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SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE

# The University Faculty Senate Charter and Bylaws

The President of Sam Houston State University approved the following changes to the bylaws for the University Faculty Senate in Fall 2007

## CHARTER FACULTY SENATE OF SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

### Preamble

In order to develop fully the freedom of discussion, participation, and examination of ideas by faculty, students, and administration in the search for truth, the faculty and administration hereby establish and promulgate this Charter of the Faculty Senate of Sam Houston State University.

### Article I. Function of the Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate shall consider matters of general welfare to the University placed before it by members of the faculty, members and committees of the Faculty Senate, the Student Association, and the President of the University and other administrative officers of the University. Inasmuch as the Faculty Senate is advisory in nature, decisions on all such matters shall be final only when approved by the President of the University, subject to the authority of the Board of Regents, The Texas State University System, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Faculty Senate shall have no existence separate and apart from the University.

### Article II. Composition of Faculty Senate

#### Section 1. Eligibility

The Faculty Senate shall be composed of full-time faculty members. Persons who are not full-time faculty members and persons holding administrative positions with the rank of program coordinator or above shall not be eligible to serve.

#### Section 2. Election Procedures

- Apportionment and Eligibility to Vote

All faculty members, full-time and part-time, are eligible to vote. Positions on the Faculty Senate will be apportioned among the major administrative units of the University. These units are defined as the several colleges and the Newton Gresham Library. Each unit will have a minimum of one senator and the Senate may not exceed twenty-five members.

- Nominations and Elections

Senators will be elected each spring semester to serve for a term of three consecutive years. An eligible full-time faculty member within any particular administrative unit must designate in writing to the Election Committee his or her willingness to be a candidate for election to the Faculty Senate. Each

administrative unit will elect senators from nominees within that unit. A committee composed of one senator from each administrative unit, with the Chair-Elect of the Faculty Senate as chairperson, will be responsible for conducting elections. This committee will decide questions or apportionment, subject to approval by the Faculty Senate as a whole.

If, for any reason, a member of the Senate cannot serve a full term, the vacancy will be filled by the person receiving the next highest number of votes in the most recent spring election of the appropriate administrative unit. In case of a tie vote, the name will be determined by lot. A vacancy due to resignation will be declared to exist by the Chair of the Faculty Senate upon receipt of a letter of resignation. A vacancy due to removal will be declared to exist after a determination by a two-thirds majority of the Senate that the responsibilities of the position are not being filled.

## **Article III. Organization of Faculty Senate**

### **Section 1. Organizational Meeting, Chair and Chair-Elect**

The Faculty Senate will hold an organizational meeting in the fall after the election of new senators. The meeting will be held at the call of the incoming chair.

At the organizational meeting, a Chair-Elect will be elected who will serve one year (September 1 – August 31) in that capacity, and the following year as Chair. Any Senator elected Chair-Elect in the third year of his or her term will automatically have his or her term extended by one year. Nominations will be taken from the floor, and voting will be by secret ballot. Every member of the Senate, including those nominated, is eligible to vote.

The Chair shall call meetings of the Faculty Senate and preside at those meetings; moreover, the chair is responsible for representing the Senate to the administration. The Chair-Elect will assume the duties of the Chair in the event of the Chair's absence, perform such other duties as the Chair shall decide, and will be responsible for keeping written accounts of Senate meetings and for distributing these to the faculty, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President.

### **Section 2. Committees and By-Laws of the Faculty Senate**

The Faculty Senate shall be empowered to establish By-Laws and such committees from its membership as it deems advisable for carrying out its responsibilities.

### **Section 3. Meetings of the Faculty Senate**

There will be a minimum of four meetings during each regular semester of the academic year. The chair will ordinarily schedule these meetings after consultation with the members to determine the most convenient time. A meeting must be called if requested by at least one-third of the Senate.

## **Article IV. Protocol for Senate Actions**

The President of the University or a designated representative will respond in writing to recommendations submitted by the Faculty Senate to the President. Normally, this response will be made within sixty days after receiving the transmittal from the Chair-Elect.

If the President rejects a proposal of the Senate or adopts an alternate course of action, he will so notify the Senate. The Senate may reconsider the proposal and, if it deems appropriate, submit the proposal for a vote of the entire faculty. Upon approval by two-thirds of those voting on the issue, the Senate may again transmit the proposal to the President and request a re-consideration.

## **Article V. Method of Ratification**

This Charter will be considered ratified after it has been approved in a referendum by two-thirds of the faculty voting in the referendum, and then approved by the President of the University.

## **Article VI. Amendments to the Charter**

Amendments to the Charter of the Faculty Senate may be initiated by two-thirds of the Senate membership or by petition to the Chair of the Senate signed by at least fifty members of the voting faculty. Amendments must be ratified by two-thirds of the faculty members voting on the amendment. Amendments shall become effective when approved by the President.