

# UNIVERSITY SENATE CONSTITUTION

## Eastern Connecticut State University

### 1. Preamble

In order to carry out our responsibilities with regard to the governance of the University and the formation and review of its policies, we, the Faculty of Eastern Connecticut State University, do establish and confirm the University Senate to represent us. In so doing, we delegate those powers which are ours and which are not reserved to other bodies by statute or contract.

### 2. Powers and Responsibilities

2.1 The University Senate and the University Administration share a joint responsibility and authority for the development of University policies in such areas as curriculum, degree requirements, scholastic standards, admission policies, academic freedom, promotion, tenure and continuing appointments, and University organizational structure, in the selection of the President, Vice Presidents, and Deans, in budget and planning, and in other matters affecting the educational quality and mission of the University.

2.2 The Senate shall present its decisions in the form of Bills and Resolutions. The President shall report all approved Bills and Resolutions to the President of the University. A "resolution" is defined as an expression of the sentiment of the Senate requiring no action by the President of the University.

2.2.1 The President of the Senate shall, with the help of the Secretary, keep a current record, by numbers assigned to them, of all Bills and Resolutions, with notes as to their status; such record shall be available to faculty members.

2.2.2 Approved Bills and Resolutions of the Senate shall be reported to the President of the University within five school days of their approval. The President of the University shall return Bills to the President of the Senate within fifteen school days, marking them approved or disapproved (the Faculty shall likewise have a period of fifteen days in which to petition for reversal of a Senate decision; see Article 3). If a Bill is disapproved, the University President shall furnish a written explanatory comment to the Senate. Approved Bills shall become official University policy.

2.3 The University Senate shall constitute and establish or approve the procedures for all committees representing the instructional and/or administrative faculty. Such committees shall report to the University Senate, except when exempted by the University Senate.

2.4 The University Senate must approve the establishment of new departments and divisions and all changes or reorganizations of existing departments and divisions.

2.5 The University Senate may consider and decide any jurisdictional matter that in its view has not been delegated to others.

### 3. Restrictions

3.1 Since the University Senate derives its powers from the Faculty, the Faculty may review and reverse any of its decisions. If ten percent or more members of the Faculty so petition within fifteen school days of the announcement of a Bill of the Senate, the Senate President shall within ten days call a special session of the Faculty to consider the petition.

3.1.1 Upon receipt of a petition to reverse a Bill of the Senate, the Senate President shall notify the University President. All action on the matter of the Bill shall thereupon be suspended, pending a resolution of the petition.

3.1.2 The Faculty must discuss the petition during a duly called meeting which must be held at least one week prior to voting on the matter. The Faculty may reverse an action of the University Senate by a majority of the Faculty members voting. Such voting shall be by anonymous ballot. If the Senate action in question is not duly reversed in that vote, such action shall stand and be subject to no further petition.

3.2 Senators may be recalled or replaced by their constituencies in accordance with the constituency's bylaws.

3.3 An amendment to the Constitution of the University Senate may be initiated by the University Senate or by any special session of the Faculty. The proposed amendment and an announcement of a special session of the Faculty to ratify it must be circulated to the total Administrative and Instructional Faculty at least ten school days prior to a vote.

Ratification of an amendment requires a majority of the Faculty present, voting by secret ballot at a special session of the Faculty, and the approval of the President of the University. The procedure for presidential approval shall follow the rules applying to Senate Bills (see Article 2.2.2).

### 4. Organization

#### 4.1 Membership and Representation

4.1.1 The University Senate shall consist of one representative for each academic department, one for the Library Faculty, one for the Counseling Faculty, one for Athletics Faculty, the President of the University as a non-voting member, and three senior officers of the Administration, five representatives chosen by and from members of the Administrative Faculty bargaining unit, four Faculty members elected at large from the entire Instructional and Administrative Faculty of the University, and three students selected by the student government.

4.1.2 Each constituency shall provide an alternate for each of its senators; this provision applies to the three senior officers of the Administration, but not to the President of the University. The Administrative Faculty shall be allowed to designate a pool of alternates up to the total number of Administrative Faculty senators, rather than a specific alternate for each senator. Similarly, alternates for Senators-At-Large may serve in the absence of any At-Large-Senator. Academic departments may designate a third person to serve as Senate representative when the Senator and Alternate are both unable to attend a Senate meeting. Such temporary departmental representatives shall be accorded all the rights and privileges normally reserved for senators and their service shall not be subject to Senate confirmation.

4.1.3 All regular senator elections shall be reported to the Senate no later than the last Friday of March, with the new senators taking office at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year. Each senator and alternate shall be elected for a two-year term by their constituency and may be reelected.

4.1.4 The Administrative Faculty shall elect three representatives for two-year terms in even-numbered years and two representatives for two-year terms in odd-numbered years.

## 4.2 Meetings

4.2.1 The University Senate shall meet on a regular schedule during the academic year. Special sessions of the University Senate may be called by the Senate President, by ten percent of the Senate membership, or by twenty percent of the Faculty. All petitions must be in writing and the purpose of the meeting clearly stated. The Senate President must call a special meeting within six working days during the academic year after receipt of such a petition.

4.2.2 Meetings of the University Senate shall be open to all administrative officers, faculty and students. Faculty members may participate in Senate discussions, and other visitors may request permission to speak on a particular issue.

4.2.3 The University Senate may vote to go into executive session by a two-thirds vote of senators present. Minutes reporting executive session action shall be made public within twenty-four hours of such session.

4.2.4 The Senate Secretary shall deliver the minutes and make all reports available to all members of the Senate, the Faculty, and administrative officers within five academic working days after a Senate meeting. Copies of all Senate minutes and reports shall be filed in the Official Records of the University Senate in the University Archives.

4.2.5 The Senate shall take no action unless a quorum is present. A quorum shall consist of a majority of senators or alternates on the official University Senate Roster.

4.2.6 A simple majority shall decide votes of the University Senate in all cases not otherwise specified in the Senate Constitution or Bylaws.

4.2.7 The University Senate shall conduct its business in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

#### 4.3 Officers

4.3.1 The officers of the University Senate shall be a President, a Vice-President for Instructional Faculty, a Vice President for Administrative Faculty, a Secretary and any such other officers as the University Senate may deem necessary. These officers and the chairpersons of all standing committees of the Senate shall constitute the Executive Committee of the University Senate.

4.3.2 These officers shall be nominated from the University Senate members at a special organizational meeting held at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the academic semester. Voting shall be by secret ballot, and their terms shall be for one year. The past officers shall preside over the University Senate until new officers have been elected. Any officer of the University Senate may be removed by a vote of two-thirds of the senators or alternates. Action on such a motion shall take place no sooner than the next regular meeting of the Senate.

4.3.3 In the event of the office of the Presidency of the University Senate becomes vacant, the Senate shall select one of its Vice Presidents to preside over election of a new President.

#### 4.4 Duties of the Officers

##### 4.4.1 The President

4.4.1.1 To preside at all meetings of the University Senate and Faculty meetings called by the Senate President.

4.4.1.2 To serve as an ex-officio member of all University Senate committees.

4.4.1.3 To call all meetings of the University Senate and certain meetings of the Faculty.

#### 4.4.2 Vice Presidents for Instructional and Administrative Faculties

4.4.2.1 To assume the duties of the President when the President is temporarily absent. The Vice President for Instructional Faculty shall assume this duty in odd-numbered years and the Vice-President for Administrative Faculty in even-numbered years.

4.4.2.2 To serve ex-officio on the Organization Committee.

#### 4.4.3 The Secretary of the University Senate

4.4.3.1 To keep accurate records of the Senate attendance and the proceedings of all Senate meetings. To deliver the minutes of the University Senate meetings of the Faculty and make the minutes and Senate reports available to the entire university community. To oversee maintenance of the Official Record of the University Senate in the University Library.

### 5. Ratification

This Constitution and changes thereto shall be ratified when approved by a majority vote of the Instructional and Administrative Faculty.

[This version includes all approved amendments through May, 2012. ssr]