

Frequently Asked Questions about the Faculty Senate

Additional information available in the *ECU Faculty Manual*,
Part II, Section II. Faculty Constitution and By-Laws

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/customcf/currentfacultymanual/part2section2.pdf>

What is the Faculty Senate?

A legislative and advisory body representing the general faculty and shall consist of elected and ex-officio members. The Faculty Senate and the various committees on which the faculty serve shall be the primary media for the essential joint effort of faculty and administration in the government of East Carolina University.

What is the mission of the Faculty Senate?

The purpose of the faculty organization shall be to provide the means by which the faculty is enabled to fulfill its function with respect to academic and educational policies and other affairs of East Carolina University.

What are the duties of the Faculty Senate?

The legislative powers of the general faculty are delegated to the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate shall have the powers of the general faculty, subject to the limitations stated in this constitution, in formulating the policies of East Carolina University.

The Faculty Senate shall ratify, amend, or remand all matters of academic policy or faculty welfare which have been recommended by any standing or special committee of East Carolina University, or initiate any policies in such matters which it deems desirable.

What is the relationship between the Faculty Senate and administration?

The ECU Faculty Senate is the centerpiece of shared governance. The elected ECU Faculty Senators serve as the voice of ECU's general faculty. The Faculty Senate and the various standing University Committees on which the faculty serve are the primary conduit for the essential joint effort of faculty and administration in the long-standing shared governance of East Carolina University. The Chancellor and the Chair of the Faculty facilitate communication that enables continuing and effective faculty participation in all aspects of the University community.

What is the role of the Faculty Senate committees in determining university policy?

All University Academic Committees are standing committees of the Faculty Senate. The committees initiate and review policies on all matters of academic and faculty welfare and present those policies to the Faculty Senate for ratification, amendment, or remand. They meet on a standard schedule, set and revised by the Committee on Committees.

In addition to the Academic Standing Committees, the Faculty Senate has five standing appellate committees that deal with discharge, imposition of serious sanction, employment status, instructional relationship, implementation of governance procedures, sexual, racial or ethnic harassment or discrimination or conflict of interest, nonreappointment and non-conferral of permanent tenure.

Information about these committees is available on the Faculty Senate web site:
<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/academiccommittees/committeesmainpage.cfm>

What are the responsibilities of Faculty Senators to their units and to the university?

Because the legislative powers of the general faculty are delegated to the Faculty Senate and Senators are the elected representatives of their academic units to this legislative body, Senators are responsible for communicating with the faculty in their units about all actions, pending and completed, of the Faculty Senate. Best practices for Senator-unit communications include reviewing the Faculty Senate agenda with actions, sharing announcements with the unit faculty, and serving as a liaison between the unit faculty and the Faculty Senate.

How does the Faculty Senate communicate with the faculty at large?

The general faculty shall be informed of the time, place, and agenda of all regular and special meetings. Each member of the general faculty receives a copy of the agenda via email for each meeting of the Faculty Senate at least one week before the date of the meeting. In addition, all Faculty Senate meeting Agendas and minutes are posted online at <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/senate/fscharge.cfm>

Who determines the schedule of meetings for the Faculty Senate and its committees?

The organizational meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on a Tuesday following the last regular meeting of the spring semester but before the beginning of the examination period. Four regular meetings of the Faculty Senate will be held each fall and spring semester according to a schedule prepared by the Agenda Committee and approved by the Senate in the Fall Semester of the preceding year.

In an exceptional situation in which the regular procedures for scheduling a meeting of the Faculty Senate are clearly inadequate and would cause undue delay, the Chair of the Faculty shall be empowered to call a special session of the Faculty Senate. Upon written petition of fifteen members of the Faculty Senate, the Chair shall call a special session of the Faculty Senate within four days. A notice stating the purpose of any special session shall be distributed to the members of the Faculty Senate and the general faculty at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting.

Who sets the Faculty Agenda?

The Faculty Senate shall be free to establish its own agenda. The Agenda Committee is charged to formulate monthly agendas, provided that all matters of academic policy brought forward by action of the general faculty, any senator, or any standing or special committee are placed on the agenda no later than the second regular meeting of the Faculty Senate after receipt of the request.

How are faculty senators chosen and how long is their term in office?

The Secretary of the Faculty shall request that each electoral unit proceed to elect its representatives. elections shall be held in February of each year with members-elect to take office on the day following the last regular meeting of the Faculty Senate in the spring semester.

To obtain nominations, each department/school/college shall develop a ballot that lists every eligible member of that department/school/college. Each member of the faculty shall vote by secret ballot for twice as many nominees as that faculty member's department/school/college is entitled to elect. That group of nominees equal to twice the number of representatives to be elected that receive the largest number of votes shall then be placed on a separate ballot for the election of representatives. An alternate method of nominating Senators by the schools is found in Section VI.

To elect representatives each faculty member shall then vote by secret ballot for the number of representatives allotted that electoral unit. Votes shall be counted in accordance with procedures agreed upon by the electoral unit. The administrative officer of each electoral unit shall report the results of the election to the Secretary of the Faculty. Each senator shall serve a two-year term. Senators may be elected

to succeed themselves twice. After a lapse of one year following the expiration of this third term, they will again be eligible for election.

What if I miss a meeting or two due to illness or other University responsibility?

The seat of an elected senator who fails to attend more than three consecutively held meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be declared vacated by the Chair of the Faculty and the Senator's unit will be informed and asked to elect another representative to fill the vacated seat. If a senator is awarded a research or medical leave and an alternate senator attends in his or her place, the three consecutive meeting rule will not be invoked.

What is the role of the Senate alternate?

The alternate will represent that electoral unit at the discretion of any Senator within the electoral unit, and in such a situation, shall notify the Secretary of the Faculty or Faculty Senate office that he or she is Representing that electoral unit prior to the convening of the Senate session in question.

What are the duties of the Faculty Officers? How long do they serve?

All faculty officers are elected for one year terms, with the ability for re-election. The Chair of the Faculty shall preside at all meetings. He or she is empowered to call special meetings when necessary. The Chair is an ex-officio member of all academic committees and various administrative committees. The Chair may delegate to the Vice Chair or an appointed representative his or her seat on any of the academic or various administrative committees. He or she shall appoint persons to fill unexpired terms on academic committees.

Before the first regular meeting of the Faculty Senate, the Chair will appoint the Parliamentarian of the Faculty. The Parliamentarian need not be a member of the Faculty Senate, but shall advise the Chair and the faculty on the parliamentary matters according to the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* and the *Faculty Constitution* and its *By-Laws*.

The Chair is responsible for conveying greetings of the Faculty at commencement exercises and representing the Faculty at university functions and Board of Trustee meetings. For the length of his/her term as Chair, the Chair of the Faculty serves as a Delegate to the Faculty Assembly (but not exceeding six consecutive years), with duties as a delegate described in the Bylaws of the Faculty Assembly of the University of North Carolina, and referenced in the *ECU Faculty Manual*.

The Vice Chair of the Faculty shall perform all of the duties of the Chair in the absence or incapacity of the Chair. The Vice Chair of the Faculty shall serve, at the request of the Chair of the Faculty, as the Chair's representative on faculty committees. The Vice Chair of the Faculty shall succeed to the office of Chair of The Faculty in the event that office should become vacant during the term of the incumbent.

The Secretary of the Faculty shall keep accurate minutes of all regular and special meetings, ensure distribution of copies of the minutes to all members of the general faculty, keep an accurate list of membership of the Faculty Senate, keep an accurate record of attendance, inform the Chair of the Faculty when a seat becomes vacant, serve, at the request of the Chair of the Faculty, as the Chair's representative on faculty committees, and perform such other appropriate duties as directed by the Faculty Senate.

How do senators address the Senate?

The generic term "professor" is usually used as a title for all senators. For administrators with titles, it is appropriate to use the administrator's official title.

How are speaking rights granted?

Members of all committees reporting to the Senate are automatically granted speaking privileges. Visitors may not participate in Senate discussions and business except by advance invitation of the Senate Agenda Committee or the Chair of the Faculty. Such an invitation will be announced to the Senators prior to the meeting. Those wishing to address an issue and speak to the Senate should contact the Chair of the Faculty prior to the meeting and make a request.

Who can ask questions during the question period in Senate meetings? To whom can questions be addressed?

Faculty senators and ex-officio members may ask questions during the question period. Questions may be addressed to anyone who has given a report to the Senate, Faculty Officers, ex-officio members (including administrators) in attendance, or individuals who have been granted speaking privileges.

How is voting conducted?

Each member of the Senate shall have one vote. A vote by choice will be the regular method of voting on any motion that does not require more than a majority vote for its adoption. According to parliamentary procedures, the Senate may request a different form of voting, i.e. standing vote, secret vote.

Where do senators sit? How long is the seating order determined?

To facilitate the efficient flow of business, Senators shall be seated with ex-officio members assigned seats on one row and elected members seated in alphabetical order by electoral units.

What should a senator do if he/she arrives late for a Senate meeting?

If a Senator arrives late for a meeting, s/he should proceed quietly to his/her assigned seat. During the break, the Senator should make sure that the Secretary of the Faculty has noted his/her arrival.

How does a senator make a motion?

1. The Senator raises his/her hand and waits to be recognized by the Chair of the Faculty.
2. The Chair of the Faculty recognizes the Senator. The Chair usually recognized the Senator by name. After receiving formal recognition from the chair, a member is then said to "have the floor."
3. Once recognized, the Senator rises, states her/his name and academic unit.
4. Addressing the Chair, the Senator introduces a motion in form of "I move that..." followed by a statement of the motion. Please note that motion sheets are provided at the Senator's tables. Any Senator making a motion must be ready to provide a written copy of the motion to the Chair and the Secretary at the time the motion is stated.
5. Another member seconds the motion. Without recognition from the presiding official, another member may say, "I second the motion." If the motion is not seconded, it "dies for lack of a second."