

## COLLEGE SENATE BY-LAWS

### Article I. Preamble

- A. Buffalo State College establishes these By-Laws in order to provide for the democratic government of the College and make recommendations to the President of the College in the execution of the President's responsibilities as Chief Administrative Officer.

### Article II. College Faculty<sup>1</sup>

- A. The composition of the College Faculty has been fixed by the *Policies* of the State University of New York Board of Trustees, 1968, Article X, Section 1, and includes the Chancellor, the President, and other members of the voting faculty of the College, other members of the academic staff of the College, and such non-voting administrative officers and professional staff as may be designated by these laws.
- B. In accordance with the *Policies*, the Article X, Section 1, the college voting faculty is herewith defined as comprising:
  - 1. The Chancellor of the University and the President of the College; and
  - 2. Members of the academic staff of the College, including those having temporary appointments; and
  - 3. Vice Presidents (including Associate Vice Presidents, Assistant Vice Presidents), Deans (including Associate Deans, Assistant Deans), Directors (including Associate Directors, Assistant Directors), Associate Directors; and
  - 4. All professional librarians of the College; and
  - 5. All other professionals as defined by the active voting list of the Public Employees Relations Board of the State of New York; and
  - 6. All college support staff.
- C. The College Senate, as defined below, will maintain a list of eligible voters and notify in writing those persons declared to be voters under Article II, Sections A and B above. An appeal of a Senate decision may be heard only by the voting Faculty. Any disenfranchisements of faculty members, professional staff and support staff are the responsibility of the relevant units. All faculty members and staff members should be eligible to run and vote in two elections – the general “At Large” Senate elections and one unit affiliation election (e.g., faculty schools, Professional Staff caucus, library, and support staff).

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<sup>1</sup> The College Faculty are defined in Article II of both the College Senate By-laws and the State University of New York *Policies of the Board of Trustees, 2006*.

- D. At a meeting of the Faculty or a faculty unit or professional support staff, a quorum shall consist of 20% of the eligible voters, unless otherwise specified by a faculty unit.

### **Article III. College Senate**

- A. The College Senate shall be the official agency through which the Faculty and students engage in the governance of the College. It shall concern itself particularly with the following:
1. curriculum;
  2. instruction and research;
  3. standards for students (admission, retention, and graduation of students);
  4. faculty/staff welfare (appointment, termination, promotion of faculty and to define "consultation" in selecting department chairpersons and deans);
  5. by-laws and elections;
  6. budget and staff allocations;
  7. student welfare;
  8. academic plan.
- B. The actions of the Senate are advisory to the President.
- C. Faculty members shall be the majority membership of the College Senate. The College Senate shall only include the following groups: Faculty (consisting of the four schools and the library), professional staff members, support staff members, students, and administrators (non-voting), with specific members as follows:
1. The President of the College, ex-officio, non-voting; and
  2. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs ex-officio, non-voting, the Vice President for Student Affairs ex-officio, non-voting, and the Vice President Finance and Management ex-officio, non voting; and
  3. Seven<sup>2</sup> members of the College Faculty (Article II, Section A and B) elected at large by a majority vote of the College Faculty; and
  4. Six members elected at large by a majority vote of the professional staffs of

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<sup>2</sup> The reduction from nine At-Large Senators to seven will be phased in, such that during 2007-08 there will be eight At-Large Senators, and only three At-Large Senators will be elected for 2008-09, bringing the total number to seven.

the Instructional Resources, Student Affairs, and other professional groups not otherwise represented; and

5. Six members elected from each of the approved Faculties (School of Arts and Humanities; School of Education; School of Natural and Social Sciences; School of the Professions) and other Faculties recommended by the Senate and approved by the President; and one member from the Butler Library Faculty. Each of these Faculties shall determine how its senators shall be elected; and
6. Two University Faculty Senators elected by the College who must be full-time faculty members and an alternate University Senator appointed by the Chair for a one year term to serve in case of need by the elected Senators, who must be a full-time faculty member.
7. Twelve students elected by the student body whose terms of office and method of election shall be determined in accordance with the United Students' Government constitution; and
8. One member of the college support staff elected as determined by the support staff.
9. Two members ex-officio, non-voting appointed by the President.

D. The term of office for an elected senator shall be three years for all senators who are not students. Student senators are elected by the United Students' Government in accord with its By-Laws. However, the elections and the by-laws committee of each unit, as well as the College Senate By-Laws and Elections committee shall arrange terms so that approximately one-third of the elected members shall be elected each year.

1. No elected member of the Senate shall be eligible to succeed himself after serving two consecutive terms.
2. The total term of office for any student member of the Senate shall be no more than three years.

E. All Senators elected to the Senate are subject to recall by the voting members of the unit which elected them. A petition signed by 25% of the voting members and presented to the presiding officer of the Senate shall make mandatory, within two weeks, an election to determine whether the Senator shall be recalled. A majority of the unit's eligible voters shall determine the status of the Senator(s).

F. There shall be a standing committee for each of the eight areas specified in Article III., Section A. above.

1. The Senate shall elect one of its members to be chairperson of each standing committee for a one-year term.
2. The chairperson of each standing committee shall appoint the members of the

committee, subject to the consent of the Senate.

3. Committee or committees may be created by the Senate to represent it in consultation with community representatives and with the College Council.
4. The Senate may create ad hoc committees as it deems necessary.
5. Each committee, as specified in Article III, Section A, shall have the following representation, with two exceptions noted at the end of this section. Each committee will follow the stated guidelines in the College Senate Handbook, Section III, Organization and Structure; make every effort to see that all Faculties and Professional Staff (including librarians as either/both) are represented in approximately equal proportions, include at least one student representative (student senators shall be considered), and an appointed non-voting administrative liaison, appointed in consultation with the appropriate administrative office. At least one member of the committee, other than the committee chair, should be a Senator.

These guidelines will pertain with: (a) the exception of Faculty/Staff Welfare, which will have no student members (Note that even if a faculty or staff member is taking one or more courses, he or she is still eligible to serve on Faculty/Staff Welfare.) and (b) the exception of Student Welfare, which will have a majority of student members, and an Associate Chair, to be appointed by the chair of Student Welfare. The Associate Chair shall be a non-student senator.

- G. Each committee of the Senate shall be charged with a mission. The charge shall serve to define the purpose of the committee and will provide a frame of reference within which it shall operate. The charge shall be prepared by the committee and upon approval by two-thirds of the Senate shall become the basis for the committee's action. Each charge and any changes shall be published and distributed to the electorate upon approval. Annual reports are made by each of the committees and presented to the Senate at the end of the spring semester each year. These reports are to be posted on the College Senate website, and maintained in the Senate Office for archival purposes.
- H. A Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the College Senate shall be nominated and elected from the elected faculty membership of the College Senate by the College Senate each year.
- I. A student senator shall be nominated and elected from the membership of the Senate each year, to serve on the Agenda Committee. If the election of the student senator cannot occur concurrent with the election of the other officers of the Senate, then it shall occur prior to the first meeting of the Senate Agenda Committee, when possible, or as soon thereafter as feasible.
- J. The Chairperson of the College Senate shall preside at all meetings of the Senate and all general faculty meetings not called by the President of the College. He/she shall prepare and circulate to all faculty and the student Senators the

agenda for all meetings over which he/she presides. The Chairperson of the College Senate may convene the College Faculty as needed with the consent of two-third of the Senate he/she may remove a chairperson of a committee of the Senate. He/she shall also represent the Faculty at appropriate College and community functions, as authorized by the Senate.

- K. The Chairperson shall receive agenda items from faculty members, students, or staff at least ten days prior to any meeting. She/He shall be assisted in preparing the agenda by the Vice Chairperson, and the members of the Agenda Committee to be made up of no fewer than three members of the Senate named by the Chairperson for a one-year term. One of the members of the Agenda Committee shall be a student senator elected by the Senate to be a member of the Agenda Committee. The agenda shall be circulated to all members of the Senate and published at least one week prior to meetings. The agenda shall provide for the presentation of new business at any stated meeting.
- L. The Vice Chairperson shall serve as Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.
- M. *Numbers of Meetings, Quorum, and Procedure:* The College Senate shall meet at regularly scheduled times at least once a month during the academic year and at special meetings when called by the Chairperson, or upon a petition of 10% of the faculty, or upon the request of a two-thirds majority of a standing committee of the Senate, or by action of the Senate. A majority of its membership shall constitute a quorum. Business shall be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*.
- N. A College Senate seat shall be deemed vacant if a member of the Senate resigns, or shall be granted a leave of absence, as defined by the *Policies of the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York* (such as sick leave, maternity leave, vacation leave, reassignment which precludes attendance, such as participation in the Siena program, etc.) and cannot attend Senate meetings because of the leave. The Senator should notify the Chair of the Senate of such circumstances. It shall be the responsibility of the presiding officer of the College Senate promptly to notify the Senate and the faculty unit of such vacancies.

In addition, if a senator will be on sabbatical leave, and decides not to attend the Senate during the period of the sabbatical, the senator shall give notice to the body which elected him/her that a vacancy will occur.

If the vacancy occurs in the representation of one of the designated Faculty units as defined in Article III, Section C, paragraph 6, that unit shall proceed to fill the vacancy within one month of notification by the presiding officer of the Senate, using procedures specified in its own governance documents. If the vacancy occurs in an at-large faculty seat, the presiding officer shall direct the Senate By-Laws and Elections Committee to fill the vacancy from the next highest vote-getter from the at-large list of nominees in the previous election. This person shall be an interim appointee. In the case of a vacancy due to any of the reasons described above (other than resignation), the remainder of the unexpired term, if any, shall be filled by the interim appointee until the absent Senator returns from

leave, at which time the senator shall resume the senate seat until the elected term expires.

In the event of a vacancy due to resignation, the relevant unit may determine whether to fill the term for the remainder of the senator's term, or to elect an individual to begin a new term. If the resignation occurs within two months of a scheduled election, then the new senator(s) may be elected rather than appointed.

#### **Article IV. College Senate Communications**

- A. At the Senate meeting in May of each year, the Chairperson of each standing committee of the College Senate shall report to the Senate the actions of each committee during the academic year and the disposition of these matters.
- B. Elected representatives to the College Senate shall report the proceedings of the College Senate to their respective units at respective meetings at least once each academic year.
- C. The College Senate shall keep official minutes and shall publish summaries of its actions in the *College Bulletin*.
- D. Elected student representatives shall report the proceedings of the College Senate to the student body at least annually.

#### **Article V. Grievance Committee**

A Grievance Committee may investigate matters brought to its attention by any faculty member, or group of faculty members, who believe that some College practice has resulted in unfair or unjust treatment to them. In accordance with the *Policies of the Board of Trustees* and procedures of the Faculty Senate of State University of New York, the Grievance Committee shall make recommendations to the President of the College on the matters that it considers.

#### **Article VI. Appointment to, and Representation on, Key Faculty Groups**

- A. In the course of college governance and business, key groups are established. When the charge of the group includes outcomes that influence or direct a cross-section of persons represented by the College Senate, the Chairperson of the Senate will seek Senate representation on such key groups. These groups may be (though are not limited to):
  - Search for and appointment of college officers
  - Review of college officers who are not reviewed by their own units (e.g., Graduate Dean, Associate Vice President of Teacher Education)
  - Task forces
  - Blue Ribbon Panels
  - Planning Groups

- B. The role of the Senate representative is two-fold: a) to reflect possible concerns of the Senate to the group and b) to share with the Senate (in a manner befitting) progress reports as well as a summary report.

#### **Article VII. Organization of Departments, Divisions and Schools**

Subsequent levels of the College faculty organized as departments, divisions and schools shall determine and state in writing the By-Laws for each faculty group. These By-Laws will express the means of faculty participation in decision making with respect to pertinent areas noted in Article III, Section A. They shall be consistent with the By-Laws of the College. When promulgated, these statements should be filed with the Chairperson of the College Senate.

#### **Article VIII. Amendments**

- A. Amendments to these By-Laws may be originated in the following ways:
  - 1. Any member, or group of members, of the faculty or of the College Senate may propose an amendment to these By-Laws, in writing to the Elections and By-Laws Committee. The Committee may present the amendment, with or without its revisions, to the faculty.
  - 2. Any group of at least 10% of the faculty may petition the President of the College to present an amendment to the faculty.
- B. Proposed amendments, ready to be presented to the Faculty, shall be circulated to the Faculty in written form. No vote shall take place until seven calendar days have elapsed after this distribution. A vote must take place within forty calendar days. A proposed amendment may be further modified by the Faculty at the time the amendment is being considered.
- C. These By-Laws may be amended by a written majority vote of the voting Faculty.
- D. The voting members of the Senate authorize the members of the College Senate By-laws and Elections Committee to make such terminology changes in the College Senate Bylaws as to include such things as gender-inclusive language and other technical changes that reflect the present organizational structure of the college. These changes must be reported to the Senate in the final report of the Committee to the Senate, and archived in the records of the Senate.

#### **Article IX. Adoption of By-Laws**

- A. These By-Laws and subsequent amendments shall become effective after they have been adopted by the faculty and when the President of the College declares them effective.

## Summary of Amendments

Note: All amendments 1968-1977 are incorporated into the text of the document, and are not specified below.

Approved by the Faculty, December 1968.

Approved by the Faculty, February 19, 1971; approved by the Chancellor, March 24, 1971; declared in effect by the President, with concurrence of the College Council, March 26, 1971.

Approved by Faculty Action, June 22, 1973; approved by the College Council and declared in effect by the President, August 1, 1973.

Approved by the Faculty Action, September 9, 1977; approved by the College Council and declared in effect by the President, October 17, 1977.

Approved by the Faculty, April 1995:

1. College Senate By-Laws, Article I: Preamble added – “and makes recommendations to the President of the College in the execution of his responsibilities as Chief Administrative Officer”.
2. College Senate By-Laws, Article III: College Senate added – paragraph B. “The actions of the Senate are advisory to the President”.
3. College Senate By-Laws, Article III: new – C. a. President of the College, *ex officio*, non-voting. b. The Vice President for Academic Affairs, **add: *ex officio*, non-voting**, the Vice President for Student Affairs, **add: *ex officio*, non-voting**, the Vice President for Finance and Management, **ex officio, non-voting** and... h. Two members *ex officio*, non-voting appointed by the President.

Approved by the Faculty, May 1996:

1. Amendment to College Senate By-Laws, Article III College Senate; Section C.d. College Senate shall be composed of: “Six members elected at large by a majority vote of the professional staffs of the Instructional Resources, Student Affairs, and other professional groups not otherwise represented,...”
2. Added New Article X

In August 2000 a new Senate handbook was produced, with new pagination, and revised grammar and gender references.

Amended by the Senate, May 2001; approved by Faculty October 2003:

1. Article III, Section E, guidelines for composition of standing committees of the Senate were modified to be in accord with practice.
2. Article III, Section F, role of secretary was changed to conform to practice, with student senator being designated as a member of the Senate Agenda Committee.
3. Article III, Section N, addition of resignation of senator, and clarification of notification policies for leaves of absence from the Senate.
4. Public Service Activities Committee dissolved, and eliminated throughout

document.

Amended by the Senate, April 2003; approved by Faculty October 2003:

1. Article III, Section G, add discussion of annual reports from page 4 deleting it from page 4.
2. Article III, Section J, change to sentence 3.
3. Article VI, was renamed: Appointment to, and representation on, Key Faculty Groups
4. Article VI, text was deleted in both A. and B. and new text inserted.
5. Article VIII, modified text of Article X was inserted as new Section D or Article VIII, since both Articles VIII, and X deal with the amendment process.
6. Article X was eliminated, since it was modified and inserted into Article VIII as Section D.

Amended by the Senate, May 2005; approved by the Faculty, April 2006:

1. Academic Services and International Education Committees dissolved and eliminated throughout the document.

Amended by the Senate, March 2006; approved by the Faculty, April 2006.

1. Article III, Section C, reworded to reflect reorganization of academic units.
2. College support staff were included as a represented group. Changes made throughout document.
3. Article II, Section C, additions to address any disenfranchisements regarding voting and ability to run for elections.
4. Article III, Section C, introductory section changed to clarify faculty majority and groups represented on the College Senate.
5. University Senators must have full time faculty status.

Amended by the Senate, March 2007; approved by the Faculty,

1. At-large reduction from nine senators to seven to achieve faculty majority.
2. Changes to charges for all standing committees except Curriculum and Budget and Staff Allocations.