

CHARTER AND BYLAWS OF THE FACULTY SENATE OF SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

CHARTER

1 Preamble

- 1.01 In order to develop fully the freedom of discussion, participation, and examination of ideas by faculty, students, and administration in the search for truth, the faculty, administration, and the Texas State University System (TSUS) Board of Regents hereby promulgate this Charter of the Faculty Senate of Sam Houston State University (SHSU).
- 1.02 Only the TSUS Board of Regents may establish a faculty senate at Sam Houston State University, consistent with this charter, the TSUS Rules and Regulations, and applicable state law. The Faculty Senate represents the entire faculty of Sam Houston State University and shall advise SHSU and, where applicable, the TSUS Administration regarding matters related to the general welfare of SHSU.
- 1.03 The Faculty Senate is an advisory body only and may not be delegated the final decision-making authority on any matter. The Faculty Senate may establish standing or ad hoc committees to advise the administration on particular matters relating to the general welfare of SHSU. These standing committees are described in section 8 of the bylaws. Such committees shall be comprised of sitting faculty senators and are established subject to the authority of the Faculty Senate's presiding officer. Such committees are advisory only, and no proposal or recommendation by a committee is binding on the administration.
- 1.04 The Faculty Senate shall adopt rules for establishing a quorum, detailed in 9.01(a) of the bylaws. The Faculty Senate may adopt other procedural rules, consistent with this charter, the TSUS Rules and Regulations, and state law, to govern the conduct of its meetings and other authorized activities of the Faculty Senate.
- 1.05 The Faculty Senate may not issue any statement or publish a report using SHSU's or the TSUS's official seal, trademark, or resources funded by SHSU or TSUS on any matter not directly related to the Faculty Senate's duties to advise the administration.
- 1.06 The Faculty Senate operates within the framework of shared governance, as defined in Texas law. Shared governance structures may not be used to obstruct, delay, or undermine necessary institutional reforms or serve as a mechanism for advancing ideological or political agendas. Under Texas law, the provisions of Chapter 2110 of the Texas Government Code regarding state agency advisory committees do not apply to a Faculty Senate established by the TSUS Board of Regents.
- 1.07 Nothing in the charter or bylaws shall be construed to limit a faculty member from exercising his/her right to freedom of association protected by the United States Constitution or the Texas Constitution.

2 Function of the Faculty Senate

- 2.01 The Faculty Senate shall consider matters of general welfare to the University placed before it by members of the faculty, members and committees of the Faculty Senate, the Student Association, and the President of the University and other administrative officers of the University.

- 2.02 Inasmuch as the Faculty Senate is advisory in nature, decisions on all such matters shall be final only when approved by the President of the University, subject to the authority of the Board of Regents, The Texas State University System, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Faculty Senate shall have no existence separate and apart from the University.

3 Amendments to the Charter

- 3.01 Amendments to the Charter of the Faculty Senate may be initiated by two-thirds of the Senate membership or by petition to the Chair of the Senate signed by at least fifty members of the voting faculty. Amendments must be ratified by two-thirds of the faculty members voting on the amendment. Amendments shall become effective when approved by the President. Changes to the charter required by law do not need to be submitted for a vote.

BYLAWS

4 Purpose

- 4.01 The purpose of these Bylaws is to state the manner in which the provisions of the Charter of the Faculty Senate of Sam Houston State University (hereafter referred to as the Senate) shall be applied to the functioning of the Senate and its committees.
- 4.02 The Faculty Senate shall be empowered to establish Bylaws and such committees from its membership as it deems advisable for carrying out its responsibilities.
- 4.03 Amendments to the Bylaws may be initiated by petition signed by five members of the Senate. Amendments shall become effective when approved by two-thirds of the senators present and the President of the university.

5 Senate Composition

- 5.01 All full-time, tenure-track and tenured faculty members who are not holders of administrative positions as defined by membership on the Academic Affairs Council (with the exception of the presiding officer and associate presiding officer, hereafter referred to as the Chair and Associate Chair of the Faculty Senate) are eligible to serve on the Senate. Full-time, non-tenure-track faculty members with three years of continuous full-time employment holding one of the following faculty titles are eligible to serve on the Senate: Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer, Clinical Lecturer, Senior Clinical Lecturer, Principal Clinical Lecturer, Clinical Assistant Professor, Clinical Associate Professor, Clinical Professor, Assistant Professor of Practice, Associate Professor of Practice, Professor of Practice, Professor of Practice, College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM), Assistant Professor (COM), Associate Professor (COM), and Professor (COM), subject to the limitations in 6.01(d). The Senate shall determine eligibility in those cases where questions arise.
- 5.02 Service on the Faculty Senate is an additional duty of the faculty member's employment. Members of the Faculty Senate are not entitled to compensation or reimbursement of expenses for their role as senators unless the expense is on behalf of and approved by SHSU.

6 Appointment and Election Procedures

6.01 Method of Senate Apportionment

- a. Positions in the Senate will be apportioned among the major academic units of the University. These units are defined as the academic colleges and the Newton Gresham Library. During the spring of 2026 this will not include the Polytechnic College due to size, but when that college grows they will be provided the opportunity to join. At that time, the size of Senate will increase by two and the apportionment of the Senate in 6.01.e will be adjusted accordingly.
- b. Each such unit will have a minimum of two senators.
- c. Prior to each regular election the Election Committee will obtain, from the Director of Academic Records and Reporting, the number of tenure/tenure track faculty members and non-tenure-track faculty members holding a title of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Principal Lecturer, Clinical Lecturer, Senior Clinical Lecturer, Principal Clinical Lecturer, Clinical Assistant Professor, Clinical Associate Professor, Clinical Professor, Lecturer of Practice, Senior Lecturer of Practice, Assistant Professor of Practice, Associate Professor of Practice, Professor of Practice, Professor of Practice College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM), Assistant Professor (COM), Associate Professor (COM), and Professor (COM) in each of the academic units, based on full time equivalents (FTEs) and head count.
- d. Each academic unit may have a maximum of one senator who is a non-tenure-track faculty member. The number of seats held by non-tenure-track faculty members is limited to a maximum of 10% of the total number of seats in the Senate. If 10% of the seats are held by non-tenure-track faculty members whose terms are not expiring, then no non-tenure-track faculty members will be elected or appointed during that election cycle. If the number of non-tenure-track faculty members elected to the Senate in any year exceeds the 10% limit or causes the total number of non-tenure-track members to exceed the limit, the Senate will determine which newly elected non-tenure-track members are seated in the Senate by lot.
- e. Senate will comprise 30 senators taken from the nine academic units, plus three officers: the Chair, Associate Chair, and Secretary, for a total of 33 senators. In cases where a change in apportionment results in the loss of a seat where no position is expiring, senators will be allowed to complete their term, but in no case will the number of senators exceed 38. The Election Committee will determine the number of senators to be allotted to each academic unit only after the President appoints the officers, who are not included as representatives of their originating academic unit. Each academic college shall be represented by a minimum of two members, one appointed by the President and the remaining members from each college elected by a vote of that college. The allotment will be apportioned according the Hamilton method as used by the United States census bureau, described as follows:
 - i. Nine senators, one from each academic unit, will be appointed by the President of the university. The other 21 senators will be elected according

to the below apportionment structure. After the addition of the Polytechnic College, ten senators will be appointed and 22 senators elected:

- ii. For each unit, multiply 21 by the number of FTEs of the unit and divide the product by the total FTEs, keeping all decimal places. Next, for each unit, multiply 21 by the number of head counts, and divide the product by the total head counts, keeping all decimal places. For each unit, take the average of the FTE and head count numbers. Call these results the theoretical allotments.
- iii. For those units which have a theoretical allotment of 1 or less, the actual allotment shall be 1.
- iv. For those units whose theoretical allotment is more than 1, the actual allotment shall be determined as follows:
 - 1 Truncate each of the theoretical allotments to an integer.
 - 2 Calculate the sum of the actual allotments determined in step 3 plus the truncated theoretical allotments. If this sum is equal to 21, then the truncated theoretical allotments shall be the actual allotments. If this sum is less than 21, arrange the theoretical allotments in order by decreasing fractional parts (do not consider the whole number part in the ordering). Beginning at the first of the list, increase the truncated theoretical allotment by 1 for as many units as needed to raise the sum to 21. These adjusted truncated theoretical allotments shall be the actual allotments. If this sum is more than 21, arrange the theoretical allotments in order by increasing fractional parts (do not consider the whole number part in the ordering). Beginning at the first of the list, decrease the truncated theoretical allotment by 1 for as many units as needed to lower the sum to 21. These adjusted truncated theoretical allotments shall be the actual allotments.
- v. Should an exact tie occur in fractional parts that must be broken to achieve the total of 21, the election committee shall break the tie by means of an unbiased random choice (flip a fair coin, draw a name from a hat, etc.). Should this process result in the loss of Senate position(s) for an academic unit where no term is expiring, the senator(s) in that position will complete their term(s). Should an academic unit gain one or more positions in the Senate, those positions will be filled in the regular election with senator(s) who will have two-year terms.

6.02 Appointments, Nominations, and Elections

- a. Each spring the Election Committee will poll the faculty in the various academic units to solicit self-nominations for Senate membership. Eligible full-time faculty members within a particular academic unit must designate in writing to the Election Committee their willingness to be a candidate for election to the Senate.

- b. Each academic unit will vote on senators from within that unit. Nominations will be accepted from all academic units and placed on the ballot, regardless of whether a vacancy in that unit is expected.
- c. All teaching faculty members, either active or on official leave (Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Faculty Development Leave (FDL), and APS 210505, *Modified Instructional Duties for Significant Life Events*), full or part time, shall be eligible to vote. All questions of voter eligibility will be decided by the Senate.
- d. Following the election, the Senate Chair and Associate Chair will provide the President a list of all faculty who self-nominated to stand as candidates in the election, and the total votes they received.
- e. Appointed senators will be selected by the President and may serve up to six consecutive one-year terms, beginning September 1 and ending August 31. Appointed senators may only be reappointed after the second anniversary of the last day of the member's most recent term.
- f. Following the President's appointments, remaining candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be elected to the Senate. Elected senators will serve a term of two consecutive years, beginning September 1 and ending August 31. Elected senators may only be reelected after the second anniversary of the last day of the member's most recent term.
- g. Senators will be elected each spring semester staggered in a manner such that roughly one-half of the elected members are elected each year.
 - i. For the election occurring for the spring of 2026 only, elected members will draw straws for the length of their terms at the first meeting, with those drawing the short straw serving for 6 months and those drawing the long straw serving for 18 months.

6.03 Removal or Resignation of Members

- a. A member may be immediately removed from the Senate for: 1. failing to conduct the member's responsibilities within the Senate's parameters; 2. failing to attend Senate meetings; or 3. engaging in other similar misconduct. A member may be removed on recommendation of the Provost and approval by the President.
- b. If, for any reason, an elected member of the Senate cannot serve a full term, the vacant position will be filled by the person of the appropriate academic unit receiving the next highest number of votes in the most recent election. When no such person exists, the Senate may hold a special election or wait until the next regular election to fill the position. In case of a tie vote, the Election Committee will determine the replacement by lot.
- c. In the event a member appointed by the President is removed or resigns, the President shall appoint a new member from that member's academic unit.
- d. When no notice of resignation is given, a vacancy due to resignation will be declared to exist after determination by a two-thirds majority vote of those present that a senator is not fulfilling his/her responsibilities.

7 Organizational Meeting, Chair, Associate Chair, and Secretary

- 7.01 The Faculty Senate will hold an organizational meeting in the fall after the election of new senators. The meeting will be held at the call of the incoming chair.
- 7.02 During the spring semester, the Senate will submit to the President a nomination for the roles of Associate Chair and Secretary, who will serve one year (September 1 – August 31) in that capacity, with the expectation that the Associate Chair will move into the Chair position during the following year at the discretion of the President. Nominations will be discussed at the meeting, and every member of the Senate, including those nominated, is eligible to submit nominations. The total number of the nominations will be submitted to the President for consideration. If the Associate Chair should become vacant during the assigned term, nominations to fill the vacancy will be submitted to the President as soon as possible. The appointment will be conducted in the same fashion as the ordinary appointment of the Associate Chair.
- 7.03 Senate Officers
- a. **Chair.** The presiding officer, hereafter referred to as the Chair of the Senate, calls the meetings of the Senate, presides at those meetings, and represents the Faculty Senate in official communications with SHSU and TSUS System administration. Additionally, but not limited to the following, the Chair will prepare and post the agenda for all regular and called meetings at least seven days in advance; sit on the Academic Affairs Council and other committees as required; meet with the President, the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and any other administrative officers to discuss actions and need for action by the Senate; appoint the committees of the Senate and charge the Senate committees with their responsibilities. In preparing the charges for the committees, the Chair will review the results of the annual faculty survey which was conducted the spring of the preceding academic year.
 - b. **Associate Chair.** The associate presiding officer, hereafter referred to as Associate Chair, will assume the duties of the Chair in the event of the Chair's absence and with the chair, will attend meetings with the President, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and other administrators. The Associate Chair will perform such other duties as the Chair shall decide, and coordinate with the Chair of Committee on Committees for elections, and maintain records of senators, their term limits and their status as elected and appointed.
 - c. **Secretary.** The secretary will be responsible for keeping written accounts of Senate meetings and for posting these minutes on the website. The secretary will be responsible for coordinating with IT or SHSU Online to livestream video and audio of all meetings at which a quorum is present.
 - d. **Executive Committee.** The Executive Committee will be made up of the Chair, Associate Chair, Secretary, and Chairs of the standing committees of the Senate.

8 Committees of the Faculty Senate

- 8.01 In advance of the organizational meeting, the Chair will request all senators present to express in writing their order of preferences for committee assignments.

- 8.02 The Senate will create from its membership four standing committees. The four standing committees will be the Academic Affairs Committee, the University Affairs Committee, the Faculty Affairs Committee, and the Committee on Committees and Surveys. These committees will be of approximately equal size. The Senate Chair will appoint the committee members, taking into account the senator's stated preferences, expertise, and seniority of service on the Senate.
- 8.03 After their appointment to the committees, the members of the committees will meet to elect from their membership a committee Chair. It will be the duty of the committee Chair to call meetings of the committee, conduct the committee meetings, report the results of the committee's deliberations to the full Senate, confer with administrative officers when appropriate, and attend Executive Committee meetings of the Senate.
- 8.04 All unresolved procedural issues may be brought for resolution to the Senate Executive Committee.
- a. **Academic Affairs Committee.** The Academic Affairs Committee will be responsible for all matters dealing with curriculum, calendar, academic policies, grading, academic standards, and whatever other charges the Chair may assign.
 - b. **University Affairs Committee.** The University Affairs Committee will be responsible for all matters dealing with students, traffic and safety, building and grounds maintenance, recruitment of students, University publicity, and whatever other charges the Chair may assign.
 - c. **Faculty Affairs Committee.** The Faculty Affairs Committee will be responsible for all matters dealing with merit policies, grievance policies, tenure, salary, leave policies, research policies, benefits and insurance, promotions, dismissals, an annual review of the Faculty Handbook, and whatever other charges the Chair may assign.
 - d. **Committee on Committees and Surveys**
 - i. The Committee on Committees and Surveys will be responsible for maintaining and /or reviewing the Senate Charter and By-Laws. The Committee will also be responsible for providing names for the full Senate to offer as nominees to the university-wide committees as requested. In providing names to the Senate, the committee should give consideration to faculty preference for committee assignments and a faculty member's qualifications to serve on those committees.
 - ii. The committee will conduct at least two surveys during each academic year. During the spring semester a survey will be taken to determine faculty members' preferences for service on university-wide committees for the following year. During the spring semester the committee will also conduct a survey to determine faculty concerns. The results will be made available to the full Senate in time for the incoming Chair to study the results and make the proper charges of duties to the committees of the Senate in the first meeting of the following academic year.
 - iii. Members of the Faculty Senate nominated for a university committee whose membership is recommended by the Senate will have their names

automatically removed from nomination--or from membership on the committee if the nomination has already been accepted--if they are reelected to the Senate. This amendment will not be construed to imply that faculty members newly elected to the Senate should resign from any Senate-recommended committee they are serving on at the time of their election, since they can have had no part in nominating themselves.

- iv. The committee shall also constitute the Election Committee. The duties include determining the apportionment of Senate seats each spring, conducting and certifying the election of Senators, and determining the eligibility of faculty members for service on the Senate when questions arise. The Chair of the committee will inform the Chair of the Senate of the election results in time for newly-elected members to be notified before the organizational meeting.
- e. **Ad Hoc Committees.** The Chair of Faculty Senate is additionally authorized to create, task, and dissolve ad hoc committees as needed.

9 Meetings of the Faculty Senate

9.01 There will be a minimum of four meetings during each regular semester of the academic year, traditionally on Thursday afternoons. A meeting must be called if requested by at least one-third of the Senate.

- a. **Quorum.** A quorum will consist of a simple majority of the Senate membership. The Faculty Senate shall conduct meetings at which a quorum is present in a location and manner that is open to the public and in accordance with procedures established by these bylaws.
 - i. The meetings of the Senate will be conducted in accordance with the By-Laws, except in those cases where a suspension of rules is approved by a two-thirds vote of the members present.
- b. **Meeting Notice and Agenda.** The Faculty Senate must post on the SHSU's website, at a URL designated by the SHSU, not later than the seventh day before a Faculty Senate meeting:
 - i. the date, time and location of the meeting and the link to the live URL video feed of the meeting;
 - ii. an agenda for the meeting with sufficient detail to indicate the items that are to be discussed or that will be subject to a vote; and
 - iii. any curriculum proposals reviewed by the Faculty Senate that will be discussed or voted on at the meeting.
- c. **Live Broadcast.** The Faculty Senate shall broadcast over the Internet, at a URL designated by SHSU, live video and audio of each Faculty Senate meeting if more than fifty percent of the members are in attendance.
- d. **Minutes.** Tentative minutes from the meetings will be submitted to the Senate before the next Senate meeting. The names of the members in attendance must be

recorded in the minutes of any meeting in which the Faculty Senate conducts business.

- i. In order to expedite the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, changes (additions, deletions, or corrections) in the minutes must be submitted to the Secretary in a timely manner.
- e. **Motions from Committees.** In order to expedite Senate action, committee motions should be presented to the Senate Chair and Associate Chair in writing. The Executive Committee of the Senate will prescribe the form the motion will take and provide forms to be used by the committees and the members.
- f. **Protocol for Senate Actions.**
 - i. Review of academic policies will proceed as described in APS 210216, Academic Policies.
 - ii. The Chair of the Senate will submit to the appropriate administrative officer recommendations passed by the Senate. The Senate Chair shall report at the beginning of each meeting the progress of Senate recommendations that have been submitted to the various administrative officers.
 - iii. In the case of rejection of a Senate proposal by the President or a designated representative, the Senate Chair shall call for Senate reconsideration of the proposal. The Senate may decide, by simple majority, either to submit the matter to the full faculty or to accept the administration position. If the Senate chooses to submit the matter to the full faculty, the Associate Chair will submit a poll on the proposal to all faculty members, allowing faculty one week to respond to the poll. If two-thirds of those faculty voting concur with the Senate position, the Chair shall immediately resubmit the proposal along with the vote count to the President for reconsideration.

10 Functions of the Faculty Senate

10.01 The Senate shall consider all matters of general welfare to the University placed before it in the manner set out herein.

- a. **Administration Requests.** The President of Sam Houston State University or any other administrative officer above Program Coordinator may present for consideration to the Senate, through the Chair of the Senate, any matter of concern to the faculty at Sam Houston State University.
- b. **Faculty Requests.** Members of the faculty may bring before the Senate matters of concern to the general faculty. The faculty members must notify the Chair of the Senate of their desire to address the Senate and must be placed on the agenda of a Senate meeting.
- c. **Senate Member or Committee Requests.** Members of the Senate may bring before the Senate matters deemed appropriate for Senate consideration either by placing them on the agenda or by responding when the Chair calls for new business. Senate committees may bring before the Senate appropriate items at the

time the Chair calls for the reports of the several committees, provided the committees have previously discussed these items.

- d. **Student Requests.** The Senate may consider requests from students or student groups. Students or student groups must notify the Chair of the Senate of their desire to address the Senate and must be placed on the agenda of a Senate meeting.