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## BYLAWS OF THE ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY

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**Article I. Name.** The name of the governing body established by the Constitution shall be the Athens State University Faculty or, in house, the Faculty.

**Article II. Purpose.** The purpose of this body, its Faculty Senate, and its committees is to provide recommendations in all academic matters at Athens State University in a manner that is consistent with and permitted by Athens State University's *Statement on Shared Governance*.

**Article III. Members.** Voting members shall consist of all full time tenured or non-tenured faculty members, excluding those who hold regular faculty rank but whose duties are essentially administrative (e.g., College Deans and Vice-Presidents).

**Article IV. Officers.** There shall be a presiding officer elected by the Faculty according to the process described in Article XII, Paragraph C. The presiding officer shall be eligible for re-election. The presiding officer shall appoint a secretary who shall be responsible for recording the minutes of all Faculty and Senate meetings and for preparing and distributing updated copies of the constitution and bylaws to every Faculty member yearly. The presiding officer must be a tenured member of the Faculty Senate. The presiding officer shall preside over all meetings of the Faculty and the Faculty Senate.

If temporarily absent from a meeting or portion of a meeting, the presiding officer shall appoint a temporary presiding officer from among current senators. If a permanent vacancy shall occur in the office of presiding officer, the senator with the most seniority at Athens State University shall immediately assume the duties of presiding officer, and the Elections Committee, using a procedure similar to that outlined in Article XII Paragraph C, shall organize and conduct within thirty days an election by secret signed or electronic ballot among the Faculty to select a new presiding officer from among current tenured senators.

The presiding officer serves a term of one year. The term of office for presiding officer commences on June 1.

**Article V. Quorum.** A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of all those eligible to vote in Faculty meetings.

**Article VI. Parliamentary Authority.** Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority used to settle procedural objections or points of order.

**Article VII. Meetings.** Full Faculty Convocation shall be during the first and last months' Faculty meetings in the regular academic year. Special meetings may be called by any Faculty member by notifying the entire membership in writing and stating the purpose of the meeting. If a quorum attends this meeting, business may be conducted but is limited to the stated purpose of the meeting. The presiding officer will provide an agenda for all Faculty meetings.

**Article VIII. Limitations on Debate.** Debate shall not be limited to motions on the floor but shall be permitted about academic issues and concerns even when no motion is pending. However, when a motion is pending, debate shall be limited to the issue it concerns in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

**Article IX. Committees.** The Faculty shall have the following Standing Committees: Academic Affairs Committee, Curriculum Committee, Elections Committee, Faculty Affairs Committee, and Learning



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Resources Committee. The Faculty may form additional standing and ad hoc committees, related to academic matters, as the need arises.

Annually in June after the new Senate takes office, the P.O. and Senators from each respective college will appoint four (4) committee representatives of that college from a list of volunteers within each. Since the Constitution was revised during the 2013-2014 academic year, for the 2014-2015 academic year two committee members will have a one year term and two will have a two year term, thereby staggering two year membership thereafter so as to both preserve continuity and allow for turnover. Upon completion of a two year term, committee members will be allowed to volunteer for service upon that committee again or for service upon another. Faculty will be encouraged to sign up for more than one committee and to rank order of preference as in the past, though "first come, first served" will not determine the assignment. Faculty may only serve on one committee at a time, however, and Senators may not simultaneously serve on committees.

Membership for Standing Committees (Academic Affairs, Curriculum Committee, Elections Committee, Faculty Affairs, and Learning Resources):

Arts and Sciences:	four members
Business:	four members
Education:	four members
Library:	one member

The Faculty's objectives for the mission, roles, and responsibilities of each Standing Committee, operating within the framework set forth in the *Statement on Shared Governance*, are set forth below:

### **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

**Mission:** The Academic Affairs Committee shall serve as the Faculty's primary entity to evaluate and make recommendations about academic issues that are under consideration by the Faculty Senate. The committee shall study issues and may recommend policies concerning academic programs and practices. It shall work to improve the quality of academic services rendered by the University, including teaching and learning, admission and retention, academic advising, academic sanctions and academic awards such as scholarships. It shall develop and monitor a program to generate information necessary for objective assessments of degree programs.

**Responsibilities:** The scope and responsibilities of the Academic Affairs Committee shall include, but are not limited to

- a) Undertake a periodic review, when appropriate, of the University's learning goals and recommend assessment methods of those goals.
- b) Develop and monitor a system that facilitates an academic review process for all degree programs in collaboration with the University's chief academic officer.
- c) Evaluate and recommend institutional policies relating to academic standards impacting admissions, transfer credit, grading, graduation, academic sanctions and academic honors.
- d) Recommend initiatives that will increase the quality of learning and general excellence in academic programs, with a special emphasis on priorities associated with the University's Quality Enhancement Plan or similar activity.
- e) Monitor the academic calendar for compliance with regulatory requirements while maximizing a student-sensitive timetable for delivery of effective instruction, and make recommendations related to the same.
- f) Monitor the development, adoption, and modification of degree programs, and make recommendations related to the same.



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- g) Evaluate other academic issues assigned by the Faculty Senate.
- h) Forward Committee recommendations to the Faculty Senate for review and approval.

### **CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

**Mission:** The Curriculum Committee is to review all curriculum proposals for addition or deletion of courses, changes in degree requirements, and changes in course descriptions for existing courses prior to these changes becoming policy.

**Responsibilities:** The scope and responsibilities of the Curriculum Committee shall include, but are not limited to

- a) Review new courses and programs (certificates, minors and majors) suggested by the department and supported by the college as evidenced by the completed Curriculum Review Request form.
- b) Ensure quality and clarity in learning goals and assessment areas in submitted syllabus review.
- c) Ensure collaboration and absence of duplication in new courses and programs.
- d) Review modifications in existing courses and programs of studies.
- e) Develop and review guidelines for courses and new programs as determined by departments and colleges, as well as guidelines for the number of credits in certificates, minors, and majors.
- f) Evaluate other curriculum issues as assigned by the Faculty Senate.
- g) Forward Committee recommendations to the Faculty Senate.

### **ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

**Mission:** The Elections Committee is responsible for conducting elections, such as elections for faculty senate, the Presiding Officer (P.O.), and members of the Tenure and Promotion Committee. They may be asked to assist in other elections of the faculty.

**Responsibilities:**

- a) Conduct an election in late spring semester for the following academic year's Tenure and Promotion Committee. Two members from each College will be elected.
- b) Solicit nominations and coordinate elections for the Faculty Senate.
- c) Solicit nominations from the slate of elected senators for the office of P.O. and conduct the P.O. election.
- d) Coordinate voting for amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws and any academic matters of interest to the faculty.
- e) Forward results of elections to the Faculty Senate.



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## **FACULTY AFFAIRS**

**Mission:** The Faculty Affairs Committee charge is to review and make recommendations concerning policies related to faculty employment and the welfare of the faculty.

**Responsibilities:** The scope and responsibilities of the Faculty Affairs Committee shall include but are not limited to:

- a) Review and make recommendations related to promotion and tenure policies.
- b) Review and make recommendations related to faculty evaluation, including review of student evaluation of courses to ensure quality input from students that is representative and constructive.
- c) Suggest and make recommendations on policies and guidelines related to professional development, undergraduate research support, and other matters related to excellence in teaching and working with students.
- d) Review and make recommendations when needed for the Faculty section of the Policy Library.
- e) Evaluate other items assigned by the Faculty Senate.
- f) Forward Committee recommendations to the Faculty Senate for review and approval.

## **LEARNING RESOURCES**

**Mission:** The Learning Resources Committee reports to the Faculty Senate and is responsible for making recommendations to assist the library director in the planning and evaluating of library services and information literacy programs that support the curriculum and research of the University.

**Responsibilities:** The scope and responsibilities of the Learning Resources Committee shall include, but are not limited to:

- a) Consult with the library director related to resources in the library (text, journals, data bases, web presence, etc.), and making suggestions concerning the same.
  - b) Design and implement assessment methods and instruments intended to guide the Committee's recommendations and evaluate assessment results.
  - c) Support the ongoing development and implementation of information literacy across the curriculum.
  - d) Regularly monitor and assess utilization of the library facilities, including the learning commons (e.g. technology support, writing, information literacy, research assistance, etc.) to guide the Committee's recommendations.
  - e) Suggest and make recommendations on library policy.
  - f) Serve as liaisons between the library and faculty.
  - g) Evaluate other items assigned by the Faculty Senate.
  - h) Forward Committee recommendations to the Faculty Senate for review and approval.
- All committees must keep formal minutes of meetings to meet the accreditation requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

**Article X. Amendment of Constitution and Bylaws.** The Constitution may be amended only by a recorded two-thirds vote of the Faculty followed by a written acceptance by the President of the University.

The Bylaws may be amended by a written two-thirds vote of the Faculty participating in a vote where a quorum is present or participating. Voting may be written, electronic, or by current accepted practice. The Bylaws may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of those voting at a meeting where a quorum is present, but this does not apply to the Constitution. If a provision from the Constitution is repeated in the



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Bylaws, the rule in this article that governs the Constitution shall apply.

**Article XI. Inconsistencies Between Constitution and Other Matters.** Nothing herein shall be read to be inconsistent with federal or state laws governing Athens State University, or with any policies, rules, and/or directives established by the University's Board of Trustees and/or its President. In the event of any inconsistency between any such laws, policies, rules, and/or directives and this Constitution, said laws, policies, rules, and/or directives shall govern.

**Article XII. The Faculty Senate.** During interim periods between regular meetings of the Faculty of Athens State University, the Senate of Athens State University shall conduct any business otherwise required to be transacted by the Faculty as stated herein.

**A. Membership.** The Senate shall consist of twelve regular voting members of the Faculty and one Librarian, including the presiding officer. Each College will elect four senators by secret ballot using the procedure specified in Paragraph B below. Senators serve a term of one year. The terms of office for senators commence on June 1.

**B. Election of Senators.** Early in January, the members of the Elections Committee from each College will call for nominations for senators from the Faculty from their College. The members of the Elections Committee from each College will then conduct elections by secret ballot for four senators from the nominees from their College. Nominees for the Senate must have been employed as full-time faculty members at Athens State for at least one academic year. (Note: Presiding officer candidates must be tenured faculty.) Names of the senators-elect must be submitted to the entire Elections Committee no later than February 1.

If for any reason a permanent vacancy occurs in the Senate membership, the members of the Elections Committee from the College in which the vacancy occurs shall organize and conduct a special election within thirty days to fill the vacancy. A senator elected to fill a mid-term vacancy shall take office immediately and shall serve the remainder of the predecessor's term.

**C. Election of Officers.** Upon receipt of the list of senators-elect from the Colleges, members (one from each College) of the Elections Committee will issue a call for nominations to the entire voting faculty for the position of presiding officer. Only full-time faculty members may submit nominations for the presiding officer position.

The members of the Elections Committee will be responsible for verifying the list of nominees (i.e., ensure that nominees are tenured faculty and are willing to serve), and the list of nominees must be finalized no later than March 1.

The election for presiding officer will be conducted by the members of the Elections Committee via secret signed or electronic ballot, and the election must be completed no later than April 1. The presiding officer shall be elected upon receiving 50% plus one of votes cast in the election. In the event no candidate receives a majority, a run-off will be held between the top two.

**D. Power of Proxy.** If for any reason a senator is to be absent from a Senate meeting, such senator is empowered to authorize a proxy to attend meetings and to vote on behalf of the absent senator. However, such authorization must be in writing and must be presented to the presiding officer of the Senate prior to the start of the Senate meeting. The proxy must be a regular voting member of the Faculty from the



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College of the absent senator. Moreover, this rule of power of proxy also applies to the standing committees of the faculty.

**E. Meetings.** By June 15 of each year, the Senate shall establish and distribute to the Faculty a meeting schedule (dates/times/places) of the Senate's regular meetings. Such regular meetings shall be held at least once per month during the twelve-month year. Special meetings of the Senate may be called at the request of the presiding officer, or shall be called by the presiding officer upon receipt of a written petition which has been signed by at least seven members of the Senate. No regular or special meeting of the Senate shall be held unless members of the Faculty are given at least seven days' notice of the meeting and its agenda in writing.

The first order of business at a Senate meeting shall be a recorded roll-call tally of Senate membership; this tally shall be maintained by the recording secretary as the record of attendance by senators.

A member of the Senate who, according to this tally, is absent from more than three regular meetings of the Senate during a term of office without benefit of proxy shall have vacated the office; the members of the Elections Committee from that senator's academic College shall be notified promptly of this vacancy by the presiding officer of the Senate.

**F. Voting.** The Senate shall transact business only if seven or more senators are present in the meeting room. On all matters before the Senate, a recorded roll-call vote shall be taken if requested by at least three senators in a timely manner; otherwise, viva voce voting is permitted. The presiding officer shall have an equal vote in all matters. The Senate's proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order unless altered or prohibited by the Faculty Constitution, these Bylaws or a majority vote of the Senate. The Senate shall make efforts to record all proceedings. These records shall be available to all members of the Faculty.

**G. Resolutions.** The procedure for resolutions must follow Robert's Rules of Order.