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The Constitution

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Preamble

The University as an institution of higher learning has, at its primary role, the discovery and dissemination of knowledge, and serves the students primarily through its faculty. The faculty, therefore, holds a unique position with rights, privileges, and responsibilities in many aspects of university life. To preserve these rights, privileges, and responsibilities, this faculty establishes the Prairie View A&M University Faculty Senate and presents this constitution as its official governing document.

Purposes

The purposes of the Prairie View A&M University Faculty Senate are: to cultivate a climate of mutual respect and cooperation within the various components of the university; to open avenues of communication between the administration and the faculty regarding matters of concern to the faculty; to facilitate faculty participation in academic governance; to represent the interest of the faculty to the University, and to promote the general welfare of the University.

The decisions and recommendations of the Faculty Senate shall be reported directly to the faculty and the President of the University. No Prairie View A&M University officer or Texas A&M University System's officer or body shall exercise control over the Senate's recommendations.

I. Functions of the Faculty Senate as they relate to:

A. Policy

- The faculty asserts its right and responsibility to recommend and advise on specific policies including:
 1. Curricula and instruction,
 2. Academic standards affecting students including admission, graduation, retention and probation, and dismissal,
 3. Policies dealing with scholarship, honors, and other forms of student distinction,
 4. Policies and procedures dealing with hiring, retention, tenure, promotion, dismissal, and evaluation of academic personnel,
 5. Policies affecting University development and utilization of resources.

B. The faculty, acting through the Faculty Senate, may advise the President on the following:

1. Overall educational policy and planning.
2. Priorities for future budgets.
3. Physical plant and facilities affecting educational objectives.
4. The establishment, reorganization, or discontinuation of organizational units and areas of instruction or research.
5. University Calendar.
6. Other matters pertaining to the general welfare of the faculty and of the University.

C. Rhetorical

The faculty shall be a forum for discussion and debate on any issue vital to Prairie View A&M University. It will garner faculty opinions and transmit these opinions to the appropriate person(s).

D. Reporting

The Faculty Senate shall publish the minutes of its meetings and shall report on a regularly scheduled basis to the faculty.

II. Organization of the Faculty Senate

A. Structure

1. The Faculty Senate shall consist of electoral units representing each of the academic colleges of the University.
2. Each electoral unit shall elect senators to the Faculty Senate on the basis of one senator for each ten of its faculty or fraction thereof. No faculty member shall count towards representation in more than one electoral unit.

B. Membership

1. For purposes of the Faculty Senate, a faculty member shall be anyone, ranked below the level of dean, employed by Prairie View A&M University who holds the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, lecturer, instructor and research scientists receiving full-time salary from funds appropriated for teaching and/or designated for research. In the case of questionable status under this provision, the decision of the Faculty Senate shall be final.
 2. All faculty members are eligible to vote for and to become members of the Faculty Senate.
 3. The President of Prairie View A&M University shall be an ex-officio member of the Faculty Senate.
- C. Terms and Qualifications of Officer**
1. A senator shall be elected for a term of 2 years. No senator shall serve more than two consecutive terms.
 2. To the extent possible, one-half of the senators from each electoral unit shall be elected each year.
 3. Senators shall be nominated by the faculty of their electoral units according to guidelines established by the Faculty Senate Bylaws.
 4. Any faculty member, as defined in Article II, Section B, Membership, is eligible for election to the Faculty Senate.
- D. Electors and Elections**
1. All faculty members, as defined in Section B, are eligible to vote, but shall vote in only one electoral unit.
 2. Senators shall be elected by a place system, by majority vote, and by secret ballot within their respective electoral units.
 3. Runoff elections shall be held according to guidelines established by the Faculty Senate Bylaws.
 4. Vacancies shall be filled by special elections held according to guidelines established by the Faculty Senate Bylaws.
 5. By a two-thirds vote, the Faculty Senate may petition an electoral unit to hold a recall election in the case of a senator who is unduly absent.
- E. Committees**
1. **Executive Committee**
An Executive Committee shall be composed of the chairperson, vice-chairperson, immediate past chairperson and four additional members elected annually by the Faculty Senate from its membership. Committee members shall serve from May 1 of the elected year to April 30 of the following year. The Executive Committee shall act for the Faculty Senate for the purpose of making nominations of faculty members to serve on University and System Committees. Nominations for such committees will be subject to approval of the Faculty Senate at any regular or special meeting.
 2. **Committee on Faculty Development**
The committee shall be a standing committee, charged with the preparation of detailed written reports on the progress of faculty development of the University, shall assess the implication of the programs designed for this purpose, and shall make recommendations to the Senate regarding the priorities for staff development.
 3. **Committee on Faculty Promotion, Tenure and Due Process Procedures**
This committee shall be a standing committee with the responsibility of recommending standards and procedures for granting tenure and promotion.
The Committee shall also make recommendations to the President on tenure policy. The Committee shall also serve as an advisory committee on due process complaints of faculty when requested by a faculty member or the President of the University. In such cases, the committee's investigations and findings shall be confidential and may be reported only to the complainant or the President. The committee may recommend a formal due process hearing or other appropriate action.
 4. **Committee on University Facilities**
This committee shall be a standing committee charged with representing the interests of the faculty to the University Facilities Committee.
The purview of this committee includes, but is not restricted to, such areas as planning of instructional or research buildings, access to buildings by faculty and students, security of buildings, allocation and use of parking areas, and development and enforcement of the traffic regulations. The chairperson of this committee shall be elected from its membership and shall serve a one-year term.
 5. **Committee Procedures**
 1. All standing committees' reports, except those restricted by confidentiality, shall be duplicated and distributed to all members of the Senate in advance of the date of the report's consideration.
 2. The Chairperson of the Senate shall receive and file duplicate copies of each Senate Committee's report, one of which may be borrowed by any committee of the Senate.
 6. **Committee on Committees**
This committee shall be elected by the Faculty Senate from its own members. This committee, subject to approval by the Faculty Senate, shall nominate appropriate individuals from the faculty to serve on any university-wide committee.
- F. Officers**
1. The chair of the Executive Committee shall be elected by the entire Senate and shall also serve as the speaker of the Faculty Senate.
 2. The speaker shall be the presiding officer of the Senate and shall exercise other powers delegated by the Faculty Senate.
 3. Other offices may be established by the Faculty Senate to carry out its functions.
- G. Operations**
The Faculty Senate shall establish its bylaws and rules of procedures.
- H. Reapportionment**
Reapportionment of the Senate shall take place every two years.

Amendments

A. **Initiation**

Amendments to this constitution shall be initiated by:

1. written petition presented to the Faculty Senate signed by 20% of the faculty, or
2. 2/3 vote of the membership of the Faculty Senate, following a written presentation and discussion of the proposed amendment in a previous regularly scheduled meeting.

B. **Ratification**

After initiation, the Speaker of the Senate shall publish notification and the Faculty Senate shall hold an open meeting to discuss the proposed amendment. Within 30 days after the open meeting the faculty shall vote for or against ratification. Ratification shall require approval of 2/3 of the faculty voting on the proposed amendment.

Adoption & Initiation

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee, appointed by the President of Prairie View A&M University, shall oversee the ratification of this constitution and the initial election of members of the Faculty Senate of Prairie View A&M University. The Committee shall decide all questions of the validity of ratification and the initial election of senators.

A. **Ratification**

The Constitution of the Faculty Senate of Prairie View A&M University shall become effective after:

1. a majority of the faculty voting approve ratification,
2. ratification by the President of Prairie View A&M University,
3. ratification by the Chancellor of the Texas A&M University System, and
4. ratification by the Board of Regents of the Texas A&M University System.

B. **Initial Composition**

1. Special elections of senators, following procedures outlined in organization of this constitution, shall be held after ratification.
2. Once elected, members of the Senate shall determine the length of their term by lot in accordance with the organization outlined by this constitution.

C. **Place in University Governance**

Upon adoption of this constitution, the Faculty Senate shall be the only body for university-wide faculty participation in the governance of Prairie View A&M University.

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