

CONSTITUTION OF THE FACULTY COUNCIL AND FACULTY ASSEMBLY VOLUNTEER STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE Revision: March 2021

PREAMBLE

To promote faculty participation in academic decision-making according to sound principles of higher education, to provide an orderly process for improving communication and mutual understanding between the administrative officers and the faculty of the College, to foster mutual trust and respect, and to facilitate the expression of the collective opinion of the College faculty, the Faculty Council of Volunteer State Community College establishes this Constitution.

ARTICLE I Functions

Section 1. The Faculty Council shall be empowered to advise and to make recommendations to the President and/or other administrative officers concerning matters of general educational policy or matters of general faculty interest; to act on behalf of the faculty when the faculty cannot be convened; to consider individual grievances and concerns; to consider matters suggested by the Vice President of Academic Affairs or the President.

Section 2. In exercising these functions, the Faculty Council shall have the power to make such rules and regulations as it may deem necessary for the fulfillment of its duty.

ARTICLE II Membership of the Faculty Council and Faculty Assembly

Section 1. The Faculty Council shall consist of representatives elected by the faculty for each academic division, the Library/LRC, and the Upper Cumberland and Springfield Campuses; hereafter known as Units. The adjunct faculty shall have representation. The Council may specify other ex-officio members.

Section 2. Representatives shall be selected according to the following criteria:

1. Representatives shall be full-time members of the faculty who serve under the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Division Deans are not eligible to serve as members of Council.
2. Full-Time Faculty members are eligible for election to Faculty Council after one year of service at Volunteer State. This requirement may be waived for the formation of a new Unit.
3. Representatives of all Units shall be proportional to the full-time faculty membership of each Unit at the time of the annual election.
 - (a) A Unit with 1-10 eligible FT Faculty Council members shall be entitled to one representative.
 - (b) A Unit with 11-20 eligible FT Faculty Council members shall be entitled to two representatives.

(c) A Unit with 21-30 eligible FT Faculty Council members shall be entitled to three representatives, 1 additional representative for every 10 additional eligible unit members

(d) Upper Cumberland and Springfield Faculty shall count with their Academic Division for the purposes of determining the number of representatives per Division and also shall count with their campus Unit for determining the number for that unit. However, no faculty member can serve as a representative for two units simultaneously.

4. Representatives shall be elected for two-year terms with half, or as close thereto as possible, of the representatives of each Unit elected each year. A representative may be elected to unlimited consecutive terms.

5. Each Unit shall elect one alternate representative who will serve with full privileges in the absence of a regular representative and, if necessary, complete an unexpired term of a regular representative. A new alternate shall be elected should their predecessor assume full membership.

6. Calendar for nominations and elections shall be as follows:

(a) In March, each Unit shall begin nomination of potential candidates for Faculty Council. Early nominations are intended to allow time for both nominees and their colleagues to consider interest and suitability for the position of representative.

(b) In April, each Unit shall elect the number of representatives necessary to maintain its full delegation on Faculty Council. New members will attend the last Council meeting in April, at which time their term begins. Both current and outgoing members vote for the offices of Vice-Speaker, Parliamentarian, and Recorder for the next year.

7. Nominations and elections shall be run by Unit council reps not supervisors.

8. New speaker starts Monday after May graduation.

9. The Speaker of the Faculty Council shall be an ex-officio member for one year after leaving office. The ex-officio status of a former Speaker does not preclude immediate re-election to the Faculty Council, however.

10. Adjunct faculty will have one (1) voting representative and five, non-voting (or alternate) members, representing each academic division.

(a) In August, the Faculty Council will solicit nominations for the adjunct representative. Each division shall be responsible for selecting an adjunct representative. The six adjunct representatives will determine which member will be the voting member. The remaining five adjunct faculty will be non-voting members.

Section 3. The Faculty Assembly is comprised of the entire faculty body whose membership is made up of full- and part-time faculty members. The Faculty Assembly may be called to meet and act as a voting body when necessary.

ARTICLE III Nominations and Elections of Faculty Council Officials

Section 1. Officials must have served as representatives at least one year; however, previous experience need not be in the year immediately preceding this election.

(a) Speaker: The Speaker is elected to a one-year term, to begin the Monday after Spring commencement. If the speaker is elected from among the current or incoming representatives, the seat vacated may be backfilled via special election in their Unit. The Speaker does not vote in Faculty Council except in the case of a tie.

(b) Vice-Speaker: The Vice-Speaker is elected to a one-year term, to begin the Monday after Spring commencement. The Vice-Speaker shall be a current division representative and will be a voting member.

(c) TBR Sub-Council Representative: A representative to the Faculty Sub-council of the State Board of Regents shall be elected to a three-year term. Those eligible to be elected for this position are the current sub-council representative or any past or present member of the Faculty Council. The Sub-Council Rep is an ex-officio member of the Council.

(d) Parliamentarian: The parliamentarian is elected for a one-year term. The parliamentarian shall be a current division representative and will be a voting member.

(e) Recorder: The recorder is elected for a one-year term. The recorder shall be a current division representative and will be a voting member. If no recorder is elected, a recorder shall be appointed by the Council during its first meeting of the academic year.

Section 2. Nominating Committee

1. No later than March 31st, the Faculty Council will appoint a Nominating Committee from members of the Faculty Council. The Nominating Committee will consist of not fewer than three nor more than five members who will choose a chair from among themselves. No more than one member from any Unit may serve on the Nominating Committee. Nominating Committee members should not be current Council officers nor under consideration for Council office.

2. The Nominating Committee will solicit nominations from the appropriate body of nominees and present a slate of candidates for each office. The report of the Nominating Committee will be submitted in writing, and copies will be distributed at least one week prior to the election.

3. The Nominating Committee shall run the election of officers for Faculty Council. The election will take place no later than the end of April, by verified electronic vote, which shall be open for seven days. The Nominating Committee shall announce the officers before the spring commencement date. Those eligible to vote for the offices of Speaker and TBR Sub-Council Representative are the current full-time faculty. Those eligible to vote for the offices of Vice-Speaker, Parliamentarian and Recorder are members of Faculty Council.

ARTICLE IV Functions of Representatives and Council Officials

Section 1. Representatives:

1. Shall solicit nominations in March to fill terms opening for the next year
2. Shall conduct elections in April for council representation in their respective Units
3. Shall serve as liaison between their Units and the Faculty Council in disseminating information and soliciting responses, primarily through reports at monthly Unit meetings
4. Present proposals and discussion on issues
5. Elect Council Officers

Section 2. Speaker of Faculty Council:

1. Schedules and presides over meetings of the Faculty Council
2. Schedules and presides over meetings of the Faculty Assembly
3. Establishes the agenda
4. Calls special meetings
5. Reserves agenda time at Faculty Meetings for Council reports and voicing of Faculty concerns
6. Represents the Faculty on appropriate active Administrative Committees, including the President's Cabinet
7. Prepares an Annual Report (e.g., voting record, attendance record, summary of proposals and recommendations, and final actions)
8. Establishes ad hoc and/or standing sub-committees of Council as needed

Section 3. Vice-Speaker of Faculty Council:

1. Acts for the Speaker in the Speaker's absence or at the request of the Speaker
2. Assists the Speaker in the performance of the Speaker's duties. Speaker & Vice Speaker work as a team to distribute workload

Section 4. Parliamentarian:

1. Advises representatives during Faculty Council meetings concerning points of order, rules and regulations set forth by the Faculty Council, including Constitutional procedures
2. Follows Robert's Rules of Order (the most recent edition)

Section 5. Representative to the Faculty Sub-Council of the TN Board of Regents:

1. Serves as liaison between the Council and the Sub-Council in disseminating information and soliciting responses
2. Provides information to the Council and the Faculty Assembly concerning discussion and actions by the Sub-Council
3. Serves as an ex-officio member of the Faculty Council if s/he is not an elected representative

Section 6. Recorder:

1. Types, and distributes Minutes at Council meetings and manages archives
2. Types and distributes the Minutes of open meetings, after approval, with amendments and corrections, to the members of the Faculty Assembly
3. Assists Speaker in Distribution of copies of the agenda prior to regularly scheduled meetings
4. Prepares and maintains an official membership list of the Council from which roll call votes may be made
5. Assists Speaker to type and distribute the annual report as submitted by the Speaker
6. Annually reviews the size of each Unit to determine appropriate # of Representatives and tracks the terms of Council members

Section 7. Ad hoc Council subcommittee on Finances

This committee will serve at the request of Council to maintain awareness of institutional budgetary issues as they relate to faculty concerns, in particular salary and benefits. Faculty who are not council members can also serve on this committee.

ARTICLE V Procedures

Section 1. Open Meetings:

1. Open meetings of the Faculty Council shall be held at least twice each Fall and Spring semesters. Meetings shall be open to faculty and invited guests; however, visitors have no vote and may not exercise floor privileges without the approval of a majority of the Council.
2. An agenda will be distributed to each member of the Faculty Council at least 48 hours before the beginning of each meeting.
3. Faculty wishing to bring issues to the attention of Council for discussion and possible action should do so in writing. Issues raising a concern for privacy or sensitive material can be addressed to Council officers for possible anonymity or closed meeting.

4. Business shall be automatically placed on the agenda if a petition signed by 10% of the faculty is presented to a member.

Section 2. Closed Meetings:

1. Closed meetings of the Faculty Council may be called by the Speaker upon two days notice.
2. A petition signed by 25% of the membership of Faculty Council shall be sufficient to call a closed meeting.
3. A petition signed by 10% of the faculty and presented to any member of Faculty Council shall be sufficient to call a closed meeting.
4. Closed meetings may be called to hear individual's grievances and concerns. The individual should notify a member of the Faculty Council of his/her desire for a hearing.
5. No closed meetings shall be convened unless all members and/or alternates are duly notified.

Section 3. Faculty Council Voting Procedures:

1. All business shall be decided by a simple majority of the Faculty Council except for the approval of constitutional amendments and by-laws, (See Article 6)
2. Voting privileges shall be limited to elected Unit members or their alternate.
3. Voting shall be by roll call if requested by a voting member.
4. Voting can be conducted by verifiable currently approved on-line methods

Section 4. Faculty Assembly Meetings:

1. Faculty Assembly meetings shall be held at least once each Fall, and Spring semesters.
2. Officials of the Faculty Assembly are the same officials of Faculty Council with the Speaker presiding.
3. The Speaker will submit an agenda to the members of Faculty Assembly before the beginning of each meeting. Topics on the agenda are open for discussion only. All business will be discussed and voted on in Faculty Council.

Section 5. General Procedures:

1. In all matters of procedure not specified herein, Robert's Rules of Order (the most recent edition) shall be applied.
2. Each meeting shall be adjourned upon a motion seconded and passed.

ARTICLE VI Amendments

Section 1. Proposal of Amendments: Amendments to this Constitution shall be proposed:

1. By a representative of the Faculty Council
2. By a majority vote of a single Unit presented through the Division dean or director
3. By a petition of 10% of the faculty
4. By request of the Cabinet presented through the President of the College

Section 2. Procedure:

1. Amendments shall be presented in writing at open meeting of the Faculty Council, or by appropriate verifiable and currently accepted on-line methods.
2. An amendment shall be voted on by the Council at the next open meeting following its proposal. A two-thirds ($2/3$) majority of the Faculty Council shall be required prior to submission of the proposed amendment to the faculty.
3. After Faculty Council approval, an amendment shall be presented to the faculty and must be ratified by three-fourths ($3/4$) of the faculty voting before it becomes part of the Constitution.
4. An amendment not approved by the Faculty Council may be appealed to the Faculty Assembly and ratified by three fourths ($3/4$) of the faculty voting, at which time it becomes part of the Constitution.
5. Regular faculty will be allowed at least one week following receipt of written notification to vote on the proposed amendment.