

**CONSTITUTION OF THE FACULTY
NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY**

Approved by the Council on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities, February 28, 2022

Approved by the Faculty Senate on March 21, 2022

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Approved by the President on May 2, 2022¹

PREAMBLE

Essential to the character and mission of a mature University is the Faculty's primary responsibility to develop, sustain, and enhance the intellectual quality and reputation of the institution and to maintain its academic integrity.

The Constitution of the Faculty Senate of Northern Arizona University ("Constitution") establishes a Faculty Senate ("Senate") as the representative body of all Northern Arizona University ("NAU") Faculty, which includes each category of Faculty set forth in the Arizona Board of Regents ("ABOR") and NAU Conditions of Faculty Service ("COFS"). The Constitution delineates the Senate's role in Shared Governance, as part of University Governance, with Faculty predominance in policy decisions relating to curricula, assessment, pedagogy, course design, research, academic standards, and ABOR- and University-level Faculty personnel processes.

To that end, the purposes of the Senate are to:

- Promote academic freedom for all Faculty of the University;
- Advance the instructional mission of the University by maintaining an optimal learning environment throughout the institution;
- Encourage research, scholarly activity, and creative effort as well as application of the intellectual values of the arts, the humanities, the sciences, and the professions;
- Define and establish standards and procedures for accountability concerning professional Faculty ethics and responsibilities and promote adherence to those standards and procedures; and
- Encourage an informed, continuing, and academically responsible participation in those shared governance roles set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty Senate.

¹ *This Constitution of the Faculty Senate shall supersede and abrogate the Faculty Organization Constitution approved by the Board of Regents on December 11, 1982; and modified on October 8, 1983 and April 19, 1994 and February 25, 2002.*

University Governance includes active Faculty participation in many other areas of institutional policy and operations, including strategic planning, budget, student services, University facilities, and administration, where these elements affect the academic enterprise.

1.0 AUTHORITY, STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONS, AND DEFINITIONS

1.1 FACULTY AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

1.1.1 **Faculty Responsibility.** The Arizona Board of Regents has affirmed that faculty have the right “to address matters of institutional policy or governance;” in fact, ABOR deems this right an essential component of academic freedom and also necessary to ensure “the well-functioning of academic institutions, and their ability to create and disseminate knowledge. (See ABOR policy 6-202.) The Faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curricula, assessment, pedagogy, course design, research, academic standards, ABOR- and University-level Faculty personnel processes, and other aspects of university life that relate to the educational process, subject to the authority of the Arizona Board of Regents, the administrative authority of the University President, and the limitations imposed by the Constitution of the Faculty.

1.1.2 **Role of the Faculty.** The power to initiate, review, formulate, recommend enactment of, and administer policy and procedures in the areas identified in section 1.1.1 rests with the Faculty. These powers and duties must be exercised in accordance with applicable law as well as the policies of the Arizona Board of Regents and the policies of Northern Arizona University.

1.1.3 Definitions.

1.1.3.1 **Faculty.** Members of the NAU Faculty include employees holding Faculty ranks at the University as defined in the ABOR and NAU Conditions of Faculty Service, full-time librarians holding academic professional rank, and part-time Faculty who have taught a minimum of 9 credit hours in each of the three previous years and who are currently employed as Faculty and teaching at NAU.

1.1.3.2 **Administration:** The term “Administration” is used to refer to the President, Provost, or the administrator they designate to interface with the Faculty Senate on specific matters.

1.1.3.3 **Faculty Personnel Processes:** Refers to the provisions of ABOR and University-approved COFS.

1.1.3.4 **Arizona Faculties Council (AFC):** The representative leadership body of NAU, Arizona State University, and University of Arizona comprised of the Senate Presidents from each University and other senate leadership as defined in the AFC bylaws, promoting

communication between the Faculty at the three Universities and monitoring issues of mutual concern on the state and national level. The AFC represents the Faculty to ABOR.

1.2 THE FACULTY SENATE’S REPRESENTATION OF ALL NAU FACULTY

- 1.2.1 **Purpose and Relationship to the Faculty.** The Faculty exercises its powers through the Faculty Senate, which is the legislative, representative assembly of the Faculty and is subject to the Faculty’s review. The Senate provides a forum for free discussion, decision-making, and independent statements of collective Faculty concerns and judgment. The Senate is the entity through which the Faculty discharges its role in Shared Governance at the University, within the scope of its authority.
- 1.2.2 **Membership.** The Senate consists of representative members elected from and by the Faculty, including the Officers of the Faculty Senate, as specified in section 3.3.1 below.
- 1.2.3 **Consideration of Issues.** The Faculty shall consider such policy matters as are brought before it by the Senate via the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (“FSEC”). Faculty may bring issues of concern to the Senate through their elected representatives, who will bring the issue to the Senate President or FSEC, or by a petition signed by twenty-five (25) Faculty members.
- 1.2.4 **Authority of the Senate.** Whenever the Senate is acting within its province as herein designated, its actions shall be effective without further approval by the Faculty. However, its actions shall be subject to reconsideration and review by the Faculty in accordance with Section 5.1 and the relevant sections of the Bylaws.

1.3 FUNCTIONS OF THE FACULTY SENATE

- 1.3.1 **Role of the Faculty Senate.** The Senate helps facilitate communication among Faculty, Administration, staff, and students at the University. And, in order to offer the Senate’s collective wisdom and experience, the Senate furthermore advises the University Administration through the Senate President and ABOR through the Arizona Faculties Council.
- 1.3.2 **Shared Governance Responsibilities.** As representatives of the faculty, the Senate has primary responsibility to deliberate and formulate recommendations regarding policies, changes, and amendments related to:
 - 1.3.2.1 **Curriculum.** In the vital areas of curricula and other academic policy matters, the Senate has the primary role in decision-making, subject to the approval of the University Provost, the University President,

and the Board of Regents. The Senate must approve, through the action of appropriate standing elected, representative University committees, all academic policy; this includes but is not limited to curricula and assessment, mode and method of instructional delivery, research, scholarly, and creative and artistic activity, and other related areas.

- 1.3.2.2 **Academic Standards.** The Senate maintains the academic standards at Northern Arizona University through the appropriate review, creation, recommendation, and application of academic policies as they apply to students. The Senate is charged with engaging the University community in the examination and critical appraisal of such academic policies and makes recommendations to the University Provost. The Senate also consults with stakeholders and leadership regarding policies that promote student academic success, academic integrity, or address the student code of conduct as it relates to academic affairs.
- 1.3.2.3 **Faculty Personnel Policies.** Subject to the authority of the Arizona Board of Regents, the Faculty, through the Faculty Senate, has been charged with shared responsibility for matters related to ABOR- and University-level Faculty personnel processes, including promoting academic freedom. To these ends, and in collaboration with the University Provost, the Faculty Senate has the responsibility to develop and consult regarding the review of Faculty categories and ranks; develop University-level criteria for promotion and tenure; develop workload policies; and ensure the regular review of such policies and effect revisions, as necessary.
- 1.3.2.4 When no appropriate Senate-charged committee exists to consider such matters, the matter must be brought to the Senate. If any significant policy change is implemented by the Administration without prior review and approval by the appropriate university standing committee or by the Senate, then the Senate has the right to review such change and make recommendation(s) for an appropriate course of action on behalf of the Faculty and for the University.
- 1.3.2.5 The Senate may request reconsideration of final decisions made at the University level regarding curriculum; academic standards; Faculty categories and ranks; criteria for promotion and tenure; and workload policies.

2.0 NATURE OF UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

2.1 FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE.

To demonstrate the Administration's and Faculty's mutual commitment to collaborative participation in University Governance, the Administration will consult with the Senate regarding a variety of issues of importance to the Faculty including:

- 2.1.1 **Strategic Planning.** The Senate shall participate in university-level strategic planning and be consulted on the implementation of the strategic plan.
- 2.1.2 **Budget and Budget Allocation.** While responsibility for preparation of budgets and other plans for resource allocation is that of the Administration, the Senate shall participate in the process that includes discussions related to the relationship between strategic planning and University-level resource allocation. The Senate should also be informed of and have the opportunity to review decisions made regarding and outcomes pertaining to this area; to this end, the Senate will receive information which will enable it to appropriately perform this important role.
- 2.1.3 **Institutional Policy and Operations.** The Senate shall be consulted and invited to provide feedback and advise the Administration related to academic organization, including academic programs, departments, or colleges, and in areas of institutional policy and operations, including student services, University facilities, and administration, where these elements affect the academic enterprise. The Senate may request reconsideration of decisions made at the University level regarding strategic planning; budget and budget allocation; and institutional policy and operations.

3.0 MEMBERSHIP OF SENATE, ELECTIONS, AND SENATE OFFICERS

3.1 MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1.1 **Membership.** The Senate shall consist of duly elected Senators.
- 3.1.2 **Eligibility To Serve as a Senator.** All Faculty (as defined in section 1.1.2 of this Constitution) are eligible to be elected and serve as Senators. Department Chairs, School Directors, and others holding an administrative position supervising Faculty, or Faculty holding an administrative appointment of 49% or more, are not eligible to serve as an elected member of the Faculty Senate.

3.2 ELECTION OF SENATORS

- 3.2.1 **Elections.** For the purpose of nomination of, and voting for, Senators, the Faculty shall be divided into voting units by colleges, schools, or comparable units as defined in the Bylaws. Unit elections will follow procedures as outlined in the Bylaws. The number of Senate seats assigned to each voting unit shall be proportionate to the total number of full-time equivalent Faculty members in the unit and is further enumerated in the Bylaws. Each academic voting unit is

entitled to at least one Senator and each academic unit shall be approved for Senate representation by a two-thirds vote of the Senate.

- 3.2.2 **Voting.** Faculty shall have the power to vote in meetings of the Faculty, on Faculty referenda, and in elections for representatives to the Faculty Senate and its committees, pursuant to functions of the Faculty Senate.

3.3 OFFICERS

- 3.3.1 **Officers.** Officers of the Senate are the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Parliamentarian. The immediate Past President of the Senate, or their designee as defined in the Bylaws, shall serve as a non-voting ex-officio officer of the Faculty Senate. The duties and responsibilities of the officers are prescribed in the Bylaws
- 3.3.2 **Election of Officers.** The process for the elections of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian of the Senate is set forth in the Bylaws.
- 3.3.3 **Role of the President.** The President of the Faculty Senate represents the Faculty, presides over the Senate, and represents the Faculty to the Arizona Faculties Council. The Senate President will also serve as the primary liaison between and advocate for the Faculty with the Administration.

3.4 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee organizes and coordinates the committee structure of the Senate and manages the Senate's affairs between Senate meetings. Additional duties and responsibilities of the Executive Committee are described in the Bylaws.

- 3.4.1 **Membership.** The Executive Committee is made up of the officers of the Senate and others, as specified in the Bylaws.
- 3.4.2 **Role of the President.** The President of the Senate serves as Chair of the Executive Committee.

3.5 EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Non-voting ex-officio members of the Senate include the President of the University, Provost of the University, President of the Associated Students of Northern Arizona University, President of the Graduate Student Government, and the immediate Past President of the Faculty Senate or designee, as defined in the Bylaws.

4.0 MEETINGS OF ALL NAU FACULTY

4.1 ALL NAU FACULTY MEETINGS

The Senate shall invite all NAU Faculty to meet at least once each semester, and the President of the University will be invited to address the Faculty at such meetings. The President of the Senate shall preside at all such meetings of the Faculty. Other meetings of the Faculty may be called as necessary by the President of the Senate, the President of the University, or action of the Faculty.

4.2 AGENDA

The Senate President shall set the agenda for meetings of the Faculty, in consultation with the FSEC, and shall invite feedback regarding the agenda from the President of the University.

4.3 QUORUM

Thirty percent (30%) of the Faculty as defined in section 1.2.2 shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of taking official action on any matter brought before it at meetings of the Faculty.

4.4 NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Electronic notice shall be distributed to the Faculty and the President of the University at least one week in advance of any meetings of the Faculty, and such notice shall contain a description of all matters to be presented for Faculty review and action at the meeting.

4.5 NOTICE OF AGENDA

The agenda for a meeting of the Faculty shall be distributed electronically to the Faculty and the President of the University at least three business days prior to the meeting.

4.6 METHOD OF VOTING

Voting shall be conducted by in-person and/or electronic ballot. A roll call vote may be requested by the Senate President or by five Faculty members in attendance at the meeting. All voting by ballot shall be supervised by the Senate Elections Committee (as defined in the Bylaws).

4.7 PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Unless otherwise specified, the rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the parliamentary procedures of meetings of the Faculty.

5.0 REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF SENATE

5.1 RECONSIDERATION OF SENATE ACTIONS

Any resolution or action of the Senate shall be subject to reconsideration upon written request from the Faculty, as specified below. The request must be made within three (3) weeks of public notification by posting final meeting minutes on the Senate website.

- 5.1.1 **Review by the Senate.** An action or a resolution can be remanded to the Senate for reconsideration. This procedure is initiated by the President of the Senate upon receiving the written request of (a) ten (10) Senators, or (b) twenty-five (25) Faculty members. The request for reconsideration must state the action to be reconsidered, as well as any recommended changes. The President of the Senate shall submit the request to the Senate Executive Committee, either as a priority item on the agenda of the next regular Senate meeting or as an agenda item for a special Senate meeting called for that purpose. Except for during the winter and summer breaks, such a meeting shall be conducted within four weeks of the initial receipt of the petition by the President of the Senate.
- 5.1.2 **Review by the Faculty.** A petition by twenty-five (25) Faculty members as defined in 1.1.2 is sufficient to cause an action of the Senate to be reviewed by the Faculty via a referendum. Such a petition shall state the Senate action to be reviewed and shall be addressed to the President of the Senate. The Senate President must call a meeting of the Faculty to review the appeal within four weeks of receiving the request, except for during the winter and summer breaks. Following the meeting, a vote shall be conducted consistent with the elections procedures described in the Bylaws and within four weeks after the meeting of the Faculty. The vote shall be conducted by electronic ballot. The ballots must contain the statement of the Senate action to be reviewed. At least one week must be allowed between the issuance of ballots and the deadline for their return. A majority of the Faculty members voting shall be necessary to repeal a Senate action, provided at least thirty percent (30%) of the Faculty vote on the issue.

6.0 BYLAWS OF THE FACULTY SENATE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The Bylaws of the Senate (“Bylaws”) are maintained by the Secretary of the Senate, made publicly available via the Senate’s website, and contain the processes, procedures, and guidelines which structure and clarify the Senate’s internal organization and which effectively implement the requirements of this Constitution. The Bylaws must be clearly drafted and consistent, as well as aligned with this Constitution. If any portion of the Bylaws is determined to be inconsistent with this Constitution, the language of this Constitution shall prevail.

6.2 AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Any change(s) to the Bylaws (“Amendment(s) to the Bylaws”) may be proposed in writing by:

- (1) the Senate Executive Committee,
- (2) a petition of ten (10) or more Senators, or
- (3) a petition of twenty-five (25) or more Faculty members.

A proposed Amendment(s) to the Bylaws shall be submitted to the President of the Senate. The President will present the petition at the next Senate Executive Committee meeting. The Senate Executive Committee will review the proposed Amendment(s) to the Bylaws to determine compliance with this Constitution. Any proposed Amendment(s) to the Bylaws which is in compliance with this Constitution shall be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Senate for initial review and discussion. The language of the proposed Amendment(s) to the Bylaws shall be electronically provided to all Senate members and posted on the Senate website at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting. In order to provide Senators with sufficient time to deliberate and consult with their constituents, a vote on any proposed Amendment(s) to the Bylaws will not occur until the following full Senate meeting.

Should the Senate Executive Committee determine that a proposed Amendment(s) to the Bylaws does not comply with this Constitution, the proposed Amendment(s) to the Bylaws shall be returned to its originator, along with a written explanation regarding why the proposed Amendment(s) to the Bylaws did not align with this Constitution.

6.3 RATIFICATION OF AMENDMENT(S) TO THE BYLAWS

Ratification of an Amendment(s) to the Bylaws requires that at least two-thirds of Senators present (at either a regular or a special Senate meeting, at which a quorum [51% of the Senate] is present to vote to approve the Amendment(s) to Bylaws.

7.0 AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION & RATIFICATION

7.1 AMENDMENT(S) TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE FACULTY SENATE

Any change(s) to this Constitution (“Amendment(s) to the Constitution”) can be initiated:

- (1) by an action of the Senate, approved by an affirmative majority vote at a regular or special meeting of the Senate where a quorum (51% of the Senate) is present; or
- (2) by a petition stating the proposed Amendment(s) to the Constitution and provided to the President of the Senate and signed by at least fifty (50) Faculty members.

After an Amendment(s) to the Constitution has been initiated, the President of the Senate will either place the proposed Amendment(s) on the agenda at a regular Senate meeting or may call a special meeting of the Faculty for the purpose of considering the proposed Amendment(s). (Either way, however, said Senate meeting shall be held within four (4) weeks—not including the summer and winter breaks—of the initial receipt of the proposed Amendment(s) to the Constitution, so long as Copies of the proposed Amendment(s) are electronically provided to the Faculty and posted on the Senate website at least three (3) business days in advance of the Senate meeting at which it is to be discussed.

A favorable vote by at least two-thirds of the Faculty present shall be required to approve the proposed Amendment(s) to the Constitution, provided that at least thirty percent (30%) of the Faculty (as defined in 1.1.2) are voting. At least one week must be allowed between the issuance of ballots and the deadline for their submission. Voting shall be by electronic ballot and supervised by the Faculty Senate Vice President and the Elections Committee of the Senate, as described in the Bylaws. Voting results will be certified and announced within four (4) weeks after the Senate meeting at which the Amendment was discussed. If approved by the Faculty, this Amendment shall become effective upon its approval in the manner prescribed by the Arizona Board of Regents.

7.2 RATIFICATION

This Constitution shall be submitted to the Faculty for consideration and approval. If at least thirty percent (30%) of the Faculty are voting, this Constitution shall become effective upon approval by a majority and in the manner prescribed by the Arizona Board of Regents in Policy 1-113. Faculty voting is to be by electronic ballot and supervised by the Faculty Senate Vice President and the Elections Committee of the Senate.

7.3 ABOR PROVISIONS

The Arizona Board of Regents has authority over and governance of Northern Arizona University; as such, the Board retains the right to review this Constitution, or any action of the Faculty or Senate authorized thereby and may enact changes to any such actions as it deems proper. Such actions of the Board shall always prevail.

If any part of this Constitution is determined to be illegal or contrary to the policies of the Arizona Board of Regents, such a determination shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Constitution.