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Introduction

Utah State University operates according to a system of shared governance between faculty and administration. Faculty Senate - comprised of elected and ex-officio faculty, appointed administrators, and appointed student officers - occupies a central position in this system of shared governance. To quote from the Policy Manual (Section 402.2):

*The Senate shall have the power to act for and represent the faculty in all matters of educational policy, including requirements for admission, degrees, diplomas, and certificates, and in curricular matters involving relations between colleges, divisions, or departments.*

*The Senate shall also have the following powers: (1) receive and consider reports from any faculty committee, and from any council, department, division, administrative officer, library or college; and to take appropriate action; (2) to consider matters of professional interest and faculty welfare and to make recommendations to the president of the university and other administration officers; and (3) to propose to the president amendments or additions to these policies.*

Clearly, then, the Senate has as its main charge the development, review, and modification of educational policies; but other duties and responsibilities are specified, and in practice the Senate has assumed the right to consider any opportunity or problem facing the University or any of its units, and to formulate a Senate position or recommendation.
Faculty Senate 2022-2023

Faculty Senate is an important forum for discussion, dissemination of information, as well as the formation and modification of University policies. Its agendas have included changes in federal and state laws impacting higher education, discussion of major new initiatives at USU, changes in health care and other benefits, additions, modifications and eliminations of courses or degree programs, modifications to tenure, promotion and post-tenure review processes, course evaluations, distance education, and reports from many different councils and committees.

Included in this handbook are policies related to the faculty and the Faculty Senate, information on parliamentary procedure, a list of Faculty Senate members and a calendar of meetings.

We invite all Senators to participate in Senate activities with diligence and enthusiasm. The actions of Faculty Senate are far reaching and it is the responsibility of all members to ensure that proposed actions and policies are given due consideration and are executed efficiently. If the processes on occasion seem to grind too rapidly or too slowly, too coarse or too fine, know that the Senate’s overall accomplishments substantially benefit the University and those whom it serves.
Composition and Authority of the Faculty Policy 401

401.1 FACULTY MEMBERSHIP

Utah State University is an institution of higher education comprising multiple, geographically dispersed campuses, each of which employs faculty. The faculty consists of the president, the provost, academic deans, regional campus associate vice presidents, and other members of the tenured and tenure-eligible faculty, faculty with term appointments, faculty with special appointments, and emeritus faculty as defined herein. All appointed faculty, without regard to which campus they are assigned, are members of the Utah State University faculty.

Information regarding the Authority of the Faculty can be found in Policy 401.8

Composition and Authority of Faculty Senate Policy 402

402.2

The authority of the faculty is delegated to the Senate. The Senate legislates and sets policy for matters within the collective authority of the faculty. See policy 401.7. The Senate shall have the power to act for and represent the faculty in all matters of educational policy, including requirements for admission, degrees, diplomas, and certificates; and in curricular matters involving relations between colleges, schools, divisions, or departments.

The Senate shall also have the following powers: (1) to receive and consider reports from any faculty committee, and from any council, department, division, administrative officer, library, or college; and to take appropriate action; (2) to consider matters of professional interest and faculty welfare and to make recommendations to the president of the
university and other administrative officers; and (3) to propose to the president amendments or additions to these policies.

**FACULTY SENATE MEMBERSHIP**

Please refer to policy 402.3.1 for more information

Faculty Senate is composed of

- 60 appointed faculty members with voting rights
- President and Executive Vice President and Provost
- 8 presidential appointees
- Chairs of the following committees: Academic Freedom and Tenure (AFT), Budget and Faculty Welfare (BFW), Professional Responsibilities and Procedures (PRPC), Faculty Diversity, Development, and Equity (FDDE), Faculty Evaluation (FEC)
- 3 Students USUSA President, USUSA Academic Senate President, Graduate Student Representative

**FACULTY SENATE MEETINGS, ATTENDANCE AND VOTING RIGHTS**

Please refer to policy 402 for more information

- Faculty Senate meetings are scheduled once a month on the first Monday of the month at 3:00 pm from September through May unless otherwise specified by the Senate.
- A quorum of Faculty Senators must be present at each meeting to vote on agenda items.
- The Faculty Senate Executive Committee establishes the agenda for the Faculty Senate meeting two weeks prior to each Faculty Senate meeting.
- The agenda and additional materials will be distributed prior to the Faculty Senate meeting for Senators to review. Members of Faculty Senate are expected to review these materials and come to the Faculty Senate meeting prepared to ask questions, provide suggestions, and express concerns, as needed.
- Senate members are expected to attend all Faculty Senate meetings.
  - In cases of unavoidable absence, including sabbatical leave, professional development leave, assigned teaching, and unpaid leaves of absence, senators will arrange for an elected alternate senator to attend in their place (see policy 402.10.2). The alternate shall have full voting rights.
  - Senators must notify the Executive Secretary of the Senate in writing (email is acceptable) whenever alternates will replace them. If a senator fails twice to
make a documented effort to arrange for an alternate during an academic year, then the senator’s position will be considered vacant (see policy 402.3.4).

Committees of the Faculty Senate

SENATE COMMITTEE PURPOSE 402.11.1

The Senate appoints and discontinues standing and ad hoc committees as deemed necessary to carry out its duties. The Senate establishes advisory committees to study and make reports and recommendations to it on matters under faculty jurisdiction and to carry out the decisions of the Senate relating to its functions and responsibilities. Senate committees receive their authority from the Senate and shall report their work and make their recommendations to the Senate. No Senate committee may alter the reports or the recommendations of another Senate committee.

SENATE COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Please refer to policy 402.11.3 for more information

- Senate committees shall not act independently of the Senate.
- All statements and actions of Senate committees shall be approved by the Senate before they are official, except for routine actions of the Educational Policies Committee which shall be submitted to the Senate as information items (see policy 402.12.6(1)).
- Committee work shall be accomplished as a body. Committee meetings shall be held as required to meet the duties of the committee. Meetings shall be held at the call of the chair or upon written request, submitted to the chair, by committee members or the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.
- A majority of committee members shall constitute a quorum for conducting business. Committee actions shall be by majority vote of the quorum present. Minority committee reports may be submitted to the Senate by dissenting committee members.
- Minutes shall be taken at all committee meetings and a copy shall be filed with the Senate Executive Secretary as part of the Senate records. The minutes shall include copies of all forms, statements, and reports, which are presented to the Senate for action.
- Unless otherwise specified, all standing committees and subcommittees of the Senate shall elect chairs annually, preferably at the last meeting of the academic year.
COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND TENURE COMMITTEE (AFT)
The Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee, as represented by each of its hearing panels, is an administrative hearing body, with jurisdiction in matters related to academic freedom, tenure, promotion, dismissals, and other sanctions; and actions alleged not to be in accordance with the adopted standards, policies and procedures of the University. See Policy 407.6.6(8) and 402.12.3 for more information.

BUDGET AND FACULTY WELFARE COMMITTEE (BFW)
The duties of the Budget and Faculty Welfare Committee are to (1) participate in the budget preparation process; (2) periodically evaluate and report to the Senate on matters relating to faculty salaries, insurance programs, retirement benefits, sabbatical leaves, consulting policies, and other faculty benefits; (3) review the financial and budgetary implications of proposals for changes in academic degrees and programs, and report to the Senate prior to Senate action relating to such proposals; and (4) report to the Senate significant fiscal and budgetary trends which may affect the academic programs of the University. See Policy 402.12.4 for more information.

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES (COC)
The responsibility of the Committee on Committees is to: (1) apportion Senate elective positions annually; (2) coordinate and supervise the election of members to the Senate; (3) prepare eligibility slates and supervise nominations and elections within the Senate; and (4) recommend to the Senate the appointed members of all Senate committees and the members of university committees that include Senate representatives. See Policy 402.12.2 for more information.

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES COMMITTEE (EPC)
The major function of this committee shall be to serve as the Senate committee on educational policy, including program discontinuance for academic reasons (policy 406.2). In addition to conducting studies and making recommendations as specifically instructed by the Senate, the committee itself may initiate such activities. Routine actions taken under established policy, such as approval for specific course changes, additions, or deletions, shall be submitted to the Senate as information items. All policy recommendations and major actions shall be referred to the Senate for approval or disapproval. Specific duties of the Educational Policies Committee shall include consideration of standards and requirements for university designated honors such as cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude. See Policy 402.12.6 for more information.
FACULTY DIVERSITY, DEVELOPMENT, AND EQUITY COMMITTEE (FDDE)
The duties of the Faculty Diversity, Development, and Equity Committee are to: (1) collect data and identify and promote best practices for faculty development, mentoring, and work environment to facilitate the success of diverse faculty at all career levels; (2) provide feedback and advocate processes for faculty recruitment, promotion, and retention that promote diversity, fair pay standards, and work/life balance for the faculty; (3) report on the status of faculty development, mentoring, diversity, and equity; and (4) make recommendations for implementation of proposals related to faculty diversity, development, and equity. See Policy 402.12.8 for more information.

FACULTY EVALUATION COMMITTEE (FEC)
The Faculty Evaluation Committee shall (a) assess methods for evaluating faculty performance; (b) recommend improvements in methods of evaluation; and (c) select recipients of university awards for Eldon J. Gardner Teacher of the Year, Undergraduate Faculty Mentor of the Year, and Faculty University Service Award. See Policy 402.12.7 for more information.

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (FSEC)
The Executive Committee shall perform the following duties:
- prepare Senate meeting agendas;
- propose such standing and special committees of the Senate as may be needed;
- examine the work of the Senate committees to discourage duplication of effort and to ensure that all committee assignments are carried out;
- act as a steering committee to direct problems to the proper committees;
- (e) act as a liaison to harmonize the work of all committees;
- (f) transact such business as may be referred to it by the Senate.
See Policy 402.12.1 for more information.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE (PRPC)
The Professional Responsibilities and Procedures Committee shall advise the Faculty Senate regarding composition, interpretation, and revision of Section 400 in University Policies and Procedures. Recommended revisions shall be submitted to the Senate for its consideration. The procedures for code amendments are specified in Section 202 of the USU Policy Manual. See Policy 402.12.5 for more information.
Parliamentary procedure

In an effort to conduct business in an orderly, efficient and equitable manner, Faculty Senate operates under Robert’s Rules of Order. Adhering to Robert’s Rules helps to ensure that matters are given due consideration; all members have the opportunity to voice questions, concerns, and suggestions; and issues are discussed in an orderly and structured manner.

A comprehensive explanation of Robert’s Rules requires a lengthy book (150+ pages). Below we provide a brief overview of the most common uses of Robert’s Rules within the context of Faculty Senate meetings.

University Business: Faculty Senate meetings typically open with University Business updates from President Cockett, Provost Galey and occasionally others. Members of Faculty Senate are welcome to ask questions following any of these updates.

Information Items: Some items presented to Faculty Senate are information items that are intended to inform Faculty Senate about activities, but are not subject to approval by Faculty Senate. For example, routine actions performed by EPC (e.g., approval for specific course changes, additions, or deletions) are presented as information items and do not require approval by Faculty Senate.

Faculty Senate Actions, Resolutions, and Policies: Faculty Senate actions, resolutions, and policies must be presented for approval or disapproval. These items are typically presented in Faculty Senate meetings under New Business or Old Business and include subcommittee annual reports, modifications to faculty code, resolutions, and other special items. The procedure for considering these items is as follows:

1) Brief presentation of the item.

2) A motion (example: I move to approve...) and second are needed to formally consider the item, unless the business item comes from a committee report, in which case a second is not needed.

3) The chair will ask for discussion regarding the item.

4) During discussion of a motion, anyone may propose an amendment. Any amendments or modifications to the motion must be considered as follows (this
process must be repeated for each amendment proposed):

i) A motion (example: I move to amend the motion to...) and second are needed to formally consider the amendment.

ii) The chair will repeat the proposed amendment and will ask for discussion on the proposed amendment. During the discussion of an amendment, an amendment to the amendment (a secondary amendment) may be proposed, and must be seconded, at which point the discussion shifts to the secondary amendment. Amendments may not be proposed beyond a secondary amendment.

iii) At the conclusion of discussion on the amendment, a vote is conducted to approve or disapprove the amendment.

iv) Discussion then reverts to the primary amendment, if a secondary amendment was voted on, or to the main motion as amended, if the amendment passed, or to the original motion without amendment, if all amendments failed.

5) Anyone can propose to end debate and call for a vote on the motion by saying, “I call the question” or “I move to end debate.” These motions are nondebatable. An immediate vote is taken, and a two-thirds vote is required to end debate once the question has been called.

Motions should be stated in clear, simple language so that everyone can understand precisely what is being proposed. No explanation or context should be stated when a motion is made. The chair will repeat the motion and ask for any discussion, and it is at that point that additional context, opinion, and discussion can be provided by the person who made the motion or by anyone else.

Motions may be withdrawn or delayed in three ways: 1. Original mover may withdraw the motion. 2. Anyone can move to postpone consideration of the motion to a specific time (e.g., next meeting, or after a task force has completed a report). In this case it is automatically added to the agenda of the faculty senate meeting specified. 3. Anyone may make move to “table” a motion. If the assembly agrees by a majority vote, the motion is taken off the floor (i.e., “tabled”) until someone makes a motion to “remove [the motion to ... ] from the table.” This can be done in the same meeting in which the
motion was tabled or at a subsequent meeting. Motions to postpone or table are debatable.

Policy changes require at least two readings. Per USU Policy 202.4, policy changes must undergo at least two readings in faculty senate prior to ratification. In the “first reading,” the policy change is presented primarily as an information item. Faculty senate may provide feedback to PRPC on the proposed policy change. For substantial policy changes, it is recommended that PRPC obtain additional feedback from University Executive Committee and other relevant stakeholders prior to the second reading at Faculty Senate. Formal motions to amend proposed policy changes would typically be made at the “second reading.”

COMMITTEE PROCESS FLOWCHARTS

NOTE: Notice of Final Approval will be provided in a letter from the Executive Vice President and Provost. No action should be taken until the letter is received.
Common Questions on USU Faculty Policies

Faculty Senators are often seen by other faculty as a source for information about faculty roles, rights, responsibilities, and resources. The following FAQs are provided as a guide to Faculty Senators when responding to questions from other faculty members.

1. What is academic freedom and what are my professional responsibilities?

USU’s Faculty Code 402.3 states the following:  

403.2 Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. The faculty member is entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the
limitations imposed by professional responsibility. See Faculty Code 403 for the full scope on Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities.

2. Where can I find information in USU’s policy code concerning tenure and promotion or promotion to full professor?
   USU Policy Manual Section 405
   Tenured and Term Appointments: Evaluation, Promotion and Retention

3. Who can I contact about benefits?
   You can contact one of the Faculty Senate representatives for your college, the Faculty Senate caucus leader for your college, the chair of Faculty Senate’s Budget and Faculty Welfare (BFW).

4. Where can I find the USU Academic Policies and Procedures Manual?
   These policies cover procedures related to academic issues only. Answers can be found here to questions about the university’s policy on incompletes, final exams, deadlines, etc. It can be found at http://catalog.usu.edu/index.php

5. Is there a process for handling student incivility and disruptive behavior?
   YES. This policy can be found at http://www.usu.edu/studentservices/studentcode/article5.cfm#secV3.

6. What is the process for student grievances against faculty?
   This can be found in the Student section of the USU Policy Manual at http://www.usu.edu/studentservices/studentcode/article7.cfm#secVll1.

7. What are the responsibilities and rights of students?

8. Where can I find the University’s policy manual?
   USU’s Policy Manual covers the procedures and standards related to the functioning of the university and its employees. It contains a section on faculty policies. These policies are also referred to as faculty code. Section 400, is essential.

9. What are my due process rights?
   The due process rights of faculty can be found in the Policy Manual, Number
This section also contains the procedures for filing a grievance, 407.6 GRIEVANCES. The university has also established a mediation process.