

Faculty Senate FAQ (most answered are from the *ECU Faculty Manual* and the ECU Faculty Senate website)

What is the Faculty Senate?

The Faculty Senate is the legislative, advisory, and primary faculty governance body representing the general faculty of East Carolina University. The general faculty are the general electorate and the Faculty Senate is the legislative and advisory body representing the general faculty.

What is the mission of the Faculty Senate?

The primary mission of Faculty Senate and its standing Academic Committees is to provide a mechanism for the essential joint effort of faculty and administration in the governance of East Carolina University. The Faculty Senate provides the means by which faculty are able to participate in the development of academic and educational policies, as well as other affairs of the university. The Faculty Senate has oversight of the *ECU Faculty Manual*. The Chancellor and the Chair of the Faculty facilitate communication that enables continuing and effective faculty participation in all aspects of the University community.

What are the duties of the Faculty Senate?

The legislative powers of the general faculty are delegated to the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate has the powers of the general faculty to formulate, in cooperation with the university administration, the policies of East Carolina University.

The Faculty Senate has oversight of the *ECU Faculty Manual*.

The Faculty Senate sets up committees that are necessary for the performance of its duties.

The Faculty Senate ratifies, amends, or remands all matters of academic policy or faculty welfare which have been recommended by any standing or special committee of the university. It may also initiate policies in such matters.

All acts or decisions of the Faculty Senate are considered approved unless vetoed within thirty days of the action by the Chancellor of East Carolina University by written notice to the Chair of the Faculty or unless the Chancellor notifies the Chair of the Faculty in writing that the proposal has been forwarded to the Board of Trustees or to the Board of Governors.

How are faculty senators chosen and how long is their term in office?

Each academic unit holds elections in February of each year with members-elect to take office on the day following the last regular meeting of the Faculty Senate in the spring semester.

Each senator shall serve a two-year term. Senators may be elected to succeed themselves twice. After a lapse of one year following the expiration of this third term, they will again be eligible for election.

If an elected senator fails to attend more than three consecutive meetings of the Faculty Senate her/his seat will be declared vacated by the Chair of the Faculty.

What is the role of the Senate alternate?

Elected alternates attend Faculty Senate meetings when the elected Senator is unable to attend. While attending in the place of the elected Senator, the alternate has all of the privileges and responsibilities of the elected Senator.

How do senators address the Senate?

The generic term "professor" is usually used as a title for all senators. For administrators with titles, it is appropriate to use the administrator's official title.

How are speaking rights granted?

Visitors (non Senators) may be granted speaking privileges by the Seante Agenda Committee or the Chair of the Faculty, if it is deemed necessary and appropriate for the efficient conduct of the Senate's business. Speaking privileges must be requested in advance. The decision to grant or not grant speaking privileges is at the discretion of the Agenda Committee and Chair of the Faculty. All speaking privilege approvals will be announced to the Senators prior to the meeting.

Who can ask questions during the question period in Senate meetings?

Any Senator may ask questions during the question period. Only other Senators, persons who have given reports to the Senate, or individuals who have been granted speaking privileges may respond to questions.

To whom can questions be addressed?

Questions may be addressed to anyone who has given a report to the Senate, to the Faculty Officers, or to ex-officio members (including administrators) in attendance.

What are the duties of all the Faculty Senate Officers? How are they elected, and for how long?

The Chair of the Faculty presides at all meetings, is empowered to call special meetings of the Senate, is an ex-officio member of all academic committees and various administrative committees, and appoints persons to fill unexpired terms of committees. Further, before the first regular meeting of the Faculty Senate, the Chair appoints the Parliamentarian of the Faculty. The Chair of the Faculty also supervises the Faculty Senate office personnel and, with their assistance, plans the General Faculty Convocation; is responsible for conveying greetings of the Faculty at commencement exercises and representing the Faculty at university functions and Board of Trustee meetings; serves as a Delegate to the Faculty Assembly.

The Vice Chair of the Faculty performs all of the duties of the Chair in the absence or incapacity of the Chair; serves, when requested by the Chair of the Faculty, as the Chair's representative on faculty committees; and succeeds to the office of Chair of the Faculty if that office is vacated during the term of the incumbent.

The Secretary of the Faculty, with assistance of the office personnel, keeps accurate minutes of all regular and special meetings; ensures distribution of the minutes to all members of the general faculty; keeps an accurate list of membership of the Faculty Senate and an accurate record of attendance; informs the Chair of the Faculty when a seat becomes vacant; serves, at the request of the Chair of the Faculty, as the Chair's representative on faculty committees; and performs such other appropriate duties as directed by the Faculty Senate.

The Parliamentarian of the Faculty advises the Chair of the Faculty and the faculty on the parliamentary matters according to the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* and the *Faculty Constitution* and its *By-Laws*.

How is voting conducted?

Voting on general matters coming before the Faculty Senate (e.g., committee reports and resolutions) is generally conducted either by voice vote or a show of hands, at the discretion of the Chair of the Faculty. If requested by any of the members present, voting may also be done via secret ballot. Voting for elected office is usually done by secret ballot. Ex-officio members are not eligible to vote in elections for committee membership of faculty office.

Where do the senators sit? How is the seating order determined?

Senators sit in assigned seats. The order of seating is alphabetical, by unit, with all ex-officio members sitting in one row. Only elected and ex-officio members (including alternates, if representing their electoral units) may answer the roll call, vote, or occupy seats assigned to senators.

What should a senator do if he/she arrives late for a Senate meeting?

If a Senator arrives late for a meeting, s/he should proceed quietly to his/her assigned seat. During the break, the Senator should make sure that the Secretary of the Faculty has noted his/her arrival.

Who sets the Faculty Senate Agenda?

The Faculty Senate establishes its own agenda. The details of the agenda, including the order of items on the agenda, are overseen by the Agenda Committee, as prescribed by the Appendix A of the ECU Faculty Manual. Any matters of academic policy brought to the Agenda Committee by any senator, any standing or special committee, or by the action of the general faculty will be placed on the agenda no later than the second regular meeting of the Faculty Senate after receipt of the recommendation.

The Agenda Committee meets two weeks before each regularly scheduled faculty meeting. At that time, it considers all recommendations and reports from academic committees, including all standing and ad hoc committees of the Faculty Senate, and all other items that have been brought to it by any senator, any standing or special committee, or by the action of the general faculty.

On the basis of this information, as well as input from the Faculty Officers, the Agenda Committee draws up the agenda, on each regular and special meeting of the Faculty Senate. The committee has the responsibility of providing each member of the faculty a copy of the agenda for each meeting of the Faculty Senate one week before the date of the meeting.

What is the impact if a senator does not show for meetings?

If an elected senator fails to attend more than three consecutive meetings of the Faculty Senate her/his seat will be declared vacated by the Chair of the Faculty and the Senator's unit will be informed and asked to elect another representative to fill the vacated seat.

How does a senator make a motion?

1. The Senator raises his/her hand and waits to be recognized by the Chair of the Faculty.
2. **The Chair of the Faculty recognizes the Senator.** The Chair usually recognized the Senator by name. After receiving formal recognition from the chair, a member is then said to "have the floor."
3. **Once recognized, the Senator rises, states her/his name and academic unit.**
4. **The Senator makes the motion.** Always address the Chair and introduce a motion in the form, "*I move that...*" followed by a statement of the motion. Please note that motion sheets are provided at the Senator's tables. Any Senator making a motion must be ready to provide a written copy of the motion to the Chair and the Secretary at the time the motion is stated.
5. **Another member seconds the motion.** Without recognition from the presiding official, another member may say, "*I second the motion.*" If the motion is not seconded, it "*dies for lack of a second.*"
6. **The Chair states the motion to the assembly.** The Chair repeats or "*states the motion*" to the assembly. Once it has been formally stated to the assembly, it may be referred to as "the question."

What are the responsibilities of Faculty Senators to their units and to the university?

Because the legislative powers of the general faculty are delegated to the Faculty Senate and Senators are the elected representatives of their academic units to this legislative body, Senators are responsible for communicating with the faculty in their units about all actions, pending and completed, of the Faculty Senate. Best practices for Senator-unit communications include reviewing the Faculty Senate agenda with the unit prior to each Senate meeting, informing unit colleagues of all pending or completed Senate actions, sharing announcements with the unit faculty, and serving as a liaison between the unit faculty and the faculty Senate.

How does the Faculty Senate communicate with the faculty at a large?

Each member of the faculty receives a copy of the agenda for each meeting of the Faculty Senate at least one week before the date of the meeting. In addition, the Faculty Senate sends e-mail messages to the general faculty to keep them informed of all important Faculty Senate and Faculty Senate committee events and announcement. The Chair of the Faculty communicates with the faculty at annual at the Faculty Convocation, which is both the annual welcome-back ceremony at the beginning of the academic year and the annual business meeting of the general faculty.

Who determines the schedule of meetings for the Faculty Senate and its committees?

The meeting schedule is set by the Faculty Constitution and By-Laws (Appendix A of the *ECU Faculty Manual*). Appendix A requires that four regular meetings of the Faculty Senate be held each fall and spring semester according to a schedule prepared by the Agenda Committee and approved by the Senate in the Fall Semester of the preceding year, that the organizational meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on a Tuesday following the last regular meeting of the spring semester but before the beginning of the examination period; and that, upon written petition of fifteen members of the Faculty Senate, the Chair of the Faculty shall call a special session of the Faculty Senate within four days. In exceptional situations the Chair of the Faculty is empowered to call a special session of the Faculty Senate with 24 hour notice.

What is the role of the Faculty Senate committees in determining university policy?

All University Academic Committees are Standing Committees of the Faculty Senate. The committees initiate and review policies on all matters of academic and faculty welfare and present those policies to the Faculty Senate for ratification, amendment, or remand. They meet on a standard schedule, set and revised by the Committee on Committees.

In addition to the Academic Standing Committees, the Faculty Senate has five standing appellate committees that deal with discharge, imposition of serious sanction, employment status, instructional relationship, implementation of governance procedures, sexual, racial, or ethnic harassment or discrimination or conflict of interest, non-reappointment and non-conferral of permanent tenure.

Information about these committees (as well as some of the university's administrative committees) is available on the Faculty Senate web site (<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/academiccommittees/committeesmainpage.cfm>).

What is the relationship between the Faculty Senate and the ECU administration?

The Faculty Senate and the various standing Committees on which the faculty serve are the primary conduit for the essential joint effort of faculty and administration in the government of East Carolina University. The Chancellor and the Chair of the Faculty facilitate communication that enables continuing and effective faculty participation in all aspects of the University community.

What are the primary governance responsibilities of the faculty (of ECU and all universities)?

The 1966 Joint Statement on the Government of Colleges and Universities, a statement jointly formulated by the American Council on Education (ACE), the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), promotes shared university governance and indicates that a joint effort must be made when dealing with such issues as long-range planning, use of physical resources, budgeting, and the selection of key administrators. Further, it defines the role of governing boards, upper administration, faculty, and students in the governance of the university and provides strong rationale for the need for authoritative faculty voice in all matters relating to academics.

As stated in 1998 by past Chair of the Faculty Don Sexauer, "shared governance in an academic setting is a fragile balancing act that takes place between the administration of the university and its faculty. It is the attempt by the administration and the faculty to solve problems and implement policies in a manner that benefits all the constituencies of the university." The ECU Faculty Senate is the centerpiece of this collaborative balancing act. And, the elected ECU Faculty Senators serve as the voice of ECU's general faculty.