

**FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION  
AND BYLAWS  
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# FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION

## Preamble

The faculty of Virginia State University are committed to the principles of shared governance and recognize the interdependence of all units of the University. It is only through planning together, working together, respecting one another, and communicating openly and freely about any and all issues that our community will thrive. Clearly, some responsibilities require the action of a single entity: not only are there areas of responsibility which are designated to specific units by state regulation, accreditation guidelines, expertise, and tradition, but also implementation is often clearly within the purview of a single department or office. Nevertheless, decisions made will be more informed, implementation will be more effective, and support will be more broad-based if policy is based on shared governance.

The centrality of the faculty to the life and mission of the University is self-evident. Every faculty person is a highly trained professional and is an authority in his or her academic discipline. Faculty members provide continuity, not only in terms of the University's long-range mission and goals but also in terms of connecting the University to the most up-to-date scholarly work in the Academy and other global institutions. The faculty's expertise and training, as well as their professional responsibilities to the University, its students, and community, establish the importance of their participation in the governance of the University. At the same time, the faculty reiterate their support of the shared governance model and their commitment to the principles that have been incorporated into the Faculty Senate Constitution.

The core values of shared governance, as supported by every item in the Faculty Senate Constitution, are:

- Informed and inclusive decision-making
- Transparency and clarity of operations and decision-making
- Open lines of communication between and among all components and members of the VSU community
- Accountability
- Mutual respect and trust

Guided by these core values, Virginia State University's Faculty Senate shall be one of four shared governance bodies (the others being the University Council, the Staff Senate, and the Student Government Association). The Faculty Senate, along with the other shared governance bodies, is constituted by the President based on delegated authority of the VSU Board of Visitors.

## Article I. The Purpose and Mission of the VSU Faculty Senate

The purpose of the Faculty Senate is to represent the faculty in the consideration of all policies that affect the academic climate and direction of the institution. The Faculty Senate seeks to create, maintain, and protect a university environment conducive to the growth of scholarship, learning, teaching, research, service, and respect for human dignity and rights. Among other things, the responsibilities of the Faculty Senate include:

- Working as advocate for the faculty and for the mission of the University with all shared governance bodies (Student Government Association, University Council, Staff Senate)
- Offering suggestions to the Provost, Vice Presidents and the President on matters of University organization, budget recommendations and revisions, facilities, planning, and mission at the University level
- Consulting with appropriate resource persons concerning academic policy
- Offering recommendations about admissions policies, faculty employment, faculty evaluation, retention, promotion and work environment policies, academic policies, and other policies and procedures affecting the work environment
- Working with the Provost to establish policies and procedures by which faculty will be involved in the evaluation of academic administrators
- Maintaining open and continuous communication with the faculty and obtaining faculty input to all actions

## **Article II. Functions of the VSU Faculty Senate**

### **A. The Decision-Making Function:**

**In a shared governance structure, there is opportunity for input in any area; however, decision-making is delegated to certain areas by virtue of state, SACS, or other guidelines and/or expertise. This function of the Faculty Senate will vary according to subject, need, and timeline, and the Faculty Senate will work closely at all times with the University Council, the Student Government Association, the Staff Senate, the Schools and their Deans, and the administrative arm of the University. Although the varied responsibilities of faculty are described in the following areas, the President and the Board of Visitors have ultimate authority.**

#### **1. Primary Decision-Making Responsibility**

**Faculty have primary decision-making responsibility for:**

- **curriculum content and methods of instruction**
- **promotion, tenure, and faculty status**
- **research**
- **admission and graduation requirements**
- **the hiring process for faculty**
- **academic freedom**
- **conflict resolution as related to faculty grievance**

#### **2. Joint Decision-Making Responsibility**

**Faculty have joint decision-making responsibility for:**

- **institutional budgeting, especially as it relates to departmental budgets, academic programs, and curriculum support and development**

- **institutional, departmental, and programmatic strategic planning**
- **classroom equipment**
- **faculty office equipment and décor**
- **student life and conduct (outside of the classroom)**
- **major programmatic revisions**
- **library resources**

**3. Consultative Decision-Making Responsibility**

**Faculty should have consultative authority, or input, into:**

- **library structure and operations**
- **physical plant**
- **all other aspects of University life that affect educational quality and academics**

**B. The Advocacy Function**

The Faculty Senate shall act as advocate for faculty, academic programs, courses and policies, and the general academic mission of the University. The Faculty Senate shall also act as an advocate for students.

**C. The Liaison Function**

The Faculty Senate shall serve as liaison between general faculty and administration, between faculty and faculty, between faculty and students, and between faculty and staff. The Faculty Senate shall also disseminate information about faculty issues and communicate faculty concerns to the administration.

**D. The Grievance Function**

The Faculty Senate establishes and implements policies and procedures both for faculty members to grieve matters of privilege (e.g., classroom assignments, etc.), hiring, retention, promotion, tenure, and evaluation and for faculty and administrators to grieve one another when they come into conflict over such issues. The Faculty Senate grievance function does not replace formal procedures established by the University Council for grieving non-faculty matters.

**Article III. The VSU Faculty Assembly**

The Faculty Assembly is a meeting that consists of the entire teaching and non-teaching VSU faculty. Administrators, staff, and students are welcome to attend Faculty Assemblies, but may not vote.

The purpose of the Faculty Assembly is to bring the University community together to discuss Faculty Senate business, items of interest to the University community, and problems and challenges that need to be addressed.

The Faculty Assembly shall be convened at least twice per year: once in the fall and the spring semesters. In addition to these Faculty Assemblies, one University-wide assembly shall be held in the spring semester so that at-large candidates for the Faculty Senate and the University Council can address the University community.

## **Article IV. Composition of the VSU Faculty Senate**

### **A. Membership**

1. Those eligible to be faculty representatives on the Virginia State University Faculty Senate shall include all full-time employees of the University (a) whose primary responsibility is teaching, extension, or research, (b) who are professional librarians, or (c) who are professional counselors.
2. The VSU Faculty Senate shall be composed of at least one Senator from each academic department.
3. Academic departments with more than ten full-time faculty should elect a second Senator.
4. There shall be one Senator each for every ten full-time extension specialists, researchers, and librarians who are administrative faculty.
5. Each department/unit shall also elect an alternate to represent the original Senator when s/he must be absent from Senate meetings.
6. There shall also be five at-large Senators elected by the full faculty body, two of whom are the Chair and Vice Chair of the Faculty Senate.
7. One alternate at-large Senator shall also be elected.
8. The following are also “speaking” (non-voting *ex officio*) members: The President of Virginia State University, the Rector of the Board of Visitors, the Provost and Vice Presidents, the Deans, the Faculty Senate representative to the University Council (unless this representative is an elected Senator), Student Government officers, and a representative of the Staff Senate.

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### **B. Duties of Senators**

1. Each Senator will be responsible for representing the interests of his/her constituency, whether that constituency is an academic department, a category of faculty (such as librarians or extension specialists), or the faculty.
2. Each Senator is expected to attend all Faculty Senate meetings.
3. If a Senator is unable to attend a meeting, s/he is expected to notify his/her alternate so that the alternate can attend and assume the duties of the senator, including voting. A department or academic unit that is unrepresented for three Faculty Senate meetings in the course of an academic year will be notified by the Faculty Senate Secretary, and the department or academic unit must then take action to ensure representation.
4. Every Senator must be an active member of at least one Faculty Senate Standing Committee or Subcommittee.

### **C. Terms of Office**

1. Senators shall serve a two-year term, with the option of being re-elected to one subsequent term (resulting in the possibility of being a Senator for four consecutive years).
2. After sitting out for one academic year, a faculty member may run for Senator again.

## **Article V. Officers of the Faculty Senate**

#### A. Officers

1. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Faculty Senate shall be elected by the faculty.
2. The Secretary and Assistant Secretary shall be elected by the Faculty Senate. The Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Chair of the Faculty Senate.
3. The Officers of the Faculty Senate must be full-time faculty and may not serve in any administrative capacity during their term of office.
4. The faculty members serving as Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary of the Faculty Senate should be eligible for overload compensation as a result of additional duties required by the office.

#### B. Duties

1. The Chair of the Faculty Senate shall preside over all Faculty Senate meetings; in his/her absence, the Vice Chair shall conduct the meetings. The Chair of the Faculty Senate shall also be a member of the University Council and is expected to attend Board meetings and communicate activities of the Board to the faculty. The Chair of the Faculty Senate shall convene the Faculty Assemblies. The Chair of the Faculty Senate, with a copy to the Secretary, shall forward resolutions and actions of the Faculty Senate to the appropriate administrative bodies.
2. The Vice Chair of the Senate shall perform the duties of the Chair in his/her absence at Faculty Senate meetings and act as Treasurer of the Faculty Senate budget. S/he shall also be a member of the University Council. The Vice Chair shall help the other officers as needed.
3. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Faculty Senate shall meet with the Provost once a month in addition to the Faculty Senate meetings in order to discuss academic matters.
4. The Secretary shall take minutes of Faculty Senate meetings and post the approved minutes on the Faculty Senate website, Intranet, and/or email within seven teaching days following the approval. The Secretary shall post membership rosters, meeting times, places, and agendas on the Faculty Senate website, Intranet, and/or email at least three teaching days prior to the meeting. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate shall track recommendations of the Faculty Senate, follow their progress through administrative channels, and notify the Chair of the Faculty Handbook Subcommittee and the Assistant Secretary when changes have been finalized.
5. The Assistant Secretary of the Faculty Senate shall keep track of the current undergraduate and graduate catalogs, retain copies of the catalogs on his/her computer (and back up copies), and assist the Secretary of the Faculty Senate as needed. The Assistant Secretary shall also be a member of the Curriculum and Academic Issues Committee of the Faculty Senate as well as the Catalog Subcommittee.
6. The Parliamentarian shall help ensure that Faculty Senate acts in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and that meetings follow Robert's Rules of Order.

#### C. Terms of Office

1. Officers of the Faculty Senate shall be elected for terms of one year.
2. Each officer may be re-elected as an officer three times, resulting in the possibility of being an officer for four consecutive years.

## **Article VI. Elections**

### **A. Departmental Elections**

1. Departments will elect their own Senators and alternates.
2. Since a Senator serves a two-year term, departments with fewer than ten full-time faculty will normally hold elections every other year, unless a special election is needed to replace a Senator. Departments with more than ten full-time faculty members will be represented by two Senators, who will serve staggered terms; thus, these larger departments will hold elections every year.
3. Regular departmental elections for the purpose of electing representatives to the Faculty Senate for the next academic year shall be held between February 2 and February 20.
4. The departmental election shall be organized either by the department's Senator or, if s/he is not available, by the alternate. If neither of these individuals is available, the department chair may organize the election.
5. Departments may run their elections using methods of their choice. However, it is required that a) Senators and alternates be elected by secret ballot, and that b) the slate from which they are elected include any eligible departmental faculty member who wishes to be considered for election.
6. All full-time departmental faculty members, including the department chair, are eligible to vote.
7. The names of the department's Senator(s) and alternate(s) shall be reported by the department chair to the Faculty Senate Secretary prior to February 25.
8. If a faculty member previously elected by his/her department as a Senator is elected as Chair or Vice Chair in the at-large election, the faculty member chosen as an alternate for the department becomes the department's Senator, and the department elects a new alternate.
9. Departments may remove duly elected Senators or alternates for just cause.
10. In the case of the removal or resignation of the Senator or alternate, the department should elect a replacement within 30 days to fill the remainder of the unexpired term. Regular departmental election procedures shall be followed. The name of the replacement shall be reported to the Faculty Senate Secretary as soon as the election is completed.

### **B. Election of Faculty Senate Officers and At-Large Members**

1. The Chair and the Vice-Chair are elected at large. There must be at least two people running for each of these positions.
2. Three Senators and one alternate are elected at large. There must be at least six people running for these four positions. The candidates getting the three largest vote totals will be the three at-large Senators. The candidate with the fourth largest vote total shall become the alternate.
3. Terms of office for the Chair, Vice-Chair, and at-large Senators are described in Article V, Part C.
4. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall be responsible for arranging elections of the Faculty Senate Chair, Vice-Chair, and three at-large Senators and alternate.

5. Faculty candidates for the at-large positions for the University Council shall be elected at the same time as the candidates for the at-large positions for the Faculty Senate.
6. Before the election, candidates for all at-large positions (including officers) must address the all-university Faculty Assembly in order to state why they are running and what their goals would be for the faculty and the Faculty Senate.
7. The Nominations and Elections Committee must have the slate for all candidates prepared no later than March 1.

## **Article VII. Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate**

**The Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall be composed of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Faculty Senate, the immediate past Chair of the Faculty Senate (who is present in an advisory, non-voting capacity), the Faculty Senate Secretary, and all of the Chairs of the Faculty Senate standing committees or joint committees established between the Faculty Senate and the University Council.**

**The Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall set the agenda for the Faculty Senate meetings, monitor Faculty Senate standing and *ad hoc* committees, make sure the Faculty Senate website is properly maintained, and ensure that the Faculty Senate and all its constituent bodies are operating in accordance with the principles and core values of shared governance.**

**The Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall be available both during the standard academic year and in the summer in case input is needed or decisions need to be made. In accordance with shared governance and the values of inclusiveness and transparency, it will, however, make major decisions only with prior input from the full faculty.**

## **Article VIII. Standing Committees of the Faculty Senate**

The Faculty Senate functions through its standing committees. The mission of the standing committees is to enable the Faculty Senate to operate and to maintain the academic mission of the University by overseeing academic programs, supporting and evaluating faculty, and generally ensuring that the academic environment of the University flourishes.

Chairs of standing committees must be Faculty Senators.

## **Article IX. Amendments and Ratification**

The Constitution may be amended by the following procedure:

1. Any member of the Virginia State University community may propose amendments.
2. Proposed amendments shall be presented in writing to the Chair of the Faculty Senate for discussion and vote by the Faculty Senate.
3. Upon approval of a proposed amendment by a two-thirds vote of the Senate, a draft of the proposal shall be disseminated to the general faculty at least fifteen

- days prior to at least one Faculty Assembly, at which the proposal shall be discussed.
4. After the input from the general faculty at the Faculty Assembly, a final draft of the proposed amendment shall be sent to all faculty at least fifteen days before the date set for a ratification vote.
  5. Adoption of an amendment to this constitution shall be by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the faculty.
  6. Upon ratification of an amendment to this constitution by the faculty, it shall be forwarded to the President of Virginia State University.
  7. If the President disagrees with the amendment, s/he shall return it to the Faculty Senate with recommendations. The Faculty Senate shall consider the recommendations, and if the members agree with them, the Faculty Senate amendment approval process shall begin once more. If the members of the Faculty Senate disapprove of the recommendations, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate shall meet with the President in order to resolve the problem. If there is still disagreement, the matter may be taken to the University Council.
  8. The amendment to the Faculty Senate Constitution becomes effective when it is approved by the Faculty Senate, ratified by the faculty, and approved by the President.
  9. Although standing committees may amend their own operating procedures with approval from the Faculty Senate, those committees that address grievances and/or promotion and tenure may not amend their operational procedures except through the above process.

## **Article X. Review and Ratification**

By April 2004 a final vote by the faculty shall be taken as to whether or not to make this Constitution the permanent Constitution of the Faculty Senate of Virginia State University. Upon ratification by the faculty and approval by the President, this Constitution, or a modification thereof, shall exist in perpetuity and be reviewed by the Faculty Senate every three years.

In keeping with the principles of shared governance, before any action is taken against the Faculty Senate or against the principles expressed in this Constitution, the Board of Visitors.

# FACULTY SENATE BY-LAWS

## I. Articulation with Other Bodies

In order for shared governance to work, it is most important that all of the University bodies work closely with one another. Whenever the Faculty Senate is considering an item or having a discussion which could benefit from receiving wider input, it will contact the Executive Committee of the University Council or one of its other committees, the chair of the Staff Senate, the Deans of the Schools, or the President of the Student Government Association in order to have the item put on their agenda for consideration.

Recommendations from the Faculty Senate and its committees will be communicated to the faculty and forwarded to relevant individuals or bodies.

In most cases, subcommittees of standing Faculty Senate committees forward their recommendations to the standing committees and the Faculty Senate.

## II. Meetings

The Faculty Senate and its committees and subcommittees (unless otherwise noted) shall meet at least monthly during the academic year. Meeting times, places, and agenda for the Faculty Senate, its committees, and its subcommittees shall be communicated to the faculty electronically at least three days prior to the meeting. If decisions or input are required during the summer months, the Faculty Senate officers and other members of the Executive Committee must be consulted in a timely fashion.

The Faculty Senate and its committees and subcommittees (unless otherwise noted) shall hold open meetings. Any faculty member wishing to speak concerning a topic at one of these meetings normally should contact the appropriate chair at least one day in advance of the meeting in order to be added to the agenda. The Faculty Senate, its committees, and subcommittees shall reserve the right to hold executive sessions, in keeping with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. An executive session shall be declared upon a two-thirds vote of the total Faculty Senate, committee, or subcommittee membership present and voting.

Decisions of the Faculty Senate, its committees, or its subcommittees are made by democratic procedural rules generally applicable at VSU. Meetings are run following Robert's Rules of Order. **A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the voting members.**

The Provost will be invited to the Faculty Senate each month to make reports about items of academic importance.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair of the committee presides at committee meetings. Vice chairs of the Faculty Senate committees and subcommittees, unless otherwise noted, are elected by a vote of the committee members. If, at a meeting, no

vice-chair has been selected and the chair is not present, members of the committee select by a simple majority an ad-hoc chair for the duration of the meeting.

### **III. Attendance**

All members of the Faculty Senate, Faculty Senate standing committees, and Faculty Senate subcommittees are expected to attend all scheduled meetings. When the minutes of the Senate, any standing committee or subcommittee reflect that a member has been absent for three meetings in the course of an academic year, the following action may be taken upon a majority vote of the Senate, standing committee, or subcommittee:

- For Faculty Senators whose alternates have not attended in their stead, the appropriate department will be notified. The department shall then determine whether the Senator and/or alternate should be replaced. Until such time as the department's representation has resumed, the total number of members shall be reduced by one, for the purpose of a quorum.
- For members of a standing committee or subcommittee, the member may be dropped from the roll of the committee/subcommittee. If a member is dropped, the total number of members shall be reduced by one, for the purpose of a quorum.

### **IV. Minutes**

**Minutes of the Faculty Senate and its committees and subcommittees will be recorded and sent to members of respective bodies prior to the next meeting. Committee and subcommittee minutes will also be forwarded to the Secretary of the Faculty Senate.**

### **V. Guidelines for Participation on Governance Committees**

At the first Faculty Assembly of the academic year, usually during the week of the pre-school conference, the Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee shall disseminate a description of all of the Faculty Senate standing committees, and each faculty member shall have the opportunity to sign up for the committee and/or subcommittee of his/her choice. Additionally, faculty members will be given the opportunity at this time to indicate interest in serving on the Staff Senate, SGA or its committees, University Council standing committees, or any other University committee. The Nominations and Elections Committee will forward recommendations of interested faculty members to the appropriate bodies.

### **VI. Committee Leadership**

All chairs of Faculty Senate standing committees shall be elected members of the Faculty Senate; however, chairs of the subcommittees need not be Faculty Senators. The standing committee chairs (with the exception of the Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee who shall be elected by the committee from within its membership and ratified by the Faculty Senate) shall be chosen annually by the Nominations and Elections Committee and ratified by the Faculty Senate. Chairs are eligible to continue to serve as long as they are Senators. All chairs of standing committees shall have been full-time faculty, researchers, extension specialists, librarians, or professional counselors at VSU for at least one year prior to their service as chairs.

#### A. Duties of Standing Committee Chairs

All standing committee chairs are expected to accomplish the following either personally or by delegation:

1. hold regular monthly meetings (with the exception of the Nominations and Elections Committee and the Committee on Reconciliation, who will meet as needed)
2. attend Faculty Senate meetings and Executive Committee meetings
3. report committee activities to the Faculty Senate
4. notify the Faculty Senate of the members of the committee and the chairs of the subcommittees
5. maintain minutes of committee activities and attendance records
6. copy all major correspondence and minutes to the Faculty Senate Chair and the Faculty Senate Secretary
7. communicate a schedule of meetings to the Faculty Senate Secretary at the beginning of each semester.

#### B. Duties of Subcommittee Chairs

All subcommittee chairs are expected to accomplish the following either personally or by delegation:

1. hold regular monthly meetings (with the exception of subcommittees such as Promotion and Tenure which meet as needed)
2. attend standing committee meetings
3. report subcommittee activities to the chair of the appropriate standing committee
4. notify the appropriate standing committee of the members of the subcommittee
5. maintain minutes of subcommittee activities and attendance records
6. copy all major correspondence and minutes to the Chair of the appropriate standing committee
7. communicate a schedule of meetings to the chair of the appropriate standing committee and the Faculty Senate Secretary at the beginning of each semester.

### **VII. Decision-Making Authority**

**In general, the Faculty Senate will accept the recommendations of the Standing Committees and subcommittees. In the case of a dispute about a decision or a recommendation made by a Faculty Senate standing committee or subcommittee, the Faculty Senate shall have final authority. Disagreements with decisions from the Committee on Reconciliation and the Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee shall not be brought to the entire Faculty Senate but shall be resolved through these bodies' appeals processes.**

### **VIII. Faculty Senate Standing Committees and Subcommittees**

In addition to the Executive Committee, the Faculty Senate maintains (but is not limited to) the following standing committees:

Curriculum and Academic Issues Committee

Subcommittees: Teacher Education, Academic Credits, Graduate Curriculum, Graduate Policies and Petitions, General Education, Undergraduate Curriculum, and Catalog

Faculty Policies Committee

Subcommittees: Faculty Handbook, Promotion and Tenure, Promotion and Continuing Contract Status

Academic Environment Committee

Subcommittees: Admission and Retention, Library Affairs, Outreach, Graduate Council, Honors Council, Sabbatical Leave, and Student Support Programs

Strategic Planning Committee

Committee on Reconciliation

Subcommittee: Appeals Subcommittee for Promotion, Tenure, Continuing Contract, or Termination

Nominations and Elections Committee

Joint Committee on Student Academic Affairs, a joint committee of the Faculty Senate and the University Council

Subcommittee: Student Life

Each Committee is encouraged to initiate, study, and formulate recommendations on any policy issue within its purview as defined in the general charges of the respective committees and the Faculty Senate Constitution.

**A. Curriculum Academic Issues Committee (CAIC)**

The Curriculum and Academic Issues Committee is responsible for the following areas: academic programs, teaching and pedagogy, and the catalog. The committee will formulate and recommend policies on curricular requirements, instructional standards, academic and instructional research, and the standards for all educational programs of the University. It will assist the Provost in ensuring the timely publication and distribution of new academic policies, procedures, and standards, and it will ensure timely review, updating, publishing, and distribution of the University catalog. The Curriculum and Academic Issues Committee will review and recommend policies and procedures for the establishment, modification, and deletion of academic programs, including degree programs and special committees on programs (for example, Teacher Education Committee). Additionally, the CAIC will ensure (through review and response when necessary) compliance with existing policies and procedures when course additions, deletions, and changes are enacted.

**1. Function: the Senate Curriculum and Academic Issues Committee shall:**

- **periodically review University-wide academic programs, in cooperation with the Provost**
- **Review curricular procedures for consistency**
- **Resolve disputes raised during the review process for course and program proposals**

- **Make recommendations to the Senate and Vice President for Academic Affairs, deans, and department chairs regarding the need for program modifications and deletions when these are indicated by the program review**

**2. Membership:** CAIC shall consist of the CAIC chair, the chairs of all of its subcommittees, the Assistant Secretary of the Faculty Senate, the Provost and/or his/her designee(s), and no fewer than 5 and no more than 10 additional full-time faculty members. The Assistant Secretary of the Faculty Senate shall be a member of the Catalog Committee.

3. Subcommittees:

- Teacher Education
- Academic Credits
- Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
- Graduate Curriculum Committee
- Graduate Policies and Petitions Committee
- General Education
- Catalog Committee

The Undergraduate and Graduate Curriculum Committees shall serve as the curriculum committees for the University.

4. Operational Procedures: Once changes in courses or academic programs have been approved at the highest levels, the Assistant Secretary of the Faculty Senate should be notified so that s/he can make the necessary changes in the catalog (or in the database containing the official and most up-to-date copy of the catalog).

There are three tracks for processing curricular changes:

**a. Change in a Course Title or Number.**

**Proposals for a change in a course title or number only will be sent directly from the Department Curriculum Committee to the School Curriculum Committee, to the appropriate dean, and to the Provost/Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. Once changes are finalized, they are reported to the Assistant Secretary of the Faculty Senate so that the change may be recorded.**

**b. Course Additions, Deletions and Modifications.**

Proposals for course additions, deletions and modifications shall originate in the department, and be reviewed and approved by the School's Curriculum Committee. The School Curriculum Committee will review proposals for new courses and courses that have been substantially modified, considering use of school resources (funding and space), potential impact upon other programs, notification of other affected programs, and input from affected programs. All above considerations must be addressed by the proposing department.

**Approval by the School Curriculum Committee is indicated by signature of the committee chair, and the package is forwarded to the Dean for review and approval.**

**Upon approval, the Dean signs and forwards the package to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or the Graduate Curriculum Committee for review in regard to compliance with academic policies and procedures, and the effect on overall program offerings. Beyond the level of the school, course content is assessed only for redundancy and location in the proper department. If all requirements are satisfied, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or the Graduate Curriculum Committee reports the proposals to CAIC. The CAIC will report the proposals to the Faculty Senate at large. If all is deemed proper by the Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate Chair will sign and forward the proposals to the office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs for finalization, and that office will notify the Assistant Secretary of the Faculty Senate of the outcome. If the proposals are not deemed proper by the Faculty Senate, the proposals may not move forward but shall be returned to the appropriate body (or bodies) for reconsideration.**

**c. Creation, Modification, or Deletion of an Academic Program, Major, or Degree.**

Proposals for the creation, significant modification, or deletion of an academic program, major, or degree shall follow the procedure delineated above except that after School approval, the proposals for the creation, deletion, or significant modification of all academic programs shall be submitted to the Undergraduate or Graduate Curriculum Committees for review of all documentation, compliance with guidelines by any regulatory or accrediting body, and appropriateness. The Undergraduate or Graduate Curriculum Committee certifies that all requirements are satisfied, or works with the dean of the proposing School until affirmation can be given. It then sends the proposal to CAIC, who forwards the proposal simultaneously to the Faculty Senate Strategic Planning Committee and the University Council Strategic Planning, Budget and Finance Committee for determination concerning the overall effect of the programmatic change on the University's academic and budgetary plans and on its mission. Once informed by input from the two planning committees and if approved by the CAIC, the proposal is sent to the Faculty Senate for action. Senate approval is indicated by the Chair's signature and is forwarded to the University Council for approval. From the UC the recommendation goes to the Vice President for Academic Affairs who signs and forwards it to the Faculty Senate Assistant Secretary. In the case of new academic degrees and majors, the Vice President for Academic Affairs forwards the recommendation to the President, the Board of Visitors (BOV), and State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV). A copy of the approved package is returned to the Faculty Senate Assistant Secretary.

**When a question arises about the need for review on curricular actions, the chair of CAIC shall be notified. The chair shall determine the need for review and publish a summary of such determinations in a timely manner.**

**B. Faculty Policies Committee (FPC)**

The Faculty Policies Committee of the Faculty Senate develops, coordinates, and evaluates policies and procedures that affect the professional welfare and working conditions of VSU faculty.

1. Functions: As an integral part of its function, this committee will be responsible for maintaining and evaluating the Virginia State University Faculty Handbook. In addition, the committee has the responsibility to appoint faculty senate representatives to the Promotion and Tenure Committee and to the University Promotion and Continuing Contract Status Committee. Its functions include:

- procedures for and decisions about promotion and tenure
- procedures for monitoring the progress of faculty toward promotion and/or tenure, including oversight of third year progress reviews
- procedures for faculty evaluation, including pay for performance and post-tenure review
- procedures for sabbaticals and educational leave
- procedures for leaves related to health or family
- policies regarding the status of faculty researchers, extension faculty, and library faculty
- policies regarding faculty load, class size, and productivity
- procedures for maintaining and evaluating the VSU Faculty Handbook

The Faculty Policies Committee will formulate instruments of evaluation and coordinate the evaluation of department chairs, deans and directors, vice presidents, and the President. In addition, although the Academic Environment Committee makes decisions regarding sabbatical leave, the Faculty Policies Committee develops policies and procedures for sabbatical leave.

2. Membership: Voting members of the Faculty Policies Committee will include the chair of the Faculty Policies Committee and at least nine faculty members of whom at least three must be tenured. At least one of the three tenured members must be a full professor. There should be representation each year from among faculty researchers, extension faculty, and library faculty.

In addition, the Faculty Policies Committee will include the following *ex officio* members: Vice President for Academic Affairs; Representative of Institutional Planning; Representative of Deans and Directors; Representative of Staff Senate; Representative of Student Government Association; Representative of the UC Outreach and Community Relations Committee; Representative of the UC Personnel, Compensation, Facilities and Services Committee.

3. Subcommittees: The Faculty Policies Committee has several subcommittees:

- Faculty Handbook
- University Promotion and Tenure
- University Promotion and Continuing Contract Status

a. The Faculty Handbook Subcommittee.

The Faculty Handbook Subcommittee will be convened as necessary to review, evaluate, and propose revisions to the Faculty Handbook. The Chair of the Faculty Handbook Subcommittee not only chairs the committee, but also serves as liaison to the faculty regarding the Faculty Handbook. The Provost should work with the Faculty Handbook Subcommittee when it is convened to review and evaluate the handbook. The Chair of the Faculty Handbook Subcommittee is

an officer of the Faculty Policies Committee and keeps the most up-to-date version of the Faculty Handbook on her/his computer, as well as a back-up copy. When changes to the Faculty Handbook are approved by the Board of Visitors, the Chair of the Faculty Handbook Subcommittee makes the necessary changes in the document and is responsible for disseminating the changes to all faculty members, the Secretary of the Faculty Senate, the Assistant Secretary of the Faculty Senate, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The Faculty Senate Handbook Subcommittee shall serve as the Faculty Handbook Committee for the University.

**b. The University Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee.**

The University Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee is convened annually to evaluate portfolios from faculty applying for promotion and/or tenure. The Faculty Policies Committee recommends two members for the University Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee: one will be a tenured member of the Faculty Policies Committee, at the associate professor rank or above, and the other will be a faculty member who is a tenured, full professor and preferably a Senator. The Schools of Liberal Arts and Education, Business, and Engineering, Science, and Technology shall each elect two tenured faculty members, at the associate professor rank or above, to the subcommittee. One of each pair of faculty members from each school must be a full professor, but if needed, the school may draft a full professor from another institution. The School of Agriculture shall elect one tenured faculty member, at the associate professor rank or above, to the subcommittee. No single department may have more than one member on this subcommittee. These members will constitute the University Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee and shall serve three-year staggered terms, with the exception of the Faculty Policies Committee member, who will serve a one-year term. The Chair of the University Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee will be a tenured full professor elected from within this subcommittee. Records of decisions shall be kept by the University Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee, but shall not be posted on the Faculty Senate website.

All recommendations from the University Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee are forwarded to the Provost for consideration and recommendation. If both recommendations are positive, the process continues; if both recommendations are negative, the process ceases, unless the candidate chooses to appeal to the Appeals Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation. If there is a disagreement between the recommendations of the University Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee and the Provost, then the Provost and the subcommittee should meet to attempt to reach an agreement. If they cannot agree, the process ceases unless the candidate appeals the decision to the Appeals Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation.

**c. The University Promotion and Continuing Contract Status Subcommittee.**

University Promotion and Continuing Contract Status Subcommittee is convened annually to evaluate portfolios from research/extension faculty applying for promotion and continuing contract status. The University Promotion and

Continuing Contract Status Subcommittee shall be formed with the assistance of the Faculty Senate. The University Promotion and Continuing Contract Status Subcommittee shall consist of five faculty members, no more than three of whom may also hold titles at the level of director/administrator. Each unit--the Agricultural Research Division and the Extension Service area--will elect two continuing contract status faculty members to participate as committee members. In addition, the Faculty Policies Committee shall recommend a fifth member. These members will constitute the University Promotion and Continuing Contract Status Subcommittee. The Chair of the University Promotion and Continuing Contract Status Subcommittee will be elected from within this subcommittee. Records of decisions shall be kept by the University Promotion and Continuing Contract Status Subcommittee, but shall not be posted on the Faculty Senate website.

All recommendations from the University Promotion and Continuing Contract Subcommittee are forwarded to the Provost for consideration and recommendation. If both recommendations are positive, the process continues; if both recommendations are negative, the process ceases, unless the candidate chooses to appeal to the Appeals Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation. If there is a disagreement between the recommendations of the University Promotion and Continuing Contract Subcommittee and the Provost, then the Provost and the subcommittee should meet to attempt to reach an agreement. If they cannot agree, the process ceases unless the candidate appeals the decision to the Appeals Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation.

4. Operational Procedures: Proposals for changes to either Faculty Policies or the Faculty Handbook may originate from either the administration or the faculty.

In order to be effective, the FPC needs VSU's administration to inform the committee of changes in SCHEV or legislative policies that will impact the professional welfare and working conditions of VSU faculty. In addition, faculty or other members of the VSU community may bring up issues of concern or recommend changes in policy that are important to the VSU faculty as a whole. Although the Faculty Senate and its committees must comply with mandates from agencies of the Commonwealth of Virginia (e.g. budget cuts), the implementation by Virginia State University of these mandated policies should be reviewed and recommended by the Faculty Senate and its committees.

Issues or proposals must be presented to the Chair of the Faculty Policies Committee, and the Chair may request the submission of sufficient supporting explanation/documentation to allow sound judgments and recommendations to be made. The Committee Chair will inform members of the Faculty Policies Committee of such proposals and issues. If the issue or proposal concerns a change in the Faculty Handbook, the Chair of the Faculty Policies Committee informs the Chair of the Faculty Handbook Subcommittee of the issue or proposal and forwards any supporting documentation in his/her possession. In either case, the Chair of the Faculty Policies Committee informs the Faculty Senate or the Executive Committee of the proposed change.

The Faculty Senate cannot make any final decisions on recommendations from the Faculty Policies Committee or the Faculty Handbook Subcommittee before the faculty has been informed and had the opportunity to respond.

Procedures for Changes to Faculty Policies or the Faculty Handbook :

- a. Once the Chair of the Faculty Policies Committee has received sufficient documentation and/or rationale for a proposed change in faculty policies, s/he will call a meeting of the Faculty Policies Committee for discussion and possible implementation of a new policy. Once s/he has received sufficient documentation and/or rationale for a proposed change in the Faculty Handbook, s/he will forward the information to the Chair of the Faculty Handbook Subcommittee.
  - b. A recommendation for a change in faculty policies or to the Handbook shall be sent by the appropriate committee to the Faculty Senate. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate will notify the faculty of the recommendation so that all faculty members will have an opportunity to offer comment. In addition, the Chair of the Faculty Senate may call a Faculty Assembly.
  - c. The Faculty Policies Committee or the Faculty Handbook Subcommittee then considers the suggestions of the faculty and the Faculty Senate, and, if necessary, revises the recommendation.
  - d. The revised recommendation then moves to the Faculty Senate, which may solicit additional commentary on the revisions from the faculty before the Faculty Senate votes.
  - e. If the Faculty Senate disapproves of the recommendation, it is returned to the Faculty Policies Committee or the Faculty Handbook Subcommittee for possible further study and recommendation.
  - f. If the Faculty Senate approves of the recommendation, it then moves forward to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs for approval. If necessary, the proposal will be forwarded to the President and the Board of Visitors for final approval.
  - g. The Faculty Senate will be notified of approval or rejection, and the disposition of the matter will be entered into the Faculty Senate minutes and made available to the faculty.
5. Articulation with Other Bodies: The Faculty Policies Committee needs to be promptly informed by the administration of policy changes mandated by state agencies. Because the duties of the Faculty Policies Committee involve both promotion and tenure and the Faculty Handbook, the committee must work closely with the Provost. The Faculty Senate Promotion and Tenure Subcommittee receives promotion and tenure recommendations from the School deans and forwards recommendations to the Provost.

### **C. Academic Environment Committee (AEC)**

The Academic Environment Committee of the Faculty Senate monitors, evaluates, and proposes necessary changes to help develop an environment in which all members of the VSU community may cooperate in an academically sound, ethical, and collegial manner.

1. Function: Areas of responsibility of the Faculty Senate Academic Environment Committee include the following:

- professional development
- research development
- sabbatical leave decisions
- faculty ethics
- library affairs
- admission and retention
- community outreach (including national and international communities)
- instructional technology
- academic computing
- the Academy for Faculty Development

2. Membership: Voting members of the Academic Environment Committee include the chair of the Academic Environment Committee, the chairs of all its subcommittees, and at least four faculty members. In addition, the committee will include the following *ex officio* members: Director of Academic Computing, Representative of Staff Senate, Representative of the Joint Committee on Student Academic Affairs, Students (as chosen by SGA, with number determined by need).

3. Subcommittees: The Academic Environment Committee will have several subcommittees:

- Admission and Retention
- Library Affairs
- Outreach
- Graduate Council
- Honors Council
- Sabbatical Leave\*
- Student Support Programs (TRIO, computer labs, writing and mathematics labs, academic support services, and disability services)

\*Although the Faculty Policies Committee recommends procedures for sabbatical leave, the Academic Environment Committee will form a Sabbatical Leave Subcommittee when necessary to recommend who receives sabbatical leaves; it must consist primarily of faculty members and must be balanced among the various faculty constituencies.

4. Operational Procedures: Proposals to the Faculty Senate Academic Environment Committee may be made by any member of the VSU community. Proposals or issues for discussion must be presented to the Chair of the Academic Environment Committee (AEC), and the Chair may request the submission of sufficient supporting explanation/documentation to allow sound judgments and recommendations to be made. The Committee Chair will inform members of the AEC of such proposals and issues, forward the proposal/documentation to the appropriate subcommittee, and inform the Faculty Senate or the Executive Committee.

The Faculty Senate will inform the faculty of major recommendations of the AEC or any of its subcommittees concerning changes in such areas as admission, student support programs, professional development, or other important changes in areas falling under the purview of the AEC or its subcommittees before voting on such recommendations.

Procedures for Recommendations Regarding the Academic Environment of VSU:

- a. Once the chair of the Academic Environment Committee receives sufficient documentation and/or rationale for a proposed recommendation, he/she will forward the information to the chair of the appropriate subcommittee.
- b. A recommendation for a change from a subcommittee should be reported to the Academic Environment Committee which will forward it to the Faculty Senate. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate may notify the faculty of the recommendation so that all faculty members will have an opportunity to offer comment. In addition, the chair of the Faculty Senate may call a Faculty Assembly.
- c. Then the appropriate subcommittee considers the suggestions of the faculty and/or the Faculty Senate, and, if necessary, revises the recommendation.
- d. The revised recommendation then moves to the Faculty Senate which may solicit additional commentary on the revisions from the faculty before the Faculty Senate votes.
- e. If the Faculty Senate disapproves of the recommendation, it is returned to the appropriate subcommittee for possible further study and recommendation.
- f. If the Faculty Senate approves of the recommendation, it then moves forward to the appropriate Vice President for approval. If necessary, the proposal will be forwarded to the President and the Board of Visitors for final approval.
- g. The Faculty Senate will be notified of approval or rejection, and the disposition of the matter will be entered into the Faculty Senate minutes and made available to the University community.

5. Articulation with Other Bodies: The Academic Environment Committee (AEC) must work closely with the Faculty Policies Committee (FPC), the Curriculum and Academic Issues Committee (CAIC), and the Faculty Senate Strategic Planning Committee (SPC). In addition, the AEC must work closely with other decision-making bodies and components of the VSU community, including:

- University Council
- Joint Committee on Student Academic Affairs
- Relevant committees of the SGA
- Staff Senate
- Admissions Office
- Academic Support Services
- Student Support Services

#### **D. Strategic Planning Committee (SPC)**

The Strategic Planning Committee of the Faculty Senate performs short- and long-term planning for the academic mission and programs of the University.

1. Function: The SPC brings together members of the various academic components of the University to project budget and resource needs, strategize how to fortify weaknesses and support strengths, assess and evaluate academic programs, and oversee governance. As part of its responsibilities, each spring the Strategic Planning Committee will recommend the top five academic priorities to be addressed by the University the following fiscal year.

2. Membership: The Strategic Planning Committee should be composed of at least

one faculty member from each school. All efforts should be made to ensure equitable representation from the various constituencies of the faculty, including extension specialists, full-time researchers, and librarians. In addition, an SGA representative should be a member. *Ex officio* members will include the Vice President for Administration and Finance or his/her designee and the Facilities Manager. Because both short-term and long-term strategic planning require cooperation between administration and faculty, the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee will be recommended for membership to the University Council Planning, Budget and Allocation Committee and shall be involved with any University plans. The Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee shall serve as liaison between the Faculty Senate and the University Council Committee on strategic planning.

3. Operational Procedures: Recommendations from the Faculty Senate Strategic Planning Committee shall follow the procedures outlined below:

- a. Recommendations, including the top five academic priorities, shall be submitted to the Faculty Senate. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate may notify the faculty of the recommendations so that all faculty members will have an opportunity to offer comment. In addition, the Chair of the Faculty Senate may call a Faculty Assembly.
- b. In addition to forwarding recommendations to the Faculty Senate for possible dissemination to the faculty, the Faculty Senate Strategic Planning Committee consults with the University Council Strategic Planning, Budget Allocation, and Finance Committee.
- c. Then the Faculty Senate Strategic Planning Committee considers the suggestions of the faculty, the Faculty Senate, and the University Council Strategic Planning, Budget Allocation, and Finance Committee and, if necessary, revises the recommendations.
- d. The revised recommendations then move to the Faculty Senate which may solicit additional commentary on the revisions from the faculty before the Faculty Senate votes.
- e. If the Faculty Senate disapproves of the recommendations, they are returned to the Faculty Senate Strategic Planning Committee for possible further study and recommendation.
- f. If the Faculty Senate approves of the recommendations, the Faculty Senate forwards them to the appropriate Vice Presidents. In addition, the recommendations are forwarded to the University Council and the President.
- g. The Faculty Senate Secretary will enter the UC's responses and recommendations into the minutes.

4. Articulation with Other Bodies: Working closely with the University Council Strategic Planning, Budget Allocation, and Finance Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee of the Faculty Senate advocates a comprehensive academic point of view. It also interfaces with the academic deans to support various programs of their schools and strengthen the educational mission of the University.

#### **E. Committee on Reconciliation (COR)**

The Committee on Reconciliation shall oversee the University's policies and procedures governing grievances filed by faculty, researchers, extension specialists, librarians, or professional counselors and shall serve as part of the appeal process. Faculty members are encouraged to attempt to resolve conflicts informally. However, such attempts to resolve the conflict informally shall not preclude the right to seek resolution formally through the Committee on Reconciliation.

1. Function: The Committee on Reconciliation will hear appeals regarding such issues as performance evaluations, post-tenure reviews, matters of privilege, and matters of the fair application of the University's policies. The Appeals Subcommittee will hear appeals relating to promotion, tenure, termination, or non-renewal of contracts.

2. Membership: The Committee on Reconciliation shall consist of seven members, four of whom shall be tenured senators, and three elected from the tenured faculty.

In addition to overseeing the selection of the Chair of the Committee on Reconciliation, the Nominations and Elections Committee shall oversee the election of the three at-large members and submit the names to the Faculty Senate.

Department chairs and administrators shall be ineligible for the Committee on Reconciliation.

3. Subcommittees: The Committee on Reconciliation has one subcommittee, the Appeals Subcommittee for Promotion, Tenure, Continuing Contract, or Termination (hereafter referred to as the Appeals Subcommittee)

The membership of the Appeals Subcommittee consists of five members. Two members will be chosen from the tenured senators of the Committee on Reconciliation and two members chosen by the President. These four members will then choose a fifth member. The Appeals Subcommittee shall elect its own Chair and Secretary. No member of the Appeals Subcommittee may serve on a Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee, be a dean or a department chair, or serve on the University Promotion and Tenure Committee.

4. Operational Procedures: The Committee on Reconciliation will follow the grievance procedures as described in the current *Faculty Handbook* (please note: the 1995 Handbook remains in effect until final approval of the revised Handbook).

5. Minutes: Written records shall be kept by the Secretary of the Committee on Reconciliation as well as the Secretary of the Appeals Subcommittee. Both the Committee on Reconciliation and the Appeals Subcommittee have the responsibility for proper handling and maintenance of the complete files of all judicial actions. Documents should be kept in a secure location until all appeals have been exhausted and then returned to the appropriate parties and/or disposed of in a secure manner, with the exception of transcripts from hearings regarding promotion, tenure, continuing contract status, or termination. Said transcripts should be maintained in the VSU vault for a minimum of five years and then disposed of in a secure manner.

Discretion, confidentiality, and fairness must always be important requirements of decisions and actions by members of the Committee on Reconciliation and the Appeals Subcommittee.

Upon reaching a conclusion on a grievance, the Committee on Reconciliation shall send a detailed report to the Provost which includes a summary of the findings of fact, conclusions reached, and recommendations made. Copies of this report shall be sent to involved parties.

Both the Committee on Reconciliation and the Appeals Subcommittee shall file a written report with the Faculty Senate, and the report will indicate the time and place of meetings, members present, numbers of grievances/appeals considered, number of recommendations made, and verification that involved parties have been notified.

6. **Articulation with Other Bodies:** Each department and each school is responsible for forming a Grievance Committee as specified in the Faculty Handbook. The Committee on Reconciliation will monitor the formation of departmental and school Grievance Committees and confirm that proper procedures have been followed.

The Committee on Reconciliation may also refer a matter to the University Council Mediation Committee or accept a referral from that committee. It may also refer a matter to Human Resources.

#### **F. Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC)**

1. **Function:** The Nominations and Elections Committee serves to develop a list of prospective candidates for office, to solicit and select names for each standing committee chair to be confirmed by the Faculty Senate, and to conduct and oversee elections. The committee will monitor committee memberships in an effort to ensure that all committees are adequately and efficiently constituted, as well as to ensure equitable representation from the various constituencies of the faculty.

2. **Membership:** Membership of the Nominations and Elections Committee shall be composed of full-time faculty, researchers, extension specialists, librarians, or professional counselors who have served at VSU for at least one year prior to their membership on this committee. The members of the Nominations and Elections Committee shall number no less than four members and no more than seven, of whom at least three must be Faculty Senate members. Members of the Nominations and Elections Committee are not eligible to run for elected-at-large Faculty Senate officer positions, unless they resign from the committee. All efforts should be made to ensure that there is equitable representation from the various constituencies of the faculty. Members of the Nominations and Elections Committee are chosen in the fall by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate. The members of the Nominations and Elections Committee shall elect their own chair to be ratified by the Faculty Senate.

3. **Operational Procedures:** The Nominations and Elections Committee shall ensure that there are at least two candidates running for Chair and Vice-Chair of

the Faculty Senate. It shall promote balance in all committees and shall inform *ex officio* members of their membership status. It shall operate with the highest discretion and ensure fairness in the election process. In the event of the resignation or removal of an elected officer, the Nominations and Elections Committee shall supervise the election of a replacement. Committee members must be able to justify their recommendations and make sure that all constituencies are fairly represented. A general report giving final committee recommendations for chair and committee nominations should be turned in to the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate.

a. Meetings: The Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC) shall meet primarily during the spring semester as needed in order to put together a slate of candidates for the next year's Faculty Senate Officers, recommend committee chairs, and serve as liaison to administration to suggest faculty for general University committee appointments, Staff Senate and SGA committee membership.

b. Deadlines: Early in the spring semester, the NEC shall solicit faculty who are interested in running for Faculty Senate office, faculty at large positions, and appointment to University committees (other than Faculty Senate committees) for the next academic year. Prior to March 15, the NEC shall receive names from each department and academic unit, including extension, research and library, of faculty or faculty administrators who will be Senators for the next academic year, and shall sponsor a Faculty Assembly so that those running for Faculty Senate office and for the Faculty Senate at-large positions may address the general faculty. Prior to April 15, the NEC shall hold elections for Faculty Senate officers and send forward to the Faculty Senate for approval the names of faculty for appointed positions to University committees, Staff Senate, and SGA committees. Prior to May 1, the NEC shall send forward to the Faculty Senate for approval the recommended names for Faculty Senate committee chairs for the following academic year. During the week of the fall preschool conference, the NEC shall assist the Faculty Senate committee chairs and subcommittee chairs in establishing a list of faculty willing to serve on committees. The NEC shall work to ensure optimal balance in committee memberships. Prior to September 15, the Faculty Senate chairs and subcommittee chairs shall submit a list of committee members to the Faculty Senate.

#### **G. Joint Committee on Student Academic Life (JCSAL)**

The Joint Committee on Student Academic Life is a standing committee both of the Faculty Senate and the University Council.

1. Function: The Joint Committee on Student Academic Life shall recommend policies and procedures in matters pertaining to the academic affairs of undergraduate and graduate students and to institutional services that affect students' academic success. Given its focus on the VSU student experience, this committee requires substantial student participation.

The Joint Committee on Student Academic Life shall address the academic issues of undergraduate and graduate students. Areas of concern for this committee will include but not be limited to the following:

- Teaching
- Educational Support Services
- Orientation
- Registration
- Advisement
- Extra-curricular academic/intellectual programs
- Academic vision/mission of the University as it concerns student academic affairs

2. Membership: The Joint Committee on Student Academic Life will have a balance between members appointed by University Council and Faculty Senate. Because of the broad purview of the Committee's mission, broad participation by students, administrators, faculty, directors and staff will be required. The Co-Chairs of this committee will be one member of the University Council and one member of the Faculty Senate. Each Co-Chair of this Committee will be appointed according to the procedures of his/her respective body.

3. Subcommittee: The Joint Committee on Academic Life shall have one subcommittee, the Student Life Subcommittee. The Student Life Subcommittee shall address the institutional services that impact undergraduate and graduate student life. Areas of concern for this subcommittee will include but not be limited to the following:

- Student Activities
- Residence Life
- Physical and Mental Well-Being of Students
- Safety Issues
- Judicial Concerns
- Auxiliary Services, such as the cafeteria, bookstore, etc.
- Student Union
- Financial Services

#### 4. Operational Procedures

Recommendations from the subcommittee go to the Joint Committee on Student Academic Life for approval. Recommendations for action from the Joint Committee on Student Academic Life may go to the Faculty Senate or to the University Council at the discretion of the committee. Whichever body (University Council or Faculty Senate) does not receive JCSAL recommendations for action, receives them for information. In addition, recommendations should be forwarded to the Student Government Association for informational purposes and input. Input from the faculty and students may also be solicited before a final action is taken by any of the bodies. Upon approval by either body, the recommendation moves to the appropriate Vice Presidents, the President, and the Board of Visitors for approval.

5. Articulation with Other Bodies. The Joint Committee on Student Academic Life works closely with the Student Government Association through sharing members on its committees, working together on projects, and acting as an advocate for SGA issues.

## **IX. Retreat**

There shall be an annual spring retreat with incoming and outgoing Faculty Senators. The President, Provost, the Vice Presidents, the Vice-Chair of the University Council, and the faculty representatives of the University Council will be invited. The main agenda items for the retreat shall be critically evaluating the work and progress of the current year and setting the top priorities to be addressed the following academic year.

## **X. Amendments To The By-Laws**

The By-Laws may be amended by the following procedure:

Any member of the Virginia State University community may propose amendments. Proposed amendments shall be presented in writing to the Chair of the Faculty Senate for discussion. The Faculty Senate chair shall disseminate a draft of the proposal to the general faculty at least fifteen teaching days prior to the vote of the Faculty Senate. Adoption of an amendment to these By-Laws shall be by a two-thirds majority vote of the Faculty Senate. Upon approval of an amendment to the By-Laws by the Faculty Senate, said amendment shall be ratified and become effective immediately, with the exception of some changes in procedures which must be approved by the Administration and the Board of Visitors.