

## **FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION**

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### **PREAMBLE**

The role of the faculty, through its Faculty Senate and its committees, is central to the governance, development, and improvement of Walters State Community College. Therefore, the Senate participates fully and actively in determining all College policies related to academic matters and to faculty welfare. To achieve these goals, the Faculty Senate supports the mission of the College by adhering to the articles outlined in this Constitution.

### **ARTICLE 1 – MISSION AND PURPOSE**

The Faculty Senate’s mission is to be a constituency committed to listening to, protecting, supporting and informing faculty.

The purpose of Faculty Senate is to represent faculty; to serve as liaison between the represented divisions and campuses in disseminating information and soliciting responses; to provide responsive leadership for the faculty body; to participate on all appropriate administrative councils; to initiate, formulate, discuss, and recommend policies and procedures related to the welfare of the College and the development of the academic unit; and to analyze, report, and advise the President of the College (and through him/her the Tennessee Board of Regents) on College policies and procedures in areas of primary concern.

### **ARTICLE II – SENATE DUTIES AND POWERS**

#### **Section 1: Duties and Powers**

The Faculty Senate assumes the duties and powers delegated to it according to the policies and procedures of the College and The Tennessee Board of Regents and considers matters referred to it by the faculty and administration. The duties and powers of the Faculty Senate include the right to participate fully and actively by reviewing and making recommendations concerning all policies pertaining to academic affairs and faculty welfare; to meet with the President of the

College; to receive timely response to Faculty Senate initiatives; to participate in governance of the College; to formulate and/or review all mission and values statements; to recommend and/or review goals and objectives; to review all related budgetary documents; to participate in all tenure and promotion procedures consistent with College policy and procedure; to participate in institutional effectiveness initiatives as outlined by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS); and to be represented in all faculty grievance and disciplinary hearings consistent with College policy and procedure.

## **Section 2: Regular State of the Faculty Evaluation**

As an integral part of maintaining its service and accountability to the entire faculty body, every five years, the Senate shall engage in an effort to identify areas of concern for faculty at large and subsequently propose an action plan to address such. The Evaluation shall consist of four phases:

- Design Phase: In the fall semester of a year divisible by five, the Senate shall determine what inquiries shall be made of the faculty and the method (instrument) for doing so.
- Query Phase: The following spring semester, the instrument shall be executed, and the results collected and summarized.
- Solution Phase: The following fall semester, the Senate shall form one or more action plans to address those concerns identified.
- Presentation Phase: The following spring semester, the Senate shall present the action plan(s) to the College President and administration as the will of the faculty.

The Senate shall be at liberty to fulfill this mandate as it sees fit, using any combination of committees (ad hoc or otherwise) and/or task forces.

## **ARTICLE III – BUDGETARY SUPPORT**

The College provides budgetary support for travel and operational costs, as approved within the annual budgeting process. The President of the Faculty Senate, hereinafter referred to as the President, serves as the budgetary official for the Faculty Senate.

## **ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1: Faculty Senate Membership and Terms**

- Eligibility:** Any member of the full-time faculty will be eligible for election to membership in the Senate. The College faculty consists of all full-time faculty members holding academic appointments with the rank of instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor, whose primary duties are teaching. Each division is responsible for electing faculty that it, as a whole, deems appropriate to represent the division. Should a faculty member have duties and responsibilities other than teaching, the division must

determine whether it is appropriate or not for that faculty member to serve on the Faculty Senate. Additionally, members of the Faculty Senate are expected to perform all of their job responsibilities in an equitable and unbiased manner. Anyone who does not feel he/she can do this should recuse himself/herself from the nomination and election processes. Deans shall not be eligible for membership.

- B. **Representation:** Each academic division of the College is entitled to elect one (1) representative for each five (5) eligible faculty (or portion thereof) with a minimum of two (2) representatives per division. The number of eligible faculty is determined as of March 1 each year. Representatives will serve a two-year term. Members of the division will decide when the two-year term starts for each elected member so there is a staggering of representatives. If a vacancy occurs, the division elects a representative to fill the unexpired term. This election is held at the earliest possible time and may be conducted through e-mail. The current division representatives conduct the election.
- C. **Terms of Office:** The term of office for an elected member of the Senate will be two (2) years. Terms will be staggered per office so there is not a full rotation of new officers or representatives at one time and begin on July 1 and continue through June 30, two years hence.

## **Section 2: Responsibilities of Elected Senate Representatives and Recall**

### **A. Responsibilities**

- i. It is the responsibility of each Senator to attend all meetings of the Senate. If an elected member cannot regularly attend Senate meetings, the member will be subject to recall at the discretion of their division.
  - ii. Senators serve as liaisons between their divisions and the Senate in disseminating information and soliciting responses.
  - iii. Senators may request divisional meetings if necessary for the dissemination of information and the discussion of ideas.
  - iv. Senators are expected to serve in a professional and ethical manner. In the event of unprofessional or unethical conduct, the Faculty Senate may request that the respective division faculty take appropriate action to mitigate the behavior up to and including the recall of the Senator. This recall would require a two-thirds vote of the faculty in that division.
- B. **Recall:** A Senator may be recalled by his/her division or area with twenty-five (25%) percent of the faculty members of that division/area signing a petition for a recall vote, which is then filed with the Secretary of the Senate. The Senator is officially recalled if two-thirds of the faculty in that division vote to recall. Upon a successful recall vote, the division would elect a replacement Senator to serve for the remainder of the term.

## **Section 3: Elections and Academic Obligations**

- A. **Elections:** Elections for divisional Senators are held in the spring semester of each academic year. Divisional elections are conducted by the current divisional Senate representatives in a manner agreed upon by the division. Voting may be by e-mail, voice

vote, or show of hands unless the majority of those present desire a secret ballot or a roll call. A candidate duly nominated according to the by-laws of the Faculty Senate and accepting of the nomination and facing no opposition is declared elected without opposition. All full-time faculty members may vote for divisional Senate representatives. Senators-Elect meet with the outgoing Senate at the April meeting to prepare for the following academic year. Senators will not be appointed to their position by divisional deans or other academic officers under any circumstances. In the event that a division does not elect the number of Senators allotted in Article IV Section 1B during the annual divisional elections, the division must wait until the next election cycle to fill those positions.

- B. **Academic Obligations:** The appropriate division dean or the Chief Academic Officer will work with divisional nominee(s) to enable representatives or officers to attend Senate meetings while honoring their teaching obligations.

#### **Section 4: Individual Campus Representatives**

- A. **Representation:** Sevier County, Greene County, and Claiborne County Campuses are each entitled to elect one Senate representative at-large.
- B. **Elections:** Individual campus Senate elections are held in the spring semester of each academic year. Elections are conducted in a manner agreed upon by full-time faculty housed on the site campus. Voting may be by e-mail, voice vote, or show of hands unless the majority of those present desire a secret ballot or roll call. A candidate duly nominated according to the by-laws of the Faculty Senate and accepting of the nomination and facing no opposition is declared elected without opposition. Individual campus Senators will not be appointed to their position by site-campus deans or other administrative officers under any circumstances.

#### **Section 5: Adjunct Faculty Representation**

- A. Adjunct faculty are entitled to three (3) seats on the Faculty Senate with no two from the same academic division. During the college's fall adjunct in-service meeting, information is distributed to all adjunct faculty regarding Senate representation. Interested adjunct faculty are encouraged to contact the Senate and/or a designated Senate representative. In order to represent the adjunct faculty and exercise a vote in Faculty Senate business, the adjunct must be teaching in the current major semester (fall or spring). One or two adjunct representatives are elected on alternate years. Each representative serves two years or until a successor is elected. Vacancies will be filled by election at the earliest possible Senate meeting.
- B. The Senate elects adjunct faculty representatives at the earliest possible Senate meeting during fall semester. The Senate contacts the nominee(s) before the election to determine willingness to serve.

### **ARTICLE V – MEETINGS**

### **Section 1: Regular Meetings of the Faculty Senate**

- A. The Faculty Senate meets at regular times at least once each month, or at least three (3) times during each academic-year semester, and as needed during the summer. The Secretary of the Senate notifies Senate Representatives at least one week before the first fall semester meeting noting time and location of the meeting. At the first fall semester meeting, the Senate will establish a monthly meeting date for the academic year (subject to revision) that will be adhered to without the requirement of notification.

### **Section 2: Special Meetings of the Faculty Senate**

- A. The Faculty President may call a special meeting of Faculty Senate.
- B. Ten (10) or more full-time faculty members, by petition, may initiate a special meeting of Faculty Senate.
- C. The President of the College or the Chief Academic Officer may call a special meeting of Faculty Senate.

### **Section 3: Rules for Special Meetings**

- A. The Secretary of the Senate notifies Senate Representatives of a special meeting at least six (6) days before the meeting. For called emergency meeting, the President may waive the notification requirement.
- B. Items may not be added to an agenda for a special meeting after the agendas are distributed.

## **ARTICLE VI – TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS**

### **Section 1: Quorum**

For the transaction of business, a quorum consists of a simple majority of Faculty Senate representatives.

### **Section 2: Definition of Majority**

- A. A simple majority is more than half the representatives present and voting and represents the Senate Representatives as a whole.
- B. A simple majority vote is required to transact all standard business and to elect all officers and representatives of the Faculty Senate. Some motions require a three-fourths majority to pass, especially any non-editorial amendments to the Constitution, any effort to relieve an officer of their duties, or a special vote of confidence, no confidence, or censure.

### **Section 3: Voting**

- A. Voting may be by voice vote or show of hands. A roll call vote may be taken; doing so requires one-quarter of the members present to agree to such. A secret ballot vote may be taken; doing so requires three-quarters of the members present to agree to such.
- B. Votes of confidence, no confidence, or censure can be considered during a regularly scheduled or special-called meeting of the Faculty Senate. Prior to a vote, an elected representative or the Senate President should present reasoning and/or proof to support the vote. A vote of confidence, no confidence, or censure cannot be tallied by a voice vote. The vote should be tallied by roll call or secret ballot.

#### **Section 4: Procedure**

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, most current edition, serves as the parliamentary authority of Faculty Senate on all questions not covered by the Constitution and for any standing rules the Senate may adopt.

### **ARTICLE VII – OFFICERS**

#### **Section 1: Eligibility**

- A. Officers of Faculty Senate include the President of the Faculty Senate, Vice President of the Faculty Senate, Secretary of the Faculty Senate, Treasurer of the Faculty Senate, Parliamentarian of the Faculty Senate, and TBR Faculty Sub-Council Representative. They constitute the Executive Committee of the Senate.
- B. Any member of the full-time faculty is eligible for the offices of the President of the Faculty or Vice President of the Faculty. However, the President and the Vice President may not represent the same division. Should this situation arise, the individual elected President will assume that office. The office of Vice President will be filled by the individual with the next highest number of votes that is not from the same division as the newly elected President.
- C. All officers must be elected divisional Senators.
- D. All officers must have served at least one (1) year on Faculty Senate prior to being elected.
- E. No officer may hold more than one office at a time with the exception of the TBR Sub Council Representative. In the event one person is elected to multiple offices, said individual will assume the office of his/her choice. The other position(s) will be filled by the individual receiving the second highest number of votes for that office. This shall in no way negate the policies set forth in Article VII Section 1B.
- F. All officers serve a two-year term beginning July 1. In the event that an officer position becomes vacant, the Faculty Senate will nominate and elect a replacement to serve the remainder of the term. This shall in no way negate the policies set forth in Article VII Section 1B.)
- G. All officers are voting members of the Faculty Senate.

#### **Section 2: Duties**

- A. The President of the Faculty is elected by the full-time faculty. He/she serves as the representative and spokesperson for the faculty; communicates collective faculty concerns to the administration; represents the Faculty Senate on the college's Academic Affairs committee [WSSC-PPM 11:01:00], the college's Executive Council [WSSC-PPM 11:17:00], and the Faculty Development Committee [WSSC-PPM 11:19:00] (or sends a designee); meets regularly, including at least one other member of the Executive Committee of the Senate, with the President and the Chief Academic Officer of the college; serves as chief executive officer of Faculty Senate and as an ex-officio, non-voting member of all Faculty Senate committees except the Nominating Committee; commits the Faculty Senate to courses of action only through the approval of Faculty Senate; receives a one-course teaching load reduction per semester or the receipt of a stipend (\$1,000 per year as of Spring 2021) to carry out Senate business; and presides over Faculty Senate.
- B. The Vice President of the Faculty is elected by the full-time faculty. He/she substitutes for the President when necessary or requested; performs other duties as requested by the President; chairs the Policy Review Committee; also represents Faculty Senate on the Executive Council; and advances to office of President if it becomes vacant.
- C. The Secretary of the Senate is elected by the full-time faculty. He/she records and prepares minutes of all Faculty Senate meetings for distribution to members; handles correspondence as necessary; maintains a permanent record of all Faculty Senate minutes; houses Faculty Senate designated official records in d2L (eLearn); performs other duties as requested by the President; and serves as chair of the Nominating Committee.
- D. The Treasurer of the Senate is elected by the full-time faculty. He/she oversees Faculty Senate financial affairs; collects and disburses funds as directed by the Faculty Senate; provides a financial report to the Senate at each monthly meeting; and performs other duties as requested by the President.
- E. The Parliamentarian is appointed by the Faculty Senate. He/she advises the Faculty Senate so as to ensure that all business transacted by the Senate conforms to this constitution and to the parliamentary authority accepted by Faculty Senate; serves as advisor to the President on parliamentary matters; and chairs the Rules Committee.
- F. The TBR Faculty Sub-Council Representative is elected by the Faculty Senate and serves as the Faculty Senate's official representative to the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) Faculty Sub-Council; records and prepares minutes of TBR Faculty Sub-Council meetings for distribution to Faculty Senate members and faculty at large; maintains a permanent record of all TBR Faculty Sub-Council minutes; and serves a three-year term or until a successor is appointed. If the Sub-Council representative is unable to attend Sub-council, the President will attend on his/her behalf, or appoint another Senator to be the designated attendee.

### **Section 3: Election of Officers**

- A. The President appoints a Nominating Committee at the first spring semester meeting to be chaired by the Secretary of the Senate.

- B. Each nominee must be notified of any nominations and meeting times of the Senate and must accept the nomination before the ballot opens.
- C. The chair of the Nominating Committee (the Secretary of the Senate) will email a ballot to all full-time faculty during the first week of April. The ballot will consist of a listing of nominees for each elective office. Write-in candidates will be allowed. The election will be open electronically for one (1) week (seven (7) days). The Nominating Committee will count the votes the next working day. The election of each officer is determined by simple majority vote. A tie will be broken by a majority vote in a special electronic ballot open to all full-time faculty for 48 hours. In the event that a candidate withdraws their name from a ballot while the election is ongoing, a re-vote of the affected offices will be necessary. The re-vote will be open for five days after the close of the original ballot. In the event that a candidate chooses to not accept a winning nomination, the candidate with the next highest number of votes will take office. The chair of the Nominating Committee will send an email to the President of the Faculty Senate and the nominees with the election results, followed by an email to all faculty with the results.

#### **Section 4: Removal of Officers**

- A. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Senate membership removes an officer from service.
- B. Negligence of duties as outlined in the Constitution is a valid reason to remove an officer.

### **ARTICLE VIII – COMMITTEES**

#### **Section 1: Establishment of Committees**

- A. The Faculty Senate has the power to establish committees to study and report on matters of concern to the faculty. Committees appointed by Faculty Senate become committees of the Faculty Senate, receive their authority from the Faculty Senate, and report their findings and make recommendations to the Faculty Senate. Actions taken are those of the committee as a whole representing a majority vote. Minority reports and recommendations may be submitted to the Faculty Senate if desired by dissenting committee members. A majority of committee members constitutes a quorum for transacting all business of the committee.
- B. The President appointed committees if the need arises. Each committee should have three or more members. A balance of academic division representation should be considered in making appointments. The President may allow a committee to form on a volunteer or partial volunteer basis, but with balanced representation as a consideration. Every Committee shall include at least one Senator in its membership. Committee members who are not Senators have full privileges for debating and voting within the committee but may not debate or vote on motions that result from committee reports to the Senate, except that the presiding officer or the committee chair may invite comments or explanations from any committee member during Senate debate, and as otherwise

provided in this Constitution. The membership of committees appointed must be approved by the Senate.

## **Section 2: Standing Committees**

Faculty Senate establishes or abolishes standing committees as necessary.

- A. The Constitution includes a roster of current standing committees.
- B. Establishing or deleting a standing committee does not require an amendment to the Constitution.
- C. At the first meeting of the fall semester, the President appoints members and chairpersons of Senate Standing Committees, as well as necessary appointments to External Committees.
- D. Standing Senate Committees established:
  - i. Faculty Senate Student Scholarship Committee – chair: ad hoc
  - ii. Nominating Committee – chair: Senate Secretary
  - iii. Policy Review Committee – chair: Senate Vice President, a representative from each division
  - iv. Rules Committee – chair: Senate Parliamentarian
- E. External Committee appointments made by the Senate:
  - i. Chair of Campus Peer Evaluation Committee [WSSC-PPM 11:09:00], three-year appointment
  - ii. Chair of Promotion and Tenure Committee [WSSC-PPM 11:09:00], three-year appointment
  - iii. Representative to serve as one of the Faculty Sunk Leave Bank trustees, [practice; WSSC-PPM 06:10:11]

## **Section 3: Ad Hoc Committees**

- A. The Faculty Senate may establish temporary committees for special purposes.
- B. These ad hoc committees are formed following the same guidelines as those for standing committees.

## **ARTICLE IX – PROCEDURE FOR CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

### **Section 1: Amendment Procedure**

Amendments to the Faculty Senate Constitution are made under the following provisions carried out in sequence.

- A. Initiation of Proposed Amendments  
Initiation of proposed amendments requires a majority vote of the membership at a meeting of the Faculty Senate.
- B. Procedure for Proposed Amendments

- i. Amendments are submitted to the Faculty Senate at a regular meeting.
  - ii. Action of proposed amendments is delayed until at least the next regular meeting of the Faculty Senate.
- C. Adoption of Proposed Amendments
- i. Three-fourths of the Faculty Senate present and voting must approve the amendment.
  - ii. The amendment goes into effect immediately unless otherwise stipulated by the amendment itself.

## **Section 2: Changes not Requiring an Amendment**

- A. Changes of an editorial nature do not require an amendment to the Faculty Senate Constitution. Editorial changes do not change the substance of the constitution.
- B. Editorial changes must be presented to the Senate (as an item on the agenda) at a regular Senate meeting. Action on editorial changes will be delayed until the next regular Senate meeting after presentation.
- C. Editorial changes require only a simple majority of those present to approve the changes.
- D. Editorial changes take effect immediately upon approval of the Senate.