

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF THE FACULTY ASSEMBLY OF SAINT AUGUSTINE'S UNIVERSITY

Preamble

The faculty of Saint Augustine's University assumes a major share of responsibility for the continued development and maintenance of the academic and extracurricular programs of the University. It is understood that shared governance is vital to the well-being of the University. This constitution is guided by the standards put forth by The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commission on Colleges, the expectations of the Board of Trustees articulated through the University's Bylaws and the greater Saint Augustine's University community.

ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 1: Name

The name of the body for faculty participation in shared governance at Saint Augustine's University will be the "Faculty Assembly of Saint Augustine's University" hereinafter referred to as the "Faculty Assembly."

Section 2: Purpose

The role of the Faculty Assembly is to represent the faculty position on appropriate matters which may include the formulation, implementation, review, and application of policies, procedures and regulations governing Saint Augustine's University--including the areas of academic policy and budgeting, workload, academic calendar, curricular structure, and delivery of instruction. Furthermore, the Faculty Assembly will work diligently to ensure reciprocal and open exchange between the President, The President's Cabinet (or similar administrative body), the Board of Trustees, and the overall University community.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Eligibility for Members

- a. All full-time faculty members of the University faculty, including deans and chairs, are voting members of the Faculty Assembly. Full-time faculty are those as defined in Chapter 3, Section 4 (Teaching Loads) of the *Faculty Handbook*.
- b. Part-time faculty and adjunct faculty may attend Faculty Assembly meetings and have the privilege of the floor but are not voting members.
- c. The ex-officio members of the Faculty Assembly will be the President and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. Ex-officio members cannot vote on Faculty Assembly matters but may have the privilege of the floor.

Section 2: Responsibilities and Privileges

- a. All full-time faculty members are expected to attend each regular meeting of the full Faculty Assembly.
- b. All full-time faculty are expected to serve on at least two committees: a Faculty Assembly committee and a University committee. Faculty members may elect to serve on two assembly committees in place of an assignment to a University committee and conversely.
- c. The privilege of voting on Assembly matters, committees, and the election of officers is reserved to full-time faculty members.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS

Section 1: Officers and Qualifications for Officers

Officers of the Faculty Assembly will be the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary and Parliamentarian.

- a. The Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary, and Parliamentarian shall hold the rank of assistant, associate, or full professor with three full years of experience in higher education, two full years of which must be at Saint Augustine's University at the time of taking office. Faculty are not eligible to serve as Moderator or Vice Moderator while they serve as deans or chairs.
- b. The secretary shall have the requisite skills to facilitate the needs of the Faculty Assembly as described in Section 5.3.
- c. The Parliamentarian shall have a familiarity with *Robert's Rules of Order* and the pertinent tenets of this document.

Section 2: Election of Officers

The Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary, and Parliamentarian are elected by faculty members eligible to vote. A pool of qualified candidates will be created for the office of moderator and vice moderator; the office of secretary and parliamentarian have no specific qualifications except those referred to in Article V Sections 5b and 5c. The pool will be surveyed to determine those willing to serve as moderator or vice moderator. The remaining faculty will be surveyed to facilitate the office of secretary and parliamentarian. An appropriate voting procedure, either by secret ballot or electronic tool, will be determined by the members. Each name for a particular office will be submitted to the faculty for a vote; the person receiving the highest number of votes will secure the respective office.

Section 3: Terms of Office

The moderator, vice moderator, secretary, and parliamentarian each will serve a two-year term and may be re-elected for one additional term to the same office. After an individual serves two terms in the same office, they shall no longer be able to serve in that position; however, they may serve in another office.

Section 4: Removal from Office

- a. An officer may be removed from office for dereliction of duty or misconduct, as outlined by *Robert's Rules of Order* or within this document, by a two-thirds majority vote of the Faculty Assembly members present.
- b. Misconduct or a dereliction of duty includes an officer's violation of University policies and/or the Bylaws of the Assembly
- c. This action must be preceded by a written request accompanied by appropriate documentation to the Assembly at least 10 business days prior to any action being taken.

Section 5: Vacancies

The vice moderator will assume the duties of the moderator in the event of a vacancy in that position during the term of office of the moderator. A new vice moderator will be elected at the next regular meeting following the announcement of such a vacancy. In the event any other officer resigns or is removed from office, the Faculty Assembly may elect a replacement to serve the remainder of the term. This action shall not impact any future term limit of the replacement faculty member.

Section 6: Released Time for Officers

It is recommended that the University provide six hours release time from academic duties for the Faculty Assembly moderator, and three hours release time for the vice moderator and secretary.

ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1: Members

The Executive Committee will consist of all the officers: moderator, vice moderator, secretary, and parliamentarian. Previous officers may serve as ad hoc non-voting members of the Executive Committee.

Section 2: Quorum

Three members of the Executive Committee will comprise a quorum for conducting business of the committee.

Section 3: Meetings

The Executive Committee will meet at least once every month during the academic year. A special meeting may be called if issues arise that dictate such.

Section 4: Responsibilities

- a. It is recommended that the moderator or vice moderator represent the Faculty Assembly in meetings of the President's Extended Cabinet meetings.
- b. The Executive Committee will report on any actions taken by the Executive Committee at the next full meeting of the Faculty Assembly.
- c. The Executive Committee will receive and review all Faculty Assembly committee reports and take necessary actions accordingly.

ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1: Moderator

- a. The moderator will preside over meetings of the Faculty Assembly and the Executive Committee.
- b. The provost/vice president for Academic Affairs in consultation with the moderator and Executive Committee will appoint members of all standing University committees and consult on committees of the Faculty Assembly.
- c. The moderator will prepare an annual budget to request the funding for Faculty Assembly operations and submit this request to the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs and the president.
- d. The moderator in consultation with the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs is responsible for preparing the agenda for meetings of the full Faculty Assembly.
- e. The moderator is expected to meet with the president and the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs on a regular basis to discuss matters pertaining to the faculty and academics.

- f. In the spring of each year, the moderator and the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs will prepare information on changes for the *Faculty Handbook* and share those for review and/or action with the faculty. The moderator and the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs then ensure that any changes made during that academic year are incorporated into the next year's *Handbook*. The provost/vice president for Academic Affairs will ensure that the new *Handbook* is available online (and by hard copy if requested) each May.
- g. Other responsibilities of the moderator or an appointed representative include attending meetings of appropriate committees as determined by the president, the provost/Vice president for Academic Affairs, the Board of Trustees and other senior University officials.

Section 2: Vice Moderator

- a. The vice moderator will preside over meetings of the Faculty Assembly and the Executive Committee in the absence of the Moderator.
- b. The vice moderator will serve as the Faculty Assembly's representative in the absence of the moderator for other official functions.
- c. The vice moderator attends meetings of the president's Extended Cabinet and assists the moderator in setting agendas and in ensuring that all minutes of committees and the Assembly are collected and catalogued.

Section 3: Secretary

- a. The secretary will keep and prepare all minutes of meetings of the full Faculty Assembly and the Executive Committee.
- b. The secretary will send the agenda of each Executive Committee meeting and meetings of the full Faculty Assembly to all faculty members electronically prior to the meeting.
- c. The secretary will send, via appropriate electronic means, the minutes of meetings to the appropriate parties.
- d. The secretary will provide all members of the University faculty and all ex-officio members of the Faculty Assembly with timely written notice of all meetings of the full Faculty Assembly.
- e. In the absence of both the moderator and vice moderator, the secretary will preside over meetings of the full Faculty Assembly.

Section 4: Parliamentarian

The parliamentarian will guide the proceedings of the Faculty Assembly in accordance with the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* and the current version of the Faculty Assembly Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY

Section 1: Interval of Meetings

- a. The Faculty Assembly shall conduct regular meetings at least once a semester. A regular meeting is defined as a meeting called with at least five (5) weeks' notice prior to the meeting.
- b. In the event a call meeting of assembly is deemed necessary by the moderator or Executive Committee, appropriate notice must be provided to the faculty preferably at least one (1) week prior to the meeting.
- c. In consultation with the moderator and Executive Committee, the University president, the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs, other University administrators, or chairman of the Board of Trustees may request a special meeting of the Faculty Assembly.
- d. The president shall be invited to attend the first meeting of each academic year.
- e. University administrators may attend Faculty Assembly meetings at the invitation of the moderator or the Faculty Assembly. If so invited, they have the privilege of the floor, but no vote.
- f. The faculty may request the Executive Committee to convene a special meeting excluding deans, chairs, and administrators.

Section 2: Quorum

A quorum must be present for a Faculty Assembly meeting to proceed. A quorum is defined as one third of all current full-time faculty at the University.

Section 3: Agenda

Faculty Assembly agendas are set by the moderator in consultation with the Vice president for Academic Affairs and the Executive Committee. Any faculty member, administrator or member of the Board of Trustees may submit agenda items in consultation with the moderator.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

Section 1: Standing Faculty Assembly Committees

The Faculty Assembly committees are the working agencies of the faculty. The committees may work independently or in collaboration with other committees where appropriate. The name and duties of the Faculty Assembly standing committees are as follows:

- a. Academic Policies and Procedures Committee initiates or reviews and recommends appropriate modifications in specific areas of university documents, policies and the Faculty Handbook that relate to academic affairs, faculty role and responsibilities, academic freedom, procedures for faculty appointments, and tenure tract appointments. The Academic Policies Review Committee shall be charged with the review of all curriculum changes/actions generated through the University Curriculum Council prior to approval. All action items to be approved by the University Curriculum Council should be forwarded to the Academic Policies and Procedures Committee for review and comment after which the Committee will forward its findings to the full Faculty Assembly.
- b. Academic Assessment Committee is comprised of all Program Coordinators and the Academic Assessment Coordinator. The Academic Assessment Committee receives guidance related to assessment, reporting, and student success in their academic programs.
- c. The Curriculum Council evaluates curriculum and instruction on campus through its review of current instructional programs and consideration of new instructional programs.
- d. The General Education Committee assists in the development, revision, and evaluation of University regulations with regard to the General Education core for all undergraduate curricula.
- e. The Faculty Grievance/Welfare Committee shall accept and review written requests from faculty members relative to grievances, conduct an inquiry regarding the issue, and advise the faculty member of an appropriate process for resolution. The Committee shall also represent the general welfare of the faculty regarding compensation (salary, grant proceeds, etc.) and benefits, intellectual property rights, and contractually related monetary mandates.
- f. Institutional Review Board (IRB) The IRB is charged with the responsibility of reviewing, prior to its initiation, all research (whether funded or not) involving human participants. The IRB is concerned with protecting the welfare, rights, and privacy of human subjects. The IRB has the authority to approve, exempt, disapprove, monitor, and require modifications in all research activities that fall

within its jurisdiction as specified by both the federal regulations and institutional policy.

- g. The Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure shall review and recommend appropriate modifications in specific areas of University documents, policies and the *Faculty Handbook* that relate to academic freedom, procedures for faculty appointments, and tenure track appointments. Additionally, the committee shall consider the protection of academic freedom and tenure as a principal obligation.
- h. Library Advisory Committee. The Library Advisory Committee has responsibility for supporting the University librarian in seeing to it that the library resources and services are supporting the curricular, instructional, informational, and research needs of the academic community.

Section 2: Membership on Assembly Committees

Members of Committees. A minimum of three persons is appointed by the moderator in consultation with the Executive Committee, the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs, and the respective chair/dean. Upon determination of appointment, the faculty member will be notified to confirm acceptance. Appointments should include best efforts to have representation from each school if needed.

Section 3: Committee Membership Exception

In certain circumstances, the moderator in consultation with the Executive Committee and provost/vice president for Academic Affairs may appoint an adjunct/part-time faculty member with a specific expertise to an Assembly or University committee.

Section 4: Chairs of Committees

The members appointed to each standing committee will elect a chair and a secretary.

Section 5: Committee Meetings

Each committee is expected to meet once a month during the academic year and may meet more often if necessary.

Section 6: Committee Voting

Each committee member will exercise a single vote.

Section 7: Attendance of General Faculty at Committee Meetings

Members of the University faculty may attend committee meetings unless the meetings have been designated officially closed to deal with sensitive matters.

Section 8: Ad Hoc Committees

The Faculty Assembly may establish *ad hoc* committees for special purposes. These committees are not limited to the faculty but may include members of the University

administration or staff persons with a special interest or expertise in the work of the committee.

Section 9: Agenda

The chair of each Faculty Assembly committee will provide the committee members, including those members who are *ex officio*, with an agenda five business days prior to the meeting.

Section 10: Reports of Committees

- a. The committee chair will ensure that members, including those members who are *ex officio*, are provided with minutes of the meeting within five business days following a meeting. Minutes of meetings of the Faculty Assembly are to be posted for the University community at large; sensitive issues excluded. A copy of all minutes should be sent to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- b. Each committee will summarize its deliberations and recommendations in regular reports to the full assembly, send an annual written report to the secretary of the Faculty Assembly, and make reports to appropriate University officials at least once every year. Reports may be submitted electronically.

ARTICLE VIII: ASSEMBLY GOVERNANCE PROCEDURES

Section 1: Elections and Appointments

All faculty are expected to serve on at least one Faculty Assembly committee and one institutional committee to fulfill their committee service obligation. Appointment to institutional committees is at the pleasure of the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs and the president in consultation with executive committee of the Faculty Assembly.

Election and appointment of faculty to assembly committees follows a two-step process:

- a. The provost/vice president for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the moderator, makes faculty appointments to standing institutional committees. Faculty members may elect to serve on two Assembly committees in place of an assignment to a University committee and conversely.
- b. The moderator, in consultation with the Executive Committee and the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs, makes appointments to Assembly committees.

Section 2: Notification of Appointment

Upon determination of appointment, the faculty member will be notified by the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs to confirm acceptance, after which the respective chair/dean will be notified.

Section 3: Timeline for Elections/Appointments

The calendar for faculty governance elections and selections will be determined by the Executive Committee and the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs.

Section 4: Initiating and Taking Action in Faculty Governance

- a. Administrators are encouraged to seek the advice of faculty governance groups (assembly, council, and committees), and in turn these faculty governance groups are encouraged to initiate communication with administrators in ways that are open, candid, and productive.
- b. Any faculty member, faculty group, and/or administrative office may initiate or request actions at the Faculty Assembly committee level. The initiative must be made in writing and received by the committee chair at least five working days before that committee's next meeting.
- c. The faculty committees, the University president, provost/vice president for Academic Affairs, and other vice presidents or deans may initiate or request actions at the levels of Academic Leadership Team and Faculty Assembly. The initiative must be made in writing and received by the moderator of the Faculty Assembly a minimum of five working days before that body's next meeting.

Section 5: Resolution of Requested Actions

In taking action, the faculty committees, the Academic Leadership Team, and the Faculty Assembly may do one of three things:

- a. Approve the matter and send it to a higher level;
- b. Return the initiative to its originator, requesting revision and re-submission; or
- c. Reject the matter.

Section 6: Appeals of Faculty Governance Actions

Appeals of faculty governance actions shall be addressed as follows:

- a. Actions of the Faculty Assembly cannot be appealed. Instead, the dissatisfied party can submit an initiative or file a new motion with the appropriate faculty committee.
- b. Appeals may be made either by individuals or by a faculty governance group, depending upon how the matter originally was initiated.
- c. To appeal a decision made by a Faculty Assembly committee, the Executive Committee and the chair of the respective committee must convene to hear the appeal.
- d. To appeal a decision made by a University committee, then the Faculty Assembly hears the appeal.

Section 7: The Appeal Process

This is the process of appeal:

- a. The appellant must state in writing the issue being appealed.
- b. The appellant must attach a copy of any relevant documents (both those that do and do not support the case), in particular:
 - The original request to the group;
 - Relevant minutes, memos, etc., of the group; and
 - Anything else relevant to the discussion.
- c. The appellant must submit the appeal to the appropriate body (see above) a minimum of five working days prior to that body's next meeting.
- d. The appellate body must review the matter and render a decision within 30 days of receiving the request, and must respond in writing to the appellant within five business days of the rendered decision.

Section 8: Amending the Faculty Handbook

The process for amending the *Faculty Handbook* can take place in these ways:

- a. A formal vote at Faculty Assembly meetings to approve changes to curriculum, internal policies, and other areas for which the faculty have specific oversight;
- b. Administrative changes that reflect larger University policies;
- c. As per Article V, section 1, letter f, the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs

and the moderator are responsible for reviewing all changes with the faculty in early spring of each year.

- d. Editorial/stylistic changes and updates made by the provost/vice president for Academic Affairs in consultation with the Faculty Assembly Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS/REVISIONS TO CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Section 1: Proposal of Amendments

Any full-time member of the University faculty may propose an amendment to the Constitution. The proposal must be submitted to the Executive Committee with a rationale for adoption. The Executive Committee will review and upon a majority vote will move the proposed amendment to the Assembly for discussion and possible adoption.

Section 2: Approval by the Faculty Assembly

- a. Proposed amendments to the Constitution and bylaws will be circulated to all faculty at least ten business days prior to the floor debate.
- b. Approval of an amendment will require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the faculty present.

Section 3: Approval Protocol

- a. All full-time members of the University faculty will be eligible to participate in voting for approval or disapproval of amendments to the Constitution/Bylaws.
- b. Voting will be done by secret ballot or appropriate electronic tool, monitored by the Executive Committee to ensure that only one vote is cast by each eligible faculty member. The schedule and procedure for voting will be reported to the faculty in advance for its approval.
- c. Faculty members will be given two calendar weeks (14 days) to review the amendments and submit their vote by the designated means.

ARTICLE X

The most current revised edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be the source of parliamentary authority for all Faculty Assembly meetings and those of auxiliary bodies.

Addendum to SAU Faculty Assembly Constitution and Bylaws – 2/15/2024

The following amendment was approved by the Faculty Assembly at its February 15, 2024 meeting and will be incorporated into the document at its next iteration.

Amend Article III Section 1a of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty Assembly of Saint Augustine's University to read: "The Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary, and Parliamentarian shall hold the rank of assistant, associate, or full professor with three full years of experience in higher education, two full years of which must be at Saint Augustine's University at the time of taking office. Faculty are not eligible to serve as Moderator or Vice Moderator while they serve as deans or chairs."