

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE BYLAWS

First adopted 5 May 1973. Last amended 4 June 2018.

Article V of the Faculty Constitution describes Senate membership, election procedures, organization, authority and functions. Within certain limitations, the Senate is empowered to make rules governing its own internal organization and procedures.

Meetings

As required by the Portland State University Faculty Constitution, the Faculty Senate meets normally on the first Monday of each month during the academic year. To accommodate the academic calendar, the Presiding Officer may transfer a regular meeting to another week by announcement at the beginning of the academic year. If there is an unexpected University closure on the day of a regular meeting, the meeting shall take place on the subsequent Monday (excluding holidays). If the agenda at any regular meeting is not completed, the Presiding Officer may call for an additional meeting on the following Monday. All Faculty members may attend Senate meetings as visitors; Senators may request privilege of the floor for visitors at meetings. Special meetings during the academic year may be held at the call of the President, or upon written petition to the Secretary by any five members of the Senate. Summer meetings of the Senate may be called during the eight-week term by the Steering Committee, with at least two academic days notice being given Senators before each meeting.

Alternates

Senators may designate an alternate, empowered to act on their behalf, by notifying the Secretary in writing prior to the meeting. The designation may be for a specific meeting or for a stated span of time. Senators may change their alternate any time by written notification to the Secretary. Senators, to facilitate the holding of summer meetings, are expected also to submit names and addresses of summer alternates (as well as their own summer addresses) to the Secretary by 10 June.

Resignation

The Constitution requires that a senator who takes a leave of absence or sabbatical leave for one academic year or more, or is absent for more than three consecutive meetings must resign his or her Senate seat, which shall be filled in accordance with Article V., Section 2, paragraph 5.

Presiding Officer Elect, Presiding Officer, and Past Presiding Officer

The Senate shall elect from among its members, each year at the last regular scheduled Senate meeting of spring term, a Presiding Officer Elect for a term of one year. The previous Presiding Officer Elect shall thereupon become the Presiding Officer for a term of one year, and the previous Presiding Officer shall become the Past Presiding Officer for a term of one year.

Following nominations by voice or in writing to the Secretary, election of the Presiding Officer shall be by secret ballot. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, successive run-off elections shall be held among the leading candidates whose combined votes total at least 50 percent of the votes cast, until one candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.

The Presiding Officer Elect, Presiding Officer, and Past Presiding Officer shall be members of the Steering Committee. If they are not already elected members of the Senate, they shall be ex officio members of the Senate.

The Presiding Officer shall serve for a term of one year and chair all meetings of the Senate and its Steering Committee. After completing this term, the Presiding Officer becomes Past Presiding Officer for a term of one year. If the Presiding Officer resigns or is otherwise unable to complete the one-year term, the Presiding Officer Elect shall become Presiding Officer for the remainder of the term and continue in that position in the subsequent year.

The Presiding Officer Elect shall preside in the absence of the Presiding Officer at all meetings of the Senate and its Steering Committee and, after one year serving in that position, shall succeed as Presiding Officer. If the Presiding Officer Elect resigns or is otherwise unable to complete the one-year term, the Senate shall choose a new Presiding Officer Elect at its next regular meeting, in accordance with the procedure described above.

The Past Presiding Officer shall serve in that position for one year, after completing a one-year term as Presiding Officer.

Secretary

As provided in Article IV, Section 1.2, of the Faculty Constitution, the Secretary to the Faculty shall be ex officio Secretary of the Senate.

Steering Committee

After the election of a Presiding Officer and a Presiding Officer Elect, the Senate shall elect two of its members each year to serve two-year terms as members of the Steering Committee of the Senate. Following nominations by voice or given in writing to the Secretary elections of the two members of the Steering Committee shall be by secret ballot. If two candidates do not receive a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, successive run-off elections shall be held among the leading candidates whose combined votes total at least 50 percent of the votes cast, until two candidates receive a majority of the votes cast.

In addition to the four members each elected for two-year terms, the Steering Committee shall comprise the Presiding Officer, the Presiding Officer Elect, and the Past Presiding Officer. The Secretary to the Faculty, the Chair of the Committee on Committees, the representative from Portland State University to the Interinstitutional Faculty Senate with the greatest seniority in that position, and the faculty member of the Portland State University Board of Trustees shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Steering Committee. An elected member of Steering Committee who is not already an elected member of the Senate shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of Senate.

The Steering Committee shall meet prior to each scheduled meeting of the Senate. During the summer, the members of the Steering Committee who are on campus or in town will also be available to meet occasionally on Senate business.

The Steering Committee shall expedite the work of the Senate by:

- a. Scheduling Senate action on committee work.
- b. Referring problems to appropriate committees and coordinating the work of the different committees.
- c. Assuring the Senate that agenda items submitted by Senate members and committees are properly prepared for Senate action.
- d. Initiating motions for Senate referral to committees, or, where appropriate, for direct Senate action.
- e. Making representation pursuant to Senate resolutions on educational matters and faculty interests to the State Board of Higher Education and other national, state and local government bodies. (In cases of urgency and in the absence of a Senate resolution on a policy matter at issue, the Steering Committee may make representations in the name of the Steering Committee.)

Agenda

The Constitution empowers the Senate to establish its own rules governing its agenda. Items may be placed on the Senate agenda as follows:

- a. By the Presiding Officer at his or her discretion. Ordinarily the Presiding Officer will not place matters on the agenda which should have been brought before the Senate through routine means. The Presiding Officer's prerogative in the matter is reserved for extraordinary circumstances which might require admission of unforeseeable matters to the agenda. It is not the normal function of the Presiding Officer to initiate Senate business or to relieve the Senate members from their obligations to present materials well in advance and after careful consideration. Senate members must conform to agenda rules in order to avail the body's full membership of access to all details of proposals and motions sufficiently in advance to permit careful deliberation and consideration.
- b. By notice of any member of the Senate in open meeting, providing that any two other members concur. This notice will appear in the minutes of the meeting which will be published by the Secretary.
- c. By written notice of the chairperson of a faculty committee delivered to the Secretary by 12:00 noon seven calendar days after the prior Senate meeting, or after summer break, 14 calendar days before the meeting.
- d. By action of the Steering Committee in accordance with its functions given above.

The agenda for special meetings will be published with the call for the meeting.

Except by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, motions may be made and votes taken only on those subjects listed on the agenda for the meeting.

In general, the Senate meeting agenda will be constituted with these elements:

- a. Roll, Approval of Minutes of Preceding Meeting, and Approval of Consent Agenda
- b. Announcements
- c. Discussion Item (optional)

- d. Unfinished Business
- e. New Business
- f. Question Period: Questions for Administrators; Questions for the Presiding Officer
- g. Reports from Officers of the Administration and from Committees
- h. Adjournment

Meeting Materials

At least one week before each regular Senate meeting, a packet of materials containing the full agenda and relevant supporting documents shall be distributed to senators and ex-officio members, and posted on-line. Electronic copies of all Senate proceedings are posted at www.pdx.edu/faculty-senate.

Question Period

The Senate has adopted the following rules for this portion of the question period involving administrators:

- a. Questions for administrators must be submitted to the Secretary to the Faculty by 12 noon on Monday one week preceding the Senate meeting.
- b. Questions should be designated for a particular officer of the University who is an administrative ex-officio member of the Senate (viz., President, Vice President, Assistant to the President, Provost, Vice Provost, or Dean) who is responsible for the policy or action at issue. If the senator drafting the question is uncertain to whom it should be directed, the Secretary will be available to help the senator make that designation.
- c. Questions shall be clearly framed and focused on a single issue.
- d. Supplementary questions must be directly related to the original question. The Senator drafting the original questions will be given the first opportunity to ask a supplementary question. Equity and Robert's Rules, however, demand that other Senators have a chance to put supplementary questions before anyone has a second chance to do so.
- e. The question period in any one Senate session will be allotted one-half hour on the agenda, with any additional time being at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.

Division Caucuses

When a division has an opening on the Committee on Committees, the division shall caucus to elect its representative(s). The meeting will be called by the Secretary to the Faculty. The outgoing member of the Committee on Committees or, in the absence of that person, the senior senator from the division, shall serve as chair of the caucus. Normally, the caucus will take place at the June Senate meeting to select Committee on Committee member(s) for the subsequent year; however, when a mid-term vacancy occurs, a caucus will be called at that time. Within three days after the caucus, the chair of the caucus shall report in writing to the Secretary to the Faculty of the chosen Committee on Committees member(s), along with the names of those present at the meeting.