TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

BYLAWS

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Proposed Revisions for 2004
  pp. 1, 2, 3, 4, 20, 21, 22
Chapter I. Officers of the Senate

A. The elected officers of the Faculty Senate shall be Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Speaker-Elect, and Secretary-Treasurer, each elected annually from the Senate membership.

1. In addition to the duties specified in the Constitution, the Speaker shall represent the Senate at official functions. The Speaker shall also present an annual budget report to the Senate.

2. The Deputy Speaker Speaker-Elect shall act in the absence of the Speaker. This officer shall also be a member of the Executive Committee.

3. The Secretary-Treasurer shall provide for minutes of meetings of the Senate and of the Executive Committee. This officer shall administer the financial matters of the Senate. This officer shall also be a member of the Executive Committee.

4. In the absence of the Secretary-Treasurer the Speaker shall designate a substitute. This individual should have previous experience with the duties of the office if possible.

B. The officers shall be elected as follows: Procedures for Electing Senate Officers

1. The Speaker of the Senate for the next Session will be the individual serving as Speaker-Elect in the current Senate Session. The Speaker of the Senate may serve in this office even if the term as Faculty Senator expired during service as Speaker-Elect. If the Speaker-Elect cannot or will not serve as Speaker for the next Senate Session, an election for Speaker for the next Senate Session will be held.

1.A. For the 22nd Session of the Faculty Senate, elections will be held for both Speaker and Speaker-Elect. This paragraph of the Bylaws, Chapter 1B1A, shall be deleted immediately after that election.

2. Nominations for officers Speaker-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer shall be submitted by Senators to the Election Committee no later than May.

3. Nominations from the floor are in order if and only if no nominations are submitted by May 1. Nominations from the floor require prior consent of the nominees.

4. A biographical sketch and brief statement, from each consenting candidate, shall be submitted to the Election Committee which shall distribute them to the Senators.

5. The order of election shall be Speaker, Deputy Speaker Speaker-Elect, followed by Secretary-Treasurer, and Executive Committee.

6. Unsuccessful candidates for Speaker shall be considered as nominees for Deputy Speaker unless they withdraw.
6. Unsuccessful candidates for Speaker or Deputy Speaker Speaker-Elect or Secretary-Treasurer shall be considered nominees for members-at-large of the Executive Committee unless they withdraw.

7. At a regularly scheduled meeting in May, each Senator may vote for one candidate only for each office.

8. Candidates receiving a majority vote from those Senators present and voting shall be elected to the office.

9. If no candidate receives a majority vote, the top two candidates shall be placed in a runoff. When a tie exists for the runoff positions, the tie shall be promptly determined by lot.

C. Appointed Officers

1. The Speaker shall annually appoint a Parliamentarian and a Deputy Parliamentarian who need not necessarily be Senators.

2. The Speaker shall annually appoint a Sergeant-at-Arms from members of the Senate.

Chapter II. Committees of the Senate

A. Standing Committees

1. The standing committees of the Senate shall be the Executive Committee, the Election Committee, the Bylaws Committee, the Committee on Committees, the Academic Affairs Committee, the Budget Information Committee, the Personnel and Welfare Committee, the Planning Committee, and the Research Committee.

2. Except as otherwise provided by these Bylaws, the size of standing committees shall be determined by the Senate.

3. Except as otherwise provided in the Constitution, voting members of the Senate standing committees shall also be members of the Senate. Ex Officio non-voting members who are not members of the Senate may be appointed to any standing committee.

4. Except as otherwise provided, each standing committee shall elect its own chairperson.

5. Each standing committee may form subcommittees. The chairpersons of subcommittees shall be appointed by the standing committee from among its members. Membership of subcommittees may also include persons not members of the Senate.

6. Members of all Senate standing committees shall be elected or appointed annually.
7. Outgoing chairs of all standing committees, including the Speaker on the Executive Committee, unless the outgoing chair is serving as a regular committee member, shall remain as Ex Officio non-voting members of the respective committees for a period of one year to promote continuity of purpose.

B. The Executive Committee

1. Organization and Functions

a. The Executive Committee shall have eight members, consisting of the Deputy Speaker, Speaker-Elect, the Secretary-Treasurer, and six elected members-at-large. The Speaker shall chair this committee. The Speaker shall vote only in case of ties.

b. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate shall advise the Speaker of the Senate, assist in the administration and planning of Senate meetings, be responsible for the budget, implement the decisions and programs of the Senate, and act as directed by the Senate. The Executive Committee shall have the power to act for the Senate in case of an emergency. All such actions shall be reported to the Senate at its next meeting.

c. The quorum of the Executive Committee shall be five.

2. Election Procedures

a. Nominations for members-at-large shall be submitted by Senators to the Election Committee no later than May 1.

b. Nominations from the floor are in order if and only if an insufficient number of nominations are submitted by May 1. Nominations from the floor require prior consent of the nominees.

c. A biographical sketch and brief statement, from each consenting candidate, shall be submitted to the Election Committee which shall distribute them to the Senators.

d. At a regularly stated meeting in May, each Senator shall vote for not more than six candidates following the election of Speaker-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer.

e. The six candidates receiving the largest majorities from those Senators present and voting shall be elected to the committee. In the case of ties among candidates receiving majority vote, the winner(s) shall be promptly determined by lot, at the meeting at which the votes are canvassed. The following guidelines apply:

   (1) As required by the Constitution, no electoral unit (hereafter unit) may have more than two members on the Executive Committee.
(2) For units with more than two nominees, only the two receiving the highest majority votes are eligible to be elected.

(3) If the Deputy Speaker-Speaker-Elect and the Secretary-Treasurer have been elected from the same unit, that unit shall have no other members on the Executive Committee.

(4) Those units from which either the Deputy Speaker-Speaker-Elect or the Secretary-Treasurer have been elected may have only one other member elected at-large.

f. If there are unfilled seats, the number of unfilled committee seats shall be multiplied by two and that number of candidates shall be placed in a runoff. When ties exist for the final run-off position(s), the candidate(s) shall be promptly determined by lot.

g. Senators shall then vote for no more than the number of unfilled seats, with those candidates receiving a majority vote being elected, subject to the guidelines in paragraph e.

h. If seats on the committee remain unfilled, the process outlined in paragraphs e. and f. above shall be repeated.

i. If the result of a runoff is a deadlock, i.e., no one is elected nor eliminated, the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated. An ensuing runoff shall occur.

C. The Election Committee

1. The Election Committee shall consist of one Senator from each unit. The Senators from each unit shall nominate one or more candidates. Within the full Senate, each Senator may vote for no more than one nominee for each unit. The unit nominee receiving a plurality wins. In case of ties, the decision shall be promptly determined by lot. In the event of a vacancy during the academic year, the Faculty Senate caucus of the unit lacking representation shall nominate, and the Executive Committee shall ratify, a senator as a replacement to fill the unexpired term.

2. The Election Committee shall conduct elections of the Senate, of Senate officers, and of Senate committees, consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws. The Election Committee shall develop election procedures consistent with the Constitution and other bylaws for the consideration of the Senate. These procedures shall provide for a secret ballot except when the number of nominees for Senate officers or committees is equal to the number of positions to be filled. When the number of nominees is equal to the number of positions to be filled, the nominees may be elected by voice vote.

D. The Bylaws Committee
3. A specific form for nominations shall be used. These forms shall be made available from the Office of the Faculty Senate.

4. Senatorial nominees may file for any place in the electoral unit. This right cannot be abrogated by any agreement or directive, formal or informal. Nominees may change the place for which they have filed, upon written request. The request must be made before the close of the nomination period.

5. For the regular Spring elections, the nomination period for election of Senators shall be a two week period ending two weeks before absentee voting begins. For special Senate elections, the nomination period shall be a two week period ending one week before absentee voting begins.

6. Members of the Faculty Senate Election Committee shall be in charge of final approval of nominations within their respective electoral units, subject to an appeal to the full committee.

7. A faculty member may not run for a Senate seat unless the term can be completed under current term limitations:

F. Write-In Candidates

Subject to meeting eligibility requirements for Senate membership, write-in candidates shall be eligible for election.

G. Elections

All senatorial elections shall follow Part II.D. of the Constitution.

1. Members of the Election Committee shall conduct senatorial elections in their respective electoral units using the secret ballot. If an Election Committee member is a candidate for re-election, another Senator will be appointed by the Election Committee to conduct the election in the committee member’s electoral unit. The election must be monitored by the appointed Senator, but it is not necessary for him or her to be present for the entire polling period. If another person is given responsibility to manage the actual election, the appointed Senator shall be responsible for assuring adequate training and control to avoid ballotting irregularities.

2. Ballots shall list the nominees for each vacant position in order, by the date in which they file, and shall make provision for write-in candidates for each place.

3. Absentee voting shall take place from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday; the week prior to the regular election day.

24. Absentee ballots may be cast by mail, fax, e-mail, or web for a period of one week (five working days) prior to the scheduled Senate election day: two weeks as set by the election committee. All absentee ballots shall be returned to the Office of the Faculty
Absentee ballots may also be cast at the Office of the Faculty Senate during this same pre-
election period.

35. **Elections of Senators shall be scheduled during the period of the last two weeks of**
**March and first week of April.** Regular elections of Senators will take place within the
first two weeks of April every year. The date for the election will be set by the Election
Committee and reported to the Senate no later than the February Senate meeting. On the
day of voting the polls shall be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

46. The regular election shall utilize an alternate vote procedure as described in G.7 and G.8.
Using this approach, all candidates shall be ranked with 1 equal to the first preference of
the voter, 2 equal to the next highest preference, and so on. A candidate who receives a
majority of first place votes for a senatorial place upon the first counting of the ballots is
declared the winner. If two candidates tie for first place upon first counting, and there
are no other candidates receiving votes, the winner shall be decided by lot.

57. If no candidate receives a majority of first place votes for a senatorial place upon first
counting of the ballots the alternate vote procedure for recounting the ballots shall be
used. The procedures to determine the two candidates for the second counting are as
follows:

a. If three or more candidates tie for first place upon first counting, two candidates to
compete in the second counting shall be chosen by lot.

b. If two or more candidates tie for second place upon first counting, one shall be
selected by lot to compete in the second counting.

c. If there are not ties as described above, the two candidates with the most first place
votes shall participate in the second counting.

68. If it becomes necessary to use the alternate vote procedure to determine the winner of a
senatorial place, the procedure for vote counting is as follows:

a. The two candidates participating in the second counting retain all of the votes they
received upon first counting.

b. The remaining ballots are distributed between the two candidates based upon the
highest rank received on each of the remaining ballots. If neither of these two
candidates is ranked on a ballot, that ballot is not counted.

c. If the second counting results in a tie, the winner is decided by lot.

79. Ballots will be counted **the evening of the general vote on the day following the close of**
balloting**,** by members of the Election Committee. Members of the press shall be invited
and other interested individuals may be present during the count. Election outcomes will
be publicly announced as soon as possible; election results will be available in the Office

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of the Faculty Senate. No election results will be released prior to the final day for counting the ballots.

H. Vacancies

1. Should a Senate seat become vacant before the next regularly scheduled election, the place shall be filled in accordance with Chapter VI.C.

2. Should a Senator anticipate being absent from the campus, or otherwise unable to perform his or her duties, for a period of three or more months, then:

   a. If the time from the anticipated date of return to the expiration of the term is fewer than three months, then the Senator shall resign and the seat shall be filled in accordance with Chapters VI.C.

   b. If the time remaining in the term after the anticipated date of return is three months or more, then a temporary replacement shall be appointed in accordance with VI.C. The Senator shall resume his or her seat upon returning.

   c. If an office or position on the Executive Committee becomes vacant, immediately upon notification of the vacancy occurring, a two-week nomination period shall be held, and at the next meeting of the Faculty Senate, an election shall be held to fill the vacancy.

In interpreting these provisions, "three months" shall be construed as "a period of time encompassing three regularly scheduled Senate meetings."

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

A. Elections

1. Ballots from the Faculty Senate elections shall be maintained in the Office of the Faculty Senate for a period of 91 days following the close of balloting, including the day of the election. At the end of this period, the ballots will be destroyed unless the election has been contested; if an election is contested within this period, the ballots shall be maintained in the Office of the Faculty Senate until the contest is resolved.

2. No Senator shall serve on the Election Committee who is eligible for re-election during the current year.

B. Voting During Senate Meetings.

For roll call votes, at the end of the voting the Speaker shall ask if any Senator wishes to change his/her vote. After all vote changes have been duly recorded, the Speaker shall announce the vote.