

Faculty Senate 101: Election Procedures
Steve Thomas, Faculty Senate President, 2012/13

Two Definitions

Caucus: a representative body consisting of the faculty members elected to serve as Senators and any alternate(s) to the Faculty Senate from a particular college, unit, or division [*Bylaws*, Article II. Section 8]

Committee on Nominations and Appointments: a standing committee of the Faculty Senate consisting of the elected chairs of each caucus, with of the current President-Elect of the Faculty Senate as chairperson [Article III. Section 2 F]

Each of these bodies has a distinctive role to play in Faculty Senate elections.

How Many Senators Should We Have?

Elective faculty seats are to be apportioned in January of each year among these respective colleges, units, and divisions, based on the FTE of faculty within each college, unit or division. [Article II. Section 1 E]

The administrative assistant of the Faculty Senate notifies the Faculty Senate President-Elect of the number of positions to be filled in the forthcoming election based on information received by him or her from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. [Article II. Section 1 A]

These colleges, units, and divisions, with their apportionment as of 2012 spring semester, are:

Agricultural Extension	1
Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (Resident Instruction and Experiment Station)	10
Architecture and Design	2
Arts and Sciences – Humanities	10
Arts and Sciences – Natural Sciences	10
Arts and Sciences – Social Sciences	7
Business Administration	6
Communications and Information Sciences	4
Education, Health and Human Sciences	7
Engineering	9
Law	3
Libraries	3
Nursing	2
ROTC	1
Social Work	2
UTSI	2
Veterinary Medicine	5

Qualifications for Service as Faculty Senator

Elected faculty members shall be chosen from those members of the faculty meeting the following criteria at the time of the election: (1) the holding of full-time or continuing part-time appointment with the rank, or equivalent rank, of assistant professor or higher; and (2) the performance of academic duties totaling at least half-time teaching, research, service, or departmental administration. [Article II. Section 1 B]

After completion of a full three-year term or any partial term of more than one year, an elected faculty member shall be eligible for a second three-year term. A senator who has served two consecutive terms is eligible for nomination only after being off the Faculty Senate for a full three years. [Article II. Section 1 B]

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Term of Office

The term of office for each elected faculty member is three years (unless a faculty member is elected to serve a partial term; see below) and begins August 1 of the year in which the member is elected. The members elected by each college, unit, or division shall be divided into three classes, each class consisting of approximately one-third of the elected representatives of each college, unit, or division. [Article II. Section 1 B]

In case of an increase in the number of elected faculty member representatives authorized for any caucus, the new elective seats shall be apportioned over the three classes of members in a manner that distributes the members as equally as possible across the classes. Elected faculty members may be elected to one-year, two-year, or three-year terms in order to achieve this approximate distributive equality. In case of a decrease in the number of elected faculty member representatives authorized for any caucus, the decrease in representation shall be made at the next expiration of the term of an elected member. [Article II. Section 1 E (emphasis added)]

Election of Senators: Responsibilities of Caucus Members

Members of each caucus elect a convening caucus chair for the coming year by August 1 each year. [Article II. Section 8]

The elected faculty members from each caucus shall serve as a nominations subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Committee on Nominations and Appointments for the respective college, unit, or division represented by the caucus. The caucus members shall call for and receive nominations from faculty in their respective colleges, units, or divisions. The members of each caucus shall meet to select from nominees the appropriate number of candidates to stand for election in their college, unit, or division. There shall be at least two candidates listed on the ballot for each seat to be filled through the annual election, absent extraordinary circumstances. Nominations will be submitted by February 15. [Article II. Section 2 A (emphasis added)]

Election of Senators: Responsibilities of the Committee on Nominations and Appointments

The Committee on Nominations and Appointments shall collect the names of all nominees to be included on the ballot, together with a brief biography or statement for each, and shall set the time and procedures for voting. [Article II. Section 2 A]

The Committee on Nominations and Appointments shall render a report to the Faculty Senate at its regular May meeting of each year and at other times as may be required. [Article III. Section 2 F]

Other Elections: Responsibilities of the Committee on Nominations and Appointments

The Committee on Nominations and Appointments shall also recruit two nominees for Faculty Senate President-Elect every year and two nominees for the campus representative to the University Faculty Council in the spring semester of every third year. [Article III. Section 2 F]

Qualifications for Service as President-Elect of the Faculty Senate

The President-Elect shall be chosen for a one-year term from among those members of the faculty meeting the following criteria at the time of election: (1) the holding of full-time appointment with the rank, or equivalent rank, of assistant professor or higher; (2) the performance of academic duties totaling at least half-time teaching, research, service, or departmental administration; and (3) prior service on the Faculty Senate (as an administrative member, an elected faculty member, a committee or council member, or otherwise) within the last five years. [Article II. Section 10]

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In the spring semester of each year, the Faculty Senate shall elect a President-Elect. Each nominee shall be given the opportunity to make a brief statement relevant to his or her candidacy and respond to questions at the regular meeting of the Faculty Senate in March of each year and shall provide voting members of the Faculty Senate with a written statement regarding his or her relevant experiences and proposed contributions as Faculty Senate President in advance of that meeting. [Article II. Section 10]

Procedure for Election of President-Elect of the Faculty Senate

Election shall be by a majority vote of all members of the Faculty Senate taken by a printed mail ballot before the third meeting of the spring semester. [Article II. Section 10]

Qualifications for Service and Procedure for Election of University Faculty Council Representative

No reference within Bylaws. However, the Charter for the University Faculty Council reads as follows: *“The UFC shall be comprised of the Faculty Senate President from each of the UT System campuses. Additionally, each campus shall elect, by a simple majority, one additional full-time tenured faculty member to a three year staggered term.”* [II. 1]

Responsibilities of the President-Elect of the Faculty Senate With Respect to Elections

The President-Elect of the Faculty Senate administers all elections with assistance from the administrative assistant of the Faculty Senate and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. [Article II. Section 2 A]

Responsibilities of the Faculty With Respect to Elections

The full-time or continuing part-time faculty of each college, unit, or division of UTK and UTIA and the faculty of UTSI with the rank, or equivalent rank, of assistant professor or higher shall elect its representatives to the Faculty Senate by April 1 each year. [Article II. Section 2 (emphasis added)]

All elections shall be conducted by secret ballot. The votes shall be taken and counted electronically or, in the absence of electronic voting, shall be taken in the caucus and reported to the President-Elect by the caucus chair. All elections shall be completed before April 1 each year. [Article II. Section 2 A (emphasis added)]

Selection of Secretary and Information Officer

One nomination for Faculty Senate Secretary and Faculty Senate Information Officer shall be made by the Executive Council subject to the approval of the Faculty Senate membership. [Article II. Section 10]