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Faculty Senate Bylaws

Article I: Duties of the Officers.

Section 1: The faculty senate president shall be the faculty’s spokesperson. The faculty senate president shall be the presiding officer of the senate, attend all meetings of the board of regents as the official representative of the faculty senate, refer items to committees for consideration, and perform other duties appropriate to the office. He/she shall be the faculty spokesperson when the Executive Committee meets with the chancellor and the chancellor’s designee and shall chair the Executive Committee and the Cabinet when they meet in lieu of the full senate during the months of June and July.

Section 2: The faculty senate vice-president shall preside over the senate during the absence of the faculty senate president, chair the Executive Committee except when meeting jointly with the Cabinet in lieu of the full senate in June and July, and perform other duties appropriate to the office.

Section 3: The faculty senate secretary-treasurer shall keep the official minutes of all senate meetings and shall furnish copies of the minutes to all senators at least four days prior to each senate meeting. A copy of the official agenda and the minutes shall be available in the senate office and shall be posted to the faculty senate web site. The secretary-treasurer shall maintain the financial records of the senate and, in the absence of university policies to the contrary, shall be responsible for the financial accounting of senate committees. The secretary-treasurer shall keep the minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee and the Cabinet; maintain the official membership roster, including committee assignments; keep senate attendance records; prepare and publish notices, agendas, and minutes of senate meetings; and perform other duties appropriate to the office.

Section 4: Upon election, the president-elect shall become a member of the Executive Committee. He/she shall endeavor to become thoroughly familiar with the senate’s operating procedures and its role as the faculty’s voice in the campus system of shared governance. The president-elect shall perform such other duties from time to time as may be delegated by the president or the Executive Committee.

Section 5: The past-president shall serve on the Executive Committee in an ex officio, non-voting advisory capacity during the summer months and the fall semester next following the expiration of his/her term as president. In addition, the past-president shall be entitled to attend senate meetings and join in discussion or debate during the aforementioned period but shall be without vote.

Section 6: The presiding officer of the Faculty Senate shall be the senior officer present at the meeting president; vice-president; secretary-treasurer; president-elect; chairperson of the Committee on Rules, chairperson of the Cabinet, chairperson of the standing committees other than Rules in alphabetical order, vice-chairperson of the standing committees in alphabetical order.

Article II: Elections.

Section 1: Except as provided in Article III of the senate constitution, the faculty of each college shall determine the eligibility of its own faculty members to stand for election and to vote in senate elections. Faculty members whose academic schedule, or other obligations, would not permit them to participate fully in the regularly scheduled senate and committee meetings, attending upon membership, shall consider delaying their candidacy until a more propitious time.

Section 2: Provided the senate Executive Committee is kept fully informed, each college faculty through its established governance procedures shall be empowered to reduce, if the need should arise, the duration of one or more of the terms of its own senators in order to maintain the benefits of continuity in senate membership as derived from the system of staggered expiration of three-year terms. Moreover, if as a consequence of faculty realignment or the annual reapportionment of senate seats, a college should lose one or more seats and there is no pending vacancy, the college faculty through its established governance procedures shall determine how the reduction in representation shall be accomplished and shall duly notify the Executive Committee of the senate.

Section 3: No later than December the faculty senate president shall request the appropriate faculty rosters to be used in determining the number of senators to be elected for the next academic year from the director of Institutional Research. The rosters shall include: 1) all full-time faculty tallied by college and staffed by departments; 2) all full-time non-graduate faculty tallied and sub-totaled by appointments (i.e., University Library); and 3) all full-time external NU faculty tallied and sub-totaled by college (UNK, UNL, UNMC). Definitions for all categories are included in the senate constitution.

Section 4: After consulting with the Executive Committee, the faculty senate president shall notify the appropriate academic deans of the number of seats the respective colleges are entitled to fill during the ensuing academic year. This notification shall occur prior to the first of January.

Section 5: The election of senators shall be conducted by each college by the end of the month of January in two steps: nomination and a final election. Respective college faculties shall select the nominees (e.g. by primary) for the final election. The final ballot shall list at least twice as many names as there are seats to be filled by each college. In the event of a tie in either election, a runoff shall be conducted between those...
Section 2: The agenda for each senate meeting as determined in the constitution shall be publicized in the following manner: an agenda shall be provided each senator, the chief executive officer, all college deans, the registrar, the director of admissions, and the Office of University Relations. Also, two copies of each agenda shall be deposited in the university archives. The agenda shall be available on the faculty senate website. The Executive Committee shall also provide copies of the agenda to additional university officials and other persons when such action seems appropriate for a particular meeting.

Section 3: The agenda for the senate shall include:

I. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

II. Officers’ Reports
   A. President
   B. Vice-President
   C. Secretary-Treasurer

III. Executive Committee Report

IV. Standing Committee Reports

V. Other Reports

Article III. Vacated Senate Seats.

Section 1: For good and sufficient reason as determined by the Executive Committee, a faculty senator may be accorded two excused absences from senate meetings during the academic year. If a senator accumulates a total of four absences, both excused and unexcused, within a single academic year, he or she will be removed from senate membership and the seat declared vacant. The vacant seat shall be filled in accord with provisions in Section 2 of this article.

Section 2: Vacancies in the senate due to resignation, incapacity, or removal from office shall be filled by seating the first runner-up from the appropriate college in the senate election immediately preceding the vacancy. If the first runner-up is not available, the second runner-up from the appropriate college in the senate election immediately preceding the vacancy will be seated. If the second runner-up is not available, or if additional vacancies from a college should occur, the remaining senators from that college shall caucus and elect a person from their college to fill the vacancy in accord with provisions in Article III of the constitution and Section 3 of this article. If there are fewer than two remaining senators from the college, the college shall conduct an election to fill the vacancy.

Section 3: The person who fills a vacancy under the provisions of Section 2 shall serve out the remainder of the unexpired term and shall be eligible for election to a successive regular term providing that person’s continuous service on the senate shall not exceed four years.

Section 4: When a vacant senate seat pertains to an individual holding a senate office, the vacancy shall be removed as follows: first, the vacated seat shall be filled as provided in Section 2; second, members of the senate shall follow the provisions of Article IV of the constitution to elect a senator to complete the unexpired term for the office in question.

Section 5: A senator on leave of absence for not more than one academic semester need not resign, but will be temporarily replaced by the person having the next highest number of votes cast in the previous election. If the senator will be absent longer than one academic semester, he or she will not be entitled to the seat upon return to the campus.

Article IV. Senate Agenda.

Section 1: All committee recommendations addressed to the faculty senate must be put on the agenda and presented to the senate without substantive alteration.

Section 2: The agenda for each senate meeting as provided in the constitution shall be publicized in the following manner: an agenda shall be provided each senator, the chief executive officer, all college deans, the registrar, the director of admissions, and the Office of University Relations. Also, two copies of each agenda shall be deposited in the university archives. The agenda shall be available on the faculty senate website. The Executive Committee shall also provide copies of the agenda to additional university officials and other persons when such action seems appropriate for a particular meeting.

Section 3: The agenda for the senate shall include:

I. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

II. Officers’ Reports
   A. President
   B. Vice-President
   C. Secretary-Treasurer

III. Executive Committee Report

IV. Standing Committee Reports

V. Other Reports
VI. Old Business

VIII. For the Good of the Order (This period of informal, unrecorded discussion is provided to encourage senators to voice opinions on timely issues and shall not normally exceed ten minutes.)

VIII. New Business (Final action on new business shall not include decisions on matters requiring approval by the chancellor or the governing body of the university until thirty days shall have elapsed after introduction, and the opportunity is provided for appropriate committee recommendation except when such business is an "emergency matter." The expression "emergency matter" used in Article IV of the constitution shall apply to any new business at any meeting of the faculty senate when two-thirds of the members present and voting approve. The vote on the question of "emergency matter" and all votes on the substantive question under consideration shall be roll-call votes.)

IX. Adjournment

Article V: Senate Accountability.

Section 1: The senate shall keep the faculty and administrative staff informed of its recommendations and actions through its system of regular monthly meetings, its published agendas and minutes, periodic memos by e-mail, postings to the faculty senate web site, and the president's annual report to the chancellor.

Article VI: Committees.

Section 1: Membership. At the last regular senate meeting of the academic year, the retiring Committee on Rules shall submit to the senate for its approval a slate of nominees for university committees and the senate standing committees. Nominations may be solicited from all segments of the university for membership on university committees. Further nominations may be made from the floor.

The size and composition of standing committees will be such as to maintain broad representative points of view, or as specially provided in these bylaws for particular committees. At a recess during the last regular senate meeting of the academic year, each retiring standing committee shall meet and select a continuing member to chair the committee for the subsequent year. Standing committee chairpersons must be members of the senate.

Standing committees will determine their own rules of procedure, including selection of additional officers (such as vice-chair) and appointment of subcommittees. Minutes shall be forwarded to the secretary-treasurer of the senate through the Executive Committee.

Section 2: Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the senate and the appointed chairpersons of the Cabinet and the Committee on Rules. The Executive Committee shall act in accordance with the duties and responsibilities described in the constitution of the faculty senate.

Section 3: Cabinet of the Faculty Senate. The cabinet of the faculty senate shall be composed of the chairpersons of the standing committees. The faculty senate president shall appoint one of the members of the Cabinet as chairperson, and the chairperson shall be a member of the Executive Committee. The cabinet of the faculty senate shall advise the faculty senate president and the Executive Committee on matters of common interest and shall assist in the preparation of the agenda.

Section 4: Joint Meetings of the Executive Committee and the Cabinet

4.1 The Executive Committee and the Cabinet are separate senate entities; however, they may meet jointly to prepare the monthly agenda for senate meetings and at other times as circumstances warrant to consider matters of faculty interest and concern.

4.2 In accordance with Article IV of the Constitution, the Executive Committee and the Cabinet shall meet jointly in lieu of the full senate in the months of June and July to conduct the faculty's business. All decisions made or actions taken shall be submitted to the senate at its next regular meeting in the fall.

A quorum for purposes of these summer meetings shall consist of two-thirds of the combined voting membership of the Executive Committee and the Cabinet. Formal decisions of this body when acting in lieu of the full senate shall require a simple majority of the combined voting membership of the Executive Committee and the Cabinet.

The Executive Committee shall be empowered to set the official agenda for the June and July meetings. Minutes shall be kept of all such proceedings and shall be published and posted in the same manner as the minutes of senate meetings during the academic year.

Section 5: Standing Committees

5.1 Committee on Faculty Personnel and Welfare. The committee shall elect its own chairperson and vice-chair in accordance with the procedure described in Section 1, and the chairperson shall then serve in the Cabinet. The responsibilities of the committee shall include those matters which pertain to faculty working conditions and teaching loads, academic privileges and responsibilities, academic freedom and tenure, and the coordination of grievance procedures throughout the university. In addition, this committee shall have oversight responsibility for the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee, the Faculty Grievance Committee, the Professional Conduct Committee, and any other such committees as directed by the Executive Committee.

5.2 Committee on Professional Development. The committee shall elect its own chairperson and vice-chair in accordance with the procedure described in Section 1, and the chairperson shall then serve in the Cabinet. The responsibilities of the committee shall include those matters which pertain to policies involving professional growth, development of research and teaching facilities, sabbaticals, and faculty development. In addition, the committee shall have oversight responsibility for the university committees on research and faculty development, and any other such committees as directed by the Executive Committee.

5.3 Committee on Academic and Curricular Affairs. The committee shall elect its own chairperson and vice-chair in accordance with the procedure described in Section 1, and the chairperson shall then serve in the Cabinet. The responsibilities of the committee shall include those matters which pertain to policies involving the academic life of the university, coordination of curricular review procedures, faculty competence, admission policies, academic honors, calendar and commencements, and examinations and testing. In addition, the committee shall have oversight responsibility for university committees on academic standards, admissions, honors and awards, commencement and honors, and calendar, and any other such committees as directed by the Executive Committee.
5.4 Committee on Educational Resources and Services. The committee shall elect its own chairperson and vice-chair in accordance with the procedure described in Section 1, and the chairperson shall then serve in the Cabinet. The responsibilities of the committee shall include those matters which pertain to policies, development of library, computer usage, international programs, and any other educational programs/services.

In addition, the committee shall have oversight responsibility for the university committees on library and educational resources, computer usage, international programs, and special education, and any other such committees as directed by the Executive Committee.

5.5 Committee on Goals and Directions. The committee shall elect its own chairperson and vice-chair in accordance with the procedure described in Section 1, and the chairperson shall then serve in the Cabinet. The responsibilities of the committee shall include those matters which pertain to the future and development of the university, the public image of the university and community acceptance of higher education, development, and implementation of goals and policies.

In addition, the committee shall have oversight responsibility for university committees on planning, student affairs, and athletics, and any other such committees as directed by the Executive Committee.

5.6 Committee on Rules. Soon after the last regular Senate meeting of the academic year, the incoming president shall appoint a member of the committee as chairperson. This senator shall also serve on the Executive Committee and Cabinet. The Committee on Rules shall serve as a coordinating body for the faculty senate. The committee shall take an active role in the delegation of issues to appropriate committees.

The Committee on Rules shall also be responsible for the faculty senate for recommending faculty for membership on university committees, standing committees, faculty committees, and ad hoc and advisory committees. The Committee on Rules shall use the following guidelines to develop the faculty membership of committees:

1. Every effort will be made to distribute the faculty membership of committees proportionally by college.
2. Every effort will be made to maintain continuity of membership on committees where possible or appropriate.
3. Every effort will be made to apprise faculty members of openings on committees and to allow them an opportunity to express a preference for committee assignments by means of an annual survey of the entire faculty or other appropriate procedures.
4. The Committee on Rules shall make the final appointments to standing committees.
5. Temporary appointments to other committees not to exceed 60 days may be made without prior Senate approval.

Section 6: Faculty Committees

6.1 Faculty Grievance Committee. The entire Senate shall elect a seven-member Committee on Faculty Grievances to fulfill the grievance functions of the Senate, and this committee shall have the powers and duties outlined in Section 4.13 of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents. This committee shall consist of two full professors, two associate professors, two assistant professors, and one additional faculty member who shall be elected annually without regard to academic rank from the membership of the Committee on Faculty Personnel and Welfare. The term of service will be three years, and each year, at the September meeting of the Faculty Senate, new members will be elected from a list of nominees which shall include one more candidate than the number of vacant seats created by reason of the expiration of the term of a member, resignation, or retirement. Members of the committee shall serve staggered terms, meaning that the term(s) of one class of members will expire each year. The member elected from the Faculty Senate Committee on Faculty Personnel and Welfare shall serve a maximum three-year term or the remainder of his term on the Faculty Senate Committee members shall be elected from faculty members eligible for election to the Faculty Senate. Within five days after the September meeting at which the new members are elected to the Grievance Committee, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Faculty Senate, or his/her designee, will call a meeting of the Faculty Senate Committee for the express purpose of electing a grievance committee chair. The committee shall elect its own chairperson from among its tenured members. A committee, with a case under consideration, shall, when necessary, continue past September with its membership unchanged until the case is resolved, in such an event, new cases shall be considered by the reconstituted committee.

6.2 Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee. Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee. This committee, composed of five (5) tenured and two (2) non-tenured members of the UNO faculty, will sit on all cases covered by sections 4.14 of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska. Members of the committee shall be elected by the faculty to a term of three (3) years. Every year at the September meeting, the Committee on Rules shall present a list of nominees that shall include for each vacancy to be filled one more candidate than the number of vacant seats created by reason of resignation, retirement, or the expiration of the term of a member. The senate shall be notified of the newly elected members by way of a resolution presented by the Committee on Rules at the October Senate meeting. Non-tenured faculty members who receive tenure shall resign at the end of the academic year in which it is conferred and be replaced in the manner previously described. Elections to this committee shall be conducted in the same way that faculty senators are elected. The committee shall elect its own chairperson. A committee with a case under consideration shall, when necessary, continue past September with its membership unchanged until the case is resolved, in such an event, new cases shall be considered by the reconstituted committee.

6.3 Professional Conduct Committee. Professional Conduct Committee. This committee, composed of five (5) tenured UNO faculty members holding the rank of professor or above, will consider all professional conduct cases under sections 4.15 of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska. The election to fill committee vacancies due to resignation, retirement, or the expiration of a three-year term shall be held at the September meeting each year. The faculty senate shall choose committee members by plurality vote from a list of nominees prepared by the Committee on Rules. The ballot shall list one more nominee for each position than there are positions to be filled, and insofar as feasible, the representation of the faculty should be sought in the composition of the committee. Members of the committee shall serve staggered terms, meaning that the term(s) of one class of members will expire each year. Retiring members shall continue to serve for three (3) years as alternates who will be available as committee replacements should the need arise in a particular case. The committee shall elect its own chairperson from the membership. A committee with a case under consideration shall, when necessary, continue past September with its membership unchanged until the case is resolved, in such an event, new cases shall be considered by the reconstituted committee.

Section 7: Faculty Senate Advisory Committees

The faculty president, in consultation with the Executive Committee, may appoint advisory committees that include but are not limited to the following:...
7.1 Budget Advisory Committee. The Budget Advisory Committee shall consist of three faculty members appointed, one each year, for three-year terms. The chairperson shall be an individual who has expertise in budget matters. The committee shall acquire detailed knowledge of the budget and expenditures of the entire University of Nebraska System and shall act as a source of information and independent opinion for the faculty senate. The secretary-treasurer of the faculty senate shall act as liaison between the committee and the Executive Committee.

7.2 Ad Hoc and Special Committees. With the advice and consent of the faculty senate, the president may appoint ad hoc and special committees from time to time to conduct inquiries and hearings, carry out special studies, and accomplish other tasks of the senate. The size, composition, and duration of operation of each such committee shall be appropriate to the purposes and objectives set forth in the committee’s charge. Broad representation of the faculty normally should be sought. Membership need not be confined to members of the faculty senate.

Article VII: Amendments.

Section 1: These bylaws can be amended at any business meeting by simple majority vote of those eligible to be cast by the entire senate providing that at the preceding meeting an announcement has been made declaring intent to introduce a motion to amend at the next meeting and describing its content and purpose. The proposal must be reduced to writing when presented for a vote.

Article VIII: Parliamentary Authority

Section 1: The parliamentary authority for the Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha shall be the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order.

History of Amendments to the Bylaws:

- R 2250 & 2253 = formation of Constitution and Bylaws Committee, 06/21/07 & 06/12/07
- amendments presented to the Faculty Senate, 03/11/08
- R 2295, 2296 & 2305 = approval of amendments by the Faculty Senate, 04/08/08
- amendments presented to the Faculty Senate (by Committee on Rules), 12/08/09
- R 2422 = approval of amendments by Faculty Senate, 12/08/09
- amendments presented to the Faculty Senate, 02/08/10
- R 2434 = approval of amendments by Faculty Senate, 02/08/10
- R 2459 = approval of amendments by the Faculty Senate, 05/10/09
- amendments presented to the Faculty Senate, 02/08/10
- R 2460 = approval of amendments by the Faculty Senate, 05/10/09
- R 2506 = formation of Constitution and Bylaws Committee, 10/11/09
- amendments presented to the Faculty Senate, 05/07/10
- R 2540 = approval of amendments by the Faculty Senate, 04/11/10
- proposed amendment presented to the Faculty Senate, 08/10/09
- R 2545 = approval of amendment by the Faculty Senate, 08/13/10
- Approved by the Board of Regents, 01/26/2007
- proposed amendment presented to the Faculty Senate, 02/12/11
- R 2550 = approval of amendment by the Faculty Senate, 03/14/12