

# **SOUTHEAST NEW MEXICO COLLEGE**

## **FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION**

*Adopted by Faculty Vote on May 4, 2022*

### **Preamble**

To promote the educational success of Southeast New Mexico College students, we hold that the governing of Southeast New Mexico College is the joint responsibility of the Southeast New Mexico College Board of Trustees, the Southeast New Mexico College administration, and the faculty and staff of the college. In order to assure that the faculty fully participates in the determination, formulation, and implementation of educational policy and procedure, the adoption of this Constitution establishing a Faculty Senate at Southeast New Mexico College is hereby ordained.

### **Article I: Designation**

The name of this organization shall be the **Southeast New Mexico College Faculty Senate**, hereafter referred to as the Senate.

### **Article II: Purpose**

The purposes of the Southeast New Mexico College Faculty Senate shall be to:

1. serve as the exclusive representative of the Southeast New Mexico College faculty to the college administration and Board of Trustees in academic and professional matters and the determination, formulation, and implementation of educational policy;
2. advise the College President on matters of importance to the college and faculty;
3. promote communication, collaboration, and professional development among the faculty and between the faculty and other groups;
4. maintain and promote the standards and ideals of the profession;
5. serve as the voice of the faculty in shared governance;
6. protect and preserve academic freedom;
7. provide an open forum for the free discussion of academic and professional issues;
8. negotiate and advocate for faculty hiring, salary structure, benefits, promotion and tenure, and other employee matters;

9. negotiate other academic and professional matters as mutually agreed upon between the administration, Board of Trustees, and the Senate.

### **Article III: Privileges & Responsibilities**

1. The Senate shall, of its own determination, concern itself with any academic or professional matter that it deems important to the welfare of the college.
2. The Senate shall be the exclusive negotiating representative of the faculty with respect to all academic and professional matters as stated in the Faculty Handbook.
3. The Senate shall act for and on behalf of the faculty as a whole in exercising its primary responsibility for such matters as curriculum, subject matter and method of instruction, grading policies, program development, faculty status (including appointments, evaluations, and dismissals), and those aspects of student life, such as student preparation and success, that relate to the educational process.
4. The Senate may formulate recommendations on the selection of administrators of the college after due diligence has been conducted. On behalf of the faculty, the Senate may forward its recommendations to the College President as well as the Board of Trustees of SENMC.
5. The Senate shall work jointly with administration officials on the appointment of faculty members to all College, Academic, and Ad Hoc committees and to other extracurricular offices and responsibilities.
6. The Senate shall establish ad hoc or standing committees, as needed, to address issues related to budget and resources; college planning; curriculum and programming; research and creative activity; diversity, equity, and inclusion; student success; or any other relevant areas.

### **Article IV: Membership & Election Process**

#### **Section A: Membership**

The Senate shall be comprised of a President who is elected by the general faculty (see Section C below), and one member from each of the academic departments/divisions (see Addendum 1). After the members are selected, a Vice-President and Secretary shall be elected by the Senate.

#### **Section B: Term Lengths & Limits**

Each member, including the President, shall be elected to serve a two-year term. Members may serve two consecutive terms. After those two terms, they must be excluded from the ballot for one academic year before becoming eligible to serve again.

### **Section C: Election Process**

Elections shall be held no later than the last full week of each spring semester, so that newly elected members will begin their terms at the beginning of the academic year the following fall semester. All full-time faculty members may vote in the election.

Prior to the election date, the current (outgoing) President shall ask for candidates for President via email to the full faculty. Interested parties should indicate their interest to run for the position to the current President, who will then send out a ballot to the full faculty. Candidates for Senate President should be tenured Associate or Full Professors.

Once the President has been selected, a second ballot shall be sent out to elect the remaining members of the Senate.

In the event of a vacancy, a special election will be held to replace the member. The Faculty Senate President may declare a Senate seat vacant if:

1. an elected member is unable to complete his/her term due to illness, scheduling conflict, or any other legitimate reason,
2. misses three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings without notice, and/or
3. becomes ineligible to be a Senator for any reason.

### **Section D: Senate Duties & Responsibilities**

1. Members are responsible for arranging time in their schedules to attend each scheduled meeting.
2. If a member finds that there is a conflict with the established meeting dates/times of the standing committee that will prohibit them from adhering to the attendance policy they should contact the Senate President to initiate a request to have a temporary substitute selected.
3. Members should carefully study any materials sent to them prior to the scheduled meetings. They should take this time to check with their colleagues to determine if there are any questions or areas of concern about topic(s) to be discussed.
4. Members should attend each meeting prepared for discussion.
5. If a member cannot attend a meeting, he/she should contact the President or Secretary in advance.

**Duties of President:** The President shall prepare the agenda, determine if a quorum is present, maintain order, and conduct meetings of the Senate. The President will also serve on the College Council, as well as giving reports at the Board of Trustees Meetings. The President, in conjunction with the Vice President of Academic Affairs, will prepare the agenda for the monthly faculty meeting, and he/she will preside over those meetings. Due to these significant responsibilities, the President should be exempt from any other standing committee obligations.

**Duties of Vice-President:** The Vice-President shall assist the President in the preparation and running of monthly meetings, as needed. The Vice-President shall assume the responsibilities and duties of the President in the event that the President is unable to meet his/her obligations. The Vice-President shall serve as the Faculty Senate representative on the Steering Committee.

**Duties of Secretary:** The Secretary shall act as the recorder of minutes for each meeting, creating the official minutes for each meeting that will be approved by the Senate at the beginning of each subsequent monthly meeting.

## **Article V: Meetings & Procedures**

The Senate shall meet at least once per month during the academic year separate from the general Faculty meeting. In instances that require a vote, all members of the Senate will have an equal vote.

A member of the Senate who cannot attend a meeting may be represented by an alternate or proxy. This representative shall have full rights and privileges of a Senator at Senate meetings. The absent member must provide a written notice via email to the Senate Secretary that includes the date and authorization for the designee to act as a proxy. In addition, another serving member of the Senate could act as a proxy with such a notice.

## **Article VI: Amendments & Revisions**

Amendments and revisions to this constitution may be made by a majority vote of the full-time faculty. All faculty members may propose amendments and additions to this Constitution, which will be considered by the Senate at the next scheduled meeting. All proposed amendments must be made available to the Senate at least two weeks in advance.

## **Addendum 1**

As of April 20, 2022, the departments and divisions at Southeast New Mexico College have been identified as the following:

- 1. Nursing/NURS**
- 2. Mathematics**
- 3. Social Sciences**
- 4. Education & Foreign Languages**
- 5. English/Humanities/Fine Arts, Digital Media**
- 6. Allied Health**
- 7. Business, Computer Technology and Manufacturing**
- 8. Science/Engineering**

One faculty member from each department/division shall be elected to serve on the Senate. This list is subject to change, and if/when changes are made, the Senate membership shall be altered to represent the most up-to-date list.