



## **Charter of the University Senate**

**Western Kentucky University**

May, 2001

## Table of Contents

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Preamble	1
I. The Function of the University Senate	1
II. The Membership of the University Senate	2
A. Composition	2
B. The Officers and Their Functions	2
C. Elections	3
D. Term of Office	4
III. Senate Meetings and Rules of Procedure	4
IV. The Organization of the University Senate	5
A. Standing Committees of the Senate	5
1. The Executive Committee	5
2. The University Curriculum Committee	6
3. The General Education Committee	7
4. The Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities Committee	8
B. Rules of Standing Committees	9
C. Ad Hoc Committees	9
D. Faculty Representation on other University Committees	10
V. Charter Amendments	10
VI. Implementation	10
Appendix:	
Functions of the College Curriculum Committees	11
Bylaws	13

## **PREAMBLE**

We, the faculty of Western Kentucky University, are committed to a collegial system of university governance. In a collegial system, authority and responsibilities are shared among colleagues, some of whom have duties as faculty and others as administrators. The Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities jointly formulated by the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (as adopted by the AAUP in 1966 and revised in 1990), outlines general principles governing the respective roles of governing boards, faculties, and administrators. In accord with the general principles outlined in this document, we subscribe to the goal of a system of governance in which there are appropriately shared responsibilities and cooperative action.

In a collegial system, decision-making power is delegated to the collegial group most expert in or responsible for the area in which a decision is made. The faculty has primary responsibility for areas such as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life relating to the educational process. The final decision on these matters is by statute lodged with the Board of Regents and may be delegated by the Board to the President. We believe that in these matters faculty advice should be welcomed and encouraged and if not accepted, the rationale communicated to the faculty. Whenever possible, the faculty should have the opportunity to consider the matter further and to convey its view to the appropriate administrator. In other areas that affect academic programs, such as the selection of the President and other administrators, the organization and structure of departments, institutional budget priorities, and the like, the appropriate faculty bodies should be consulted.

This Charter sets forth a structure through which the faculty as a whole at Western Kentucky University can exercise its collegial responsibility. Every faculty member shall have the opportunity to participate in university governance either directly by serving in the Senate or on a Senate committee or indirectly by electing colleagues to represent her or him.

### **I. The Function of the University Senate**

The University Senate is the agency for the articulation and presentation of the views of the faculty. While departments, colleges, schools, and programs are empowered to make decisions in many areas, the need remains for consultation and cooperation on academic and professional matters that pertain to the university as a whole. Hence, the University Senate shall function as the official representative voice of the faculty, advising and making recommendations to the President and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs concerning academic requirements and policies, faculty responsibilities and welfare, and any other matters of importance to the faculty.

## **II. The Membership of the University Senate**

### **A. Composition**

1. The term "faculty" for purposes herein is defined as all persons in the full-time employ of the University who hold faculty rank, instructor and above, excluding visiting or adjunct professors. The two exceptions are the extended campus and the part-time representatives selected to serve on the Professional Responsibilities and Faculty Welfare Committee who must be members of the group they are to represent, but need not have faculty status as defined above.
2. Each college and library department shall have one representative. A departmental alternate shall have the full rights and privileges of an elected senator when substituting for a regular representative. Department heads shall be eligible to serve on the Senate.
3. Each college and the library shall select as many at-large alternates as required so that the total of departmental and at-large representatives is equal to ten (10) percent (rounded to the nearest whole number) of the unit's total faculty. An equal number of alternates shall be selected by each unit. An at-large alternate shall substitute for an at-large senator and shall have the full rights and privileges of an elected senator.
4. Non-voting advisory members of the University Senate include: the President of the University, the Provost, the Academic Deans, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Dean of Libraries, the Faculty Regent (the Faculty Regent cannot also be an elected Senate representative), and a representative from the Staff Council.
5. Student Membership: three students shall be members of the University Senate. They and their alternates shall be selected by the Student Government Association and shall serve one-year terms.

### **B. The Officers and Their Functions**

1. The University Senate shall have a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary elected annually by the membership of the University Senate. A Parliamentarian, who need not be a Senator, shall be appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee.
2. The Chair shall conduct the meetings of the Senate and serve as the chair of the Executive Committee.
3. The Vice Chair shall perform all the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair.
4. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all Senate meetings and make the minutes available to members of the Senate and the entire faculty by posting them on the Senate Website within five work days. The Secretary shall keep a membership list and record of attendance. The Secretary shall also keep minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee.

5. The officers of the University Senate shall serve in their respective positions for a period of one year or until successors are elected. They shall be eligible for reelection.
6. The terms of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary shall begin with their election at a meeting held near the end of the spring semester.
7. The constitutional officers of the Senate may be removed for cause, following the guidelines established in the most recent edition of Sturgis's *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*.

### C. Elections

1. Departments shall hold elections for departmental Senators during the first week of March. The results shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the Senate who shall prepare the roster for the new Senate. Each department shall also elect an alternate to attend Senate meetings when the regular representative is unable to attend.
2. Election of at-large members shall be conducted by the Vice-Chair of the Senate, assisted by College representatives on the Executive Committee. The election shall proceed as follows: in the first week of March each department may nominate up to three faculty members to a pool from which its college's at-large representatives shall be chosen. (The same procedure shall be used by the library.) The list of nominees for each college shall be published and voting by ballot shall be in the offices of the college deans and/or other designated place at a time determined by each college. Each eligible voter shall be permitted to vote for as many persons as positions being filled. Those with the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie, a drawing to determine the winner shall be conducted by the Vice-Chair. The runners-up shall be placed in a pool from which replacements will be selected when vacancies occur. In each case, the person with the highest number of votes shall be selected. Among the runners-up, a number equal to those elected shall be declared alternates for at-large representatives.
3. In conjunction with the organizational meeting of the new Senate, the representatives from each college and the library shall caucus separately to elect from their number representatives to each of the standing committees.
4. If a departmental senator resigns, then the department's alternate shall become the department's representative. If an at-large senator resigns, the first eligible alternate from that college/library shall replace that person.
5. If a senator is absent from two regularly scheduled Senate meetings during an academic year and fails to provide an alternate, then the Chair of the University Senate may declare the senator's position vacant. If the position of a departmental senator is declared vacant, the department shall hold a new election. The Vice Chair of the University Senate shall keep a complete record of the votes for at-large senators for each college. If the position of an at-large senator in a college is declared vacant, the next eligible person in the at-large pool for that college shall become senator.

#### **D. Term of Office**

Each elected member shall serve for a term of two years beginning August 1 of the first year and ending July 31 of the second year. Members shall be eligible for reelection for a second consecutive term, but ineligible for further reelection until one year has elapsed. Elections to fill vacancies shall be conducted by the department where the vacancy has occurred and shall be only for the unexpired term. Fractions of terms of less than one year served in fulfilling an unexpired term shall not prevent the individual from being elected for two additional successive terms.

### **III. Senate Meetings and Rules of Procedure**

- A.** The University Senate shall meet once a month during the academic year unless the frequency of meetings is changed by a vote of the Senate. The date, time, and place of the meetings are to be determined by the Executive Committee.
- B.** The agenda shall be distributed to the members of the Senate at least seven days prior to the meeting. For action items, appropriate information shall be distributed with the agenda. For items on the information only/consent agenda, information shall be made available on the Senate Website at least seven days prior to the meeting.
- C.** A special meeting may be called by the Chair, with the concurrence of the majority of the voting members of the Executive Committee. A special meeting must also be called by the Chair upon written request of at least ten members of the University Senate.
- D.** If a departmental senator and the departmental alternate senator cannot attend a Senate meeting, the departmental senator can send any member of the department to the Senate meeting.
- E.** A quorum of the University Senate shall be a majority of the voting membership of the Senate. Business conducted up to the point that an absence of a quorum is established and announced by the chair is assumed to be conducted with a quorum present.
- F.** Procedural matters brought before the Senate shall require only one reading; substantive matters shall require two readings. Any senator may make a resolution which, if seconded, shall be addressed by the Senate.
- G.** The University Senate shall use the most recent edition of Sturgis's *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure* to govern its meetings.

- H. All meetings of the University Senate shall be open to all members of the faculty and other interested parties. Visitors shall be permitted to address the Senate at the discretion of the chair.

#### **IV. The Organization of the University Senate**

The University Senate shall act on all proposals received either from its committees or from its members. In addition, the Senate shall hear and rule on any appeal from a college curriculum committee and shall forward its recommendation, along with the relevant materials, to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The University Senate shall also act through its committees, receiving for information reports of committee actions. However, the Senate may vote to review a committee action. The committee shall be informed of the review, and the matter shall be placed on the agenda of the next Senate meeting. The Senate shall forward its recommendation to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

##### **A. Standing Committees of the Senate**

The standing committees of the Senate are the following: the Executive Committee, the University Curriculum Committee, the General Education Committee, and the Professional Responsibilities and Faculty Welfare Committee. The composition and duties of the standing committees are as follows:

###### **1. The Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary of the University Senate, the Chairs of the other standing committees, and one Senate member from each undergraduate college and the library. The Provost and the Faculty Regent shall be non-voting advisory members of this committee. The Secretary of the Senate shall function as Secretary of the Executive Committee.

*The functions of the Executive Committee shall be:*

- a. to set the time and place of regular meetings and to prepare the agenda for each meeting
- b. to function as liaison between the Senate and the President and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, meeting with each one at least twice a semester
- c. to respond to requests from the President and Provost for the formation of an ad hoc committee to study a particular issue or to recommend faculty members to serve on a university committee
- d. to assist the Chair of the Senate in assigning issues to the appropriate committee for

- study and possible action
- e. to make recommendations to the Senate concerning Senate rules and bylaws, proposed amendments, and procedural changes.
- f. to conduct elections for Faculty Regent

## 2. The University Curriculum Committee

The University Curriculum Committee shall consist of voting members and alternates as well as non-voting advisory members. Voting members will be selected as follows: one senate representative and one alternate from each college and the Library shall be selected by Senate colleagues from the same college. One curriculum committee representative and one alternate shall be elected from each of the college undergraduate curriculum committees, the college graduate curriculum committees, and the Graduate Council. To ensure adequate representation three faculty members and three alternates shall be appointed by the Executive Committee; the appointed members should normally be Senators, but non-Senators may be appointed. One student senator and one student alternate shall be selected by the Student Government Association to serve on the committee. The Registrar, a representative of the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the deans (or their representatives) of the undergraduate colleges, the Library, and Graduate Studies and Research shall be advisory members.

*The functions of the University Curriculum Committee shall be:*

- a. to review existing programs and new program proposals in light of the university's mission statement
- b. to review any academic matters such as degree and graduation requirements, standards of scholastic achievement, rules and regulations governing faculty-student relations
- c. to review existing courses and new courses having significant consequences that cross college lines
- d. to study any curricular matter it chooses
- e. to study matters assigned to it by the Executive Committee

The University Curriculum Committee shall have two types of responsibilities: 1) to make proposals to the University Senate concerning university-wide academic policies, and 2) to review particular programs and courses to determine whether they meet established standards. The latter includes both action and consent items received from college curriculum committees.

University-wide academic policies include such matters as admission requirements, undergraduate degree and graduation requirements, and all similar matters that have application or significance beyond a single college, except matters pertaining to General

Education. The University Curriculum Committee shall make recommendations concerning these matters to the University Senate for its approval. Upon Senate approval such items shall be forwarded to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The University Curriculum Committee shall place on its agenda the following items. In his/her report to the Committee, the Chair shall inform the Committee of all information items submitted by the college curriculum committees. (See Appendix A for a definition of Information item.) All consent items submitted by the college curriculum committees shall be placed on a consent agenda. (See Appendix A for a definition of Consent item.) Any member of the University Curriculum Committee shall have the option of removing a consent item from the consent agenda and placing it on its action agenda for regular review. All action items submitted by the college curriculum committees shall be placed on an action agenda. (See Appendix A for a definition of Action item.) Any action item that the Curriculum Committee rejects shall be returned to the college curriculum committee that submitted it, accompanied by a rationale for the rejection. All consent and action items that the Committee approves shall be placed on the University Senate's consent agenda and upon its approval shall be forwarded as a recommendation to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

### 3. The General Education Committee

The General Education Committee shall consist of the following voting members: senators, one from each undergraduate college, shall be selected by Senate colleagues from the same college; members, one from each undergraduate college, shall be elected by the curriculum committees of the respective colleges; to ensure adequate representation three faculty members shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. (The appointed members should normally be Senators, but non-Senators may be appointed.) One student senator shall be selected by the Student Government Association to serve on the committee. A representative of the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the General Education Coordinator shall be non-voting advisory members.

*The functions of the General Education Committee shall be:*

- a. to develop and review general education guidelines, performance standards, and course criteria
- b. to review existing courses and to consider new courses proposed for general education
- c. to engage in a continuing evaluation of the effectiveness of the general education program
- d. to study all matters it chooses pertaining to general education
- e. to study matters assigned to it by the Executive Committee

The General Education Committee shall function as the faculty review body to make

recommendations regarding matters pertaining to general education. The General Education Committee shall have two types of responsibilities: 1) to make proposals to the University Senate concerning the structure and content of general education, and 2) to review courses proposed for general education to determine whether they meet established standards.

The oversight of the general education program includes such matters as establishing standards for general education and monitoring the effectiveness of general education. Proposals concerning such matters shall be submitted to the University Senate for approval. Upon Senate approval, they shall be forwarded to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The General Education Committee shall also review all courses submitted to it by college curriculum committees for general education credit. Information regarding approved courses shall be placed on the University Senate's consent agenda and upon its approval shall be forwarded as a recommendation to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Any proposal that the General Education Committee rejects shall be returned to the appropriate college curriculum committee, accompanied by a rationale for the rejection.

#### 4. The Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities Committee

The Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities Committee shall consist of fifteen voting members. The Gordon Ford College of Business, the library, and the Bowling Green Community College shall each have one voting member. The College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Ogden College of Science, Technology and Health, and Potter College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences shall each have two voting members. All members are to be selected by Senate colleagues from his/her unit. To ensure adequate representation three faculty members shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. (The appointed members should normally be Senators, but non-Senators may be appointed.) A faculty member from extended campus and a part-time faculty member shall also serve as voting members of this committee. (These members shall be selected by rotation among the off-campus centers in the case of the extended campus member and rotated among the colleges for the part-time faculty member.) One student senator shall be selected by the Student Government Association to serve on the committee. A representative from the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs shall be a non-voting advisory member of this committee.

*The functions of the Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities Committee shall be:*

- a. to make recommendations concerning the responsibilities and obligations of the faculty person in his/her role as scholar and teacher
- b. to make recommendations concerning faculty evaluation and the recognition of

- outstanding performance in teaching, scholarship (research), and university service
- c. to make recommendations on policies, criteria, and procedures for faculty recruitment, appointment, reappointment, promotion, tenure, post-tenure review, salary, workload, working conditions, summer teaching, sabbatical leave, leave of absence, professional travel expenses, off-campus teaching and service, and consulting activities
- d. to furnish advice on policies and procedures relating to retirement programs, insurance plans, sick leave, tenure, and other matters relevant to faculty welfare
- e. to study any matter pertaining to faculty responsibilities and welfare it chooses
- f. to make recommendations concerning policies and procedures related to faculty grievances
- g. to establish the pool from which faculty members will be chosen to serve on Faculty Grievance and Continuance Committees
- h. to study matters assigned to it by the Executive Committee

## **B. Rules of Standing Committees**

1. Meetings Standing committees shall meet at least once each month during the academic year. Special meetings may be called by the committee chair upon the request of a majority of the committee members.
2. The day, time, and place of all meetings shall be published so that interested parties may attend a committee meeting. Visitors shall be permitted to address the committee at the discretion of the chair.
3. Quorum A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of voting members of the committee.
4. Voting requirements A simple majority of the quorum is required for a legal vote.
5. Each committee, except the Executive Committee, shall elect its own chair. The chairs of all standing committees shall be members of the Senate.
6. Appointed members of committees who are not members of the Senate shall have the right to speak on the floor of the Senate when matters related to their committee are being debated, but they shall not have voting rights. In committee sessions they shall have the same rights as Senate-elected members of the committee.

## **C. Ad Hoc Committees**

The Executive Committee shall have the right to appoint an ad hoc committee in response to a need which it has identified or to an administrative request. The composition of such a committee shall be determined by the situation. Where appropriate, the rules for Standing Committees shall govern the organization and operation of an ad hoc committee. An ad hoc committee shall be disbanded after it has completed its investigation and reported its findings to the University Senate.

#### **D. Faculty Representation on other University Committees**

In addition to academic and faculty responsibility and welfare matters, there are many activities in the university that affect academic programs. Examples include the selection of the President and Executive Officers, institutional budget priorities, building priorities and design of academic facilities, goals and objectives of major fund raising efforts as related to academic matters, scholarship policies, selection of major non-academic administrators, support services related to academic functions, general policies regarding intercollegiate athletics, campus safety, transportation and parking policies, etc. In these matters it is appropriate that faculty opinion be considered along with that of others. Where feasible, the appropriate faculty body should be consulted. In other cases, the appropriate form of faculty input may be through having one or more faculty members serve on the committee in question. When committee appointments are appropriate, the President or delegated administrative officer shall request the University Senate Executive Committee to recommend as many faculty members as needed to serve on such committees. This applies both to standing committees such as the Budget Committee, Athletic Committee, and the like, and ad hoc committees formed to study and make recommendations on any issue of special importance to faculty.

Faculty members representing the Senate on a standing university committee shall normally serve for two years, but may serve for a longer term to conform to the norm for that committee. On ad hoc committees, Senate-recommended members shall serve until the committee has completed its task and is dismissed. One faculty representative from the Senate who serves on a standing university committee or an ad hoc committee shall report to the Senate and shall keep the Senate abreast of the activities of the committee on which he/she is serving.

#### **V. Charter Amendments**

A proposed amendment to the Charter of the University Senate may be submitted to the Executive Committee by Senate members or by a committee of the Senate. The Executive Committee shall present the proposal, along with its own recommendation, to the membership of the Senate. An amendment must have two readings and be approved by a two-thirds majority of the membership present.

#### **VI. Implementation**

The University Senate shall be established and this Charter adopted when approved by the Board of Regents of Western Kentucky University and shall replace the current Academic Council and Faculty Senate.

[Appendix]

### **Functions of the College Curriculum Committees**

Each college shall have undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees to review all curriculum-related matters, including the determination of degree requirements and standards of scholastic achievement. Departments shall submit to their college curriculum committees all proposals for changes in their academic programs.

If a proposal is approved by a college curriculum committee and it has significant implications for departments in other colleges, then it shall be forwarded to the University Curriculum Committee as an action item. Proposals with significant implications include the following: proposals for new programs (majors, minors, certificate programs), significant changes in programs, new courses, multiple changes to existing courses, changes in course credit hours, changes in course numbers with changes in level (e.g. PSY 342 becomes PSY 453), multiple offerings of "one-time only" courses, and academic policies and regulations.

If a proposal does not have significant implications beyond the college, then it shall be forwarded to the University Curriculum Committee as a consent item. Proposals that do not have significant implications for programs in other colleges typically include the following: proposals to change program (major, minor, certificate) titles, replace one intradepartmental course in a program with another, delete programs, suspend programs, delete courses, suspend courses, change course titles, change course catalog descriptions (as long as course content is not changed), change course numbers without changing level (e.g. PSY 342 becomes PSY 353), change course prerequisites, or create community college equivalent courses. Any member of the University Curriculum Committee shall have the right to remove a proposal from a college curriculum committee's list of consent items and to treat it as an action item. If a member of the University Curriculum Committee does so, the Committee may postpone review of the item until the next meeting of the University Curriculum Committee.

One-time only course offerings and proposals to change course prefixes shall be forwarded to the University Curriculum Committee as information items.

If a new course is also being recommended for inclusion in general education, then the proposal shall first be forwarded to the University Curriculum Committee for approval. If approved, the proposal shall be forwarded simultaneously to the University Senate for consent and to the General Education Committee for review.

If the University Curriculum Committee or the General Education Committee rejects a proposal from a college curriculum committee, the college curriculum committee shall have the

opportunity to revise its proposal and to resubmit it to the same committee. If the proposal is rejected a second time, the college curriculum committee shall have the right to appeal its case to the University Senate. It shall submit the proposal to the Chair of the Senate to be placed as an action item on the Senate agenda. If the University Senate rules in favor of the college curriculum committee's proposal, the proposal shall be forwarded as a recommendation to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

## **Bylaws**

**Bylaw 1 (supplementing II.C.4. and II.D. of the Charter of the University Senate).** The election of departmental senators will be conducted during odd years (e.g., 2001, 2003...). The election of at-large senators will be conducted during even years (e.g., 2002, 2004...). To make this possible, departmental senators will have a one-year term for the 2000/2001 academic year and a special election will be conducted for departmental senators during the spring of 2001. This one-year term will not be counted towards successive terms and any reelected departmental senator will be eligible for a second consecutive term of two years. This would give a departmental senator elected in 2000 the possibility of three terms in office (one term of one year and two terms of two years for a total of five years in office). After the spring 2001 elections, all senators will have two-year terms as described in the Charter.