

# Proposed Changes to the CONSTITUTION FOR A FACULTY SENATE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

**Note:** This copy contains proposed changes to the Constitution which were passed by the Senate on March 18, 1997, but which must be approved by a vote of the University faculty. The vote will probably be held in the fall of 1997. Proposed deletions are designated by a ~~strike through~~, while proposed additions are in a *blue italic font*.

## ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Faculty Senate is to aid The University of Alabama in making judgments on questions of policy, development, and operations and thereby to assist the University in its continuing quest for excellence. It seeks to accomplish this goal by:

1. Facilitating and encouraging meaningful input on matters of general faculty concern.
2. Providing a readily accessible channel of communication through which continual dialogue and exchange of information and ideas may be carried on between the Faculty and University Officials.

## ARTICLE II. RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS

The responsibilities of the faculty rest with the faculty as a whole, but faculty opinion will normally be articulated through a Faculty Senate as herein constituted.

The Faculty Senate has the responsibility and authority to deliberate issues of general faculty concern and to communicate the results of these deliberations and its recommendations to the President of the University.

The Senate receives information from the administrative officers of the University regarding pending policy decisions, or it determines through independent study that certain policy decisions appear to be appropriate; in either instance its function is to aid in the formulation or re-formulation of University policy.

The function may be served in some instances by discussion in which Senate members contribute their advice for consideration by those who are responsible for formulation and implementation of policy regarding the matter in question. In particular instances, on the other hand, the Senate may choose to make formal statements by majority vote.

The Faculty Senate is entitled to be advised of the disposition of any recommendations it makes.

Some general matters appropriate for faculty deliberation include:

1. General policies for admission of students to the University and the establishment of academic standards and requirements for graduation.
2. Establishment of the terms and conditions of faculty service and well being.
3. Selection of a University President or Vice-President. The views of the Faculty Senate should be solicited and considered before an appointment is made. In the case of selection of a divisional Dean only the faculty of that particular division should be consulted.
4. Budgetary Matters: Reviewing past and current allocations; Faculty Senate will designate one of its members to be available to the President to serve on all groups which make budgetary decisions on a campus-wide basis. Such groups include those concerned with establishing need, establishing priorities for allocations, and deciding on allocations.
5. Establishment of the University calendar.
6. Major changes in academic or research programs which are of an interdivisional nature or which have significant interdivisional impact.

Repudiation by a majority vote of the faculties of 2/3 of the divisions voids an action of the Faculty Senate.

## ARTICLE III. APPORTIONMENT OF SENATE REPRESENTATION

Each division of the University, including colleges, schools, and the University Libraries, is represented in the Faculty Senate by one senator for each twenty persons, or fraction thereof, serving on the date of the election under a regular appointment\* as an instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor engaged in teaching or research at least half of a normal load during the regular year, or a librarian having corresponding rank and professional engagement.

Each division of the University shall elect alternate senators in a number equal to the number of its senators. Such alternate senators can substitute for any senator within the alternate's division of the University on request of the Senator. When serving for a senator, an alternate may perform any of the functions of a senator with the full power of the senator. No senator may be represented by other than a duly elected alternate from the same division of the University.

A person holding a joint appointment involving more than one division must choose the division through which to participate in senate representation.

The dean or corresponding administrative officer of each division will be responsible for certifying the number of persons who qualify under this section to be counted in determining the number of senators for the division.

## ARTICLE IV. ELECTIONS

~~The divisions of the University will hold General elections for Senators and alternates by secret ballot within the first week in April for a term of two years commencing April 16.~~ *The divisions of the University will hold elections for Senators and alternates by secret ballot during the last two weeks of February or the first two weeks of March, for a term of two years commencing April 1.* In the divisional elections nominations may be made anonymously or from the floor. Only regular faculty members as defined in Article III are eligible for election to the Senate. However, the faculty of each division may determine who is eligible to vote in its particular election and in making this determination is not governed by the factors of eligibility to be counted for apportionment purposes under Article III.

The faculty of a division either may elect its senators at large or assign them for election by any arrangement of faculty subgroups as determined by faculty vote.

The dean or corresponding administrative officer of each division will conduct the election. Except for Special elections, election as a senator is for a two year term of office and to replace those senators whose terms are expiring. The Senate Secretary will notify the deans of the divisions by ~~March 1~~ *February 14* of the number of Senate vacancies which will occur that year in each division.

The term of office for a senator elected in a Special election is for the remaining portion of the term of the senator being replaced.

## ARTICLE V. ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURES

~~A newly elected Senate will meet on the third Tuesday in April to organize itself. The incumbent President will convene the organizational meeting and preside until its own presiding officer is elected, which will be the first order of business.~~

~~The Senate will elect from its membership a President, Vice-President, and a Secretary, and may establish standing and special committees and the manner of selecting Senate members to serve in those capacities.~~

*At its last regular meeting in March, the first order of business for the Senate shall be to elect a President, a Vice-President, and a Secretary of the Senate for the ensuing year, from those Senators recently re-elected to the Senate or whose Senatorial term does not expire the ensuing April 1. No person elected to the Senate for the first time shall be eligible for such offices. The new officers shall take office on April 1.*

The presiding officer of the Faculty Senate will call a meeting of the faculty of the University when so requested by a petition from one-fifth of the members of the faculty as determined by the total number of persons certified by the administrative officers of the divisions of the University at the time of the last General Senate election, by a vote of the majority of the Senators present at a meeting of the Senate, or by the President of the University.

The elected officers, the immediate past President of the Faculty Senate, and chairpersons of standing committees will constitute a steering committee. If the immediate past President of the Faculty Senate is no longer a senator, ex officio status in the steering committee will be automatic. The immediate past President who is no longer a senator will be privileged to attend all open and executive sessions of the Senate with right of debate but without vote. The steering committee will determine the agenda of all Senate meetings. Anyone may propose agenda topics for Senate meetings. A topic must be put on the agenda if as many as five senators, twenty faculty members, or the President of the University request

it.

The Senate will meet each month during August through April, according to a schedule. The steering committee may call special meetings at any time while the University is in session ~~during the regular academic year or a summer term (not including the interim term)~~; and must do so when as many as ten senators, forty faculty members, or the President of the University request it.

A senator's absence from three meetings during a term of office without being represented by a duly elected alternate may vacate the office. The Senate shall be the judge of the reasonableness of the senator's absence without representation. Upon notification by the Senate, the dean of a division in which a senator's office is vacated shall hold an immediate Special election for a replacement.

The dean of a division also will hold Special elections to senate seats when these seats are vacant because of death of the senator, resignation of the senator from the Senate, resignation of the senator from the faculty of the University, or for vacancies caused by a change in the status of a senator of such nature that the senator no longer is eligible to hold the office under provisions of this constitution. Such Special elections will be held following notification by the Senate of a vacancy and as promptly as feasible after this notification.

Action to recall a Senate member from a division or faculty subgroup may be initiated by petition of not less than one-third of the voting members from that division or subgroup. Upon receiving this petition, the dean of the division shall notify the Senate member promptly and convene a special meeting of the voting members of the division to consider the petition. After opportunity for discussion of the substance of the petition, a secret vote shall be taken. If two-thirds of the voting members present vote to support the petition to recall the Senate member, the seat shall be declared vacant. The dean shall hold a Special election promptly to select a replacement and will notify the Senate President of the action. In such a meeting for recall and in all General and Special elections, a vote will be taken only after it is determined that a quorum is present as defined by the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order will govern the proceedings of the Senate except when they contravene a rule adopted by the Senate.

## **ARTICLE VI. ADOPTION**

Approval of this Constitution by a simple majority vote of the eligible faculty and by the President of the University will have the effect of establishing a University of Alabama Faculty Senate as herein defined.

## **ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENT**

Amendments to this Constitution will originate in the Senate. An amendment will be proposed and debated at a meeting of the Senate, and following further debate will be voted on at the next subsequent meeting of the Senate. If the amendment receives a majority vote of the Senate, it will be presented to the faculty of the University for its action in a University-wide referendum. There will be a 30-day period between the announcement of the referendum and the date of the ballot. Amendments which receive a favorable vote of the majority of the faculty voting in the referendum will be presented to the President of the University for approval.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Marcus Brown, Secretary, Faculty Senate

Date: \_\_\_\_\_