

HOW THE VSU SENATE WORKS

<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/faculty-senate/documents/faculty-senate-bylaws-2017.pdf>

The Senate serves as the mechanism for **shared governance** at Valdosta State University (*Statutes*: Chapter 4, Article I, Section 1 – statutes are currently being updated; 2007 statutes can be found at <http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/policies/documents/2000.1StatutesofVSU.pdf>). [The 2007 Statutes do not reflect the current model employed for the Faculty Senate at VSU. Please see the Faculty Senate Bylaws for the current Faculty Senate model.]

What the Senate does is to **formulate** university policy. This is an extremely important function, central to the vitality of VSU. In the words of the *Statutes*, the Senate functions as the **representative, deliberative, advisory, and legislative body** of the **General Faculty**.

The Faculty Senate currently (2018-2019) includes 60 elected faculty senators (voting), administrator participants (non-voting), staff participants (non-voting), and student participants (non-voting).

Any faculty member, administrator, staff member, or student can submit an issue for Senate consideration. It must be submitted in writing to the **President of the Faculty Senate**. [Currently, Eric Howington, ebhowington@valdosta.edu], who brings it to the Executive Committee of the Senate. It is strongly recommended that anyone raising an item for the Executive Committee make their report thorough and well-researched. The President of the Faculty Senate is **not** expected to do any supplemental research or work on your report or item.

The **Executive Committee** serves as a traffic cop, deciding whether an issue goes to the Senate, and if so, which committee is the appropriate committee to consider an issue. The President of the Faculty Senate, the Vice President of the Faculty Senate, Secretary of the Faculty Senate and the Parliamentarian of the Faculty Senate form the Executive Committee, with the immediate Past President of the Faculty Senate serving as an ex-officio non-voting member of the committee. The FSEC can be reached at fsec@valdosta.edu.

There are three (3) kinds of Senate committees: statutory committees, standing committees, and special committees. Membership on all committees is either by election or by recommendation of the Committee on Committees to the Senate for approval.

The five (5) **statutory committees** were permanently established by the *Statutes*. They are major committees - Academic Committee, Committee on Committees, Faculty Affairs Committee, Institutional Planning Committee, and the Faculty Grievance Committee.

Standing committees were formed by the Senate, and can be changed by following the Amendment procedures. They are listed in the *Bylaws of the Faculty Senate* <https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/faculty-senate/documents/faculty-senate-bylaws-2017.pdf>. Standing committees may form subcommittees. **Special committees** are formed by the Executive Committee of the Senate, normally for a period of one year.

Senate committees can **initiate** policy recommendations within their committee. Senate committees do **not** have to wait for items to be submitted to them by the Executive Committee. (*Statutes*: Chapter 4, Article VI, Section 3 – statutes are currently being updated).

Committees make recommendations to the full Senate. The Senate then considers the matter (time limit: 30 minutes). It may accept the recommendation, amend it, or remand the matter

back to the appropriate committee. If the Senate adopts a recommendation, the President of the Faculty Senate (within 10 working days) sends the recommendation to the VSU President, who has 60 days to either approve or disapprove the recommendation, or to seek an extension from the Faculty Senate. If approved by the VSU President, the recommendation becomes **university policy**. If disapproved by the VSU President, the recommendation is returned to the Senate for possible override (requires 2/3 vote) and submission to the General Faculty for its recommendation to the VSU President. The VSU President still has the final authority.

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Revised P. L. Moch 2015

Revised B.C. Ring 2017

Revised E.B. Howington and P. L. Moch 2018

Statutory Committees:

Academic Committee:

- a) Approves, disapproves, or remands to the originating unit any proposals and recommended changes related to the educational philosophy, academic mission, and educational enterprise of the University;
- b) Approves, disapproves, or remands to the originating unit any recommended curricular proposals; and
- c) Approves, disapproves, or remands to the originating unit any proposals and recommended changes in the policies and procedures pertaining to the academic programs of the University.

Committee on Committees:

- a) Nominates for Senate approval the membership for all existing statutory and standing committees of the Senate, unless such membership is elected by the General Faculty or Senate; the method for selecting nominees is set forth in the Senate Bylaws;
- b) Oversees election of members to the Senate;
- c) Oversees election of members to statutory committees;
- d) Advises on appointments for membership on University-wide special committees; and;
- e) Fills any vacancy in a statutory, standing, or special committee during the academic year. A replacement must be from the same unit as the person being replaced.

Faculty Affairs Committee:

- a) Reviews policies and makes recommendations pertaining to faculty welfare matters;
- b) Reviews policies and makes recommendations pertaining to the teaching, learning, and research environment of the University; and
- c) Reviews policies and makes recommendations pertaining to general University matters affecting the educational mission.

Institutional Planning Committee:

- a) Reviews policies and makes recommendations pertaining to the operations of the academic and administrative bodies of the University;
- b) Reviews policies and makes recommendations pertaining to academic and administrative effectiveness of the University and its units;
- c) Reviews policies and makes recommendations pertaining to the use of physical, financial, and human resources of the University; and
- d) Reviews policies and makes recommendations pertaining to comprehensive institutional planning.

Faculty Grievance Committee:

- a) The Faculty Grievance Committee has the authority to conduct inquiries into grievances by faculty who have exhausted the University's appellate channels from the department, to the college, school or division, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs; to attempt the resolution of those grievances by mediation; and to present to the President its recommendations for appropriate response to the grievances it has considered.
- b) The Faculty Grievance Committee will not consider grievances involving promotion, salary, non-renewal of contracts, or tenure unless the aggrieved faculty member reasonably alleges violation of University Statutes, academic freedom, administrative processes or procedures, or discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, handicap, or age.

Standing Committees:

Academic Scheduling and Procedures Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to the University calendar, class scheduling, final examination scheduling, University catalogs and bulletins, Honors Day, and commencement.

Athletic Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to University intercollegiate athletics.

Educational Policies Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to advising, undergraduate admissions and retention, public services, and registration; and to hear undergraduate petitions for exceptions to academic policy, including graduation.

Faculty Scholarship Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to both graduate and undergraduate faculty development, research, and the use of animal and human research subjects; to receive and review research and development proposals; and to allocate research and development funds.

Library Affairs Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to the Odum Library and its use, and to review and make recommendations related to library allocations.

Diversity and Equity Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to ethnic, religious, and gender minorities; and to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to quality support programs for students with special needs including, but not limited to, those with physical impairments, behavior disorders, and learning disabilities.

Student Affairs Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to such student services as financial aid, housing, health services, counseling services, mail services, and food services; as well as student communications and affairs, in general.

Environmental Issues Committee: to review and recommend policies and procedures pertinent to environmental issues, as they relate to recycling, facilities use, campus beautification, and traffic planning.

Academic Honors and Scholarship Committee: to review and recommend college-wide scholarships and honors for students and to arrange for appropriate presentations, including Honors' Day.

Technology Committee: to develop and review policies and procedures relating to technology issues and to interface with other statutory and standing committees when such issues overlap their charge.

Internationalization and Globalization Committee: to initiate, develop and review policies and procedures to strengthen the institution's internationalization and globalization efforts, interacting with other statutory and standing committees when such issues overlap their charge.