARTICLE III. Offices of the Senate

Section 1. Election and Tenure of Officers

The offices of the Senate shall be the President, immediate past-President, President-elect, Secretary-Treasurer, Archivist, and other officers as determined by the Senate. At the April meeting of the Faculty Senate, the Senate shall choose, by election, its new officers, all of whom shall assume their offices at the May meeting of the Faculty Senate. The President-elect shall assume the Office of President during the May meeting and shall conduct new business at that meeting.

The Faculty Senate strongly recommends that department chairs grant release time to their faculty who serve as Faculty Senate President.

The terms of office for the President, immediate past-President, President-elect, Secretary-Treasurer and Archivist shall be for one year.

Section 2. Duties of Offices

The **President** shall

- preside over all regular and special session of the Faculty Senate
- serve as the faculty representative on the Southwestern Oklahoma State University Administrative Council
- receive recommendations from the Senate and transmit them to the appropriate officials
- counsel, involve, and train the President-elect in such a fashion as to provide continuity in the efforts of the Senate from year to year
- appoint a Senate member as Parliamentarian to be approved by the Senate
- appoint an Archivist (need not be a Senate member) to be approved by the Senate
- appoint a Senate member, to be approved by the Senate, to the University Scholarship Committee
- submit a budget to the Senate for approval each fall. The budget shall be detailed to whatever degree the Senate shall require
- have the authority to create and continue special committees
- have the authority to convene the Senate into special session
- have the authority to dismiss any guest or non-voting member at his/her discretion
- serve as a member of the Executive Committee
- fulfill whatever other duties the Senate may vest in the office

At the end of his/her term the President shall submit a written annual report before the June meeting that will include but not be limited to issues, motions, and unresolved issues.

The **Secretary-Treasurer** shall be responsible for minutes of meetings, the Senate funds, and records of receipts and expenditures. The Secretary-Treasurer shall submit a balanced annual report at the May meeting. Generally accepted accounting procedures shall be followed. The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve on the Executive Committee.

The **Archivist** shall keep records of past minutes and all motions, resolutions, and their dispositions passed by the Senate. The Archivist shall keep officers' general correspondence or notes five years; keep financial records seven years; and keep minutes, financial reports, and committee final reports permanently.

The **President-elect** shall serve on the Executive Committee and perform other duties assigned by the President.

The immediate **past-President** shall serve on the Executive Committee and perform duties assigned by the President.

Section 3. Removal from Office

Any Senate officer shall be removed from office for cause with the concurrence of two-thirds of the Senate members present. The officer shall be entitled to a hearing by the Senate preceding the vote.

Section 4. Vacancies in Office

In case of the removal, death, or resignation of the President, the powers and duties of said office shall devolve upon the President-elect, in which case the Faculty Senate shall hold an election at the next regularly scheduled meeting to fill the vacant office of President-elect. In case of the removal, death or resignation of the President-elect, Secretary-Treasurer or any other officer, the Faculty Senate shall hold an election at the next regularly scheduled meeting to fill the vacant office.

ARTICLE IV. Conduct of the Senate

Section 1. The Faculty Senate shall

- begin its new year on May 1 and end April 30
- follow Robert's Rules of Order or may otherwise determine, by majority vote, the rules of its proceedings
- meet in regular sessions during each month that the University is in session
- conduct business only when a quorum (a simple majority) is present
- upon the concurrence of two-thirds of the members present expel a member, but the Senator shall be entitled to a hearing preceding the vote by the Senate

Section 2. Standing Committees

(a). Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall make recommendations to the Senate with regard to all Senate offices except the Archivist at the March meeting. Recommendations shall also be made for nominees to Standing University Committees when requested by the University Vice President or required by the Faculty Handbook.

(b). Personnel Policies Committee

All matters relating to such personnel policies as appointment and dismissal, tenure, promotion, sabbatical leaves, class loads, salaries, benefits, and other personnel matters shall be referred to a permanent standing committee of the Faculty Senate, to be called the Committee on Personnel Policies, which shall make appropriate recommendations to the Senate.

(c). University Policies Committee

All matters relating to such university policies as the academic calendar, class schedules, final examinations, university catalogues, faculty handbooks and other publications, and university matters not assigned to other standing committees shall be referred to a permanent standing committee of the Faculty Senate, to be called the Committee on University Policies, which shall make appropriate recommendations to the Senate.

(d). Curriculum Committee

All matters relating to the curriculum shall be referred to a permanent standing committee of the Faculty Senate, to be called the Committee on Curriculum, which shall advise the Senate in regard to appropriate recommendations.

(e). Student Affairs Committee

All matters relating to the student body shall be referred to a permanent standing committee of the Faculty Senate, to be called the Committee for Student Affairs, which shall advise the Senate in regard to appropriate recommendations. The Student Affairs committee shall include a representative from the Student Government Association as a non-voting member.

(f). Judiciary Committee

All questions that shall arise concerning the meaning or intent of this Constitution shall be submitted to a special committee, to be called the Judiciary Committee, for resolution. This committee shall submit to the Senate its written opinion of the controversy no later than the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting. Since the fraction of the Senate elected each year may change, the Judiciary Committee shall review the matter at least every five years and adjust Senate terms as necessary.

(g). Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall deal with all matters that the President deems necessary. This committee shall be composed of the President, President-elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and immediate past-President.

(h). Audit Committee

The Audit Committee shall perform the audit function of the financial activities of the Senate. The audit report shall be submitted at the June meeting. An audit may be conducted at any time during the term at the request of the President or Senate majority. This committee is to be composed of three non-officer faculty members.

(i). Budget and Program Committee

The duties of the Budget and Program Committee shall include but are not limited to: evaluation of the distribution of University funds over time; evaluation of the annual faculty salary table; and making appropriate recommendations to the Senate.

Section 3. Ad hoc Committees

The President for special tasks may appoint *ad hoc* committees.

ARTICLE V. Amendments to the Constitution

The Senate, whenever a simple majority meeting in regular session shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on written petition of one-third of the full-time faculty, shall create a special committee for proposing amendments. In either case, such amendments shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the faculty in an election called by the Senate for this purpose. No less than two or more than eight weeks shall elapse between the time of proposal and ratification.

ARTICLE VI. Ratification of the Constitution

This Constitution shall replace the Charter Constitution when called by the Faculty Senate, sanctioned by the University President, and ratified by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in a special election. We, the undersigned, bear witness this ___day of _____, 1996, that the Faculty and Administration of Southwestern Oklahoma State University have duly ratified this Constitution.

For the Administration:

Dr. John Hays
President
Southwestern Oklahoma State University

Dr. Bet Rice
Provost
Southwestern Oklahoma State University

Initially approved, July 18, 1967.
Revised and approved, March 1989.
Revised and approved, 1997.

For the Faculty:

Dr. James South
President
Faculty Senate

Dr. Jason Johnson
Secretary-Treasurer
Faculty Senate