

Charter of the Faculty Senate State University of New York at Buffalo

As approved by the Faculty Senate October 10, 1978 and amended subsequently.

Article I: Definitions

1. Unless otherwise specified, terms used in this Charter which are defined in Article I of the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty shall have the same meanings in this Charter as are ascribed to them in Article I of the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty.

Article II: Powers and Duties of the Faculty Senate

1. Pursuant to Article II, Paragraphs 1 and 5, of the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty, the Senate shall have the authority to establish bylaws, standing orders, and special orders, regarding both the conduct of its business and the procedures through which it will carry out the powers and duties delegated to it in this Charter.
2. Pursuant to Article II of the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty, the Faculty Senate shall have the authority to represent and act for the faculty with respect to:

A. Faculty Status and Activity

(1) Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure.

The Senate shall act for and represent the Voting Faculty in all matters pertaining to the adoption, promulgation, and implementation of general University-wide standards and procedures regarding the appointment, promotion, and tenure of faculty. To the extent that any of these matters fall within the jurisdiction of a collective bargaining agent which represents the faculty, the Senate shall consult with the bargaining agent, and shall advise the bargaining agent regarding the impact of appointment, promotion, and tenure procedures and standards on the academic program of the University.

(2) Procedures and standards regarding conduct and evaluation of research and teaching.

The Senate may establish procedures for evaluating teaching, and it may recommend guidelines regarding the responsibilities and liabilities of researchers and teachers. The Senate shall review

and confirm procedures for review and evaluation of teaching which are proposed by any officer or agency of the University, other than the Voting Faculty or the faculty of an academic unit.

(3) Complaints or charges.

The Senate shall establish, by standing orders, the procedures called for in Article II, Paragraph 4, of the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty.

(4) University Articles of Governance.

The Senate shall represent the Voting Faculty in any proceedings or procedures pertaining to the development of University-wide articles of governance applicable to the faculty.

(5) Speech and Assembly on Campus.

The Senate shall act for and represent the Voting Faculty in all matters pertaining to freedom of speech and assembly on the campus.

B. Academic Degree Programs

(1) Undergraduate.

(a) **Admission.** The Senate shall establish standards for the admission of undergraduate students to the University. Admissions standards established by the faculties of academic units for undergraduate degree programs or undergraduate departmental majors shall be reviewed by the Senate.

(b) **Curriculum.** The Senate shall discharge the powers and duties of the Voting Faculty regarding general undergraduate degree requirements and general policies and procedures regarding undergraduate curricula. These include, but are not limited to, general education requirements and other matters of academic policy common to the several undergraduate degree-granting programs of the University. The Senate shall appoint the faculty for representatives to University-wide committees responsible for reviewing course and curriculum proposals for undergraduate programs.

(c) **Evaluation.** The Senate shall establish the system to be used in reporting faculty evaluations of undergraduate students' academic work.

(d) **Graduation.** The Senate shall establish the general standards for graduation of students and awarding of baccalaureate degrees.

(2) Graduate and Professional.

The Senate may periodically review graduate and professional degree programs with respect to their quality, direction, admission standards, and degree requirements, and may review general University policies and procedures regarding graduate and professional curricula, and may make recommendations to the professional or graduate program faculties or to the President.

C. University-wide Matters.

(1) The Senate shall review, prior to adoption, all formal plans relating to the future of the University.

(2) The Senate shall review, prior to adoption, all proposals regarding the formation, reorganization, or dissolution of academic units.

- (3) The Senate shall review, prior to adoption, articles of governance of academic units, provided, however, that the faculties of individual academic units shall not be deprived of their own independent authority to review and advise on such matters as are delineated in Article II, Paragraphs 2 and 3, of the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty and which directly relate to the academic policies and procedures of their respective academic units.
3. Pursuant to Article IV of the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty, the Senate shall act for the faculty and provide appropriate procedures for the election of representatives to the Faculty Senate of the State University of New York.

Article III: Membership in the Faculty Senate

The membership of the Senate shall consist of the following:

1. The Chancellor, the President, and the Provost, all of whom shall serve *ex officio* without vote;
2. The Vice-Chairman of the Voting Faculty, who shall serve as Chairman of the Senate;
3. The Vice-Chairman-elect of the Voting Faculty, who shall serve as Vice-Chairman and Chairman-elect of the Senate;
4. The Secretary of the Voting Faculty, who shall serve as Secretary of the Senate;
5. One (1) representative per X members of the Voting Faculty, where X is equal to 1/100 of the total number (rounded down to the nearest hundred) of Voting Faculty in the University, but is never less than fifteen (15) (see Article IV, Paragraph 3 (B), of this Charter), elected by and from the membership of the Voting Faculty according to election procedures provided in Article V of this Charter and apportioned among the academic units of the University as provided in Article IV of this Charter;
6. The SUNY at Buffalo representatives who serve in the Faculty Senate of the State University of New York, as described in Article IV of the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty.

Article IV: Apportionment of Senators Among Electoral Units

1. Electoral Units.
For the purpose of electing the Senators provided for in Article III, Paragraph 5, of this Charter, the electoral units of the faculty shall be:
 - A. Each administrative division of the University in which any member of the Voting Faculty holds primary appointment and whose chief executive officer is a Dean;
 - B. The University Libraries; and
 - C. The Institutional/General unit, which shall consist of all administrative divisions of the University not included in subparagraphs (A) or (B) of this Paragraph

in which any member of the Voting Faculty holds primary appointment and whose chief executive officer reports to the Provost.

2. Faculty members shall be assigned to electoral units through the academic unit in which they hold their primary appointment. Faculty members holding joint appointments in two or more academic units located in different electoral units may choose the single electoral unit to which they will be assigned. If such faculty do not make this election, they will be assigned by the Elections Committee.
3. The senatorial seats created by Article III, Paragraph 5 of this Charter will be assigned to electoral units as follows:
 - A. Each electoral unit shall have at least one (1) senatorial seat.
 - B. For purpose of calculating the number of senatorial seats to be filled by any electoral unit having more than X affiliated Voting Faculty (see Article III, Paragraph 5, for definition of "X"), the number of Voting Faculty shall be rounded to the nearest number divisible by X.
4. Subject only to the limitation and the requirements of Article V of this Charter, the Voting Faculty in each electoral unit will provide for the implementation of the provisions of Paragraph 3 of this Article.
5. Senatorial terms will be for two (2) years, except in the case of senators elected to fill the unexpired term of another senator. Senatorial terms for each electoral unit will be staggered so that each year a unit elects one-half of its Senators, or the closest applicable whole number thereof. A Senator who has served two (2) consecutive two (2) year terms shall be ineligible to serve as a Senator for one (1) year following the expiration of his or her second consecutive term in office.
6. The Senate shall provide in its bylaws or standing orders for any rules or procedures required to implement the terms of this Article.

Article V: Elections and Referenda

1. Pursuant to Article V, Paragraph 2, of the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty, the Senate is appointed to act for the Voting Faculty as the legislative and regulatory body regarding the conduct of faculty elections and referenda.
2. In bylaws, or in standing orders, the Senate shall provide rules and regulations for the conduct of faculty elections and referenda. Such rules and regulations shall be consistent with the laws of New York and the United States, the Policies of the Board of Trustees, and the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty.
3. The Elections Committee shall supervise faculty elections and referenda and administer the rules and regulations promulgated by the Senate, pursuant to Paragraph 2 of this Article.
4. Cumulative voting procedures shall be used in nominating and electing the Senators provided for in Article III, Paragraph 5, of this Charter. The cumulative voting procedures required by this Paragraph shall provide that in each election, each eligible voter within an electoral unit shall be allocated votes equal in number to the total number of

Senators to be elected from the electoral unit in that election, and that the total number of votes so allocated may be cast for one or more candidates, in such proportion as each eligible voter determines.

5. In the normal course of its deliberations, the Senate may choose to use a mail ballot to submit propositions before the Senate to the Voting Faculty either for advice or for final disposition. A mail ballot on a proposition before the Senate is mandated when requested by twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the senators present at any valid business meeting of the Senate. When a proposition before the Senate is referred to the Voting Faculty, alternative propositions will be included on the ballot if supported by a vote of more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the Senators present at that meeting. Any alternative so presented shall be limited to the general issue of the original proposition the Senate voted to refer to the Voting Faculty.
6. A referendum on a proposition before the Senate is mandated when requested by petition in writing by five percent (5%) of the Voting Faculty, signed by the petitioners and delivered to the Secretary of the Senate within twenty (20) days (exclusive of University recesses or weekends) following notification to the Voting Faculty of any action taken by the Senate regarding the proposition in question.
7. Mail ballots or referenda under Paragraphs 5 and 6 of this Article shall be completed within fifteen (15) days following the distribution to the Voting Faculty of the ballot and any supporting materials.
8. All matters before the Senate may be referred to a mail ballot or referendum except questions of order and privilege, and motions to adjourn, to fix the time at which to adjourn, to accept minutes of previous meetings, to receive reports, and to refer to committees for study and report. For purposes of this Article, the terms "proposition before the Senate" and "matters before the Senate" mean items of Senate business on the agenda for, or properly presented in, a regular or special meeting of the Senate.

Article VI: Committees of the Faculty Senate

1. Executive Committee of the Senate.

- A. There shall be an Executive Committee of the Senate, elected from the members of the Senate. The Executive Committee shall represent and act for the Senate in all matters within the jurisdiction of the Senate, pursuant to such delegation and directions as the Senate shall provide in bylaws, standing orders, or special orders.
- B. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the following:
 - (1) Representatives elected by and from the senators of the several electoral units;
 - (2) The four (4) senators elected to the Faculty Senate of the State University of New York;

- (3) The officers of the Senate as provided in Paragraph D of this section.

- C. The representatives specified in subparagraph B (1) of this Paragraph shall be apportioned among the electoral units which seat Senators as follows:

- (1) Each electoral unit having no fewer than two (2) Senate seats and no more than seven (7) seats shall have one (1) representative;
- (2) Each electoral unit having more than seven (7) Senate seats and no more than fourteen (14) seats shall have two representatives;
- (3) Each electoral unit having more than fourteen (14) Senate seats shall have three representatives; and
- (4) Representatives shall be elected in numbers consistent with the provisions of sections (1) – (3) of this subparagraph by and from the Senators who represent electoral units which seat one and only one (1) Senator per Article IV, Paragraph 3, of this Charter.

- D. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Senate shall be Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, respectively. The Secretary of the Senate shall be a member of the Executive Committee and shall serve as Secretary to the Executive Committee. The President shall serve *ex officio* without a vote. All other members elected to the Executive Committee shall serve for one (1) year and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms.

2. Standing Committees of the Senate.

- A. The standing committees of the Senate, and their general charges, shall be:

(1) Academic Freedom and Responsibility.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate matters concerning policies, procedures and actions within the University regarding academic freedom and academic responsibility.

(2) Academic Planning.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate matters concerning the future of the University and proposals for the formation, reorganization or dissolution of academic units.

(3) Admissions and Retention.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate matters concerning admissions to the University, the departments and to major fields, and matters concerning the recruitment of students.

(4) Athletics and Recreation.

This committee shall conduct regular reviews of general University policies encompassing all athletic activities at this University and report on these; carry out continuous liaison with the Director of Athletics and other appropriate University officers and committees concerned with the development and administration of University athletic programs; be responsible for the relation of the University athletic program to the standards, principles, and policies of the various conferences

and associations to which the University belongs; and carry out such specific studies or investigations regarding athletic affairs as may be assigned to it by the Executive Committee.

(5) Budget Priorities.

This committee shall advise the President in the development of the University budget, recommend criteria for the allocation of University budgeted funds related to the initiation, development, and implementation of the educational program, and recommend and report regularly to the Senate.

(6) Bylaws.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate matters concerning amendments to the Charter of the Faculty Senate and to the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty, and matters concerning bylaws, standing orders and special orders of the Senate.

(7) Computer Services.

This committee shall review and report to the Senate matters concerning policies and procedures for the University Computer Services.

(8) Educational Programs and Policy.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate matters concerning academic policy in the University, including (but not limited to) undergraduate, graduate and professional degree requirements; graduation standards; faculty evaluation of academic performance of undergraduate students; and University facilities for educational programs.

(9) Elections.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate rules and regulations for the conduct of faculty elections and referenda (including, but not limited to, rules governing apportionment of senatorial seats to electoral units, consistent with Article IV, Paragraphs 3 and 4 of this Charter); shall assign faculty members to electoral units consistent with the provisions of Article IV, Paragraph 2 of this Charter; and shall supervise faculty elections and referenda, administering the procedures, rules and regulations promulgated by the Senate and by this Charter.

(10) Facilities Planning.

This committee shall represent faculty interest to the administration, the Office of Facilities Planning, the UB Foundation, and others, with respect to: a) facilities needs for teaching, research, and other educational purposes; b) construction priorities; c) maintenance priorities; and d) faculty involvement in the planning process; be familiar with plans and priorities and, as necessary, present to the Senate information and issues relating to faculty interest in facilities; and monitor and, if necessary, investigate operations and decisions pertaining to the physical plant which may affect the health, safety, convenience, comfort and academic effectiveness of faculty, staff and students.

(11) Faculty Tenure and Privileges.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate matters concerning standards within the University regarding appointment, promotion and tenure of faculty, and matters concerning faculty rights and privileges.

(12) Grading.

This committee shall from time to time review the grading policies of the University, including the range of grading options, the meaning of various grades, the applicable deadlines for submission of grades, procedures for grade changes, and other matters pertaining to grading that may be of faculty interest; and shall also monitor grade distribution and any apparent inflation or erosion of grades.

(13) Information and Library Resources.

This committee shall conduct a regular review of policies and practices of the University's library and other informational resources and services including such matters as operational aspects, facilities, and general policies for future development; carry out a continuous liaison with the Director of the Libraries, the Director of the Educational Communications Center and other appropriate University officers concerned with the development, integration, and administration of information and library resources; and carry out such specific studies or investigations regarding informational and library resources as may be assigned to it by the Executive Committee.

(14) Research and Creative Activity.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate matters concerning University policies, procedures and actions regarding research and creative activity; University facilities for research and creative activity; funding for research and creative activity; and responsibilities and liabilities of researchers.

(15) Student Life.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate matters concerning student life; conduct regular reviews of University policy that affect or are of concern to students; and carry out a continuous liaison with appropriate administrative officers and student organizations on matters involving and affecting students.

(16) Teaching Quality.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate matters concerning the conduct of teaching within the University and procedures for the evaluation of such teaching.

(17) University Calendar.

This committee shall devise and recommend an official University calendar that will apply to degree-granting parts of the University up to five years in advance.

(18) University Governance.

This committee shall review, report and recommend to the Senate matters concerning University governance and governance of academic units.

- B. Members of standing committees shall be appointed to two-year staggered terms by the Executive Committee of the Senate, in such number as the Executive Committee deems reasonable. The chairperson of each standing committee shall be a member of the Voting Faculty and, where appropriate, the faculty membership of each standing committee shall be generally representative of the major academic organizational units of the Voting Faculty. Standing committees may establish subcommittees and appoint the members thereof.
- C. All reports of standing committees shall be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Senate, for transmission within reasonable time to the Senate, with or without comment. At least once each academic year, not later than March 31, each standing committee of the Senate shall provide to the Executive Committee a written report signed by every member of the standing committee.

3. Other Committees of the Senate.

The Senate may establish other committees to act for the Senate and to review, report and recommend to the Senate on matters within the jurisdiction of the Senate. Each committee shall be provided with a charge stating the nature of its assignment and the period of the committee's life. Committees will be composed of members of the Voting Faculty and such other persons as, in the judgment of the Senate, should be invited to sit on committees.

4. Jurisdiction of Committees of the Senate.

Any topic reasonably within the scope of the charge to a committee of the Senate may be reviewed and reported or recommended to the Senate by the committee, irrespective of other action concerning the topic taken by any other committee of the Senate.

Article VII: Meetings

1. Meetings of the Senate.

- A. Meetings of the Senate shall be held at regular intervals, not less frequently than six (6) times between September 1 and May 30 each year.
- B. Special meetings of the Senate may be called at any time by the Chairman of the Senate, by the Executive Committee, or upon petition of twenty (20) members of the Senate. A petition for a special meeting shall be in writing, signed by each of the petitioning Senators, and shall be delivered to the Secretary of the Senate. A petition for a special meeting shall set forth the matters to be presented at the special meeting. Unless the petition for a special meeting stipulates a later date, such special meeting shall occur not later than fifteen (15) calendar days (exclusive of official University recesses) after the petition is delivered to the Secretary of the Senate.
- C. A majority of the Senate shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the Senate.
- D. Upon recognition by the Chairman of the Senate, Voting Faculty who are not members of the Senate

may obtain the privileges of the floor and of speaking on the floor of the Senate, without vote, at any regular or special meeting. Others may obtain the same privileges by written request to the Chairman of the Senate or by resolution of the Senate at any meeting.

- E. Unless otherwise provided in its bylaws or standing orders, the Senate shall observe *Robert's Rules of Order* in conducting its meetings.

2. Meetings of the Executive Committee of the Senate.

- A. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held at regular intervals, not less frequently than every two weeks September through May, and at such additional times as the Executive Committee shall deem necessary.
- B. A majority of the voting members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the Executive Committee.
- C. The Executive Committee may adopt such rules for the transaction of its business as it may deem necessary. Unless otherwise provided, *Robert's Rules of Order* will apply to the conduct of Executive Committee meetings.

Article VIII: Amendments

- 1. Amendments to this Charter shall be adopted upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Senators present and voting in a regular or special meeting of the Senate.
- 2. Amendments to this Charter shall be adopted upon an affirmative vote of a majority of those casting ballots in a referendum of the Voting Faculty.
- 3. Amendments to this Charter may be proposed by any member of the Senate or the Voting Faculty.
- 4. Amendments proposed for the consideration of the Senate shall be presented in writing to the Secretary of the Senate. The Secretary shall transmit the proposed amendment to the Executive Committee, which shall in turn transmit it to the Senate along with its recommendation. If the Executive Committee fails to act on and transmit the proposed amendment to the Senate within 30 days after it is received by the Secretary of the Senate, the Secretary will transmit the proposed amendment to the Senate at its next scheduled meeting. Such proposed amendment shall take precedence over any other item on the agenda for that Senate meeting.
- 5. Amendments proposed for the consideration of the Voting Faculty shall be treated according to the procedures specified in Article VII, Paragraph 3, of the Bylaws of the Voting Faculty.
- 6. No amendment to this Charter may be adopted between May 1 and September 30 of any year.

Article IX: Effective Date and Transitional Rules

1. This Charter shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Voting Faculty.
2. The Senate shall observe such of the rules and procedures governing the Senate as are specified in the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate, adopted and amended through September 1, 1977, which are not inconsistent with the terms of this Charter, until such time as the Senate adopts bylaws or standing orders pursuant to this Charter which supersede the aforementioned rules and procedures.
3. The Chairman and Secretary of the Senate incumbent at the time of adoption of this Charter shall assume the offices of Chairman and Secretary provided for in this Charter. They shall hold those offices for the balance of the terms to which they were elected by the Voting Faculty.
4. For units currently represented, the Senators incumbent at the time of adoption of this Charter shall constitute the membership of the Senate established in this Charter until the June 30 next following the adoption of this Charter; for units not now represented, Senators may be added to the Senate roster as soon following the ratification of the Charter as their election is certified in writing to the Secretary of the Senate. The members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee incumbent at the time of the adoption of this Charter shall constitute the membership of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee provided for in this Charter, until the June 30 next following the adoption of the Charter. The Secretary of the Senate and a committee designated by the Executive Committee will provide for elections to establish the membership of the Senate and the Executive Committee provided for in this Charter. The Senators first to be elected pursuant to this Charter shall assume office on the July 1 next following the adoption of this Charter, or upon the date notice of their election is received by the Secretary of the Senate, whichever is later.

Article X: Separability Clause

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, section, or part of this Charter shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder hereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, section, or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered.

For further information, contact the Faculty Senate at 645-2003.