

# Ventura College Academic Senate Constitution

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS:

The Board = Ventura County Community College District Board of Trustees. Interchangeable with “Governing Board”

Academic Senate = See general membership

General Membership = All full-time faculty and other members as stipulated in the by-laws

Senators = See Senate Council

Senate Council = Senate Executive Committee and representatives from the academic divisions. Senate Council is interchangeable with “Senators”. “Members” under Robert’s Rules of Order refers to “Senate Council”. Senate Council will be composed of full-time faculty and one (1) appointed part-time faculty

Committees = All Academic Senate committees and subcommittees

Senate Executive Committee = Officers of the Senate Council: president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Interchangeable with “Senate Executive” or “Senate Exec.” Senate Executive Committee members must be full-time, tenured faculty members not serving in the role of administration

## ARTICLE I – NAME

### Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Ventura College Academic Senate.

# ARTICLE II – PURPOSE AND DUTIES

## Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this organization shall be to represent the faculty in the formation of college and district policy on academic and professional matters, as outlined in Title 5, Section 53200 (b), also known as 10 + 1. These include:

1. Curriculum including establishing prerequisites and placing courses within disciplines
2. Degree and certificate requirements
3. Grading policies
4. Educational program development
5. Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success
6. District and college governance structures, as related to faculty roles
7. Faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports
8. Policies for faculty professional development activities
9. Processes for program review
10. Processes for institutional planning and budget development
11. Other academic and professional matters as mutually agreed upon between the governing board and the academic senate

## Section 2. Membership

The membership of the Senate Council shall be the Senate Executive Committee and representatives from the academic divisions as defined in the Bylaws.

## Section 3. Duties

It is the duty of the Senate Council to address, either directly or through its designated committees, all academic and professional matters, including but not limited to, representation on committees that impact faculty (e.g. hiring, curriculum, program discontinuance, etc.) and to establish positions on all such issues. The duties of the Senate Executive Committee, standing committee chairpersons, and Senate Council representatives shall be those detailed in the Senate Bylaws, Title 5, Section 53200 (b) (10 + 1), Cal. Code Regs. tit. 5 § 53200 (d), and as outlined in Roberts' Rules of Order.

Cal. Code Regs. tit. 5 § 53200 (d): "Consult collegially" means that the district governing board shall develop policies on academic and professional matters through either or both of the following methods, according to its own discretion:

1. relying primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate; or
2. agreeing that the district governing board, or such representatives as it may designate, and the representatives of the academic senate shall have the obligation to reach mutual agreement by written resolution, regulation, or policy of the governing board effectuating such recommendations”

## Section 4. Training

All Senate Council and Senate Executive Committee members shall be provided with procedural training as specified in the Bylaws at the beginning of each academic year.

## Section 5. Terms

The Senate Executive Committee shall begin their term of office on the day after the last day of spring semester. The Senate Executive Committee shall be elected to a term of two (2) years or until their successor is elected and shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in any of these positions.

Chairpersons will be from the executive committee or designee as approved by Senate Council. The Chairperson is responsible for monthly reports to the Senate Council.

The CTE Liaison who serves on Senate Council may be nominated and approved by their division for a two (2) year term. There is no limit on how long the CTE Liaison may serve as long as they are nominated and approved by their division and subsequently approved by the Senate Council for each new term.

Curriculum Committee Co-Chair serves as a representative of the Academic Senate and has .3 reassigned load for this position. This position will have a term of two (2) years and shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

Senate Council representatives shall begin their terms of office on the first day of fall semester, or after being nominated and approved by their divisions and Senate Council. Senate Council representatives shall serve a term of one (1) year. There is no limit on how long a Senate Council representative may serve as long as they are nominated and approved by their division and subsequently approved by the Senate Council for each new term.

## Section 6. Nominations

Nominations for office to the Senate Executive Committee shall be made by any member of the general membership.

A petition form must be signed by ten (10) full-time faculty from the general membership and presented to the Senate President.

Candidates shall provide the petition form and a written statement outlining the reasons they are running for office with their petition. Written statements will be included with the voting ballot.

The Senate Council shall establish an election committee of no fewer than three (3) members of the Academic Senate. The election committee shall oversee all aspects of the election process as stipulated in the Constitution and Bylaws.

All nominees for office may elect to make a presentation to the Senate Council and General Membership at least two (2) weeks before the election at a regularly scheduled Academic Senate meeting.

If no candidates for a particular Senate Executive Committee office have submitted their petitions by the second Senate Council meeting in February, nominations may be made by a committee of the Senate Council as described in the Senate Bylaws.

## Section 7. Elections and Appointments.

### Elections

The slate of candidates for Senate Executive Committee positions shall be published and submitted to the general membership no later than the second meeting in February.

The Election committee shall be formed during the first meeting in February.

The Election process shall be conducted between the last regularly scheduled Academic Senate meeting in February and the second meeting in March.

The date(s) of election shall be determined by the Senate Council no later than the first meeting in February.

Elections shall be completed and results made public by the second Academic Senate meeting in March.

Voting shall be by secret and secure ballot: either written or electronic ballot.

1. Balloting shall be distributed to
  - a. full-time faculty mailboxes OR
  - b. official college email link to full-time faculty
2. The voting period shall be at least five (5) business days and no more than seven (7) business days.

3. If no candidate receives a simple majority of votes cast on the first ballot, a runoff election shall be held and completed between the top two (2) candidates by the first meeting in April.
4. Runoff elections will follow the same election ballot procedure used in the initial election.

Election procedures are to be reviewed each year by the Senate Council, and changes may be made to the procedures during that year for unforeseen circumstances that are out of the Senate Council's control without making an amendment to the Constitution or Bylaws.

## Appointments

Senate Council representative appointments shall be approved as specified in the Bylaws.

## Section 8. Vacancies on the Senate Council and Senate Executive Committee

### Senate Council

Vacancies on the Senate Council occur through completion of term, resignation, incapacitation, failure to fulfill responsibilities as stated in the Bylaws, retirement, removal, or death.

Vacancies shall be filled according to procedures outlined in the Bylaws (Article 2, Section 6).

### Senate Executive Committee

Vacancies on the Senate Executive Committee shall occur through the following:

1. End of term with the successor elected
2. Resignation in writing
3. Removal from faculty status
4. Retirement
5. Incapacitation or Death
6. Failure to attend four (4) consecutive Senate Council meetings
7. Failure to attend four (4) consecutive Senate Executive Committee meetings
8. Removal from office by the general senate membership (as described in Robert's Rules of Order)
9. Removal from office by the Senate Council (as described in the Robert's Rules of Order)

10. Misconduct or dereliction of duty as determined by the senate council in conjunction with the senate Bylaws and in reference to Robert's Rules of Order that negatively impact the work of the senate council on behalf of the senate membership

## ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

### Section 1. Academic Senate

In accordance with Education Code Title 5, Sections 53200 (a), full-time faculty who are not designated as management by the college administration shall be members of the Academic Senate (also referred to as General Membership). Insofar as the Academic Senate is recognized as the representative of all faculty to the Board, the Academic Senate recognizes its responsibility to encourage and solicit engagement from part-time and other faculty members.

### Section 2. Academic Senate Council

The Academic Senate Council shall be full-time faculty members that have been approved to represent their respective divisions and other members as outlined in the Ventura College Academic Senate Bylaws.

### Section 3. Academic Senate Executive Committee

The Academic Senate Executive Committee shall be full-time, tenured faculty members that have been elected by the general membership. The following positions are part of the Academic Senate Executive Committee:

1. Pres = 1.0 reassigned load
2. VP = .3 reassigned load
3. Treasurer = .2 reassigned load
4. Secretary = .2 reassigned load

# ARTICLE IV – ORGANIZATION

## Section 1. Business

The business of the Academic Senate shall be carried out through the Senate Council and the committees of the Senate. It is the responsibility of the Senate Council to confer with the divisions they represent about the business being conducted on their behalf.

The general membership shall retain the right to amend or rescind something previously adopted by Senate Council (as per Robert's Rules of Order) through petition.

The right to rescind or amend an action previously taken by Senate Council shall require a petition with ten (10) percent of full-time faculty in favor of amending or rescinding the action AND a two-thirds majority of vote of the general membership provided that one-third or more of the general membership participates in the voting.

Actions that cannot be rescinded or amended are:

1. When it has previously been moved to reconsider the vote on the main motion, and the question can be reached by calling up the motion to reconsider
2. When something has been done, as a result of a vote on the main motion, that is impossible to undo (the unexecuted part of an order, can be rescinded or amended)
3. Resignation has been acted upon or a person has been elected to or expelled from membership or office, and the person was present or has been officially notified of the action

## Section 2. Meeting

The Senate Council shall meet on campus as specified by the Brown Act and detailed in the Bylaws. Special meetings shall be called upon petition of at least ten (10) percent of the general membership, or upon simple majority vote of the Senate Council, or as deemed necessary by the Senate Executive Committee.

## Section 3. Committees

The Senate Executive Committee shall appoint faculty to all professional and/or academic committees, both college and district, unless otherwise stipulated by an Administrative Procedure (AP).

The Senate Council shall approve these committee appointments, as specified in the Bylaws.

Standing Committees and chairpersons under the direct report to the Academic Senate are:

1. Curriculum Committee – Academic Senate President or designee
2. Faculty Staffing Priorities Committee – Academic Senate Secretary or designee
3. Faculty Sabbatical Leaves Committee – Academic Senate Vice President or designee
4. Faculty Professional Development Committee – Academic Senate Vice President or designee
5. Travel Pool – Academic Senate Treasurer or designee

Standing Committees with Academic Senate representation:

1. Distance Education Advisory Group – Academic Senate Vice President or designee
2. Budget Resource Committee–Academic Senate Treasurer or designee

Ad hoc committees may be created by the Senate Council as the need arises:

1. The Senate Council shall determine committee charges and responsibility.
2. The chairperson of each ad hoc committee shall be named by the Senate Executive Committee.

It shall be the duty of all committees:

1. To consider, study, and/or make recommendations on all matters submitted
2. To report to the Senate Council at least once per semester as long as the committee has work in progress and more often as requested by the Senate Council or Senate Executive Committee
  - a. The process for reporting to the Senate Council shall be established by the Senate Council and may be revised by it at any time
3. The committee will, in conjunction with the Senate Executive Committee and Senate Council, report committee work to the Senate general membership in venues other than regular or special Senate meetings
4. The Senate general membership may submit proposals for approval to the Senate Council for committees that need to be formed prior to undertaking a study or investigation. In the event that the Senate Council disapproves of a committee's proposal, the committee may appeal the decision of the Senate Council to the general membership by ballot following procedures in Article V Section 5 of the Constitution

It shall be the duty of standing committee chairpersons (Curriculum Committee, Faculty Staffing Priorities Committee, Faculty Sabbatical Leaves Committee, and Faculty Professional Development Committee):

1. To call regular meetings of the committee and to provide notice of committee meetings with sufficient time to inform all committee members and the general membership



2. To prepare an agenda for committee meetings
3. To maintain all committee records
4. To report committee actions to the Senate Council
5. To liaise with other committees and with the Senate Council

## Section 4. Rules

The latest edition of Roberts' Rules of Order shall guide the Academic Senate on all matters not specifically covered by this Constitution or its Bylaws.

## Section 5. Voluntary Dues

Voluntary dues may be collected annually by the Senate Council, but are not a condition of membership, pursuant to the Bylaws.

# ARTICLE V – AMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS

## Section 1. Amendments

Amendments constitute changes that add new rules or procedures to the Constitution and/or Bylaws.

An amendment to the Constitution or to the Bylaws shall be proposed by majority vote of the Senate Council or by written petition of at least ten (10) percent of the general membership.

The proposed amendment(s) shall be communicated to the Senate Council at least two (2) weeks prior to the next regular meeting of the Senate Council at which time it will appear on the agenda, and the proposed amendment shall be communicated to the general membership at least one (1) month prior to voting via secret ballot.

Adoption of an amendment to the Constitution requires a two-thirds majority vote of ballots cast by the general membership voting by secret ballot with at least 30 percent of full time faculty voting.

Adoption of an amendment to the Bylaws requires approval by a two-thirds majority vote of ballots cast by Senate Council.

## Section 2: Revisions

Revisions constitute changes that provide clarity to the existing Constitution and/or Bylaws.

Review of the Constitution and Bylaws shall be done by an ad hoc committee every at least every five years to determine if revisions need to be made.

Revisions to the Constitution and Bylaws may be initiated by the Senate Executive Committee, Senate Council, or a petition of ten (10) percent of the general membership.

Revisions to the Constitution and/or Bylaws are approved by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by Senate Council members.

(VC Academic Senate Constitution: Adopted- April 30, 1971; Revised- December 7, 1973; Revised- April 27, 1978; Revised/Adopted- April 18, 2002)

Revised by Bob Porter and Peter Sezzi on October 19, 2005

Revised by Senate Executive Committee on February 23, 2006

Revised by Senate Executive Committee on March 1, 2006

Revised by Senate Council on March 2, 2006

Revised and Adopted Unanimously by Senate Council on March 16th, 2006

Approved by the General Membership on April 5th, 2006

Revisions begun by Cari Lange, Dan Clark, Ron Mules, Dorothy Farias, and Deanna Hall on May 10, 2024

VC Academic Senate approved on Oct. 3, 2024.

Ratified by the Senate of the Whole on April 14, 2025.

Notification to Senate Council on May 1, 2025.