

**Faculty Senate**  
Southwest Tennessee Community College

**Constitution**

**ARTICLE I**  
**Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Faculty Senate of Southwest Tennessee Community College.

**ARTICLE II**  
**Statement of Purpose**

The Faculty Senate of Southwest Tennessee Community College is the elected representative body of the Southwest Tennessee Community College faculty. The Faculty Senate shall support faculty interests, provide encouragement for professional development, and provide a means of communication of common concerns.

The Faculty Senate is comprised of duly elected senators. This body oversees curriculum, standards and instructional programs. The body initiates projects, studies, makes reports and forwards resolutions and recommendations to the President or designee. The Senate provides the forum for the determination and the expression of the consensus of the faculty.

**ARTICLE III**  
**Functions of Faculty Senate**

The following are functions of the Faculty Senate:

- A. To be a standing committee of the College.
- B. To consider matters of common concern and make reports, forward resolutions and recommendations to the College President and other appropriate persons or institutions.
- C. To initiate projects and studies suggested by its own membership and to forward the resulting reports and recommendations to the College President and other appropriate persons or institutions.
- D. To consider faculty concerns for the purpose of promoting and improving faculty welfare.
- E. To provide a formal procedure for participating in the formation of academic policies and guidelines.
- F. To serve as the forum for the determination and expression of the official opinion of the Southwest faculty.

## **ARTICLE IV** **Powers**

All actions taken by the Faculty Senate shall be considered as actions taken on behalf of the Southwest faculty. However, the establishment of this Senate is not an annulment of the actions of the faculty. The faculty shall have the right to modify or revoke actions of the Senate (Article IX).

## **ARTICLE V** **Membership**

All full-time College personnel whose regular assignments normally include instruction for credit courses constituting at least fifty percent of their workload and who hold rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, or Instructor are members of the Southwest faculty.

- A. An academic department shall be entitled to one representative.
- B. The number of divisional representatives will be determined by the following chart:

|                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 – 30 faculty    | (1 representative)  |
| 31 – 50 faculty   | (2 representatives) |
| 51 – 70 faculty   | (3 representatives) |
| 71 – 90 faculty   | (4 representatives) |
| 91- 110 faculty   | (5 representatives) |
| 111 – 130 faculty | (6 representatives) |
| 131 – 150 faculty | (7 representatives) |
| 151 – 170 faculty | (8 representatives) |

- C. Any department or division after adoption of the Constitution shall attain Senate representation in the first Senate election following the organization.
- D. First-year faculty members are not eligible to serve on the Faculty Senate.

The members of the Faculty Senate must represent the interests of the faculty at all times and shall not undertake any activity, position, or office which might create a conflict with that interest; i.e., a senator who accepts an appointment as an administrator of the College must resign his/her Senate seat. A Senator is exempt from serving on a college-wide or Senate standing committee.

## **ARTICLE VI** **Election of Senators**

A Faculty Senate shall be elected from the members of the faculty. All Senators shall be elected no later than the end of the 3rd full duty week in March and shall take office at the April meeting of the Faculty Senate. The April meeting is a transitional meeting between the past and present Senates. Terms of senators shall be staggered so that approximately one-half of the members of the Senate shall be elected each year. It is the responsibility of the Election Committee, under the supervision of the Senate Vice-President, to monitor and/or administer all Senate elections.

- A. Election of Departmental Representatives

The department shall conduct the departmental election no later than the end of the second full duty week of February.

A plurality vote constitutes election to a term; that is, the candidate receiving the most votes from each departmental pool will be elected. The department chair shall certify the results of the election to the Secretary of the Faculty Senate who will enter a report of the departmental elections in the March minutes. The senator shall serve for a two-year term. The senator shall begin his/her term at the April Senate meeting.

B. Election of Divisional Representatives

Each department shall elect a divisional nominee no later than the end of the second full duty week of February. The Election Committee of the Faculty Senate shall seek faculty candidates for the divisional representative positions to be filled. Also, faculty members may nominate themselves for positions. At least two weeks before the General Election, a list of candidates shall be presented to the divisional faculty.

The General Election shall be held no later than the third full duty week of March. One initial divisional representative per thirty faculty members, and thereafter one additional representative per twenty faculty members, or major fraction thereof, shall be elected by ballot from the members of each respective academic division. A plurality vote constitutes election to a term; that is, each of the candidates from the divisional pools receiving the most votes will be elected.

The Election Committee shall arrange for designated polling sites at each campus or teaching center, or administer the online voting process. The Election Committee shall count votes and certify results to the Secretary of the Senate. The Election Committee's report will be entered in full in the Senate April minutes.

**ARTICLE VII**  
**Election of Officers**

In order to be a candidate for Faculty Senate President, the candidate must submit to the Senate Secretary a petition signed by twenty faculty members no later than the first Wednesday of March.

The Senate President shall be elected by a plurality vote of the faculty under the direction of the Senate President Election Committee during the Spring Semester. The Senate President Election Committee shall be chaired by the Vice-President of the Senate and includes all other Senate Executive Committee officers with the following exceptions: (1) the serving president and (2) any serving officer who is a candidate for president. The Election Committee shall arrange for designated polling sites at each campus or teaching center and/or administer the online voting process. The Election Committee report shall be entered in full in the April Senate minutes.

The Senate President shall be elected for a one-year term, with no limitation on the number of terms. The Senate President shall be a non-voting member of the Senate, except in case of a tie. The President shall take office at the April meeting of the Faculty Senate.

Other officers of the Faculty Senate shall be a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Parliamentarian. These officers shall be elected annually by the Senate from among its members at the April meeting. All shall be voting members. They shall take office at the April meeting of the Faculty Senate.

## ARTICLE VIII

### **Duties of the Officers**

The duties of the Faculty Senate officers shall be as follows:

- A. President: The President shall be the presiding officer of the Senate. He/she shall be Chairman of the Executive Committee and shall be an *ex-officio* voting member of all other Senate committees. The President shall serve as or appoint a representative to the Tennessee Board of Regents Faculty Sub-Council, and make a report to the Senate on the quarterly meetings of the Sub-Council.
- B. Vice-President: In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall assume all the duties of that office. He/she shall be Vice-President of the Executive Committee and shall be responsible for supervising all faculty Senate elections.
- C. Secretary: The Secretary shall record, prepare, and distribute the official minutes of the meetings after their approval by the Senate; keep a record of attendance for each meeting of the Senate; and prepare and maintain an official membership list. The Secretary shall post a copy of the agenda for regular Senate meetings and all approved minutes on the Senate web site.
- D. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall receive a monthly record of the Senate budget account from the Business Office, keep records of all business transactions, disburse all moneys as the Senate may direct, and report all activities at each Senate meeting.
- E. Parliamentarian: The Parliamentarian shall inform the senators concerning points of order, rules, and regulations set forth by the Senate. In other situations, the Parliamentarian shall use Robert's Rules of Order.

## ARTICLE IX

### **Vacancies, Removals, Terms of Office**

- A. In the event the office of Senate President is vacated, the Vice-President shall assume all the duties of the President until a new President is elected at large by the faculty.
- B. If one of the other four offices of the Senate becomes vacant, the vacancy shall be filled by the Senate at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- C. If a Senate position becomes vacant, the department or division having the vacancy shall fill it within one month of notice from the Secretary of the Senate. The faculty member who fills a vacancy under the provisions of this article shall serve out the remainder of the unexpired term and shall be eligible for election to a regular term. First-year faculty members are not eligible to fill such vacancies.
- D. The President may be removed from office if he or she is found negligent in the performance of his/her assigned duties by means of a written petition containing the names of at least two-thirds of the Southwest faculty. Any other Senate officer may be removed from office if he or she is found negligent in the performance of his/her assigned duties by means of a written petition containing the names of at least two-thirds of the Faculty Senate. A departmental Senator may be removed from office if he or she is found negligent in the performance of his/her assigned duties by means of a written petition containing the names of at least two-thirds of the departmental members. A divisional Senator may be removed from office if he or she is found negligent in the performance of his/her assigned duties by means of a written petition containing the names of at least two-thirds of the divisional members.

- E. The term of office for an elected member of the Senate shall be two years or until his/her successor is elected, except that the representatives chosen in the first election shall be equally divided by a lot into holders of one- or two-year terms. There are no limitations placed on the number of terms a senator may serve.

## ARTICLE X Sessions of the Senate

The Faculty Senate shall meet at least monthly during the academic calendar year at times and places decided by the Senate. The Senate President or the Senate Executive Committee may call special sessions when deemed necessary.

## ARTICLE XI Meetings of the Faculty

The faculty of Southwest Tennessee Community College shall assemble as often as necessary to hear such reports and recommendations as the Senate shall make and to transact other business.

## ARTICLE XII Standing Committees of the Faculty Senate

- A. **Executive Committee:** This committee shall consist of the officers of the Senate.
- B. **Faculty Handbook Committee:** This committee shall consist of seven faculty members.
- C. **Committee on Academic Matters:** This committee shall consist of nine faculty members, one student member, one staff member, and one representative of the Provost.
- D. **Committee on Faculty Development and Evaluation:** This committee shall consist of ten faculty members, and one representative of the Provost.
- E. **Faculty Welfare Committee:** This committee shall consist of fifteen faculty members.
- F. **Grade Appeals Committee:** This committee shall consist of seven faculty members and one representative of the Provost.
- G. **Election Committee:** This committee shall consist of five faculty members. The Election Committee shall be chaired by the Vice President of the Senate and include two members who are serving in their first Senate term and two members who are serving in their second Senate term. The Senate Executive Committee shall appoint the members of the Election Committee.
- H. **Senate Scholarship Committee:** This committee shall consist of three faculty members, preferably Senate Scholarship contributors. The role of this committee is to select a recipient for each of these scholarships: Academic Departmental Scholarship, John L. Thornton Memorial Scholarship, and the Dempsie B. Morrison Memorial Scholarship.
- I. **Other Standing Committees:** These shall be formed by the Senate according to need.

## ARTICLE XIII Relationships Between Faculty Senate and Certain College Standing Committees

- A. **Curriculum Committee:** The committee is a standing committee of the college.

\*All voting members of the Curriculum Committee must be teaching faculty. Each Spring the three academic teaching Divisions will select three faculty to represent them as voting members of the College Curriculum Committee; the Distance Education and Instructional Technology Division will provide one ex officio representative. The method of selection will be at the discretion of the individual Divisions. Voting membership will be for no more than three years with exceptions noted. It is suggested that the Divisions initially should appoint their representatives to three different terms of duty (1, 2, and 3 year appointments). Thereafter all terms are for three years. Divisions should consider rotating representatives among its disciplines. Voting membership shall begin at the beginning of the Fall semester each year. (\*This paragraph is copied from the Curriculum Committee Handbook.)

- B. **Promotion and Tenure Committee:** This committee shall consist of seven tenured faculty members. When a department does not have a tenured faculty member, the department shall have the option to submit the name of a tenured faculty member from any division. The Faculty Senate's role in the determination of the composition of the committee is as follows: Each academic department will submit to the President of the Faculty Senate the name of a tenured faculty member to serve in the pool for the selection of the seven-member committee. This person must hold tenure at the College, should be elected by the department and cannot be a candidate nor related to a candidate for promotion and/or tenure during that year. No department head or division dean is eligible for membership on this committee. At a regular session of the Faculty Senate, the President of the Faculty Senate will determine by random selection from the pool submitted by the departments, the names of seven voting members and three alternates to serve as the Promotion and Tenure Committee. Each of the academic divisions will have a minimum of one representative and one alternate. Before an open meeting of the Senate, the pool of names will, therefore, be divided by the Vice-President into three categories with each consisting of the names of its departmental representatives. The President of the Faculty Senate will first draw one name from each category to ensure there is one representative per academic division. Second, one drawing from each category will determine the alternates selected. Finally, the President will draw four additional names from the remainder to complete the committee of seven voting members. The President of the Senate will submit the names to the Provost for certification and notification of the membership of the Promotion and Tenure Committee. It is understood that the Senate may recommend candidates for membership by random selection in a drawing with the provision that the President of the College selects from the faculty to achieve balance. Immediate notification of change in the composition of the Committee should be given to the Senate in writing.
- C. **Readmission Appeals Committee:** This committee is a standing committee of the college. This committee shall consist of six faculty members, one staff member, and one representative of the Provost.

## **ARTICLE XIV Amendments**

In order for the Constitution to be amended, a proposal signed by fifteen (15) full-time members of the faculty must be submitted to the Senate. If a majority of the Senate approves, the proposal will be circulated to the membership of the faculty for a vote. The proposal must be approved by two-thirds of the faculty voting with final approval by the President of the College or a designee.

## **ARTICLE XV Ratification**

Upon approval of a simple majority of those individuals herein described as members of the faculty, this Constitution will be ratified and the faculty of Southwest Tennessee Community College will be officially formed.