

# University Senate Bylaws Georgia College & State University

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### **Article I. Purposes and Powers** [\[TOP OF PAGE\]](#)

**Section 1.** The purposes and powers of the University Senate are specified in Article IV of the Institutional Statutes and included here in italics and underlined for information

*A. The University Senate is endowed with all the legislative powers and authority of the University Faculty and shall be the policy-making assembly at the Institution.*

*B. The University Senate shall have the responsibility for establishing committees, including any committees required to remain in compliance with policies of the Board of Regents,*

federal or state law, and accreditation or certification organizations that are needed for orderly and efficient governance.

C. The University Senate shall not adopt any regulations affecting curricula, or the internal affairs of an academic unit except insofar as such action may be necessary to protect the interests of the Institution as a whole, but it may make recommendations to the faculty of an academic unit concerning matters within their jurisdiction.

D. The University President shall have fifteen (15) calendar days to decide whether to accept or veto an action taken by the University Senate. Should the President veto the action(s), the President shall provide the University Senate a written statement of the reason(s) for the veto. The University Senate shall have the right to (a) accept the veto; (b) confer with the President to construct a compromise action; or (c) reject the veto requesting that the President reconsider. The decision of which action to take must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the voting membership of the University Senate. If the University Senate or University President refuses to recede, and if agreement cannot be reached, the matter shall be referred to the Board of Regents through the Chancellor for review pursuant to the pertinent policies of the Board of Regents.

## **Article II. Membership, Election of University Senators and Meetings of the University Senate** [\[TOP OF PAGE\]](#)

### **Section 1. Membership**

#### **A. Composition, Eligibility, and Terms of Service**

1. The University Senate shall consist of the President, who shall be the presiding officer, the Vice President and Dean of Faculties, the Vice President for Business and Finance, the Vice President and Dean of Students, the Vice-President for Institutional Research and Enrollment Management, the Chair of Staff Council, and the President of the Student Government Association. The President may appoint six (6) additional faculty, staff, students, and/or

administrative officers after consultation with the Executive Committee of the University Senate. Elected faculty representation shall be set at a fixed number of thirty-six (36) members that shall always provide for a three-quarter majority of voting members in the University Senate. The President, Vice President and Dean of Faculties, Vice President for Business and Finance, Vice President for Student Affairs, Vice President for Institutional Research and Enrollment Management, Chair of the Staff Council, and President of the Student Government Association shall be permanent members by virtue of title. The six appointed members from the faculty, staff, students, and/or administrative officers shall be appointed annually by the President.

2. Elected faculty members must have at least two (2) years of service at Georgia College & State University at the time they take office and shall be elected for two (2) year terms. Faculty elections for the forthcoming academic year shall be held during the spring semester of the current academic year and shall take place in each academic unit by secret ballot after open nominations. It will be the responsibility of the Executive Committee to ensure that the terms for all academic units shall be staggered so that approximately one half of the University Senate membership changes in any given year. Elected faculty representation shall be limited to faculty in the Corp of Instruction.

3. Terms of service shall begin with the call to order of the last University Senate meeting of the academic year. Vacancies that occur during a term of service shall be filled for the remainder of that term in the same manner as the original election or appointment.

B. Within ten (10) calendar days of the Executive Committee's announcement to the University Community of the results of the election of incoming University Senators, the President shall appoint six members to the University Senate.

## **Section 2. Election of Senators**

A. The election of the thirty-six (36) members of the University Senate representing the Corps of Instruction shall proceed as follows:

1. By October 1 of each academic year, the Executive Committee shall obtain from the Office of Academic Affairs a list of the faculty in the Corps of Instruction. This list shall also show the academic area where each Corps of Instruction faculty member is assigned. Faculty not assigned to one of the academic schools shall constitute a group of faculty hereafter referred to as the Library/General Division. Administrators who are members of the Corps of Instruction and serve on the University Senate by virtue of office shall not be included when calculating the apportionment based on this list. Using the faculty numbers represented on this list, the Executive Committee shall apportion thirty-four (34) of the University Senate elected faculty positions among the Schools and the Library/General Division. This apportionment shall be based on the percentage of the members of the Corps of Instruction (excluding administrators defined above) assigned to each of the Schools and the Library/General Division. The remaining two (2) University Senate faculty positions shall be elected at large by faculty members in the Corps of Instruction. Only Corps of Instruction faculty members counted in the numbers for apportionment of senators are eligible to vote for the thirty-six (36) University Senate faculty senators.

2. The exact number apportioned to each School and the Library/General Division for spring elections shall be determined by the Executive Committee and announced to the University Senate by November 1. Each School as well as the Library/General Division must have at least one elected University senator. The number of at large elected faculty senators may be increased from two (2) to three (3) by the Executive Committee to adjust for rounding the apportionments among the Schools and the Library/General Division.

3. The faculty of each School shall determine how the University Senate faculty senators are elected in their School and each Dean shall be responsible for carrying out the election by March 1 of each year or a date specified by

the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall announce the results of the School Elections to the University Community within five (5) calendar days of March 1. The Executive Committee shall conduct the election of at large University Senators and shall also conduct elections for University Senators from the Library/General Division. The Executive Committee shall announce the results of these elections to the University Community no later than March 31.

4. The Executive Committee shall supervise the elections of all University Senate faculty senators and obtain from the Schools a written description of the method used to elect faculty senators in each School. This shall be reported to the University Senate at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year and attached to the minutes of that meeting.

### **Section 3. Meetings**

#### **A. Calendar and Protocols**

1. The University Senate shall meet at least four times during the academic year, in September, November, February, and April, and at other times deemed necessary. The Executive Committee of the University Senate shall have the option of canceling a maximum of two of these four meetings should there be insufficient business for the meeting. Special meetings may be called by the University President (the presiding officer of the Senate), the Executive Committee, or upon the petition of at least twenty percent (20%) of the membership of the University Senate. By May 1, after consulting the University Calendar, the incoming Executive Committee shall announce and publicize the meeting dates, places and times for the meetings that will occur during the following academic year. Changes to this schedule shall be announced and publicized by the Executive Committee at least 10 calendar days in advance of any meeting whose time has been changed.

2. Any elected faculty representative on the University Senate shall have the right to call meetings of this group of

senators for deliberative and informational purposes regarding issues being considered by the Senate.

3. A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.
4. Adequate notice (at least 10 calendar days) shall be given of any University Senate meeting.
5. Meetings of the University Senate and its committees, except the Executive Committee at its own discretion, shall be open to the University Community, provided that only members have the privilege of voting, and non-members shall have the privilege of the floor only when specifically provided by the University Senate or its committees, or when recognized by the presiding officer of the meeting.
6. The minutes of the University Senate and its committees, including the Executive Committee, shall be open to inspection by the University Community subject to applicable privacy and open records laws.

#### B. Procedures

1. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Statutes and these Bylaws and for matters not covered in the Statutes or Bylaws, in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.
2. The University President shall preside at all meetings of the University Senate. Should the President be unable to fulfill this obligation, then the President's designee shall preside.
3. The Executive Committee shall name a parliamentarian to the University Senate for the coming academic year at the first regular University Senate meeting. The presiding officer may refer to the parliamentarian as to the proper procedure to be followed in matters of rules of order.
4. The Secretary of the Executive Committee shall also serve as the Secretary of the University Senate.
5. Each University Senator is expected to attend every University Senate meeting. Each member of a senate

committee is expected to attend every meeting of that committee. Substitutes are not allowed to vote on any issue. The Chair of the Executive Committee or the Chair of a Committee must notify the University Senate Secretary when a member has missed three meetings. A person who is on authorized leave for an extended period of time shall notify the Chair of the Committee to which the person has been elected, or the Chair of the Executive Committee, of his/her anticipated absence. The Chair of the Executive Committee shall notify the Committee on Nominations whenever a replacement needs to be elected.

### **Article III. University Senate Organization** [\[TOP OF PAGE\]](#)

**Section 1.** The University Senate shall discharge its responsibilities through a system of standing committees elected by and directly responsible to the University Senate. These standing committees shall establish their own operating policies and procedures consistent with these Bylaws and the University Statutes. These must be filed with the Executive Committee and updated as needed.

**Section 2.** Each spring, after the membership of the incoming University Senate has been determined, the outgoing Committee on Nominations shall propose a list of candidates and an election process to fill the vacancies on standing committees for the following academic year. At its organizational meeting in the spring, the incoming University Senate shall elect the committee members. After the nominations of the Committee on Nominations have been placed on the ballot, additional nominations may be made from the floor. The majority of members serving on standing committees must be senators. The incoming committee members shall begin their term of service when the faculty convenes for the fall semester.

### **Article IV. Committee Organization** [\[TOP OF PAGE\]](#)

**Section 1.** The regular operations of the University Senate shall follow a committee review procedure. The University Senate by a two-thirds majority vote may suspend committee review of a specific matter and act as a committee of the whole. In all other cases, the Senate shall submit all matters of

substance for study, recommendations, and/or action by a committee prior to definitive action being taken by the University Senate. Standing committee business may be initiated by any member of the committee, by the Executive Committee of the University Senate, by the President, or by a written request to the Executive Committee supported and signed by at least five Senators.

**Section 2.** The committees listed in Article V Section 2.A.1 shall constitute the standing committees of the University Senate. Each standing committee and the Executive Committee, through their duly elected chair, shall, at all regular meetings of the University Senate, make a brief verbal report of business transacted. The text of any motions or resolutions that are to be proposed by committees at a University Senate meeting shall be provided to the Executive Committee fifteen (15) calendar days before the meeting, and shall be forwarded to University Senate members by the Executive Committee eight (8) calendar days prior to the meeting. In addition, each committee shall present a comprehensive, written, annual report to the Executive Committee. This comprehensive report, which shall be submitted to the Executive Committee shall include a summary of the major items considered by the committee during the academic year and the disposition of each. The Executive Committee shall set a due date and these reports shall be posted with the minutes of the last University Senate meeting of the academic year.

**Section 3.** The outgoing chair of each standing committee shall transfer current committee records to the incoming standing committee. Records older than twelve (12) months and not needed by the incoming committee shall be handled in accordance with the policies of the Board of Regents and State of Georgia requirements (see government link <http://www.usg.edu/usgweb/busserv/index.phtml>). Within fifteen (15) calendar days of the first day of classes of the Fall semester, the incoming committee shall conduct an organizational meeting at which they will elect a chair, vice chair, and a secretary in accordance with Article V Section 2.B.1 of these bylaws. The Executive Committee shall designate a facilitator to both preside at the organizational meeting and conduct the elections of committee officers.



**Section 4.** All elected members of the University Senate shall have at least one University Senate committee assignment. Faculty, staff, administrators and students who are not members of the University Senate may be nominated to University Senate committees if the Committee on Nominations deems that appropriate. Committee members who are not members of the University Senate shall be afforded all rights of committee membership, including voting, but shall have none of these rights in the University Senate.

**Section 5.** Vacancies on the University Senate or its committees that occur between regular elections, other than those that occur on the Committee on Nominations, shall be filled by the Committee on Nominations in the manner originally used to fill the position. Such vacancies shall be reported immediately to the Committee on Nominations by the chair of the committee on which the vacancy occurs. The Executive Committee shall fill vacancies of this nature on the Committee on Nominations.

## **Article V. Committees of the University Senate** [\[TOP OF PAGE\]](#)

### **Section 1: The Executive Committee**

A. The Executive Committee of the University Senate shall consist of the University President, the Vice President and Dean of Faculties, and four (4) elected members of the University Senate. Within ten (10) calendar days of these elections, the incoming Executive Committee shall hold an organizational meeting at which they elect a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. These elections shall be presided over by the University President.

1. The election of the four Senators to the Executive Committee shall proceed as follows. At the spring organizational meeting of the incoming University Senate, the outgoing Committee on Nominations shall nominate four elected Senators from the incoming University Senate. The presiding officer shall then call for other nominations from the floor. Should there be more than four (4) nominees, the incoming University Senate will vote, with members casting votes for up to four (4) nominees. The four (4) Senators receiving the most votes will constitute the elected members

of the Executive Committee. There will be an additional vote in the case of a tie.

2. Should the chair of the outgoing Executive Committee not be reelected to the Executive Committee, (s)he shall serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of the incoming Executive Committee to assist with continuity for the following academic year.

B. The Executive Committee shall meet as needed throughout the year to facilitate the functioning of the University Senate. Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the Chair, President, or by written request from a majority of the Executive Committee membership. A majority of the Executive Committee membership shall constitute a quorum.

C. The duties of the Executive Committee shall include the following:

1. The members of the Executive Committee shall constitute an advisory committee of the faculty that the University President may consult.

2. The Executive Committee shall set the agenda for regular and called meetings of the University Senate. The agenda shall be disseminated to members of the University Senate no later than five (5) calendar days prior to the meeting. The Executive Committee shall also provide the text and any other supplemental information in a timely manner, when available, regarding any motions that are to be proposed to the Senate.

3. The four elected members of the Executive Committee shall serve as the informal body of inquiry (the "body of inquiry"), as described in Board of Regent's policy (803.1102), to mitigate the removal of any tenured or non-tenured faculty member. The body of inquiry shall be responsible for the determination of confidentiality relating to such informal inquiries, especially when sensitive information about particular individuals would be otherwise revealed. If the body of inquiry has failed to effect an adjustment, they shall advise the president whether dismissal proceedings shall be undertaken. The body of inquiry's recommendation shall not be binding on the president.

4. Except when the University Senate gives specific directions, the Executive Committee shall, when consideration is being given to referring any matter to a standing committee, determine the standing committee which shall have jurisdiction; provided, however, that nothing in this responsibility shall challenge the University President's authority and responsibility for interpretation of the Statutes and Bylaws or for determining ultimate jurisdiction when conflicts arise.

5. The Executive Committee shall receive and disseminate reports of all standing committees prior to meetings of the University Senate. The Executive Committee may review the reports and, when deemed appropriate, make its own recommendations in addition to forwarding those of the committees.

6. The Executive Committee shall appoint a Committee on Nominations that shall nominate candidates to committees of the University Senate for approval by the membership of the University Senate.

7. The Executive Committee may recommend to the University Senate for their consideration and approval such standing and/or special committees as it deems necessary.

8. The Executive Committee may consider and recommend to the University Senate any matters that are within the powers of the University Senate.

9. The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility for initiating and maintaining the system of overlapping terms, for verifying representatives authorized to each academic unit, and for resolving questions related to the faculty election process.

10. The Executive Committee shall ensure that up-to-date versions of any documents (statutes, bylaws, policy manuals, handbooks) that define or reference the governance structure in any unit of the University are archived in both "hard" and "electronic" format to facilitate access.

11. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for maintaining a calendar of University Senate activity.

12. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for maintaining and disseminating the minutes of University Senate, the minutes of the Executive Committee, and the minutes of standing committees, sub-committees, and ad hoc committees to the faculty, staff and students of the University. The Secretary of the Executive Committee will also serve as the Secretary of the University Senate. The Secretary of the Executive Committee, with the approval of the Executive Committee, will appoint an Archivist.

a. The Archivist shall maintain a historical record of University Senate activity both on paper and electronically and make the electronic version of this archive available to the University Community.

D. The Committee on Nominations.

1. The Committee on Nominations is a subcommittee of the Executive Committee whose members are appointed by the Executive Committee. The membership of the Committee on Nominations shall include, but not be limited to, the Student Government Association President, the Executive Committee, the Staff Council Chair, and the Standing Committee Chairs.

2. The duties of the Committee on Nominations shall include the following.

a. The committee shall meet and elect a chair within fifteen (15) calendar days of its appointment.

b. The Committee on Nominations shall report on the ratio of senators to non-senators, and on the proportion of committee membership composed of non-elected senators who serve by virtue of office or are presidential appointees for all committees of the University Senate. Such a report shall be submitted to the Executive Committee when the initial committee recommendations are made and any time that changes are proposed to committee membership.

**Section 2: Membership, Duties and Description of the Committees established by the University Senate**

A. Membership of the Standing Committees

1. There shall be four standing committees: the Academic Governance Committee, the University Services Committee, the Budget and Planning Committee, and the Student Affairs Committee.
2. There shall be fifteen (15) members on each standing committee, one of which is appointed as specified in Article V Section 2.C of these bylaws. The remaining fourteen (14) members shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected by the University Senate. Each School and the Library/General Division shall be represented on each standing committee and there shall be no fewer than eight (8) senators on each standing committee. Each standing committee shall include at least one (1) student nominated by the Student Government Association.
3. There may exist a subcommittee structure that supports the work of standing committees.
  - a. The University Senate may establish permanent subcommittees that report to a standing committee. The standing committee itself, the Executive Committee or the University Senate may recommend the creation of a subcommittee to assist with the work of the standing committee. Such a recommendation would take the form of a motion submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration by the University Senate. The Committee on Nominations shall nominate subcommittee members. At least two (2) members shall be university senators. The University Senate shall elect the voting membership of any such subcommittee and specify to which standing committee they report.
  - b. The business of the University Senate may be addressed by ad hoc committees that report to a standing committee or the Executive Committee. A standing committee, the Executive Committee or the University Senate may create ad hoc committees. An ad hoc committee charter must be filed with the Executive Committee before the first meeting of the ad hoc committee. Members of the body that create the ad hoc committee shall choose the ad hoc committee membership. Any member of the University Community is eligible to serve on an ad hoc committee; however, at

least two (2) members shall be university senators. The members of the ad hoc committee shall select a chair (must be a university senator), vice-chair, and secretary. The announcement of meetings and the posting of minutes shall follow University Senate protocol. Ad hoc committees shall cease to exist upon completion of an assigned task or at the end of the academic year, whichever comes first.

4. The term of service on a standing committee or subcommittee shall be one year. Approximately half the membership shall be replaced each year. Members may be reelected to committees.

B. Duties of standing committees and subcommittees.

1. The members of a standing committee shall elect a chair, a vice chair, and a secretary by secret ballot at the first committee meeting in accordance with Article IV Sec 3 of these bylaws. Only those members elected to the University Senate are eligible to serve as the committee chair, but any member of the committee is eligible to serve as vice chair or secretary. The chair, vice chair, and secretary shall be elected for a period of one year. The chair, vice chair, or the secretary may be reelected.

2. Committees shall consult with the Executive Committee as to relevant issues, policies, and procedures that shall be the work of the committee and to seek out and identify concerns within its area of responsibility.

3. The secretary of the committee shall provide minutes of each meeting to the Secretary of the Executive Committee as well as post the minutes electronically within eight (8) calendar days of the meeting. This would include minutes of any subcommittee or ad hoc committee that reports to it.

4. Standing committees shall monitor the activities of their subcommittees and consult with subcommittees regarding the relevant issues, policies, and procedures that shall be the work of that subcommittee.

- a. The subcommittee members shall elect their chair, vice chair, and secretary, set the agenda for their meetings, and determine when meetings will take place.

- b. Subcommittee chairs shall attend standing committee meetings as requested to report on the activities of the subcommittee and to provide information regarding the status of recommendations emanating from the subcommittee.
5. Committee chairs shall attend meetings of the Executive Committee as requested.
6. Committees may recommend policies and procedures of the University and shall send them to the Executive Committee that shall forward them for consideration to the University Senate.

## **C. Standing Committees**

### **1. Academic Governance Committee**

- a. This committee shall be composed of fourteen (14) members elected by the University Senate, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs/ Dean of Faculties.
- b. This committee shall have the responsibility of considering and making policy recommendations regarding all issues that affect Corps of Instruction faculty, curriculum, instruction, and academic programs and policies that affect the entire University. The committee shall address issues relating to the quality of instruction and shall make recommendations concerning the nature and structure of undergraduate and graduate degree programs, general accreditation compliance, core curriculum, admissions, advisement, retention, and academic practices. The committee shall also recommend policies and procedures concerning professional development and research opportunities for faculty, faculty awards (teaching, research, service, and program), intellectual property rights, research awards, distinguished service awards, and honorary degrees. The committee shall also recommend university-wide policies concerning faculty workloads, salaries, and tenure and promotion. This committee shall consider recommendations on the procedures for faculty recruitment, faculty grievance resolution, and academic administrator evaluation. The committee shall also be concerned with issues related to the

Honors & Scholars Program, continuing education and non-degree programs, international education, and experiential learning. Recommendations on academic programs including but not limited to the academic calendar, this committee shall also consider registration, retention and student academic appeals processes.

## **2. University Services Committee**

a. This committee shall be composed of fourteen (14) members elected by the University Senate, and the Director of Legal Affairs.

b. The responsibility of this committee includes the review and recommendation of policies related to technological services, practices and fees that affects faculty, staff, and students, and issues regarding the health, welfare, and safety of the University Community including, but not to be limited to, policies and procedures regarding alcohol and illegal drugs on campus, the use of human subjects in research, safety and risk management, Homeland Security, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, affirmative action, conflict resolution, and student health services.

## **3. Budget and Planning Committee**

a. This committee shall be composed of fourteen (14) members elected by the University Senate, and the Vice President for Business and Finance.

b. This committee shall have the responsibility of considering and making recommendations regarding the budgeting process and its impact on the general educational policy and welfare of the University Community. These responsibilities include University Senate recommendations to the President concerning the University Strategic Plan, budgeting (including long range planning and the annual budget), marketing, facilities, and campus master planning.

## **4. Student Affairs Committee**



a. This committee shall be composed of fourteen (14) members elected by the University Senate, and the Vice President for Student Affairs.

b. This committee shall have the responsibility of considering and making recommendations and policies concerning student housing, the quality of residence life, scholarships, orientation, first year academic experience activities, graduation and other student ceremonies (Honors Day, Convocation), athletics and NCAA practices, rules and regulations affecting student life and activities, non-academic student appeals process, and University Diversity Planning.

### **Section 3: Administrative Committees**

A. The Administrative committees are defined as those committees and councils that are established by an administrator to assist and advise that administrator in carrying out his/her duties. If it is required that part of the membership be elected, elections for these committees shall be arranged by the Director of Legal Affairs. The administrator who establishes the committee shall convey any recommended policies or policy changes of that committee to the University Senate for consideration.

B. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to keep a current list of these administrative committees including their charge, membership, and the name of the administrator to whom they make recommendations.

## **Article VI. Changes to these Bylaws** [\[TOP OF PAGE\]](#)

Any proposed changes to these bylaws must be submitted to the Executive Committee and must have the written support of at least five (5) University Senators. The Executive Committee shall make a report and recommendation to the University Senate regarding the proposed change. A motion shall be made regarding the disposition and tabled until the next meeting. A change shall be adopted with a majority of those eligible to vote favoring adoption and upon approval of the University President.