

Bylaws of the University Faculty Senate: University of Northern Iowa

Updated: December 2, 2024

1. POWERS. The University Faculty Senate shall be the principal representative agency of the university faculty. The Senate shall have power to act for the faculty on all matters in its jurisdiction as defined by the Faculty Constitution (see Faculty Constitution, Article V, Sections 3 and 4).

1.1 Exceptions. The Senate shall not have power to amend the Faculty Constitution and the Senate shall not have power, except in emergencies, to set aside a decision of the faculty taken during the current academic year; exercise of such emergency powers shall require a two-thirds vote of the Senate.

2. MEMBERSHIP. The University Faculty Senate shall be composed of members elected by and from each academic department including the Library Faculty. The nominating committee shall create a roster of departments. Any changes from the previous year must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Faculty Senate before elections.

2.1 Delegates. Each academic department shall be provided an opportunity to elect a voting faculty member of their department to serve as a senator. In addition, three at large positions will be reserved for contingent faculty (1 term, 2 adjuncts), who will elect their own delegates.

2.1.1 Compensation. Service as a senator shall be considered as service to the university and therefore is normally part of a faculty member's standard load. However, adjuncts who serve on senate in at-large positions for a full year without such a service expectation as part of their contract will be compensated by UNI Faculty Senate up to \$1000 per academic year, contingent on availability of funds.

2.2 Review of Faculty Roster. Only members of the voting faculty listed in the fall edition of the Official Faculty Roster will be eligible for election to serve as a senator.

2.3 Terms. Terms shall normally be for three years, with terms of one-third of elected senators to expire each year. Terms begin on May 15.

2.4 Limitation on terms. A senator shall serve no more than two consecutive full terms.

2.5 Alternates. Senators shall appoint alternates from their elective constituencies and shall notify the secretary of the Senate of the names of such alternates. Alternates normally serve during the term of the senator and exercise the full duties and responsibilities of a senator during those meetings that they substitute for a senator.

2.6 Vacancies. In case the absence or the incapacity of a senator should extend beyond a complete semester, or if, in the Senate's judgment, it is likely that it will so extend, the Senate may declare the office vacant and provide an opportunity for the academic department to replace the senator.

2.7 Member ex officio. The chairperson of the faculty shall be an ex officio member of the Senate, without vote, but with the privileges of motion, second, and debate. If a senator is elected chairperson of the faculty, he/she must resign as senator.

3. ORGANIZATION. At the last regular meeting of the spring semester, the Senate shall elect, from its newly elected and continuing members, a vice chairperson to take office beginning May 15. The chairperson shall be the person whose term as vice chairperson is just ending. No one may hold two offices simultaneously or serve consecutive terms in the same office. If the rising chairperson's service in the Senate would otherwise end at the conclusion of his or her term as vice-chair, the term shall be automatically extended for one year. Such extension would not replace the normal election cycle for a new Senator from the vice-chair's constituency. Normally, nominations for the office will be made by a nominating committee composed of outgoing Senate members. However, the Senate may decide in a particular spring semester (by two-thirds majority of members present and voting at a Senate meeting for which this matter has been announced, at least a week previously, as an item of business) to suspend this nominating procedure for the election in question and to substitute, for that election, another nominating procedure that seems more appropriate and/or workable. In any case, the procedure used shall permit nominations to be made from the Senate floor prior to the election. The chairperson of the Senate shall appoint a Parliamentarian of the Senate from the Faculty. The Parliamentarian will serve in a non-voting capacity.

3.1 Duties of the chairperson. The chairperson shall perform the following duties:

3.1.1 Preside at meetings of the Senate.

3.1.2 Prepare, with the assistance of the vice-chairperson of the Senate, and subject to the approval of the Senate, the official calendar of Senate meetings. Senate approval is not required if the pattern of meetings follows a previous pattern approved by the Senate.

3.1.3 Call regular and special meetings of the Senate.

3.1.4 Prepare and arrange for the distribution of notices of regular and special meetings of the Senate so that the notices are received a minimum of three class days in advance of the meetings (as possible and practicable). Such notices shall normally contain the calendar items and docket items for the meeting. In addition to Senators and regular guests, agendas should be available to both the faculty and related parties i.e., Department Heads, Deans, Administrators, Student Government Leadership) prior to the meetings. Minutes, once approved by the Senate, should also be widely distributed. (Emails with links to these documents are acceptable.)

3.1.5 Sign requisitions against the budget of the Senate.

3.1.6 Make decisions on parliamentary and procedural questions in fulfillment of the provisions of these bylaws, in consultation with the Parliamentarian, subject to approval of the Senate.

3.1.7 Maintain liaison, as required, with the Northern Iowa Student Government (NISG) and the officers of administration.

3.1.8 Transmit to the faculty or to other components of the university or, consistent with Board rules and regulations, the Board of Regents or its committees, actions of the Senate directed thereto.

3.1.9 Represent to the press and to the public the established policies and positions of the Senate as appropriate.

3.1.10 Forward policies, when approved by the Senate, to the University Counsel or appropriate next body.

3.1.11 Serve, as provided by the Faculty Constitution (Article II, Section 2), as vice-chairperson of the Faculty.

3.2 Duties of the vice-chairperson. The vice-chairperson shall perform the following duties:

3.2.1 Preside, in the absence of the chairperson, at meetings of the Senate.

3.2.2 Assist in preparing the official calendar and docket of the Senate, in cooperation with the chairperson and secretary of the Senate as required.

3.2.3 Take attendance at Senate Meetings and prepare the minutes.

3.2.4 Other duties as the chairperson may request or as may be appropriate in the temporary absence of the chairperson.

3.3 Duties of the former chairperson. The former chairperson shall perform the following duties:

3.3.1 Preside, in the absence of the chairperson or vice chairperson, at meetings of the Senate.

3.3.2 Assist in preparing the official calendar and docket of the Senate, in cooperation with the chairperson and vice chairperson of the Senate as required.

3.3.3 Other duties as the chairperson may request.

3.4 Duties of the Parliamentarian. In general, a Parliamentarian will maintain institutional memory and ensure adherence to senate bylaws across cohorts of senate officers. Specifically, a Parliamentarian will:

3.4.1 Attend and facilitate meetings of the University Faculty Senate, advising senate officers regarding matters of procedure and historical context.

3.4.2 Attend meetings of senate officers and advise them regarding preparation and distribution of the calendar, the docket, petitions, and meeting notices.

3.4.3 Advise senate officers regarding faculty senate relations with other components of the university, such as administrative and student leaders.

3.4.4 Keep track of attendance when the Vice Chair is acting Chair.

4. MEETINGS. At least one regular meeting of the Senate shall be held each semester.

4.1 Call for regular meetings. The UNI Faculty Senate reserves for meetings the second and fourth Mondays of every month of the Fall and Spring terms from 3:30 – 5:00 PM at a

place to be determined by the chairperson of the Senate, or, in her/his temporary absence, by the vice-chairperson of the Senate.

4.2 Call for special meetings. Special meetings of the Senate may normally be called by the chairperson of the Senate, or, in his/her temporary absence, by the vice-chairperson of the Senate.

4.2.1 By petition. Upon petition of five current members of the Senate or upon petition of thirty current members of the faculty, normally directed to the chairperson of the Senate, the chairperson of the Senate shall call a meeting of the Senate. The petition, in either case, shall contain a statement of the subject to be considered and the action deemed desirable by the petitioners. Petitioned meetings shall be called by the chairperson. A petition which in the judgment of the chairperson does not meet the above stipulations concerning: (1) number of proper signatures; (2) statement of the subject to be considered; or (3) the action requested, may be returned to the petitioner by the chairperson with a specification of the correct procedure for resubmission.

4.2.2 On request of an administrative officer. Upon request by the President of the University or of the Vice-President and Provost to the chairperson of the senate, the chairperson of the Senate may call a special meeting of the Senate. Such a request shall contain a statement of the subject to be considered and an indication of the action deemed desirable by the officer of administration.

5. FUNCTIONS. The University Faculty Senate functions within the broad grant of authority delegated to it by the Faculty Constitution as provided above (Section 1). Within that grant of authority, Senate functions may take the following forms: policy formation, integration and coordination, consultation, and adjudication.

5.1 The policy formation function. The Senate acts for the faculty in the reception of policy proposals initiated by its members, by faculty non-members, by committees of the Senate or the faculty, by officers of administration, by the student government, or by the non-academic staff. The Senate deliberates and decides upon these matters by majority vote.

5.2 The integrative function. The Senate acts for the faculty in developing greater coordination or cooperation between the several components of the university and their constituencies, including the relationships of faculty and administration, faculty and students, faculty and alumni, faculty and public, and consistent with Board procedures, between the faculty and the State Board of Regents and its committees.

5.3 The consultative function. The Senate acts for the faculty in making provision for informal consultation with the officers of administration, including the academic deans, but particularly with the President of the university and the Vice-President and Provost. While the Senate encourages these offices of administration to present resolutions to be placed on the calendar and docketed for consideration in the normal order of business, the Senate recognizes that some problems are too diffuse, tentative, or delicate to lend themselves to such treatment and therefore makes provision in its procedures for timely consultation and advice.

5.4 The adjudicatory function. The Senate shall act as an appeal body in case of a disputed interpretation of the Faculty Constitution as provided in the Faculty Constitution, Article VI, Section 5. The Senate shall act as an appeal body in case of an alleged violation

of a provision of the Faculty Constitution as provided in the Faculty Constitution. Article VI, Section 6. 6.

6.0 COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND THE FACULTY. Except when otherwise directed by the faculty, all standing committees of the Faculty and all ad hoc faculty committees shall report to and be accountable to the Senate (see Faculty Constitution, Article V, Sections 3.9 and 4).

6.1 Committees of the Faculty. Committees of the faculty which normally report to the Senate shall be accountable to the Senate as the faculty's delegate. The Senate may schedule regular or special reports from its faculty committees; it may approve reports in part or as a whole; it may amend them; it may return them to the committee for revision or for additional information and recommendations.

6.2 Committees of the Senate. The Senate shall have the power to create, change, and discharge standing and ad hoc committees; the Senate may schedule regular or special reports from its committees; it may approve such reports in part or as a whole; it may amend them; it may return them to the committee for revision or for additional information and recommendations.

6.2.1 Delegation of Senate authority to Senate committees. The Senate may, by majority vote, delegate to any of its committees the power to decide and act upon a problem subject to subsequent Senate review (See Faculty Constitution, Article V, Section 3.10).

6.2.2 Communications between Committees and the Faculty. Normally, communications from committees, when sent to the faculty as a whole, should come jointly from the Chair of that Committee and from the Senate Officer acting as Liaison for the Committee.

6.3 Committee reports: Form. The Senate requests committees reporting to it to present their reports according to a schedule furnished by the chairperson of the Senate. Recommendations for specific action by a committee should be transmitted immediately to the chairperson for calendaring. Since the Senate is not principally a fact-finding body, the Senate requests committees to present with their reports and/or recommendations whatever information and documentation may be necessary to allow the Senate economically to deliberate upon the committee's recommendation.

6.4 Committee reports: Procedures. Committee reports, as they are received by the chairperson, will be placed on the calendar of the Senate, normally in the order of their reception. Those reports that the Senate wishes to discuss or which appear to require Senate action will be moved to the docket following the procedures set forth below.

6.5 Selection of committee members. A subcommittee of the Faculty Senate shall coordinate elections for all committees of the senate and the faculty that are chartered by the Faculty Senate. This subcommittee shall have the power to fill committee vacancies via appointment until such time as it is able to conduct an election to fill the position for the remainder of the term.

6.5.1 This subcommittee shall report the results of all elections to the Chair of the Senate no later than April 15.

6.5.2 This subcommittee shall issue an annual report to the Senate that briefly describes the charge of each committee and updates the membership of the Senate and all committees. This report shall be presented to the Senate at its final regularly scheduled meeting of the spring semester. The subcommittee shall at this time recommend to the Senate the discharge of any standing or ad hoc committees (except for standing committees established by the Faculty Constitution) which in its judgment have become superfluous.

7. PROCEDURES OF THE SENATE. Except as provided by these bylaws or by the Faculty Constitution, Robert's Rules of Order (latest revision) shall be the parliamentary guide for the conduct of Senate business.

7.1 Quorum. The presence of one-half of the elected members of the Senate or their alternates shall constitute a quorum.

7.2 Faculty review of Senate action. Action taken by the Senate shall become effective fifteen days after publication of the action in the minutes of the Senate. Within this period, any action of the Senate, upon petition of thirty faculty members, shall be referred to the faculty for review and the decision of the faculty shall be final.

7.3 How matters may come to the Senate. A matter may come to the Senate for consideration by being brought up by a member of the Senate or the faculty according to the procedural provisions set forth below;

- a. It may be referred to the Senate by an officer of administration;
- b. It may be communicated to the chairperson of the Senate by any senator, faculty member or group, student, or non-academic staff member.
- c. Any person or persons in the university community may address a petition to the senate on any matter within the Senate's jurisdiction by presenting the petition in writing to the chairperson of the Senate, usually via the Senate Website.
- d. The chairperson shall cause the petition to be entered on the calendar of the Senate.
- e. The Senate requests that such petitions be accompanied by information or documentation that may assist the Senate in making a determination on the matter petitioned and that the petition clearly state what action the petitioner(s) desire(s) the Senate to take.
- f. While Senators are expected to work through the petition and docketing process where possible, if needed, a senator can move, at a meeting, that an item be docketed directly by the Senate. This can be for immediate or future discussion/voting. Direct docketing requires a second and a majority vote of the Senators. Immediate consideration requires a second and two-thirds vote of the Senators.

7.3.1 How petitions are docketed for Senate Meetings:

- a. Petitions shall normally be reviewed first by the Chair of the Senate, who shall propose an agenda, which will then be reviewed and approved by a majority vote of the Senate Leadership Council Steering Committee (also referred to as the Docketing Committee).
- b. The Docketing Committee shall consist of Senate Officers, the Chair of the Faculty, the Chairs of the Governance, Nominating, and Policy Committees (or their designee), as well as any the Chairs of any additional committees that the Senate or the Senate Officers deem appropriate.
- c. The Docketing Committee shall determine the final content and order of the agenda.

- d. Where reasonable, they will meet one week prior to a full meeting of the Senate.
- e. Normally, the chair will share the preliminary agenda from the docketing meeting with Senators, Guests, faculty, Deans, and Department Heads within 24-48 hours of the meeting.
- f. Sometimes, changes in circumstances may require changes to the agenda after that time. If so, items to be added should still be with the consent of a majority of the Docketing Committee. (Items can also, at times, be removed because a petition is withdrawn or expected documentation is not provided.)
- g. For a Monday meeting, the final agenda normally goes to the Senators on Friday or Saturday prior to the meeting.

7.4 Order of business. The order of business in each meeting of the Senate shall be as follows:

7.4.1 Call to order.

7.4.2 If required, consideration of challenges to the minutes.

7.4.3 Courtesy comments (as time allows).

7.4.4 Regular Business as approved by the Docketing Committee.

7.4.5 New business

7.4.6 Other new business, once moved and seconded, may be docketed in regular order by majority vote of the senators present.

7.4.7 Senators may at any time, submit a written motion to the chairperson of the Senate

7.4.8 The annual report of the University Curriculum Committee will normally be handled as a special item following consideration of the calendar and preceding the items of the regular docket.

7.4.9 Adjournment.

7.5 Form of Senate resolutions. Except for business introduced under the provisions of 7.44 (above), the individual or group desiring Senate consideration of an issue shall submit a petition using the forms found on the Faculty Senate website or by filing a print or electronic petition with the chairperson of the Senate. The issue should be put in the form of a resolution and, if in print, signed by the petitioner. The chairperson will then assign the resolution a Calendar number. The resolution should present such facts as are needed to establish the importance of the problem and to indicate its present status and should close with the standard phrase, "Therefore, be it resolved..." or some other form of specific proposal in which the petitioner shall clearly indicate the kind of action he/she deems advisable.

7.6 While Robert's Rules of Order guide the Senate process, deviations from the rules which do not materially affect deliberations are acceptable and do not invalidate decisions of the Senate. At any point wherein there is a deviation from the rules, a Senator can raise a point of order and ask that Robert's Rules be followed more precisely for that issue. The Parliamentarian will rule on the issues around Robert's Rules of Order. A point of order, asking for more specific adherence to the rules, does not require a vote of the Senate.

7.7 Rights of faculty non-members. Members of the faculty are welcome to attend Senate meetings, except for executive sessions.

7.8 Students. Students, including representatives of the Northern Iowa Student Government (NISG) and student press, are welcome to attend meetings of the Senate, except for executive sessions.

7.9 The public. Meetings of the Senate, except for executive sessions, shall be open to the public, including the press. Space considerations may limit the application of this provision.

7.10 Voting. Action by the Senate shall be determined by voice vote, division, written ballot, electronic means, or roll call.

7.10.1 Forms. In case of doubt by the presiding officer or upon call by a senator, the Senate shall divide. A written ballot may be ordered by majority vote of the Senate. Upon request of four members of the Senate, the Vice Chair or Parliamentarian of the Senate shall call the roll of the membership in alphabetical order and record the Aye and No vote on each member.

7.10.2 Representation of the voting faculty. When the Senate acts representatively on these matters which comprise the distinctive functions of the voting faculty (see Faculty Constitution, Article IV, Section 4) privilege of motion, second, and debate shall be afforded all members of the Senate, but votes shall be cast only by those elected senators or alternates who are current members of the voting faculty.

7.11 Executive sessions. An executive session of the Senate is a meeting or a portion of a meeting the proceedings of which are secret. Only Senators, their duly selected alternates, or others whom the Senate may by majority vote invite shall be permitted to remain in the meeting room.

7.11.1 Executive sessions: authorization. The chairperson shall declare the Senate to be in executive session when the Senate, by a two-thirds vote, authorizes such a session.

7.11.2 Executive sessions: subjects. The business of the Senate is normally conducted in open and public session. An executive session will be authorized only when compelling reasons lead the Senate to believe that the matters to be discussed, if publicly disclosed, would do serious and perhaps irreparable harm to individuals or to the university.

7.11.3 Executive session: motions. During an executive session, if two-thirds of the Senators agree that it is appropriate, motions and votes may be held with the results reported when coming out of Executive Session. Coming out from Executive Session only requires a simple majority vote.

7.12 Consultative sessions. When an officer of administration wishes to report to the Senate or ask the advice of the Senate on a matter of the sort described above (Section 5.3), requests for a consultation can be submitted as a petition on the Senate Web Page or directly to the Chair. The Senators may also request a session about a particular issue, or report from an officer of the administration on a matter of joint concern through the same method.

7.12.1 Initiation. Either the administrative officer desiring a consultative session informs the chairperson of the Senate or alternately the chairperson of the Senate, majority approval of the Senate having been recorded, shall transmit an invitation to the appropriate administrators(s). In either case, the matter shall be placed on the docket, as for example, "Consultative to the President on ..."

7.12.2 Procedure. During the consultative session, the administrative officer normally presents opening remarks and then leads the ensuing discussion. The consultative session may be terminated by the chairperson of the Senate when she/he feels that the session has accomplished its purpose. During a consultative session, the only motion in order is the motion to rise from consultative session. When made and voted upon, if the motion carries, the Senate finds itself sitting in ordinary session.

8. AMENDMENT. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Senate provided that a notice containing the text of the proposed amendment is sent to the Senate membership at least five class days in advance of the meeting at which the amendment is considered; no amendment not in conformity with the requirement of the faculty constitution shall be in order.

9. ADOPTION. These bylaws shall become effective immediately upon their adoption by a two-thirds vote of the Senate, and these bylaws shall, in case of actual or apparent conflict, take precedence over the provisions of the current Policies and Procedures Manual as they apply to the Senate.

Amended December 2, 2024.