

**CONSTITUTION OF  
THE FACULTY OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA**

(as amended October 19, 2020)

September 30, 2019

August 29, 2011

February 3, 1986

February 7, 1983

March 31, 1980

October 1, 1979

February 7, 1977

and approved by the Board of Regents February 20, 1986

**Preamble**

The University of Northern Iowa is a complex organization composed of interrelated components. The University was established by the people of the State of Iowa to serve the educational needs of its citizens and it is largely sustained by them. The people's delegates, the General Assembly, and the Governor define the scope of the University's operation and fix the level of its support. The Board of Regents, acting in turn as their delegates, establishes basic policies and sets overall goals.

Within itself, the University is likewise divided into distinct parts, to each of which is delegated a particular function in achieving the primary ends of the University, which are: the discovery and the dissemination of knowledge through teaching, research, and service.

The University's students are its very reason for being. Forwarding their progress toward the attainment of critical intelligence, moral sensitivity, and aesthetic awareness must be at the center of the University's many and varied activities. The faculty's work is to guide the students toward their educational goals through teaching and research. The nonacademic staff provides the services and the material conditions that make that work possible. The administrative offices oversee the whole operation and conduct the University's relations with the Board of Regents, the General Assembly, the Governor, and the people of Iowa.

The faculty of the University of Northern Iowa believes that the institution best fulfills its purposes when its several components--students, faculty, staff, and administration--act in

harmony and cooperation to achieve the common goals of the educational community in which they live.

The faculty further believes that this cooperative endeavor is more likely to succeed when each component understands its proper and distinctive functions and at the same time views these functions as shared and interdependent.

With these principles in mind, the faculty of the University of Northern Iowa, seeking to define itself more accurately, to outline its rights and responsibilities more precisely, and to describe its functions more exactly, hereby establishes and ordains this Constitution.

### **Article I: Definition of the Faculty**

**1. The University Faculty.** The University faculty shall consist of two groups: the voting faculty and the non-voting faculty.

**1.1 The Voting Faculty.** The voting faculty shall consist of all those who hold tenured, probationary, term or renewable term faculty appointments. It shall also include any other faculty with full-time contracts, plus any current temporary (adjunct) faculty members with a cumulative total of six or more semesters of service to the University at half-time or greater, out of the last eight semesters.

**1.2 The Non-Voting Faculty.** The non-voting faculty shall consist of those who hold all other faculty appointments, including emeritus faculty.

**1.3 Jurisdiction of the Voting Faculty:** Limitation of Voting. Privilege of motion, second, and debate shall be afforded to all members of the faculty during faculty meetings. Voting shall be restricted to members of the voting faculty.

**1.4** The Faculty Senate may, as it deems appropriate, admit individuals to the voting faculty or to the non-voting faculty on a permanent or ad hoc basis. Individuals who believe that their university responsibilities justify their being members of the voting or of the non-voting faculty may apply, in writing, to the Faculty Senate for consideration. Voting faculty or non-voting faculty status granted by the Faculty Senate shall be for such terms as the Faculty Senate specifies, but in all cases will be retained by the individual only as long as he/she remains in his/her position.

**2.** The word "Faculty" in this Constitution. When the word "faculty" is used in this Constitution without a modifying adjective preceding it, reference to the University faculty shall be assumed.

**3.** The definitions of the University in this Constitution apply to the conduct of the official business of the University faculty and do not prohibit the granting of privileges normally associated with faculty status, such as social privileges, to other members of the University

administration and staff.

**4. Official Roster of the Faculty.** As soon as practical in the fall semester but no later than October 1 and in the spring semester no later than February 1, the chairperson of the faculty shall arrange for the availability of an official roster of the faculty. The chairperson of the faculty shall have the authority to decide boundary cases of faculty status according to the spirit of the foregoing sections, subject to challenge and review as provided below. The fall roster shall include a listing of those persons who are qualified for membership in the voting faculty and those qualified for membership in the non-voting faculty. The spring roster shall consist of a list of additions to the fall roster. Qualification for faculty status for the entire academic year shall be established by a person's assignment during either the fall or the spring semester of that year. Faculty status established during an academic year shall be construed to apply also to the following summer session, unless the person does not continue his/her appointment with the University.

**4.1 Distribution.** A sufficient number of copies of the roster for the fall and spring shall be prepared to supply each of the following committees, persons, and offices: the Committee on Committees; the chairperson of the faculty; the vice-chairperson of the faculty; the secretary of the faculty; the Office of Academic Affairs; all college offices; all departmental offices. Each college office and each departmental office shall, for a period of one week after the roster's issuance, prominently display the roster in a place readily accessible to the faculty. In addition, a copy of the current semester's roster shall be made available to any faculty member upon written request to the secretary of the faculty.

**4.2 Challenges of the Roster.** Challenges of the accuracy or the propriety of the listings in any semester's roster shall be directed to the University Faculty Senate within 15 class days after distribution for adjudication by majority vote.

**4.3 Appeal and Final Disposition of Challenge.** The Senate's decision (see section 4.2 above) may be appealed to a majority vote of the University faculty whose decision shall be final.

## **Article II: Officers and Duties**

**1. Chairperson of the Faculty.** The University faculty shall elect its chairperson by majority vote of those voting.

**1.1 Election.** The Committee on Committees shall make at least two nominations; other names may be added to the ballot by petition of at least thirty faculty members delivered to the secretary of the faculty.

**1.2 Term.** The chairperson shall serve a term of one year, beginning in the fall semester; a person may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

**1.3 Duties.** The official duties of the chairperson of the faculty shall include:

**1.31** Presiding at meetings of the University faculty.

**1.32** Calling meetings of the faculty as prescribed in Article III.

**1.33** Preparing, in cooperation with the vice-chairperson of the faculty, the agenda of faculty meetings

**1.34** Acting as spokesperson for the established policies and positions of the faculty to officers of administration, to the press, to student leadership representatives, and, consistent with Board policies and regulations, to the Board of Regents.

**1.35** Communicating in writing with the faculty, or with its delegate, the University Faculty Senate, or with officers of administration on matters of faculty welfare, educational policy, or general institutional concern.

**1.351** The aforementioned correspondence shall, when judged appropriate by the chairperson, be distributed in copy form to the entire University faculty; files copies of all the official correspondence of the chairperson shall be available for examination by any member of the faculty.

**1.4 Absence or Incapacity of the Chairperson of the Faculty.** When, in the judgment of a majority of the University Faculty Senate, an absence of the chairperson of the faculty is prolonged to the point that the Senate judges the effectiveness of the office to be seriously jeopardized, the Senate shall declare the office vacated and shall nominate and then elect a faculty member to fulfill the remainder of the term.

**2. Vice-Chairperson of the Faculty.** The chairperson of the University Faculty Senate shall be the vice-chairperson of the University faculty. The vice-chairperson shall act as chairperson in the temporary absence of the elected chairperson, and shall serve as a consultant on faculty agenda, and in other ways as requested by the chairperson.

**3. Secretary of the Faculty.** The chairperson of the faculty shall appoint the secretary of the faculty.

**3.1 Term.** The secretary of the faculty shall serve during the term of the chairperson.

**3.2 Duties.** The official duties of the secretary of the faculty shall include:

**3.21** Taking, duplicating, and promptly distributing the official minutes of the faculty.

**3.22** Assisting the chairperson of the faculty in the preparation, distribution, and possible revision of each semester's roster.

**3.23** Maintaining a file of the official correspondence of the chairperson of the faculty.

**3.24** Keeping the minutes and other official documents of the faculty in a safe and accessible place.

**3.25** Maintaining liaison, where and when necessary, with the secretary of the University Faculty Senate.

**3.26** Preparing and distributing notice of regular and special meetings of the faculty.

### **Article III: Meetings**

**1. Regular Meetings.** There shall be at least one regular meeting of the faculty each year. Regular meetings of the faculty shall be called by the chairperson of the faculty; the chairperson may also call special meetings of the faculty.

**2. Special Meetings.**

**2.1 By Petition.** A special meeting of the faculty shall be called by the secretary of the faculty on receipt of a petition signed by thirty members of the faculty.

**2.2 Called by Senate.** The University Faculty Senate may, by majority vote of those present and voting, call a special meeting of the faculty. In this case, the secretary of the University Faculty Senate shall prepare a descriptive listing of the items to be discussed at the aforementioned meeting and shall promptly inform the chairperson of the faculty and the secretary of the faculty.

**2.3 Requested by the President or Vice-President and Provost.** The chairperson of the faculty shall, at the request of the President of the University or of the Vice-President and Provost, call a special meeting of the faculty.

**3. Notice of Meetings.** The secretary of the faculty shall prepare and distribute to the entire faculty and to recognize student government leaders, at least one week in advance whenever possible and practicable, a descriptive listing of the item(s) to be discussed at regular or special faculty meetings.

**4. Regular Meetings: Reserved Times.** A period of time sufficient to provide for a meeting of not less than fifty minutes in length shall be set aside once each month of the academic year for the scheduling of regular faculty meetings. No collegiate-grade classes and no other professional meetings or class exercises, insofar as possible and practicable, shall be scheduled for this period.

**5. Meetings: Times and Places.** Determination of the time and the place of faculty meetings shall normally be the responsibility of the chairperson of the faculty, except in the case of meetings called by majority vote of the Senate or by petition. In the latter two cases, responsibility for determining the time and place of the meeting falls to the secretary of the

faculty. In either case, the faculty officer shall request the cooperation of the University administration in reserving appropriate times and places for meetings.

**6. Parliamentary Guide.** Except as provided by this Constitution, or by the standing rules or bylaws of the faculty. Robert's Rules of Order (latest revision) shall be the parliamentary guide for the conduct of business in regular and special meetings of the University faculty.

**6.1 Appointment of Parliamentarian.** The chairperson of the faculty shall appoint a faculty member to serve as parliamentarian during the chairperson's term of office; the appointee shall perform such duties as the chairperson may stipulate.

**6.2 New Business and Deferred Final Action.** The chairperson of the faculty shall, as time and the agenda may permit, recognize members of the faculty who desire to present new and undocketed business at a regular or special faculty meeting. However, final action and vote on new and undocketed business shall automatically be postponed until the next regular or special faculty meeting when such business will be the first order of business at the commencement of the aforementioned meeting. By a two-thirds vote of those faculty members present and voting the provisions of this section may, for the instant meeting only, be overridden and immediate action on new and undocketed business concluded.

**6.3 Specially Privileged Motion to Adjourn.** After the expiration of fifty minutes from the commencement of a regular or special faculty meeting, a member of the faculty may interrupt debate to move to adjourn and the chairperson shall immediately put this motion to a vote of the faculty then present; the motion shall be undebatable; if the motion is adopted, the meeting shall be adjourned forthwith and the business under consideration just previous to the motion to adjourn shall be the first order of business at the commencement of the next regular or special meeting of the faculty.

**6.4 Quorum: Regular Meeting.** A quorum for a regularly scheduled meeting of the faculty for which notice has been sent at least one week in advance shall consist of 15% of the University faculty as listed in the current faculty roster.

**6.5 Quorum: Special Meetings.** A quorum for a special meeting of the faculty shall consist of 25% of the membership of the University faculty as listed in the current faculty roster.

**7. Meetings Open to the Public.** Regular and special meetings of the faculty shall be open to the public, except when the faculty votes to sit in executive session.

#### **Article IV: Jurisdiction**

**1. Powers of the Board of Regents.** It is recognized that nothing in this article, or in this constitution, can take precedence over the laws of Iowa or the statutory powers of the Board of Regents to set policies and to promulgate rules and regulations governing the institutions,

including the University of Northern Iowa, that are under its control.

**2. General Principles.** The faculty has the right to be adequately informed about and to participate jointly with the related components of the University in the determination of policy touching all the phases of the University's operations. The faculty may formulate and recommend policies to the President of the University on all subjects of University concern. The faculty shall play a central role in all decisions regarding educational policy and curriculum. The faculty functions through consultation and review in personnel decisions that can modify the faculty's professional identity, professional quality, and working environment (subject to any restrictions imposed by Chapter 20 of the Code and any collective bargaining agreements). The faculty's more general concern with the total program of the University is expressed in the form of recommendations and advice to the related components of the University.

**3. The University Faculty: Jurisdiction.** In accordance with Sections 1 and 2 above, the University faculty shall play a central role in formation and adoption of educational policy and may adopt recommendations and resolutions on any matter touching on the general welfare of the University. Subject to the limits provided in Section 1, above, the University faculty assume the major role in decisions related to 1) curricular matters which do not lie wholly within the jurisdiction of one college, 2) standards for granting of academic degrees and academic credit, and 3) educational policies not confined to one college. It shall participate in the nomination and review of academic administrators. It shall act on such other matters as may be submitted to it for decision by an officer of administration or by an officially designated representative of student government.

#### **Article V: Delegation of Functions**

**1. The Delegation Principle.** The University faculty and the voting faculty shall have power to delegate their functions to elected representatives from their membership and to establish standing or ad hoc committees as they see fit.

**2. Delegation of Functions to Faculties of Colleges.** The functions of the University faculty and of the voting faculty are hereby delegated, for all matters lying essentially within the jurisdiction of a single undergraduate college, to the appropriate faculty of that college and, for all matters relating essentially to the Graduate program, to the faculty of the Graduate College. Decisions of a college faculty or of its elected agencies are reviewable by the University faculty or its agencies only upon a finding by a college faculty, or by a college dean or the Vice-President and Provost or by the University Faculty Senate, that the responsibilities of another college or general University responsibilities are substantially involved. The term "college" includes all academic units that function as a college, regardless of designation.

**3. Delegation of Functions to the University Faculty Senate.** The principal representative

agency of the University faculty shall be the University Faculty Senate, which shall have the power to act for the faculty on all matters within its jurisdiction with these two exceptions: (a) the Senate shall not have power to amend this constitution: (b) in emergencies the Senate shall have the power to set aside a decision of the full faculty by a two-thirds vote; this action may be subject to subsequent review by the total faculty.

**3.1 Senate Membership.** The University Faculty Senate shall be composed of members elected by and from the voting faculty from each undergraduate college (including academic units that function as a college although otherwise designated), and elected by and from the Library Faculty. The number of senators to be elected by the members of each undergraduate college and the Library will be determined by the University Faculty Senate Bylaws. The chairperson of the faculty and the chairperson of the graduate faculty shall be ex officio members of the University Faculty Senate with full rights of debate and motion but will not vote.

**3.2 Terms.** Terms shall normally be three years, with terms of one-third of each group defined in 3.1 above to expire each year. A member shall serve no more than two consecutive full terms.

**3.3 Prolonged Absence or Incapacity of a Senator.** In case the absence or the incapacity of a senator shall extend beyond a semester, or if, in the Senate's judgment, it is probable that the absence will so extend, the Senate shall declare that senatorial office vacated and shall then proceed to request of the appropriate University faculty or college faculty agency either that a special election be held to fill the unexpired portion of that term or that the person receiving the next highest vote total in the election that installed the aforementioned senator be declared the incumbent in the senatorial office for the unexpired portion of the term. The provisions of this section shall not be construed to abridge the right of a senator to designate an alternate from his/her elective constituency to serve in his/her place and to exercise the functions of his/her office for reasonable periods of time. If a senator is elected chairperson of the faculty, he/she must resign as senator.

**3.4 Representation of the Voting Faculty: Limitation of Voting.** Privilege of motion, second, and debate shall be afforded to all members of the Senate during Senate meetings. Voting shall be restricted to senators who are members of the voting faculty.

**3.5 Senate Organization.** The Senate shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from among its members; it shall establish such additional offices and committees from among its members or the faculty at large as it sees fit; and it shall adopt appropriate by laws, rules, and procedures for the conduct of its business consistent with the requirements and the spirit of this Constitution.

**3.6 Information and Communication.** The time, place, and agenda of meetings of the



Senate shall be regularly communicated in timely form to the faculty; faculty members and recognized student government leaders shall have the right to attend and be heard at meetings of the Senate; minutes of the Senate meeting shall be promptly distributed to the entire faculty and to recognized student government leaders; and Senate documents shall be available for inspection by faculty members and by student government leaders upon request.

**3.7 Senate Focus on the University as a Whole.** It shall be the duty of the Senate to consider all matters that come before it from the point of view of the welfare of the entire University and the State it serves; although elected from various faculty constituencies, senators shall consider themselves representatives of the best in their profession rather than the representatives of fractions of their larger constituency.

**3.8 Faculty Review of Senate Action.** Actions of the Senate shall be reviewed by the faculty upon petition of thirty members of the faculty, delivered to the secretary of the faculty, within fifteen days from the publication of the minutes of the Senate meeting at which the action was taken.

**3.9 Accountability of Faculty Committees to the Senate.** Except when otherwise directed, all standing committees of the faculty and all ad hoc faculty committees shall report to and be accountable to the University Faculty Senate, and their work subject to instruction or amendment by the Senate.

**3.10 Delegation of Senate Authority to Faculty Committees.** The Senate may delegate to any faculty committee the authority to make disposition of any matter, subject to subsequent Senate review.

**3.11 Senate Consultation with Administrative Officers.** The Senate shall establish procedures for regular communication and consultation with the officers of administration, but particularly with the President and the Vice-President and Provost of the University.

**3.12 Relation of Senate Meetings to Faculty Meetings.** Except when specifically authorized by majority vote of the University faculty, the University Faculty Senate shall not meet while the faculty is in session.

**4. Standing Committees of the Faculty and the University Faculty Senate.** The faculty and its delegate, the University Faculty Senate, may establish such committees, standing or ad hoc, as they see fit, and delegate to them, subject to review by the University faculty, any of their functions and responsibilities. Except as explicitly provided otherwise, all such committees report to and are answerable to the Senate.

**5. Cooperative Action with other Agencies.** Nothing in this article precludes service of members of the faculty on committees or other appropriate professional groups established by the University administration or other appropriate agencies, except that no internal

agency of University governance not answerable to the University faculty may exercise any of its functions.

#### **Article VI: Ratification, Amendment, and Review**

- 1. Ratification.** This Constitution shall become the official Constitution of the University faculty of the University of Northern Iowa effective two weeks from the date of its adoption by majority vote of a regular or special faculty meeting, notice of which shall have been given at least one week in advance to the University faculty.
- 2. Amendment of the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Faculty.** The University Manual of Policies and Procedures, bylaws and other standing rules and resolutions of the faculty already adopted or which may be adopted under this Constitution may be amended, revised, or repealed by majority vote of those present and voting at a regular or special meeting of the faculty, notice of which, including a statement of the proposed amendment, revision, or repeal, shall have been given at least one week in advance.
- 3. Amendment of this Constitution.** This Constitution may be amended, revised, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a regular or special meeting of the faculty, notice of which, including a statement of the proposed amendment, revision, or repeal, shall have been given at least one week in advance.
- 4. Interpretation and Construction.** In case of any actual or apparent conflicts of construction or interpretation between this Constitution and the current University Manual of Policies and Procedures and/or other officially adopted standing rules and resolution of the University faculty, the contested issues shall be resolved in favor of this Constitution. If the adjudication of a contested issue is resolved in such a way as to alter a section of the University Manual of Policies and Procedures or other officially adopted standing rule or regulation of the faculty that has previously received Board approval, then that alteration shall be subject to approval by the Board of Regents.
- 5. Interpretation and Contest.** In case of a misunderstanding and/or a contested interpretation of the provisions of this Constitution, the interested party may present his/her case in writing for adjudication and decision by the University Faculty Senate and the Senate shall decide the matter by a majority vote of those present and voting.
- 6. Appeal and Final Disposition.** If the interested or the complainant party referred to above should, after completion of adjudication and decision by the Senate, remain dissatisfied, he/she may request the chairperson of the faculty to enter her/his contest or complaint, as heretofore separately defined, on the agenda of the next regular or special meeting of the faculty and the chairperson shall enter the petition on the agenda. The issue shall then be resolved by majority vote of those faculty present and voting at the aforesaid meeting; the

action of the faculty shall be considered final.