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## ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION

### ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

We, the Faculty, Administration, and Board of Trustees of Roger Williams University, cognizant of the necessity for strong faculty participation in the ongoing process of enhancing the educational environment of the University, do establish this Constitution of the Faculty Senate of Roger Williams University. It is the function of the Faculty Senate to help in the planning functions of the University; to make recommendations for the University's academic development; to inquire into any matter of an educational or administrative nature that has implications for the academic function of the University; and to act as a channel of communication between the various Schools and Colleges of the University as well as between the Faculty as a whole and the Administration and Board of Trustees.

### ARTICLE II. COMPOSITION OF THE SENATE

**Section 1.** The Faculty Senate shall be a representative committee composed of Full-time Faculty, who are elected by ~~those eligible to vote for members of the Senate. Those eligible to vote for Faculty Senators are~~ Full-time Faculty.

**Section 2.** Representation will be determined based on the number of Full-time Faculty members within a given school or division. Each school or division will be authorized one senator for every seventen full-time faculty members with each school or division having a minimum of one senator.

**Section 3.** Recognized Schools and Divisions:

#### Schools

School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation

Mario J. Gabelli School of Business

School of Education

School of Engineering, Computing and Construction Management

School of Justice Studies

~~University Colleges~~ School of Continuing Studies

#### Divisions

~~FCAS, Feinstein College of Arts and Sciences (FCAS), Humanities and Performing~~  
Arts

FCAS, Mathematics and Natural Sciences

FCAS, Social Sciences

Academic Support

**Section 4.** Besides representatives elected by schools and divisions, the faculty as a whole will elect ~~five~~two senators-at-large each year to two-year terms for a total of four senators at large.

**Section 5.** The Immediate Past President shall remain as a voting member of the Senate one year after his or her term as President has expired, even if he or she has not been reelected to the Senate. If the President of the Senate is reelected President, the office of Immediate Past President shall be vacant.

### ARTICLE III. ORGANIZATION

**Section 1.** Election of senators representing the schools and divisions of the University shall take place within each school or division prior to March ~~15<sup>th</sup>~~ of each year. Senators shall serve a two-year term with each term beginning on July 1 and ending June 30, two years hence. Senators elected to represent a school or division must hold appointment to said school or division, and be elected by faculty of said

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school or division. For purposes of this paragraph faculty holding joint appointment in more than one school or division shall be considered to belong to the school or division in which they do the majority of their teaching. If their teaching is equally divided, they shall be considered to belong to the school or division in which they received their initial appointment.

**Section 2.** An election committee appointed by the President of the Senate shall supervise the elections for senators-at-large. A list of all persons eligible to serve as senator-at-large shall be distributed to all eligible voters. Any corrections or omissions must be reported to the chair of the election committee within three working days, and these corrections will be distributed to the voters immediately following this period. One week will be provided during which nominations are forwarded to the election committee. Any eligible voter can nominate themselves or as many other persons as desired. No seconding of nominations is required. The committee shall determine the willingness of those nominated to run for election and will provide a ballot of candidates to all voters. Elections of senators-at-large shall be conducted prior to April ~~+15~~.

**Section 3.** Each member of the faculty ~~at large~~ shall be entitled to vote for up to ~~five~~two senators-at-large. The ~~five~~two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes shall serve as senators-at-large. If there is a tie vote for the ~~final~~second position the faculty ~~at large~~ shall elect the final representative in a run-off election between those nominees who tied for the position.

**Section 4.** Each annual Senate session begins July 1 and ends June 30 the following year. For purposes of continuity, the election of senators shall be staggered such that only one-half of the senators are newly elected each year.

**Section 5.** The Faculty Senate shall elect annually from among its membership ~~three (3) Officers~~four officers: President, ~~1st~~First Vice President ~~and 2nd, Second~~ Vice President, ~~and Recording Secretary~~. ~~The elections shall be conducted according to~~Recording Secretary will coordinate communications for the Senate, namely: a) oversee publication and distribution of minutes and reports; b) maintain records; c) oversee the preparation and publication of the senate calendar as outlined in the constitution. The Vice President for University Matters (UM) will act as Senate Parliamentarian and serve as the liaison between the Executive Committee and the UM Standing Committees. The UM Standing Committees include the following procedure: University Life, Diversity, Faculty Development, and Steering. The Vice President for Academic Affairs (AA) will serve as the liaison between the Executive Committee and the AA Standing Committees. The AA Standing Committees include the following: Admissions and Enrollment, Academic Standards and Policies, and Curriculum.

The President of the Senate shall convene the newly elected senate prior to the end of April. The new senate officers will be elected by the new senate at this time. Voting shall be by written ballot with a majority vote required for election. The new officers shall take office beginning the 1st of July. If any candidate on the first ballot does not receive a majority vote, a run-off election shall be conducted between all candidates tied for first or second place. The President of the Senate may succeed himself or herself, but shall serve not more than three consecutive terms. Any current senator is eligible to be elected as President of the Senate. Elections for Vice Presidents will be conducted in the same manner. ~~The officers of the Senate shall comprise the Executive Committee.~~

The Faculty Senate shall have an Executive Committee, comprising the four officers. The Executive Committee shall meet as required, but at least once each month from September through May, except January. In addition to such other duties as provided herein, the Executive Committee may take such actions as is necessary to be taken before a meeting of the Senate. It shall report such actions to the

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Senate within three workdays of such action. The Executive Committee shall not take such actions unless in its judgment the actions cannot feasibly wait until a Senate meeting.

**Section 6.** Vacancies arising during the term of office of a senator representing a schools and divisions shall be filled by an election of that respective school or division at the time such vacancies occur. Vacancies arising during the term of office of a senator-at-large shall be filled in accordance with procedures outlined in Article III, Sections 2 and 3. Within 10 days of a known vacancy the President of the Senate shall appoint an election committee and the election shall take place with 20 days. The term of the newly elected senator-at-large shall begin upon election and continue until 30 June.

## ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS

**Section 1.** The President of the Senate shall preside over Senate meetings, ensure that all actions of the Senate are communicated to the faculty as a whole, and shall act as spokesperson for the Senate's views in communications with the University administration. The Senate President shall also serve as a conduit between the Faculty Senate and the President of the University and the Provost. Normally within ten (10) business days after a Faculty Senate meeting, the Executive Committee shall meet with the President of the University and the Provost to review and discuss the Faculty Senate minutes as well as any other pertinent Senate issues. The Executive Committee shall report on these meetings at the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting. At the Invitation of the President of the University, the President of the Senate shall serve as liaison to designated administrative bodies. The President shall also communicate with the Chair of the RWU Board of Trustees, such communication to be as needed and as instructed by the Senate or by its Executive Committee. Senate minutes shall be published and available to all faculty members within 10 days of their approval.

**Section 2.** In the absence of the President, the ~~1st~~ Vice President for University Matters shall preside over the Senate. If the ~~1st~~ Vice President for University Matters is unable to preside the ~~2nd~~ Vice President for Academic Affairs shall preside over the Senate.

**Section 3.** The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate shall coordinate the work of the Senate and the ~~standing committees~~ Standing Committees, facilitate communication among its various constituencies, and prepare the Faculty Senate agendas, based, in part, on the work of the committees.

**Section 4.** To review progress ~~of the semester past~~ and to set objectives for the ~~semester to come~~ next academic year, the Senate's Executive Committee shall meet ~~in Plenary Session at before~~ the beginning of ~~each semester~~ the academic year with the University's Deans' Council ~~and, the Provost,~~ the University President's Steering Committee or such other principal advisory group the President of the University may establish. The Executive Committee shall report on these meetings at the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting.

**Section 5.** The Faculty Senate shall meet monthly during the academic year. Notice of dates, times and agendas shall be determined by the President of the Senate and shall be distributed one week in advance of meetings to all Full-time Faculty, the President of the University and the Provost. Special meetings may be called by the President of the Senate or written petition signed by ten percent (10%) of the full-time faculty. Sixty percent (60%) of the senators shall constitute a quorum. No meeting can be held without a quorum. Meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be open to all members of the University community, except (1) that at the discretion of the president, an executive session may be placed on the agenda at the request to the president from any senator, such sessions normally to be held at the end of a

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regular meeting; or (2) when a two-thirds vote of those senators in attendance call the Senate into Executive Session.

**Section 6.** Any member of the faculty, the Provost or the President of the University, shall have the right to request consideration of additional items for the agenda, in writing, to the Executive Committee ~~two weeks~~one week before the next Senate meeting.

**Section 7.** All Faculty Senate meetings, including those of the Standing Committees, are open to the public and shall operate under the guidelines established by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order. Only senators present at a meeting may vote. Normally voting will be by voice; but when the decision is not clear, the presiding officer shall call for a show of hands. Any member may call for a paper ballot at any time.

**Section 8.** Absences of senators shall be recorded in the minutes of the Senate. ~~If~~When a senator ~~is not present for two consecutive Senate meetings, the Senate minutes shall reflect that these absences do not meet the minimal attendance standard expected by the Senate of its members. If a senator misses~~has missed three regular Senate meetings in ~~a semester~~an academic year, the office shall be declared vacant.

**Section 10.** In order to allow every senator to contribute fully to a discussion, debate shall be allowed to continue until there is no objection to proceeding to a vote or until a ~~two-thirds~~ majority votes to conclude the debate.

~~**Section 11.** The Senate shall call meetings of the entire faculty before the end of each semester for the purpose of enhancing communication between the Senate and the faculty.~~

**Section 11.** The Senate may also call special meetings of the entire faculty. The call to such meetings must be issued at least one week in advance and the purpose stated. The President of the Senate shall preside at said meetings.

## ARTICLE V. COMMITTEES

**Section 1.** In order to conduct business in a timely and efficient manner, the Faculty Senate shall create seven (7) ~~standing committees~~Standing Committees, each of which shall be comprised of up to ten (10) full-time faculty members, no more than one from each school or division. The committees are encouraged to invite members of the university community who may be helpful to the discussion of given issues.

**Section 2.** A chair, chosen from the Senate shall convene each ~~standing committee~~Standing Committee. The chair will also serve as the representative from his/her school or division.

**Section 3.** Each school or division may elect one representative to each of the ~~standing committees~~Standing Committees unless ~~the chair~~a senator already represents that school or division. Committee members are elected to a two-year term. For continuity purposes, the election of committee members shall be staggered such that only one-half of the members of each committee are newly elected each year.

**Section 4.** All Faculty Senate ~~standing committees~~Standing Committees shall develop and publish their policies and procedures. Standing committees shall conduct regular meetings as required. At the beginning of each semester, ~~standing committees~~Standing Committees shall prepare a calendar of meetings for the semester and forward that schedule to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall then reconcile, collate, and publish the official Senate meeting calendar.

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**Section 5.** Senate ~~standing committees~~Standing Committees shall consider issues assigned to them by the Senate. Faculty who wish to have an issue considered by a Senate ~~standing committee shall~~Standing Committee may submit the request directly to the ~~Senate~~Standing Committee. Committees shall report their recommendations to the Senate for discussion and action. Committees shall produce agenda, minutes, and written reports. Minutes shall be published and available to all faculty following their approval.

**Section 6.** The following committees shall be considered as Senate Standing Committees. It is anticipated that the Faculty Senate committees will invite linkages to other University committees.

**1. Admissions and Enrollment Committee**

This committee shall concern itself with admission of students to the University, transfer issues, etc., with a holistic view of class composition including diversity, and an awareness of admissions trends among other colleges and universities.

**2. Curriculum Committee**

This committee will be responsible for program coordination and facilitation of curricular innovation, helping to coordinate program development in the several University academic constituencies. Other duties will include library, technology issues, study abroad and core.

**3. Academic Standards & Policies Committee.**

This committee shall be responsible for policy review in matters that affect student persistence and success. The committee shall act as the appeals body for Academic Standards petitions and shall serve as a liaison with the University's Center for Academic Development.

**4. Faculty Development Committee**

This committee will facilitate faculty participation in enhancing the intellectual life of the University community.

**5. Steering Committee**

This is an advisory committee ~~will serve as faculty linkage~~made up of experienced senators to provide guidance to the ~~University's strategic plan.~~Senate on matters of policy and long-term objectives.

**6. University Life Committee**

This committee will be charged with enhancing the civic culture of the University, promoting a humane and tolerant environment. The committee shall appraise the state of intellectual and cultural life at Roger Williams University.

**7. Diversity Committee**

This committee will be charged with monitoring, reporting on, and encouraging diversity at Roger Williams University.

**Section 7. Ad Hoc Committees.** The Faculty Senate may create and disband ad hoc committees, study groups, and task forces at the request of its members or other members of the University community.

## **ARTICLE VI. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES**

Recommendations of the Senate Standing Committees will be forwarded to the Faculty Senate.

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## ARTICLE VII. FORWARDING PROCEDURES

**Section 1.** The Faculty Senate will consider and vote on committee recommendations, as well as other matters brought before the Faculty Senate, prior to forwarding to the appropriate individuals.

**Section 2.** ~~It is requested that~~The Faculty Senate requests a response ~~be given within 30 days to all recommendations/on~~ motions ~~submitted by the Senate it has passed and forwarded~~ to University Administrative Officers within 30 days.

**Section 3.** The Faculty Senate requests a response on motions it has passed and forwarded to the Provost and/or President of the University as appropriate within 30 days. The response may be made in person or in writing.

## ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

To amend this Constitution it shall be necessary to ~~propose~~approve the amendment at ~~one meeting and vote on the proposed amendment at the next two consecutive meetings~~. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of those Senators present at the second meeting shall be required for passage to a Full Faculty Caucus. ~~In order for a Faculty Caucus to vote on a constitutional amendment a quorum of 60% of all full time faculty is required. A two thirds (2/3) majority of those full time faculty present at the Caucus shall be necessary to amend the Faculty Senate Constitution~~ratification vote.

## ARTICLE IX. RATIFICATION

This constitution shall be ratified by a simple majority vote of the university faculty.