

## Chapter 2: Faculty Bylaws

### 2.1 / FACULTY SENATE BYLAWS

#### 2.1.1 / The Faculty Senate

The normal business of the faculty shall be conducted at Faculty Senate meetings.

The essential functions of the Faculty Senate meetings shall be deliberation and action on policy as well as review of policy implementation. As part of this latter function the chairperson shall schedule regular presentations from each of the administrative divisions of the university by the President's Cabinet. These presentations (which normally should not exceed 10 minutes, except at the discretion of the Executive Committee) shall be preceded by a written report, submitted on deadline with other Senate materials. The Planning and Priorities Committee and the President's Cabinet shall also regularly provide written summaries of their minutes to the Faculty Senate

Though normally the Faculty Senate shall act only upon the recommendations of faculty committees and of appropriate administrators, the chair may also schedule discussions of policy matters relating to the mission, purpose, and curriculum of the university even before such matters have been referred to committees of the faculty. In extraordinary cases, senators may also place items for consideration on the agenda. Senators proposing items to be added to the agenda must submit their request in writing to the Executive Committee ten days in advance of the scheduled Faculty Senate meeting.

If, after seeing the published agenda, senators wish to add an item or change the status of an item (e.g., from "for information" to "for approval"), they should gather the signatures of the appropriate number of colleagues (as outlined below) and submit their request in writing to the Senate Executive Committee before noon on the day of the Senate meeting.

- Upon the request of 10% of senators, an item will be placed on the agenda "for discussion and input."
- Upon the request of 10% of senators, an item will be placed on the agenda "for information."
- Upon the request of 30% of senators, an item will be moved from "for information" to "for approval."
- Upon the request of 30% of senators, an item will be placed directly on the agenda "for approval."
- Any item brought through these means directly to Senate "for approval" must be passed by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority.

Finally, in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (11th ed., p. 373, lines 1–8), members of Senate can make a motion to change the agenda at the meeting, before the agenda has been approved. Such changes require a majority.

#### 2.1.1.1 / Senate Executive Committee and Its Duties

The Executive Committee members of Faculty Senate are the President, Provost, Vice Chair, and Secretary.

The Executive Committee of Faculty Senate, in consultation with faculty committees and the administrative team of the university, shall propose the agenda for Faculty Senate meetings. The agenda shall be adopted by the Senate, which may also propose changes in the order of business for that meeting. The agenda shall include an item called Question Period. During this period senators may direct questions to any committee or official regarding their work or regarding reports that have been distributed to the faculty.

The Executive Committee will ensure that all faculty members will be given a copy of the detailed Senate agenda no later than seven calendar days before the meeting. Full documentation will be available to each department from its senator. In addition, all Faculty Senate documents (the detailed Senate agenda with its full documentation) and some committee documents, as selected by the officers of the Senate, should ordinarily be posted to a local campus intranet at least seven calendar days prior to Senate deliberation about them. An exception to the seven-day rule may be made if the Senate officers agree to it and no three senators protest the exception.

#### 2.1.1.1.1 / CHAIR

The president of the university shall serve as the non-voting chair of the Senate.

#### 2.1.1.1.2 / VICE CHAIR

- A. **Eligibility.** All persons with faculty status who are serving in at least their fourth consecutive year of employment at Calvin University shall be eligible for election as vice chair of the Faculty Senate.
- B. **Term.** The vice chair of the Senate shall serve for no more than three 3-year terms (running for election each time) and shall be a voting member of Faculty Senate while holding office.
- C. **Election.** The election of vice chair shall occur at the same time as the Faculty Senate elections.
  - The Committee on Governance shall solicit nominations for vice chair. Each division shall be asked to nominate one of its members. At its discretion the Committee on Governance shall solicit additional nominations and add no more than two additional nominees to make up a slate of four to six nominees.
  - The vice chair shall be elected by majority vote.
  - If vice chair is a sitting senator, his or her Senate seat shall be considered vacant and shall be filled following the bylaws for vacant Senate seats.
- D. **Duties.** Duties of the vice chair include the following:
  - Taking the chair at Faculty Senate meetings at the request of the president.
  - Serving *ex officio* as a voting member on the Committee on Governance.
  - Providing a concise digest of matters coming before Faculty Senate to all colleagues prior to each Senate meeting, and a prompt summary of what occurred at Faculty Senate following each Senate meeting.
  - Pairing each newly elected senator with a second- or third-year senator in his/her division.

- In conjunction with the other members of the Executive Committee of Faculty Senate, organizing an orientation and welcome session early in the fall semester for new senators.
  - Participating in orientation meetings for all governance committee chairs.
  - Facilitating Senate's relationship with *Chimes*, as per [appendix F](#).
- E. **Compensation.** The vice chair of Faculty Senate will normally receive one course release per academic year as compensation for these responsibilities

#### 2.1.1.1.3 / SECRETARY

- A. **Eligibility.** The secretary of the Senate shall be an elected member of the Senate.
- B. **Term.** The secretary shall be elected by the Faculty Senate for a two-year term.
- C. **Election.** The election of secretary shall take place at the last spring meeting of Faculty Senate.
- D. **Duties.** Duties of the secretary include the following:
- Conducting official correspondence,
  - Recording the minutes of the Faculty Senate meetings
  - Maintaining an agenda of unfinished Senate business
  - Classifying all reports to be considered by the Senate
  - Supervising the permanent files of all faculty committees.

#### 2.1.1.1.4 / PARLIAMENTARIAN

- A. **Eligibility.** The parliamentarian shall be an elected member of the Senate.
- B. **Term.** The parliamentarian shall serve a one-year, renewable term and shall be a voting member of Faculty Senate while holding the office of parliamentarian.
- C. **Selection.** The Senate parliamentarian shall be appointed by the other Senate officers, subject to confirmation by Faculty Senate.
- D. **Duties.** Duties of the parliamentarian include the following:
- Ensuring that faculty bylaws are followed
  - Serving as the authority to whom questions regarding parliamentary procedure may be referred by the chair during meetings of the Senate.

#### 2.1.1.2 / Eligibility for Election to the Senate

All persons with faculty status who are serving in at least their fourth consecutive year of employment at Calvin University shall be eligible for election to the Faculty Senate, except persons of color, who are eligible to be nominated in their third consecutive year of employment.

Senators normally will not be eligible for immediate reelection; eligibility for election will resume after a one-year hiatus.

*2.1.1.3 / Senate Terms and Committee Service*

Under the supervision of the Committee on Governance, senators will be elected to a three-year term.

During their term of Senate service, faculty senators may be asked to serve as members, but normally not as chairs, of university committees. Normally, faculty senators may not be asked to serve on intensive governance committees during their terms of office on Faculty Senate.

*2.1.1.4 / Senate Composition and Election Procedures*

One-third of the Senate shall be elected each year. Prior to an election, a demographic profile of the previously elected Senate membership should be distributed.

To be elected, a candidate must win a majority of the ballots cast.

The Senate shall have the following composition, elected as follows:

A. Academic Departments

- Each academic department will elect one of its members to the Senate.
- Each year the academic departments whose senators are retiring will elect replacements from their respective departments by the end of February for three-year terms, which begin on the first day of the fall academic period.

B. Schools of the Academic Division

- Each school will elect one at-large senator.
- Whenever necessary, each school will elect a replacement for its retiring senator from a slate for which each department in that school may submit one nominee from any department in the school. This election will take place by the end of March, for three-year terms, which begin on the first day of the fall academic period.

C. Administrators with Faculty Status

- Administrators with faculty status will elect two senators. When administrators with faculty status also have a teaching appointment in an academic department, the Committee on Governance will decide whether, for the purposes of voting and representation, they should be considered members of that academic department and its respective school or administrators with faculty status..
- Whenever necessary, administrators with faculty status will elect a replacement for their retiring senator by the end of March, for a three-year term, which begins on the first day of the fall academic period.

D. Ex officio Members

- The provost will be a voting member ex officio.
- The university president and the school deans will be nonvoting members ex officio.

E. Student Representation

- The president and a vice president of Student Senate will sit on Faculty Senate, along with an at-large student senator chosen from among the current student senators by Student Senate during the time of student appointments to faculty governance committees each spring. The at-large senator must have completed at least one year at Calvin University.
- Student members of Faculty Senate shall not have the right to vote or to make motions, and they shall be excused from the Faculty Senate meeting room during an executive session.

#### 2.1.1.5 / *Senator Absence and Replacement Between Elections*

Attendance of senators at Senate meetings shall be considered an integral part of their professional duties. As members of a deliberative body, it is expected that senators will be in attendance at each meeting of Senate. In the case of a necessary absence, senators must inform the Senate secretary. A senator may send a replacement colleague for one meeting, but, as mandated by *Robert's Rules of Order*, this colleague may not vote.

When a Senate seat is vacant for two or more meetings before the expiration of a term (through, e.g., illness, leave of absence, retirement, or death), a replacement will be appointed. Replacements for academic department representatives will be appointed by the department chair; replacements for school representatives will be appointed by the school dean; replacements for administrators with faculty status will be appointed by the Committee on Governance. Such replacements will serve for the duration of the term or until the original senator returns. If that period is no more than one year, the replacement senator will be eligible for immediate reelection.

#### 2.1.1.6 / *Senate Meetings*

- Schedule of Meetings.** The Faculty Senate shall normally meet at least once a month during the academic year. Additional meetings may be called when formally requested by at least 10 senators or at the discretion of the Senate officers, who may also cancel a regularly scheduled meeting should the lack of a full agenda warrant it.
- Quorum.** The presence of  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the voting membership constitutes a quorum. Senators are expected to be in attendance.
- Voting Rights.** Voting rights shall be held by all duly elected senators and *ex officio* members.
- Robert's Rules of Order.** *Robert's Rules of Orders* shall be used to govern the procedures followed at meetings of the Senate. See [appendix B](#) for some procedures which are particularly applicable to Senate business.
- Minutes.** All faculty members shall be given a copy of the summary minutes of Senate meetings. The President's Office will make full minutes available to all faculty members.
- Postponing Agenda Items.** Upon request by 20% or more of persons with faculty status, Faculty Senate action upon any agenda item will normally be postponed pending formal discussion by the full faculty. Such requests must be submitted to the president at least one class day prior to the scheduled Faculty Senate meeting. The president shall then schedule a meeting for this discussion prior to the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting.

G. **The Rights of Non-senators.** The following members of the university community may attend Senate meetings as visitors, except in executive sessions, without the right to vote but with the privilege of the floor as granted at the discretion of the chair or a majority of the Senate:

- All teaching faculty.
- Members of the Board of Trustees.
- Vice presidents, other administrators, and staff members.
- Members of the Student Senate, students serving on faculty committees, and student representatives of *Chimes* and other campus media.
- Members of the Alumni Association Board.

Non-senators may request the privilege of the floor and be invited by either the chair or a majority of the Senate to speak to the Senate when appropriate; otherwise, only senators and officers have the privilege of the floor. When committee reports are presented to the Senate, the committee chair or a representative designated by the committee shall present the report.

H. **Student Media Coverage of Senate Meetings.** Student media coverage of Faculty Senate meetings shall comply with the approved policy (see [appendix E](#)).

*2.1.1.7 / Reports and Communications to the Faculty Senate*

- A. **Action Items.** All faculty committees shall make their recommendations for action to the Senate.
- B. **Schedule of Committee Deadlines.** The Executive Committee of Faculty Senate shall call a meeting of all committee chairs by October 1 to provide an orientation for chairs regarding committee mandates, important agenda items for the year, areas of overlap and common concern, and proper procedures for sharing committee minutes. By the November meeting of the Faculty Senate, the major items of the year's agenda for each committee shall be posted on the Calvin intranet. By June 30, committees shall file a report with the Senate regarding their activities for the academic year.
- C. Reports from Committees
- Written reports to the Faculty Senate shall conform to a standard form prepared by the secretary of the Senate (see [appendix C](#)). This format shall include a reference key (committee name, subject, sequence number, date, etc.), a descriptive title, the membership of the committee, the name of the reporter, a statement of the problem or explanation of the mandate, a justification for the action proposed, and the formal resolutions proposing action.
  - A written report to be considered for Senate action must be delivered to senators not later than seven calendar days before the meeting of the Senate. The reproduction and distribution of committee reports is the responsibility of the administrative representative on the committee or, in cases in which there is no administrator on the committee, the Provost's Office.

- Written reports of administrators or senators calling for deliberation or decision shall conform to the general rules concerning committee reports.
- Reports which have been distributed in advance in accordance with the above guidelines shall not be read unless requested by a vote of the Faculty Senate. A brief written digest shall be given to the secretary for inclusion in the minutes.

- D. Reports from Standing Committees, Task Forces, & Governing Boards.** Standing committees, task forces and governing boards of the university may also bring to Faculty Senate items for discussion and input even before any decision has been taken at the committee level. Items for discussion shall be ones of concern to the whole university, and shall be submitted to the President's Office at least ten days before Faculty Senate meetings. The request to have the item included on the agenda shall provide a concise overview of the issue and a set of questions on which the committee, task force, or governing board would like Faculty Senate's feedback. Members of the committee, task-force, or governing board shall be in attendance at the relevant Faculty Senate meeting to gather feedback and answer any questions. Items for discussion shall be submitted on a standard form (see [appendix C](#)).
- E. Reports from Student Senate.** All communications from the Student Senate to the faculty shall be presented to the secretary of the Faculty Senate, who shall determine if they are properly the immediate business of a particular committee, or a council, or the Faculty Senate. Furthermore, whatever the recommendation of the faculty committee or council, it shall be accompanied by the original communication from the Student Senate, unless officially withdrawn by that body. The Student Senate resolution shall have the status of a minority report if it differs from the faculty committee's recommendation.

### 2.1.2 / Faculty Assembly and Faculty Meetings

The full faculty will meet early in the fall semester for a Faculty Assembly, organized by the Senate Executive committee, to address matters pertinent to the university community. The agenda shall always include an item called Question Period. During this period faculty members may direct questions to any committee or official regarding matters of all-university concern.

If by majority vote the Faculty Senate decides that a special meeting of the full faculty should be called to consider an urgent item or a major item that affects the whole of the faculty, the Faculty Senate chair, vice chair, and secretary shall organize such a meeting. By majority vote, the Faculty Senate can also authorize that a given faculty meeting have the Senate's governance authority over some or all of the issues presented at the meeting. The agenda shall consist of items authorized by the Faculty Senate for action and/or discussion at the full faculty meeting.

### 2.1.3 / Meeting by Communication Equipment (Electronic Meetings)

Enfranchised members of the Calvin University faculty may participate in meetings of the faculty assembly, Faculty Senate, governance committees, compliance committees, center or institute advisory councils, or department/program meetings using a conference telephone or similar communications equipment, electronic video screen communications, or electronic transmission, provided that all persons participating in the meeting have been given notice of the means of remote communication and are able to access the names of the participants during the meeting, and provided that all the participants in the meeting can communicate with each other. Participation in

a meeting pursuant to this paragraph shall constitute presence in person at the meeting. During electronic meetings, it shall be permissible for votes to be taken using features of the electronic meeting service.

Each member is responsible for his or her audio and Internet connections; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.

When in-person meetings are held, it is expected that participants attend in person unless the Faculty Senate Executive Committee has given permission for an alternate choice.

#### 2.1.4 / Amendments

Bylaws governing faculty meetings may be amended by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote of the enfranchised faculty. Such a vote shall be taken by mail ballot.

## **2.2 / FACULTY GOVERNANCE, COMPLIANCE, AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

The mandates and compositions of the standing committees and councils of the faculty are posted online and also are available from the Office of the Provost.