

Bylaws of the Faculty Senate of the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth

Article I: Preamble

A university is a community of scholars engaged in the free discussion, research and dissemination of ideas and knowledge with primary authority and responsibility to develop, sustain, and enhance the intellectual quality and reputation of the institution and to maintain its academic integrity. To the end that the governing of this university shall embody the full freedom of discussion, participation and examination of ideas by faculty, students and administrators in the search for truth. The administration and the faculty of the University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNT Health) at Fort Worth hereby establish these Bylaws for the Faculty Senate.

Article II: Purpose and Responsibilities

A. Purpose:

1. The purpose of the UNT Health Faculty Senate is to represent the faculty in all matters that pertain to the institution.
2. The Senators shall be charged with:
 - a) bringing issues from the colleges from which they are elected to the Faculty Senate.
 - b) informing their respective colleges about issues being considered by the Faculty Senate; and
 - c) conducting duties of the Faculty Senate as described in UNT Health approved policies and bylaws.
3. The Senators may be charged with:
 - a) bringing issues/matters by the UNT Health leadership to the colleges they are elected to represent to obtain input on such issues/matters and
 - b) subsequently inform leadership regarding this input either through Senate meetings or other mechanisms as outlined by UNT Health leadership.

B. Responsibilities:

1. Faculty Senate may recommend academic policy for the university, acting with due regard to the requests and needs of the faculty, departments, divisions, institutes, and colleges, to the advice of the President and Provost of UNT Health, and to the regulations of the Board of Regents of the University of North Texas (UNT) System and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
2. The Faculty Senate may consider all other matters of general welfare to the faculty and university including matters raised by senators, by Faculty Senate committees, by Deans of the Colleges, by the Provost and the President of UNT Health, and, through written petition by greater than 10% of the eligible voting faculty. Any other administrative official or body or full-time faculty member shall have the right to speak to the petition. Decisions on all such matters shall be final when approved by the President of UNT Health, subject to the regulations of the Board of Regents of the UNT System.

Article III: Membership and Duties

A. Composition:

1. Each UNT Health college shall have the following Senators selected from eligible faculty (see III.B, III.C, III.D)
 - a) one Senator appointed by the President of UNT Health.
 - b) four (4) elected Senators from each college. Should a college be unable to fulfill this requirement due to a shortage of eligible candidates, a minimum of three (3) Senators will be considered a valid slate.

B. Senator Eligibility:

1. All members of the Faculty Senate shall be elected from the full-time tenured, tenure track, and non-tenure track faculty members only, as defined by UNT Health.
2. Appointments and elections shall follow election procedures outlined elsewhere in this document.
3. Senator *pro tempore*:
 - a) If an elected Senator cannot be present for a regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting, that Senator will designate an alternative representative to attend said meeting.
 - b) *Pro-tempore* alternates must meet the same eligibility requirements as Senators.

- c) Such alternates shall have the right to vote, and their presence shall be counted in the determination of quorum.
- d) Such alternates shall be permitted to represent one Senator only at any given meeting.

C. Members Not Eligible:

- 1. Part-time faculty members are not eligible to be elected to or serve as an alternate in the Faculty Senate.
- 2. Faculty performing evaluations of another faculty are not eligible to be elected or serve as an alternate in the Faculty Senate. Those faculty who contribute information to the personnel designated to complete faculty evaluations are still eligible.

D. Nominative Membership (not elected)

- 1. The chair of the UNT Health Faculty Policies and Bylaws Committee shall serve as a non-voting ex-officio member of the Faculty Senate.
- 2. Non-voting consultants may be called from diverse interests within UNT Health at the request of the Faculty Senate to serve for a limited period of time for specific purposes.

E. Senator Appointments and Elections:

- 1. Election Cycle:
 - a) Elections shall usually be held between April 1 and May 31 by each college in a manner to be determined by the respective college.
 - b) Elected Senators' terms shall begin on the following September 1.
- 2. Voting Eligibility:
 - a) All UNT Health full-time tenured, tenure track, and non-tenure track faculty members are eligible to vote for Senate candidates within their primarily assigned or designated college (see below).
 - b) Eligible faculty members assigned to multiple colleges may only cast ballots for one of the colleges they are assigned to and are to notify the deans of both colleges for which one they will be casting a vote.
- 3. Term of Office:
 - a) Senators who are appointed shall serve a single one-year term and may serve up to six consecutive terms. They may be reappointed only after a two-year break and may be elected immediately.

- b) Senators who are elected shall serve a single two-year term. They may be reelected only after a two-year break and may be appointed immediately.
- c) Senators shall take office on September 1 following their appointment or election.

4. Vacancy:

- a) A Senator with an expected absence projected to last six or more months or beyond the current unexpired term of that Senator shall constitute a vacancy for the duration of the leave or unexpired term.
- b) The Senator may choose to designate an individual or multiple faculty (meeting Senator eligibility criteria described in this document) to serve as an alternate for the duration of leave.
- c) If the Senator does not designate an alternate for the duration of leave, the dean of the college will be notified by the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer to conduct an election to fill the vacancy or to make a recommendation to the UNT Health President for an appointment for the term of that college's Senator needing to be replaced.
- d) In instances where the unexpired term is less than one year, completion of the residual term will be counted in the cumulative total described elsewhere in this document. In all other cases, the Senator appointed or elected to fill a vacancy will be limited to the remainder of the term vacated by the previous Senator.

5. Senatorial Absence:

- a) If a Senator is absent from three meetings of the Faculty Senate within a Senate year (September - August), the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer may request the Senator's dean to consult with the elected Senator and then notify the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer if there will be a replacement election or if that Senator will remain listed as one of that college's Senators.

F. Removal of a Senator

- 1. A faculty member serving on the faculty senate may be immediately removed from the senate for failing to conduct the member's responsibilities within the senate's parameters, failing to attend senate meetings, or engaging in other similar misconduct. A member of a faculty senate may be removed on recommendation of the UNT Health Provost and approval by the UNT Health President.
- 2. The faculty member who has been removed may appeal the decision in writing to the UNT Health President within ten (10) business days. The President shall reconsider the removal and shall make a final decision.

Article IV: Officers

A. Qualifications:

1. All members of the Senate, except *ex officio* members and formally censured faculty members, shall be eligible to be officers of the Senate.

B. Office Positions:

1. Associate Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate

- a) Term of Office: The term of office shall be one full year.
- b) Duties: The duties of the Associate Presiding Officer of the Senate shall be to preside over meetings and to otherwise carry out the duties of the Presiding Officer in his/her absence.
- c) Voting: The Associate Presiding Officer shall have the same voting privilege as other members of the Senate.
- d) Origination: The Associate Presiding Officer of the Senate shall not be from the same college as the Presiding Officer or the Secretary of the Faculty Senate.
- e) Appointment: The Associate Presiding Officer will be appointed by the President of UNT Health.

2. Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate

- a) Term of Office: The term of office shall be one full year.
- b) Duties: The duties of the Presiding Officer shall include presiding over meetings of the Senate, Faculty Assemblies, calling special meetings of the Senate, appointing Senate members to standing committees and ad hoc committees, serving as *ex officio* member of all Senate committees (without a voting privilege), approving minutes prior to distribution, otherwise facilitating the activities of the Senate, and representing the Senate to the administration of UNT Health and at other appropriate activities.
- c) Voting: The Presiding Officer shall only be permitted to vote at Faculty Senate meetings in the case of a tie. The Faculty Senate Presiding Officer is not permitted to vote at any committee meeting of the Senate.
- d) Origination: The Presiding Officer of the Senate shall not be from the same college as the Associate Presiding Officer or the Secretary of the Faculty Senate.
- e) Appointment: The Presiding Officer will be appointed by the President of UNT Health.

3. Secretary of the Faculty Senate

- a) Term of Office: The term of office shall be one full year.
- b) Duties: The Secretary of the Senate shall serve as an ex officio member and advisor.
- c) Voting: Secretary is a non-voting (ex-officio) position.
- d) Origination: The Secretary of the Senate shall not be from the same college as the Associate Presiding Officer or the Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate.
- e) Appointment: The Secretary will be appointed by the President of UNT Health.

4. Administrator of the Faculty Senate (non-faculty administrative support personnel)

- a) Duties: The Administrator shall supervise the keeping of the minutes of the meetings and other records and shall assist the Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate in the transaction of routine business of the Faculty Senate.
- b) Term of Office: An individual to fulfill the duties of the Administrator shall be provided by the UNT Health Office of Faculty Affairs.
- c) Voting: The Administrator shall not have a Senate vote.
- d) Origination: The Administrator shall not have term limits and shall not be required to have faculty status.

C. Succession of Officers:

- 1. The candidate endorsed by the Faculty Senate for Associate Presiding Officer shall be put forth for review and appointment by the UNT Health President.
- 2. The Associate Presiding Officer will be nominated for review and appointment by the UNT Health President to serve as the Presiding Officer for the following term.
- 3. The Presiding Officer will be nominated for review and appointment by the UNT Health President to serve as the Secretary of the Senate for the following term.
- 4. In the event the Presiding Officer of the Senate is unable to perform the functions or complete the term of the office after assuming those duties, the Associate Presiding Officer shall assume the duties of the Presiding Officer.

5. In the event the Associate Presiding Officer is unable to perform the functions or complete the term of the office after assuming those duties, the Senate shall elect an endorsed candidate from the Senate to be put forth for review and appointment by the UNT Health President to serve out the remainder of the term of office, by nomination and vote in accordance with IV. D.
6. In the event the Secretary of the Senate is unable to perform the functions or complete the term of the office after assuming those duties, the Senate may invite the Chair of the Communications Committee to sit on the Executive Committee, while remaining a Senator for the remainder of the year or leave the office unfilled.

D. Senate Officer Appointment Cycle:

1. Nomination:

- a) Nominations for all Endorsed Candidates for officer positions will occur during the April meeting, and voting will occur during the May meeting (or as needed if officers are unable to complete their terms of office), and will be carried out as follows:
 - (1) Officer Candidates must fulfill basic eligibility requirements for Faculty Senate Membership.
 - (2) Nomination may be self-nomination or nomination from the Faculty Senate body, but all nominations must have a second affirming vote from another current Senator.
 - (3) A Candidate for Associate Presiding Officer may not be from the same college as either the current Faculty Senate Presiding Officer or Faculty Senate Associate Presiding Officer.

2. Candidate Endorsement Process:

- a) Declaration of Candidacy:
 - (1) Regular nominations for Associate Presiding Officer positions will occur during the April meeting. Special nominations may be held ad hoc for vacancies as noted elsewhere in the Faculty Senate Bylaws.
 - (2) Nominations for Candidacy will follow the nominations process above.
 - (3) No member may be elected to office that has not completed the nomination process.
 - (4) Self-nomination for Candidacy must be seconded by a sitting Senator in good standing.
 - (5) Any nomination that does not receive a second from another member of the current Senate body will not be considered viable.

b) Distribution of Voting Ballots

- (1) Once nominations have been received, the Administrator (or designee) will generate a ballot for distribution to the current Faculty Senate membership save the Presiding Officer and non-voting members. The election will take place at the May meeting.
- (2) Ballots may be paper or electronic but must be individually delivered to the Administrator (or designee).

c) Announcement of Results

- (1) After tabulating the results for each Candidate, the Administrator of the Faculty Senate will release the percentage votes each Candidate received indicating the Candidate who won the endorsement of the Senate.
- (2) In the instance of a tie between candidates, a second vote following the Distribution of Voting Ballots procedure may be undertaken.
- (3) Alternatively, a secondary method may be agreed upon by all candidates for the tied position (such as a coin toss, card pull, or other random method) but may only be undertaken if all Candidates for the tied position agree in writing prior to the method being employed to be bound by the method and its results.

d) Appointment by the University President

1. Within one week, the Administrator will forward the Candidate who won the endorsement for Associate Presiding Officer of the Senate to the President of UNT Health for review and consideration.
2. The President will then appoint an eligible faculty member.

Article V: Committee Membership

A. Standing Committees

1. Executive Committee

a) Membership:

- (1) Composition: The Executive Committee shall consist of the Presiding Officer, Associate Presiding Officer, and Secretary of the Faculty Senate.
- (2) Committee Chair: The Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate will serve as the Committee Chair.

b) Function: The Executive Committee shall be empowered to act for the Senate between meetings.

c) Regularity Expectations:

- (1) Meetings: The Executive Committee is expected to meet at least monthly.
- (2) Reports: All actions taken by the Executive Committee shall be
- (3) reported to the Senate at the meeting following the convening of the Executive Committee.

2. Faculty Achievement Award Committee

The selection committee composition, award criteria, nomination eligibility criteria, nomination submission process timeline and selection process are all found in the Faculty Achievement Award Procedures.

3. Communications Committee

a) Membership:

- (1) Composition: The Communications Committee will be composed of Senators selected from volunteers or appointees by the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer from within the Senate body.
- (2) Additional non-Senator faculty and/or staff may be incorporated for knowledge and expertise but may not serve as the Chair for the Communications Committee.
- (3) Committee Chair: The Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate will appoint the Chair of the Communications Committee or request the committee elect its own chair.

b) Function: The Communications Committee charge is to evaluate and report back to the Senate on

- (1) the effectiveness of Senate communications to the faculty and
- (2) the satisfaction of the faculty with the communications by the Senate of its activities.

c) Regularity Expectations:

- (1) Meetings: The Communications Committee is expected to meet at least quarterly.
- (2) Reports: All actions taken by the Communications Committee shall be reported to the Senate at the meeting following the convening of the Communications Committee.

B. *Ad Hoc* Committees

1. Formation: As the need arises, *ad hoc* committees may be formed and charged by the Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate

2. Membership:

- a) Membership must include at least one current Senator.
- b) The duration of service on a particular committee by any single Senator shall be no more than four consecutive years.

3. Duration/Lifespan:

- a) *Ad hoc* Committee members shall be appointed for the duration of the Committee charge or until the end of the Senator's elected term.
- b) *Ad hoc* Committee members may be reappointed to a particular committee for additional one-year terms.
- c) No *Ad hoc* committee shall exist beyond two years from its establishment without review by the Executive Committee and approval of its renewal by the Senate.

4. Committee Chair:

- a) The chair of any Senate committee must be an elected member of the Faculty Senate and may be chosen by the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer.
- b) Faculty Senate Presiding Officer may defer the selection of the Committee Chair to the Committee members, but the Chair must be a current Senator who is assigned to the Committee.

5. Function: *Ad hoc* Committees shall be charged by the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer for a specific purpose which must be clearly delineated before the Committee may be formally charged for action.

6. Regularity Expectations:

- a) Meetings: *Ad hoc* Committee meeting regularity will vary according to charge but must meet biannually at a minimum.
- b) Reports: All actions taken by an *ad hoc* Committee shall be reported to the Senate at the meeting following the convening of that *ad hoc* Committee.

Article VI: Jurisdiction

A. On its own initiative, the Senate may submit recommendations to the Provost or the President of the UNT Health on any matter affecting the interests of the university.

B. Protests of Senate Action by the Faculty Body:

- 1. Within a two-week period after each monthly report of the Administrator, members of the Faculty Body may submit individually signed protests concerning action taken, or not taken, by the Senate.

2. If such protests concerning any given item are received from greater than 10% of the members of the faculty, the Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate must present the protested item for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Senate.

Article VII: Meetings

A. Regular Meetings:

1. The Faculty Senate shall meet monthly within the academic year.
2. The first meeting of each new Senate shall be held in September.
3. The Faculty Senate shall broadcast live video and audio of each open meeting over the internet if more than 50% of members are in attendance.

B. Meeting Agenda:

1. Email notice of all regular meetings shall be sent to Senate members by the Administrator with the goal of this occurring at least one week in advance of the meeting.
2. The agenda for each meeting and any curriculum proposals to be discussed or voted on will be made available on the institution's website no later than seven days before the meeting.

C. Quorum:

1. A simple majority of the membership of the Senate shall constitute a quorum for conducting a vote.
2. Thirty (30) percent of the membership of the Senate shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of discussion of items on the posted agenda.
3. Active Senators and Active Officers attending any meetings convened by via telecommunication method will be considered present in the constituents of a Quorum.

D. Procedure:

1. Faculty Senate Presiding Officer or designated alternate shall preside at meetings of the Senate.
2. The Senate shall conduct business under the guidelines of the most current publication of Robert's Rules of Order.

E. Special Meetings:

1. A special meeting of the Senate shall be called by the Administrator at the direction of the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer or upon request in writing of greater than 20% members of the Senate.
2. Written notices of such special meetings shall be sent to all members as far in advance as is possible.
3. Meetings of the full-time faculty may be called by the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer upon written requests from greater than 30% of the full-time faculty.
4. The presiding officer for Special Meetings will be the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer.
5. The Meeting Agenda for Special Meetings is restricted to the specific purpose the meeting was called for.

F. Records and Reports:

1. A complete set of minutes of each meeting of the Senate shall be kept by the Administrator.
2. The names of members in attendance must be recorded for any meeting where a vote of no confidence or policies related to curriculum and academic standards are discussed.
3. Following approval by the Senate, the Administrator shall post the minutes of the previous meeting to the intranet portion of the UNT Health Faculty Senate website, available for all faculty to access.

G. Visitors:

1. Any faculty or staff member is welcome to attend any Senate meeting and is encouraged to contact the Senate Presiding Officer in advance in order to ensure sufficient room capacity is available.

Article VIII: Administrative Support for the Senate

The Provost of UNT Health shall provide the Senate with financial support sufficient to conduct its business, including a Faculty Senate Administrator.

Article IX: Amendments to the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate

- A. Amendments to the Faculty Senate bylaws may be proposed by addressing such

amendments to the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer.

- B. Amendments require either a 2/3 majority vote in the Faculty Senate or a petition of at least ten percent of the full-time faculty members at UNT Health to be considered viable for action.
- C. The Faculty Senate Presiding Officer will review the proposed amendment and report back to the Faculty Senate at or before the next Faculty Senate meeting regarding the amendment and any changes the amendment would require to the Bylaws as a whole.
- D. Following establishment of viability and completion of any additional review actions that may be required (i.e., legal, compliance), the proposed revision or amendments must be sent to all current Senate members allowing thirty days for review. Voting on the revisions will take place at the next regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting subsequent to the 30-day review period. The review period for amendments or additions may be shortened when required to comply with changes to state law.
- E. Revisions and amendments are considered 'passed' if approved by a simple majority of Senators present at the time of voting on the amendments.
- F. All amendments to these bylaws may be subject to the approval of the President of UNT Health and the UNT System Board of Regents.

UNT Health-FW Faculty Senate Bylaws

Approved: October 11, 2019

Effective: June 1, 2019

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References and Cross References

UNTHSC Faculty Affairs Policies and Procedures: 6.101, 6.102, 6.103, 6.003, 6.104, 6.004, 6.105, 6.005, 6.005, 6.106, 6.006, 6.107, 6.007, 6.108, 6.109, 1.107, 5.106

UNT System Regents Rule 06.100

Signed by:

Dr Chris Ray 20/2025

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