



Policy Chapter: Chapter 6 Faculty Affairs

Policy Number and Title: 06.048 Charter of the Faculty Senate of the University of North Texas

I. Policy Statement

A university is a community of scholars engaged in the free discussion, research and dissemination of ideas and knowledge. To the end that the governing of this university shall embody the full freedom of discussion, participation, and examination of ideas by faculty, students, and administrators in the search for truth, the administration and the faculty of the University of North Texas hereby establish and promulgate this Charter of the Faculty Senate of the University of North Texas.

II. Application of Policy

All Full Time Faculty and Librarians

III. Policy Definitions

A. Full-Time Faculty

“Full-time Faculty,” in this policy, means a person employed full-time by UNT as a member of the university’s tenure/tenure-track/non-tenure track faculty or librarian whose duties include teaching, service, and/or scholarship. The term does not include an administrator who holds faculty rank and supervises other full-time faculty and/or holds a leadership position at the School/ College level or above (for example department chairs, division heads, associate deans or deans); a list of Faculty administrative titles can be found in the Senate Procedures Manual, or Faculty in a nonrenewable fixed term appointment such as visiting professors, scholars in residence, (etc.), or a student who teaches as part of an educational program.

B. Reapportion

“Reapportion,” in this policy, means re-allocate, distribute senators on the basis of population within the colleges/schools/departments.

C. Shared governance

“Shared governance,” in this policy, means involvement of faculty in decisions concerning academic matters and policy, including academic budgets. “Academic policy” includes curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction and research, matters of faculty status, and those aspects of student life that relate to the educational process. The Faculty Senate may also consider other matters relating to the general welfare of the Institution.

IV. Policy Responsibilities

Faculty Senate Charter

Preamble

We establish this charter as a constitutional framework for the Faculty Senate of the University of North Texas, a community of scholars engaged in the free discussion, research and dissemination of ideas and knowledge. Participation in Faculty Senate is a right afforded to all full-time faculty as defined by this Charter. To the end that the governing of this university shall embody the full freedom of discussion, participation, and examination of ideas by faculty, students, and administrators in the search for truth, the administration and the faculty of the University of North Texas hereby establish and promulgate this Charter of the Faculty Senate of the University of North Texas.

Article I. Role and Competence of the Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate advocates for shared governance and in doing so encourages faculty to participate and discuss academic matters to ensure that academic quality remains a priority at UNT. The membership acts on academic matters and policy for the university, with due regard to the requests and needs of the specific departments, divisions, schools, and colleges, to the advice of the president, the provost and vice-president for academic affairs of the university, and to the rules of the Board of Regents of the University of North Texas System and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Policies developed by the Faculty Senate become official when published by the president in the official university policy publication. The Senate represents the view of the faculty to the UNT Administration.

The Faculty Senate may consider all matters of general welfare to the university including matters raised by senators, by senate committees and by the president of the university, and, through petition, by any other administrative official or body, and by any full-time faculty member who shall then have the right to speak to the petition.

Article II. Composition of the Faculty Senate

Section 1. The Faculty Senate shall be composed of 50 voting senators.

Section 2. There shall be 40 senators elected by and from groupings of the instructional units as listed in the Faculty Senate Procedures Manual according to the latest reapportionment.

Section 3. There shall be ten senators elected by and from the faculty at large. Six of these senators will be apportioned equally among the academic ranks of professor, associate professor, and assistant professor. The remaining four senators will be apportioned among the various non-tenure track faculty ranks and librarians as further specified by the Faculty Senate Bylaws.

Section 4. There shall be two non-voting student senators: one undergraduate student elected by the Student Government Association and one graduate student elected by the Graduate Student Council.

Section 5. The Faculty Senate shall reapportion itself at every three years in time for the spring election of senators in the third year of each term.

Article III. Terms, Qualifications and Elections

Section 1. The term of office for each faculty senator shall be three years. Faculty senators may serve a maximum of two full consecutive terms with a one-year hiatus before being eligible to serve again. Faculty Senators may take a leave of absence from the Senate of up to one semester. Taking a leave of absence from the Senate that extends longer than one semester shall constitute that Senator's resignation from the Senate, except when contrary to state or federal laws; the Chair of the Senate shall thereupon declare a vacancy in the membership of the Senate.

Section 2. The term of office for each student senator shall be one year. Student senators may serve a maximum of two full consecutive terms with a one-year hiatus before being eligible to serve again.

Section 3. Faculty senators shall be full-time faculty as defined in the definition of "faculty" above.

Section 4. Student senators shall have attained the minimum of 45 credit hours for undergraduate students, and 18 graduate credit hours for graduate students.

Section 5. A vacancy shall be declared and filled by procedures described in the Faculty Senate Bylaws.

Section 6. Only full-time faculty may nominate and vote in Faculty Senate elections.

Section 7. Elections shall be held during the spring semester of each year in which terms of senators expire, in accordance with the procedures described in the Faculty Senate Bylaws.

Section 8. The Faculty Senate shall be organized each year at the September meeting at which time all new senators shall take office. Terms of office shall thus begin with the September meeting and shall expire at the "Call to Order" of the September meeting of the appropriate year of the expiration of the term.

Article IV. Officers of the Faculty Senate

Section 1. Faculty Senate officers serve at the pleasure of the Senate.

Section 2. Faculty Senate shall elect from among its members the Faculty Senate officers as specified in the Faculty Senate Bylaws. The officers include the Faculty Senate Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and other officers as deemed necessary. The Faculty Senate Chair shall preside over meetings of the Senate, and the Vice Chair shall preside in the absence of the Chair. The Chair shall vote only in the case of a tie vote. The term of officers shall be one year from July 1 to June 30.

Section 3. A Faculty Senate officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Senate (vacant Senate seats shall not be counted in determining the two-thirds majority needed for removal of an officer). A motion to remove an officer shall be

privileged, taking precedence over any other Senate business except the election of officers. A resolution for removal of an officer may be introduced by any voting Senator and must be seconded by at least two other Senators in order for a vote for removal to be taken. A twice-seconded motion for removal of an officer shall be considered a first reading of the motion. The vote of Senators on a resolution to remove an officer shall be conducted at the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting, or at a special session of the Senate called for that purpose, to be held no sooner than two weeks after the motion is introduced and seconded. Should an officer be removed before the completion of that officer's regular term of office, the Senate shall immediately elect a member of the Senate to fill the resulting vacancy and to complete the remainder of the uncompleted term of office.

Article V. Committees of the Faculty Senate

Committees of the Faculty Senate shall include an Executive Committee, Committee on Committees, Curriculum Committees, a University Election Committee, a Charter and Bylaws Committee and such other standing and temporary/ad hoc committees as the Faculty Senate shall from time to time create. The voting members of Faculty Senate committees will be restricted to full-time faculty.

Article VI. Meetings and Procedures of the Faculty Senate

Section 1. The Faculty Senate shall hold a regular meeting at least once each month from September through June of each year, with the exception of January.

Section 2. Special meetings of the Faculty Senate may be called by the Chair on their own motion. The Chair must call a special meeting when petitioned to do so by 20 percent of the voting Senators.

Section 3. The Faculty Senate shall be the sole arbiter of its own rules and procedures.

Section 4. There shall be a Faculty Senate Procedures Manual that will contain procedures for the Faculty Senate and its committees.

Article VII. Faculty Governance Bodies

There shall be a Faculty Grievance Committee as specified by university policy 06.051.

Article VIII. Amendments to the Faculty Senate Charter and Bylaws

Section 1. Initiation of Charter Amendments.

An amendment to the Charter of the Faculty Senate may be initiated in either of the following ways:

Sub-section a. An amendment to the Charter can be initiated by the Charter and Bylaw committee, presented for first read at one regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting and voted upon at the next regularly scheduled meeting. An amendment shall proceed to ratification upon receiving two-thirds of the votes.

Sub-section b. An amendment to the Charter can be initiated by petition of 20 percent of the full-time faculty calling for a special faculty meeting. Upon verification of the petition, the Faculty Senate must call such a faculty meeting within 30 days from receipt of the petition. The only subject for discussion at this meeting shall be the proposed amendment. If a majority of those attending the meeting favor the amendment, it shall proceed to ratification.

Section 2. Ratification of Charter Amendments.

A properly initiated amendment to the Faculty Senate Charter shall be submitted to a ratification vote of all full-time faculty within 30 days of being initiated. If that 30-day window falls during the summer, then the ratification vote shall take place within 30 days of the beginning of the next academic year. The amendment takes effect if ratified by a vote of all full-time faculty, with at least three fourths of those voting supporting the amendment.

Section 3. Amendments to the Faculty Senate Bylaws.

Amendments to the Bylaws shall be initiated by a first reading at any regular meeting of the Faculty Senate and shall be ratified by a simple majority of the senators attending the next regular meeting. The first reading shall be regarded as an announcement of pending consideration; debate on the proposed amendment shall take place at the second reading, at the next regular meeting of the senate. Such amendments to the bylaws shall be published in the minutes and distributed to the entire faculty.

V. Revision History

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