

UNIVERSITY SENATE BYLAWS

Section A. Term of the Senate

1. All elections of the University Senate shall be held in the month of April.
2. Officers of the Senate will be elected in May.
3. The incoming Senate shall take office effective July 1, each year.

Section B. Officers

4. Senate officers shall consist of a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and an Archivist to be elected before the end of each academic year by the incoming University Senate.
5. The duties of the University Senate President shall be:
 - a. To serve as the chief executive officer of the Senate;
 - b. To preside at all meetings of the Senate; and,
 - c. To appoint a parliamentarian.
6. The duties of the University Senate Vice President shall be:
 - a. to assume the duties of the President in the absence of or at the request of the President;
 - b. to serve as Chairperson of the Senate Agenda Committee;
 - c. to serve as a member of the Nominations and Elections Committee; and,
 - d. to perform such other functions as may be assigned by the President.
7. The duties of the University Senate Secretary shall be:
 - a. to inform fully the faculty in writing of all decisions, in the form of generally complete minutes published as a special section of *The Westconn Report*;
 - b. to communicate in writing with and to receive written replies from the President of the University as may be appropriate for policy establishment or change;
 - c. to forward as appropriate Senate actions and recommendations to the appropriate body, e.g., standing committees, departments, et al.
 - d. to maintain the tape recording of a Senate meeting until the formal approval of the minutes of that meeting has occurred.
 - e. Regarding the two sections on the minutes in Robert's Rules, use Robert's Rule only as a guideline; with the following Amendment: the tapes of the meetings be saved for 3 years and the tapes be turned over to the Archivist by the Recording Secretary.
8. The duties of the University Senate Archivist shall be:
 - a. to keep records of which committees have reported to the Senate;
 - b. to keep records of the status of policy motions and resolutions sent to the President of the University;
 - c. to keep current permanent files in the Ruth A. Haas Library of Senate minutes, actions, resolutions, etc., by topic and,
 - d. to update and maintain a manual of all University procedures passed by the University Senate and approved by the University President.

Section C. Meetings

9. The Senate shall meet the third Wednesday, at 3.30 p.m., and in the event that the agenda is not completed, on the following Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. of each academic month when the University is in session, unless the Senate President: a. cancels the meeting; or b. selects an alternate day and/or meeting time. [*Senate Amended Oct. 17, 2001 (R-01 0905) and Administrative Approval Oct. 31, 2001*]
10. Special meetings of the Senate may be called by
 - a. petition of ten elected Senators;
 - b. the President of the Senate when it is not in session;
 - c. the Senate during its own session; or

- d. the University President or his/her designee.
- 11. A majority of the voting membership is required for a quorum, i.e., 50% + 1.
- 12. Complete minutes of each meeting shall be published as a special section of the *Western Report* and shall be distributed as soon as possible after each Senate meeting.
- 13. The minutes of each meeting shall include a list of those Senators who attended.
- 14. There shall be no executive sessions.
- 15. All meetings of the University Senate are to be open to any member of the University community. Those who wish may request to speak under the operating rules on items under discussion.

Section D. Conduct of Business

- 16. Unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws, *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*, governs the conduct of business.
- 17. For local use:

The General Faculty of Western Connecticut State University consists of all full-time unclassified personnel, other than the President of the University. The Teaching Faculty of Western Connecticut State University consists of all full-time:

- a. Instructional faculty;
- b. Librarians and Counselors as defined by the AAUP collective bargaining agreement.

The nonteaching Faculty of Western Connecticut State University consists of all unclassified personnel, other than the Teaching Faculty, as defined above, and the President of the University. Administrative Faculty: all nonteaching faculty excluding the Vice Presidents, the Associate Vice President, Deans, and the Director of Affirmative Action. A general faculty roster clearly identifying teaching and administrative faculty shall be published by the University administration as early as possible each academic year.

- 18. Policy matters shall not be voted on at the same meeting during which they are introduced.
- 19. Any faculty member may bring business to the Senate by communicating it in writing to the Chairperson of the Agenda committee.
- 20. By a petition signed by 25 or more non-senators and presented to the Senate President, any matter upon which the Senate may act shall be brought to a written referendum of the entire faculty.
- 21. The procedure for a written referendum shall be as follows:
 - a. The petition must be accompanied by a copy of the matter, properly worded for the referendum;
 - b. The University Senate President shall call for and convene a faculty meeting as soon as possible. A majority of those present and voting shall determine whether the wording of the matter is appropriate for referendum. If the wording is not accepted, the petition shall be returned to the petitioners to be reworded and, at a later date, resubmitted to the faculty for approval of the wording by either another faculty meeting or by a written ballot. Following the above vote, the faculty meeting shall become an open forum for debate on the substance of the petition;
 - c. Within one week of the faculty meeting or approval of the wording of the matter (whichever is later), a referendum by paper ballot shall be conducted on the issue by the Senate Nominations and Elections Committee. A majority of those voting shall determine the outcome;
 - d. The same matter shall not be brought to referendum more than once each academic year.

Section E. Committees

22. The following is a list of Senate Committees:
- a. Procedural Committees
 1. Agenda Committee
 2. Nominations and Elections Committee
 - b. Standing Committees
 1. Academic Leave Committee
 2. Admissions Committee
 3. Assessment Committee
 4. Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum & Academic Standards
 5. Distance Education Committee
 6. Educational Achievement and Access Program
 7. Faculty Development & Recognition Committee
 8. Graduate Council
 9. Information Technology Committee
 10. Media & Library Services Policy Committee
 11. Mediation Committee
 12. Promotion & Tenure Committee
 13. Research & Development Committee
 14. Student Life Committee
 15. Termination & Appeals Committee
 16. University Planning & Budgeting Committee
 17. Committee on Physical Working Conditions
23. There shall be an Agenda Committee consisting of a chairperson (the Vice President of the University Senate), the President, the Secretary, and the Archivist of the University Senate.
24. The duties of the Agenda Committee are to:
- a. publish a call for agenda items in the *Western Report*;
 - b. decide which of the submitted items should be placed on the agenda, and to return to the sender(s) all items not placed on the agenda, with reasons for the decision, and where possible, suggestions for a more appropriate channel;
 - c. place on the open forum portion of the Senate meeting those topics denied agenda access and not referred to an appropriate committee;
 - d. call regular meetings of the University Senate by publishing the agenda in the *Western Report* preceding each meeting;
 - e. assist the proper working of the University Senate by calling for regular reports, when due, from all committees that report to the University Senate, by following up all official notifications of University Senate action with requests for reports of actions taken by the appropriate party, when such action has not been taken or reported within the specified time, and by insuring that all reports are submitted as required in Bylaw 27.
25. Individual and committee items for the University Senate, except in cases of emergency, will be stated in writing and presented to the Senate Agenda Committee for determination of the item's appropriateness for Senate consideration.
26. There shall be a three-member Nominations and Elections Committee to conduct total faculty elections, i.e., to operate the entire process by which faculty members are voted into the elective positions on standing and ad hoc Senate committees, appropriate University committees and also on various University committees.

The Committee shall also coordinate the election of senators and representatives to standing committees by the constituent groups.

The Committee shall consist of the Senate Vice President, the Director of the Computer Center, ex-officio, and two other faculty members, who shall be elected by the faculty for overlapping two-year terms. The chairperson of the committee shall be the faculty member who is serving the second year of his/her term. The new member of the committee shall be elected in April of each year and begin his/her term July 1.

The Committee shall conduct elections in the following manner:

- a. A notice shall be circulated to all faculty members informing them of an approaching election. If the Faculty Handbook does not contain a description of the function of any committee for which elections are to be held, then the Nominations and Elections Committee shall publicize such committee's function;
- b. There shall be no distinction in rank and tenure status of faculty for eligibility for committee service, with the exception of any committee in whose establishment rank and tenure were expressly stated to be a requirement for membership.
- c. The election shall be conducted in three steps:
 1. The Committee shall first request faculty members to inform them of those committees on which they are interested in serving.
 2. For those committees where the number of candidates is more than double the elective vacancies, the committee shall hold a preferential primary. In each such case, voters may select no more than twice as many candidates as there are elective vacancies.
 3. For each committee to which members are to be elected, the Committee shall provide the faculty with a final list of candidates containing approximately twice as many candidates for each committee as there are elective vacancies, if possible.

Only Teaching Faculty as defined in Bylaw 17 may vote in committee elections or primaries, except where committee bylaws specify a broader electorate.

The elections shall be completed by the end of the first full school week in April. The results of each election shall be published in the next *Western Report* or in a special notice.

The Committee shall work in accordance with the Procedural Notes, a manual to be kept by the Committee Chair person, with a copy in the archives.

If it is necessary for faculty members to attend a committee meeting before the Nominations and Elections Committee can carry out the election process, then the Senate President may appoint interim committee members to serve until the election is carried out.

A vacancy arising in an elective position on any committee shall be filled by the available candidate with the next highest number of votes in the previous spring election. The balance of the vacant term shall be filled by election at the next regular spring election.

27. All committees that report to the Senate shall be advise the Senate at least once each academic year of:
 - a. what action has been taken since the previous report; and
 - b. what business is currently before the committee.
28. Except for emergency situations, committee reports to the University Senate shall be submitted in writing sufficiently in advance of the meeting at which they are to be presented so they may be distributed with the agenda of that meeting.

SECTION F. AMENDMENTS

29. These Bylaws may be amended by a majority of the voting membership of the University Senate.
30. These Bylaws and subsequent amendments become effective immediately upon passage by the University Senate and the approval of the University President.

Sept. 16, 1980

Revised-Senate approval: Feb. 15, 1989

Admin. Approval: Jan. 2, 1990

Revised-Senate approval: Dec. 19, 1990 (R90-5-2.2)

Admin. Approval: Aug. 5, 1991

Revised-Senate approval: Mar. 18, 1992 (R92-3-2)

Admin. Approval: Apr. 14, 1992

Revised Senate Approval: 10/15/97 (R97-10-1)

Admin. Approval: 7/28/98