CONSTITUTION OF
THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
SARASOTA-MANATEE

ARTICLE I. Membership, Positions, and Vacancies

A. Membership, Voting, and Elections

1. Eligibility

All Faculty members are eligible to serve as Senators. The word Faculty in this document is defined as any USFSM employee on a continuing appointment with the rank of Lecturer, Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, Instructor Librarian, Assistant Librarian, Associate Librarian, or University Librarian and having an administrative assignment less than or equal to 50% and a FTE greater than or equal to 0.50.

2. Voting

All Faculty members are eligible to vote for the Senate President, Vice President, and At-Large Senators. The guidelines for electing College Senators and their alternates shall be determined by each college. College membership is determined based on the academic unit bearing a majority of the budget for the Faculty’s salary. If a Faculty member is budgeted for an equal portion in more than one college then that Faculty member may choose the college in which to be included.

3. Elections

An annual Senate election shall be held as specified in the Bylaws.

B. Senate Positions, Terms of Service, and Vacancies

1. Senate Positions

The Senate shall consist of a President, a Vice President, two At-Large Senators, and two Senators from each college. The Senate President and Vice President are at-large members of the Senate. All four at-large Senators shall represent librarians.

2. Terms of Service

The terms of the Senate President, Vice President, and At-Large members shall be one year and the term of each College Senator shall be two years, beginning the first day of the fall semester following the annual spring election. College Senator terms shall be staggered. Senators may seek

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reelection for a maximum of two consecutive terms, after which a period of one year must elapse before that member may be reelected to the Senate.

C. Absences and Vacancies

1. Absences

Each college shall elect an alternate to attend a Senate meeting in the event that their College Senator is unable to attend. The alternate is free to choose how to vote on behalf of the absentee Senator.

2. Presidential Vacancy

Should the President resign or become ineligible to serve, s/he shall notify the Vice President. The Vice President shall become the Interim President and shall serve out the remainder of the term of the Senate President.

3. Vice Presidential Vacancy

Should the Vice President become the Interim President, or for any reason become unable to serve until the end of his or her term as Vice President, the former Vice President shall appoint another Senator to serve as Interim Vice President until a Faculty vote can be held.

Should both the Senate President and Vice President simultaneously resign or become unable to serve, then the Senator serving the longest at USFSM shall become Interim President and the Senator serving the second longest at USFSM shall become Interim Vice President until a Faculty vote can be held for both offices.

4. College Senator Vacancies

Should a College Senator become the Interim President or Vice President or resign or become unable to serve, then a special college election shall be held.

ARTICLE II. Duties

A. President (one course release per semester)

1) Sets the agenda for all Senate meetings.

2) Chairs Senate meetings.

3) Conducts necessary correspondence for the Senate.

4) Is available for consultation when requested by the President of the USF System, the Regional Chancellor or Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, administrative officers and staff, the committees of the university and the committees of the Senate.
5) Serves on the USFSM Executive Council and the USF System Faculty Council.

6) Carries the university mace at commencements.

7) Performs all other duties that are necessary and proper to ensure the effective operation of the Senate.

B. Vice President (one course release per semester)

1) Serves as Interim President in the absence of the President.

2) Serves as the Chair of the Academic Programs Committee.

3) Serves on the USFSM Academic Council.

4) Serves on the USF System Faculty Council.

5) Serves on the USF Academics and Campus Environment Advisory Council.

ARTICLE III. Meetings

A. Regular Meetings

The Senate shall meet at least once in the fall term and once in the spring term, and as necessary during the summer term. At the fall semester meeting, the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs shall present a general message to the Senate on the state of the university.

All meetings of the Senate shall be open to members of the university community. The President of the USF System, the USF System Provost and Executive Vice-President, the Regional Chancellor, the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, the Dean of Students, and the Regional Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance shall be extended privileges of the floor upon request. Faculty and other non-members may have floor privileges at the discretion of the Senate President.

Minutes of the meetings of the Senate shall be available to all members of the Faculty and to the university community at large.

B. Special Meetings

The Senate President may call a special meeting whenever s/he deems it necessary. The Senate President shall call meetings at the request of the President of the USF System, the Regional Chancellor or Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, or at the written request of at least three Senators.
ARTICLE IV. Jurisdiction

A. Responsibilities

The Senate operates according to the USF Principles of Shared Governance (http://regulationspolicies.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/bot-policy-07-001.pdf). The Senate serves as the main channel of communication between Faculty and the administration of the USFSM and the USF system. The Senate constitutes the principal advisory body to the Regional Chancellor and Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and has the responsibility to review and make recommendations to them concerning decisions of the university on all matters pertaining to the welfare of the university, focusing particularly on those related to the academic mission. At-Large and College Senators shall report regularly to their constituencies.

The Senate may discuss and take a position on any subject concerning the university or USF System and may initiate policies on these matters to the USF System Faculty Council, the Regional Chancellor or the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs either directly or through its committees. The Senate either appoints or elects Faculty to serve on university-wide committees as well as Senate standing committees and councils. Articles IV and V of the Bylaws specify how membership is determined. These committees carry out much of the work of the Senate. Faculty are afforded an opportunity each year to volunteer for committee service. The Senate shall have a significant role in the appointment of academic administrators, as well as the periodic performance reviews of such administrators.

B. Receiving Reports

The Senate shall receive such reports as are presented to it by the USF System President, the USF System Faculty Council President, the Regional Chancellor, the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and other university officials, Senate standing and ad hoc committees, and university-wide committees and councils and any USF System reports. The Senate has the final responsibility to review reports and recommendations from university-wide committees and councils to the Regional Chancellor, the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, and other university officials, particularly when these recommendations affect wide-range changes in the academic structure of the university.

ARTICLE V. Committees and Councils

A. Senate Committees

1. Standing Committees and Councils
There shall be standing committees and councils of the Senate to expedite the efficient functioning of the Senate and its affairs. Committees and membership selection shall be made in accordance with the Bylaws.

2. Ad Hoc Committees

The Senate may establish ad hoc committees as needed, with members to be appointed by the Senate President.

B. University-Wide Committees and Councils

The Senate is the principal Faculty body and the parent body for all university committees and councils and thus serves as the focal point for the committees and councils in shared Faculty governance.

1. Membership

Election of members to university-wide committees and councils shall be conducted in accordance with the Bylaws.

2. Standing Committees and Councils

Standing committees and councils of the university and the Senate as specified in the Bylaws shall have jurisdiction under the Senate. The Senate may review and amend, at its discretion, reports and recommendations from these committees and councils.

ARTICLE VI. Administrative Considerations

Within reasonable parameters of available resources, the university shall provide for sufficient Senate support services for maintenance of permanent Senate files, for programmatic needs of the Senate, and for appropriate release time or compensation for the Senate President and Vice President. The office of the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs shall designate a member of the administrative staff to serve as Recording Secretary at meetings of the Senate. In addition, an operating budget shall be provided from Education and General appropriation for the administrative needs of the Senate.

ARTICLE VII. Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed through written petition from at least 51 percent of the Senate.

All amendments to this Constitution must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Faculty at a Senate meeting with a Faculty quorum present or where at least 51 percent of the Faculty responds in an electronic vote. All amendments to the Constitution must also be ratified by the Regional Chancellor.
All amendments to the associated Bylaws must be approved by a 60 percent majority vote of the Faculty at a Senate meeting with a Faculty quorum present or where at least 51 percent of the Faculty responds in an electronic vote.

ARTICLE VIII. Robert’s Rules of Order

Robert’s Rules of Order (latest edition) shall be the guide for conducting Senate deliberations not otherwise specified in the Constitution or Bylaws or provided by special rules adopted by the Senate. In any cases where there is a tie vote, the motion shall fail.

ARTICLE IX. Compliance

The provisions of this Constitution shall not be construed in any manner so as to conflict with the laws of the State of Florida, the policies of the Board of Governors of the University of South Florida system, policies of the Board of Trustees, or contractual agreements between the Board of Trustees and bargaining agents.