

## INTRODUCTION TO THE UFS CHARTER

The City University of New York system consists of thirteen senior colleges, seven community colleges and five independent graduate schools. It was formally created in 1961 from the original four senior colleges of the City of New York, initially linked under the Board of Higher Education. The Bylaws of the current Board of Trustees, created in 1976 when the State formalized its responsibility for the University, provide for a University Faculty Senate:

Bylaw 8.10 - University Faculty Senate There shall be a university faculty senate, responsible, subject to the board, for the formulation of policy relating to the academic status, role, rights, and freedoms of the faculty, university level educational and instructional matters and research and scholarly activities of university-wide import. The powers and duties of the university faculty senate shall not extend to areas or interests which fall exclusively within the domain of the faculty councils of the constituent units of the university. Consistent with the powers of the board in accordance with the educational law and the Bylaws of the board, the university faculty senate shall make its own Bylaws providing for the election of its own officers, the establishment of its own rules and procedures for the election of senators, for its internal administration and for such other matters as is necessary for its continuing operations.

As the faculty governance body of the University, the Senate is composed of representatives elected from each of the constituent colleges, proportional to the size of the faculty. Full-time and adjunct faculty have representation. Senators serve a three-year term. A Chair and Vice-Chair are elected for two-year terms. These two officers and seven at-large members are elected each May for the following academic year. This nine-member Executive Committee acts for the full Senate when plenary meetings are not scheduled.

The Senate represents the faculty to the Board of Trustees, to the central administration and, on occasion, to college administrations and public authorities. It coordinates educational campaigns to inform the public at large and the political authorities about the academic achievements of faculty, the success of students and the value of the University to the city and state. By its authority to appoint faculty representatives to the Faculty Advisory Council of the Research Foundation, the Senate routinely works to expand research opportunities for its colleagues and to advance their work. In founding the CUNY Academy for the Humanities and Sciences, the Senate supported an initiative that encourages scholarship and communication across the University. The Senate has created University-wide seminars for faculty development and retraining which have covered a wide range of disciplines and study areas from classical literature to computer applications.

The standing committees of the Senate are devoted to protecting and strengthening the scholarly and academic environment of the University – Academic Freedom, Libraries and Information Technology, Status of the Faculty, and Student Affairs. The Senate also supports special advisory committees to Vice Chancellors, including Budget Advisory and Academic Affairs.

At the six annual Plenary meetings of the Senate, issues of particular concern to the faculty are explored through invited guests, reports of the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors, panels, and special presentations. The Senate deliberates and votes upon

policy statements, resolutions, and reports covering issues of concern to faculty -- from questions involving academic freedom at home and abroad to rights and responsibilities of faculty on their campuses. Proceedings of Plenary sessions are sent to all Senators and Alternates, college governance leaders, the chancellery, and college presidents.

Each year the Senate sponsors a fall and spring conference with a notable keynoter, attracting approximately 100 participants. The conferences center on both governance and academic policy issues. Conference proceedings are published and distributed throughout the University community. The Senate also publishes a blog on its website, a unique record of the issues of the day that also serves as a forum for the expression of faculty points of view.

In the course of an academic year, the Senate provides recommendations of faculty to serve on University-wide task forces, search committees, and study groups. The Chair of the Senate is an *ex officio* member of the Board of Trustees without vote. Members of the Executive Committee are assigned by the Chair of the Senate to each of the functioning committees of the Board, with vote, and to such other formal bodies as the board overseeing the CUNY B.A. Degree, the City University Legislative Action Council (CLAC), and the CUNY Athletic Conference. The Senate works with the Office of Academic Affairs to help form and maintain Discipline Councils across the University. The Chair of the Senate also convenes quarterly meetings of the Council of Faculty Governance Leaders, comprising top-elected faculty chairs of campus senates and councils.

Since its establishment in 1968 the University Faculty Senate has spoken forcefully on matters of concern to the faculty of the whole University.

#### UFS Chairs:

Robert S. Hirschfield, Political Science, Hunter: 1968-1971  
Ralph Sleeper, Philosophy, Queens: 1971-1972  
Nathan A. Weiner, Electrical Technology, College of Staten Island: 1972-1974  
David Valinsky, Statistics, Baruch: 1974-1978  
Ann M. Burton, History, Brooklyn: 1978-1981  
Henry Wasser, English, College of Staten Island: 1981-1986  
Shirley U. Wedeen, Education, Brooklyn: 1986-1990  
Robert A. Picken, French, Queens: 1990-1994  
Sandi E. Cooper, History, College of Staten Island: 1994-1998  
Bernard Sohmer, Mathematics, CCNY: 1998-2002  
Susan G. O'Malley, English, Kingsborough Community College: 2002-2006  
Manfred Philipp, Biochemistry, Lehman College; 2006-2010  
Sandi E. Cooper, History, College of Staten Island: 2010-2012  
Terrence Martell, Finance, Baruch, 2012-2016  
Katherine Conway, Business, BMCC, 2016-

# CHARTER OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE, CUNY

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Adopted on March 2, 1968 by the Conference on a University Senate, for recommendation to the faculties of The City University of New York; ratified by the constituent units in March 1968. Amended in April 1969, November 1971, October 1978, November 1979, May 1992, November 1995, October 22, 2013, and March 24, 2015.

## **PREAMBLE**

The University Faculty Senate is the principal organ of faculty expression and participation in the governance of The City University of New York. Composed of elected delegates from each of the autonomous constituent units of the University\*, its purposes are to assure that the faculty shares policymaking authority and responsibility with regard to appropriate aspects of University-wide planning and operation, and to provide a channel of reciprocal communication between the faculty and the administration of the University. The Senate complements and supplements, at the University level, the Faculty Councils and other deliberative bodies of the colleges and schools of the University. Its powers and responsibilities do not normally extend to matters falling within the areas of concern of such bodies, but only to matters of University-wide import.

The basic philosophic principle of this Charter is that The City University, composed of autonomous constituent units under the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees, is a "self-governing community of scholars" in which faculty, administration, and students all have legitimate and meaningful roles to play in the achievement of their common goals.

The basic operational principle of this Charter is that, under the Board of Trustees, the University Faculty Senate constitutes the principal decision making body within the structure of the University with regard to those areas of activity in which the faculty has the primary responsibility; and that in all other areas of faculty interest and concern, the University Faculty Senate constitutes the proper organ for faculty participation in the decision-making processes of the University.

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\* "Unit" for the purposes of this Charter means the Colleges of the University, the Graduate School and University Center, The Graduate School of Biological Sciences of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and The City University School of Law at Queens College.

## **ARTICLE I-- POWERS AND FUNCTIONS**

§1. The University Faculty Senate shall be concerned with policies, operations, problems and issues which have University wide import. The powers and responsibilities of the Senate shall not normally extend to areas or interests which fall exclusively within the domain of the autonomous constituent units of the University.

§2. The University Faculty Senate shall have primary responsibility, under the Board of Trustees, for determining University-wide policies and procedures concerning

a.) the academic status, role, rights, responsibilities, and freedoms of the faculties;  
and

b.) University-level educational and instructional matters, and research and scholarly activities of University-wide import.

§3. The Senate shall be fully advised on all matters germane to the programs and operations of the University and shall be routinely consulted on all proposals before the Council of Presidents, the Board of Trustees and other University-wide bodies. All information and materials pertinent to the deliberations of those bodies shall be routinely received by the Senate.

The Senate shall initiate policy recommendations, shall review and comment upon changes in policy initiated by the University's administration, and shall routinely present faculty views to the Council of Presidents and the Board of Trustees before, as, and after matters of policy are considered and decided.

§4. Through formal procedures, and consonant with the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, the Senate or its representatives shall in addition participate fully, directly, and at all stages in the making of decisions relevant to:

a.) the allocation of monies and other resources for educational objectives, for research and scholarly activities, for the development and maintenance of the physical plant of the University, and for other purposes involved in the operation of the University;

b.) the establishment and location of new units of the University and the appointment of principal administrative officers thereof;

c.) the appointment of the principal administrative officer at existing units of the University;

d.) the appointment and retention of the principal administrative officers at the University level;

e.) the establishment of University-wide academic programs, initiatives and priorities;

f.) the revisions of existing University-wide academic programs;

g.) relations between the University and the local community or between the University and governmental units or agencies;

and h.) the general public relations of the University.

§5. In the event of disagreement between the University Faculty Senate and the University administration or the Board of Trustees, the Senate shall determine what further steps it deems necessary or desirable to protect the interests of the faculty and the University.

## Article II -- MEMBERSHIP

§1.

a.) Each unit of the University shall have one representative for each sixty persons, or major proportion thereof, who are full-time faculty eligible to vote at that unit. No delegation shall have fewer than two Senators. Each unit having at least sixty persons who are part-time

members of the instructional staff, as such staff is defined in the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, as well as those persons holding titles in the CLT series, but excluding those persons identified under Section 3 below, shall collectively have one additional representative. Units which have separate schools that have previously elected their own Senators, and schools which have sixty members of the faculty or a major portion thereof eligible to vote, shall continue to provide such representation within the total delegation.

b.) Faculty eligible to vote shall constitute the electorate for purposes of nominating and electing candidates.

§2. To be a member of the Senate representing the faculty identified under Section 1.a. above, a person must hold faculty rank, except as excluded below in Section 3.

§3. No person holding the position of Chancellor, Deputy Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, University Administrator, University Associate Administrator, University Assistant Administrator, President, Provost, Vice President, Assistant Vice President, University Dean, University Associate Dean, University Assistant Dean, Dean, Associate Dean, Assistant Dean, Administrator, Associate Administrator, Assistant Administrator, Visiting Professor, Visiting Associate Professor, Visiting Assistant Professor, Research Associate, Research Assistant, Clinical Assistant, Registrar, Associate Registrar, Assistant Registrar, Registrar's Assistant, Higher Education Officer, Higher Education Associate, Higher Education Assistant, Assistant to Higher Education Officer, Higher Education Intern, Business Manager, Assistant Business Manager, Assistant to Business Manager, or whose duties are predominantly administrative in nature, not directly related to teaching and research, except in the case of department chairs, shall be eligible for election as a Senator.

§4. Senators shall be elected for a term of three (3) years, except that each unit of the University shall allocate, if necessary, terms of office to individual Senators in such fashion that, as near as may be possible, one-third of the terms of office of all its Senators shall expire annually.

§5.

a.) In the month of October the Senate Office shall notify each of the constituent units of the University as to the number of Senators allocated to that unit's delegation.

b.) Nominations for Senator shall be made at each constituent unit of the University during the month of November. Each college, school, or constituent unit of the University having its own faculty deliberative body shall determine its own nominating procedures. Where such a faculty deliberative body does not exist, the University Faculty Senate delegation in consultation with the Executive Committee of the University Faculty Senate shall determine the nominating procedures to be followed.

c.) Elections shall be held at each constituent unit of the University during a full academic week at least two weeks after nominations, but not later than February 1. Newly elected Senators shall attend without vote such plenary sessions of the Senate as may occur before the organizational meeting of the Senate in May. Elected Senators shall take office officially at the May organizational meeting of the Senate and serve through the day prior to the May

organizational meeting of the year ending their stipulated term of office.

d.) The Senate shall be the judge of the elections, returns, and qualifications of its own members.

e.) Each college shall elect annually two alternates to fill vacancies in the regular Senate delegation of the constituent unit as they may occur. Alternates may attend meetings of the Senate with voice but without vote. In the absence of a member of the Alternate's delegation an Alternate may vote. A Senator who resigns or vacates his or her position, prior to termination of incumbency, shall be replaced, until the next regular University-wide election, by an Alternate.

f.) A Senator may be removed from office by means of the following procedure: (1) that a petition to recall, signed by sixty of the members of the electorate or one- third of the electorate, whichever is less, is submitted to the University Faculty Senate delegation in the constituent unit of the University of which the Senator is a member, and to the Executive Committee of the Senate; and (2) that a recall referendum is scheduled within two weeks of the submission to the University Faculty Senate delegation in the constituent unit of the University and to the Executive Committee of the Senate of the petition to recall. A Senator will be deemed to have been removed from office if, in the recall referendum, a majority votes to recall. If a Senator is recalled, a new election shall be scheduled within four weeks of the date of notification of recall to choose a replacement. No Senator who is recalled shall be prohibited from standing for re-election.

§6. The faculty collective negotiating agency shall be invited to send a representative to plenary sessions of the Senate to participate without vote.

§7. The Chancellor of the University shall be an ex-officio member of the Senate, with voice but without vote.

§8. Each delegation to the Senate shall designate one member of its delegation as liaison with its faculty council or appropriate deliberative body.

### **ARTICLE III -- MEETINGS**

§1. The Senate shall convene in May to organize itself for the following academic year.

§2. The Senate shall hold regular meetings at least twice in the fall and twice in the Spring of each academic year, the first Fall meeting to be held no later than October 15. The notice of each meeting shall include the agenda, together with a written statement regarding any policy matter to be presented at the meeting, and shall be distributed at least seven days before the meeting.

§3. Special meetings shall be held on the call of the Chair of the Senate or on written request of fifteen percent or more of the membership of the Senate. The purpose of such meetings shall be explicitly stated in the notice of the meeting, and the meetings shall be limited to the stated purpose.

§4. The order of business at all meetings shall conform to a standard edition of Rules of Order to be determined by the Senate. The Chair shall decide all questions of parliamentary procedure according to that standard edition of Rules of Order.

§5. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the elected membership.

§6. The right to vote at meetings of the Senate and the right to hold office shall be limited to all duly elected Senators and Alternates (See Article II, Section 5) whose terms of office have not expired except in those cases where a college or constituent unit of the University has failed to re-elect or replace a Senator whose term of office has expired, in which case the Senator shall continue to serve with the right to vote and hold office until duly re-elected or replaced, but such service shall not continue beyond the point at which the incumbent has been replaced but not later than the following June 1st.

§7. A copy of the minutes of each meeting of the Senate shall be distributed to each of the members of the Senate, to the members of the Council of Presidents and other chief administrative officers of the University and its constituent units, to the central library of each of the constituent units of the University, and to the departments of each of the colleges and schools of the University, where it shall be available for inspection.

#### **ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS**

##### **§1. Chair.**

a.) There shall be a Chair of the University Faculty Senate. The Chair shall be elected by majority vote through secret ballot for a two-year term at the organizational meeting of the Senate by the voting members of the Senate present at that meeting. A Senator shall be eligible for election as Chair for not more than two successive terms or four consecutive years, whichever is greater. The Chair must be a member of the Senate.

b.) The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Senate and of the Executive Committee.

c.) The Chair shall nominate with the approval of the Executive Committee the members and chairs of the standing committees of the Senate. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Senate. The nominations shall be subject to approval by the Senate. The Chair shall appoint other committees.

**§2. Vice Chair.** There shall be a Vice Chair of the University Faculty Senate elected by majority vote through secret ballot at the same time and for the same term as the Chair. A Senator shall be eligible for election as Vice Chair for not more than two successive terms or four consecutive years, whichever is greater. The Vice Chair shall not be a Senator from the same college or school as the Chair. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall fulfill the duties of the Chair.

§3. Nominations for all officers shall be made from the floor.

§4. In the event that an officer fails to be re-elected to the Senate from his/her college or school during his/her tenure, a new election shall be held to complete the term of that officer.

## **ARTICLE V -- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

§1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, the Vice Chair, and seven Members at-Large to be elected by the incoming Senate at the annual organizational meeting for a term of one year. The Chair of the Senate shall be the Chair of the Executive Committee. The immediate past Chair of the Senate shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Senate and of the Executive Committee with voice but not vote for a period of one year.

§2.

a.) The seven Members-at-Large of the Executive Committee shall be chosen from nominations which may be made from the floor by members of the incoming Senate at the annual organizational meeting. No person shall be nominated without consent.

b.) Voting for the Members-at-Large of the Executive Committee shall be by secret ballot. The seven nominees with the highest total votes shall be declared elected. In case of a tie there shall be a run-off election.

c.) If a vacancy occurs on the Executive Committee, the Senate shall fill such vacancy by election.

d.) Officers and members of the Executive Committee may be removed from office by means of the following procedure: (1) that a petition to recall, signed by one-third of the members of the Senate, is submitted to the Chair of the Senate or the Vice Chair if the Chair is to be recalled; and (2) that a recall referendum is scheduled for the first meeting of the Senate following the filing of a recall petition signed by the required one-third of the members of the Senate. An officer or member of the Executive Committee will be deemed to have been removed from office if, in the recall referendum, a majority votes to so recall. If an officer or member of the Executive is recalled, a new election shall be held immediately to choose a replacement. No officer or member of the Executive Committee who is recalled shall be prohibited from standing for reelection.

§3.

a.) The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility, upon proper authorization of the Senate, to disburse budgeted and other funds; allocate allotted reassigned time to Senators and on occasion, as needed, to other CUNY faculty to fulfill the prescribed purposes of the Senate; hire and assign staff for Senate functions; raise supplemental funds; retain counsel; and otherwise implement the policies of the Senate. There shall be an annual report to the Senate on actions taken under this item.

b.) The Executive Committee shall transact such business of the Senate as may be necessary between meetings of the Senate, and exercise such further powers and duties as may be conferred upon it by the Senate.

c.) The Executive Committee shall keep minutes of its meetings and shall report its actions regularly to the Senate.

## **ARTICLE VI -- STANDING AND OTHER COMMITTEES**

§ 1. Members of standing committees and standing committee chairs shall be nominated by the Chair of the Senate with the approval of the Executive Committee. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Senate. The nominations shall be subject to approval by the Senate. The members of other committees shall be appointed by the Chair of the Senate. The chairs of standing and other committees shall be selected from among the membership of the Senate. The membership of any standing committee may be drawn from among those persons comprising the electorate as defined in Article II, Section 1.a. and b. except that a majority of any committee shall be composed of Senators. The Chair and the Vice Chair, *ex officio*, shall be entitled to attend meetings of all committees of the Senate and to participate in committee discussions. The members and chairs of the standing committees shall serve for a term of one year.

§2. The standing committees of the Senate shall reflect the academic, administrative and financial organization of the University. There shall be in addition an Academic Freedom Committee and such other standing committees as the Senate shall create.

§3. Standing and other committees shall have the power to delegate specific tasks or functions to subcommittees whose members shall include one or more members of the parent committee.

§4. Reports and communications by committees to the Senate shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for inclusion in the agenda of the next meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII- FINANCES AND SERVICES**

§1. There shall be an annual Senate budget. The Executive Committee shall present annually a recommended budget for Senate consideration and action by the third regular Senate meeting of the calendar year.

§2. The annual budget shall be submitted by the Executive Committee to the Board of Trustees for inclusion in the budget of the University.

§3. The Senate shall have final authority for disbursing and distributing all discretionary allotments in the approved budget.

§4. Among the items in the Senate budget shall be appropriate allotments of reassigned time for the officers and Executive Committee of the Senate and other Senate members, and others as specified in Article V, Section 3a, whose duties, in the judgment of the Executive Committee, require reassignment from regular teaching or related functions.

## **ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS**

**§1. Proposal.** Amendments to the Charter may be proposed by:

- a. majority vote of the Senate;
- b. majority vote of the Executive Committee;
- c. application by one-fifth of the faculty councils (including alternative forms of faculty council as defined in Article VIII, §5) of the constituent units; or
- d. petition of two percent of those persons referred to in Article II, §1.a. of this Charter, provided the petitioners are drawn from at least three of the constituent units. The Executive Committee may require that the petitioners' submissions be in verifiable electronic form, for example from the campus e-mail addresses of the petitioners.

Any such proposal must include the text of the proposed amendment.

**§2. Notice.** After an amendment has been proposed in accordance with Article VIII, §1, the proposed amendment shall be posted on the UFS website or other then-equivalent electronic platform, with notice pursuant to Charter Article III. In addition, by the dates specified for notice to Senators and Alternates in Charter Article III, the proposed amendment will be disseminated electronically to all faculty governance leaders.

**§3. Meetings.** The proposed amendment will be placed on the agenda of two regularly scheduled plenaries for discussion only and will be voted on at the next regularly scheduled plenary.

**§4. Vote.** An amendment is enacted when it is approved by an affirmative vote of 60% of the whole number of the Senate.

**§5. Alternative forms of faculty council.** In the absence of a faculty council, an alternative representative faculty body designated under the governance plan of the unit shall be deemed to be equivalent to a faculty council for the purposes of this Article. In the absence of both a faculty council and an alternative representative faculty body, the functions of the faculty council described in this Article shall be carried out either by the entire faculty acting as a collective body or by means of a mechanism designated by the faculty of the constituent unit in consultation with the Executive Committee of the University Faculty Senate.