

# **Constitution of The Naugatuck Valley Community College Faculty Senate**

## **Article I – Name**

Section 1. This organization of members of the faculty of Naugatuck Valley Community College (NVCC) shall be called The Naugatuck Valley Community College Faculty Senate, referred to throughout this document as the “Faculty Senate”, or the “Senate.”

## **Article II – Purpose**

Section 1. The Faculty Senate advises the President of the college. The NVCC Faculty Senate is to serve as the official representative voice of the faculty to make recommendations directly to the college President on academic, professional, and policy matters outside the jurisdiction of the AFT & 4Cs Collective Bargaining Agreement. It provides the forum across the college for open discussion on all matters of interest to the professoriate and sustains faculty advocacy. The Faculty Senate strengthens the collegial integration of full-time and part-time faculty.

## **Article III – Definition of Faculty**

Section 1. “Faculty,” as used in this constitution means any full-time or part-time member of the college engaged primarily in teaching, and librarians.

## **Article IV – Composition**

Section 1. All members of the faculty of Naugatuck Valley Community College are members of the Faculty Senate. They will elect 15 Senators by popular ballot (see Article VI – Nominations and Elections below) to conduct the business of the Senate: 8 at-large Senators and 7 designated Senators, one from each of the following categories:

1. Allied Health
2. Arts & Humanities
3. Behavioral & Social Sciences
4. Business
5. Library
6. Part-time Faculty
7. STEM.

The Senators shall be comprised of at least 7 full-time faculty members.

## **Article V – Eligibility**

Section 1. Any full-time or part-time active faculty member, engaged primarily in teaching or employed as a librarian, may serve as a Senator of the Faculty Senate.

## **Article VI – Nominations and Elections**

Section 1. Between April 1 and April 7, the Executive Committee will make nomination forms, paper or electronic, available to all members of the faculty. The form, for the purpose of nomination or self-nomination, shall contain a listing of all current Senators and shall designate which terms are expiring and which are continuing in office. The completed form signed by the nominee will be returned to the Executive Committee in no more than seven (7) days following the distribution of the form, and shall be considered a request for said faculty member's name to be placed on the ballot as a nominee. The Executive Committee will verify the nominated faculty member's agreement to be nominated.

Section 2. In no more than fourteen (14) days following the distribution of the nomination forms, the Executive Committee shall prepare and distribute a ballot bearing the names of all nominees. They shall administer a confidential voting process for all eligible members. The voting results shall be tallied and communicated to the members of the faculty no later than April 28<sup>th</sup>.

Section 3. Each member of the NVCC faculty shall select from the available pool, the same number of nominees as there are positions available. The nominees receiving the highest number of votes for the existing vacancies shall be elected. Nominees for a designated seat who do not receive the highest number of votes for that category shall be considered at-large nominees. If no nominations are received for a designated seat up for election, then one additional at-large position will be filled from the at-large nominees in place of that designated seat. Ballots will be counted by three (3) members of the faculty who are not nominees.

Section 4. In the unlikely event that there is an exact tie of eligible ballots for the last available position(s), the tie shall be resolved by a vote of the current Senators. The Executive Committee will conduct votes with the current Senators until the tie is resolved.

Section 5. In case the total number of nominees elected does not fill the total existing vacancies, a second election shall be conducted through the process prescribed in Sections 2 and 3 above, prior to May 10.

## **Article VII – Term of Office – Senators**

Section 1. Senators shall serve terms of two (2) years. Eight members shall be elected if the calendar year of the election is an even-numbered year and seven shall be elected if the calendar year of the election is an odd-numbered year. (Additional Senators may be elected in any year as noted below in Vacancies.)

Section 2: Four at-large Senators and four designated Senators, one from each of four of the categories specified in Article IV, shall be elected in even-numbered years. Four at-large Senators and three designated Senators, one from each of the remaining three categories specified in Article IV, shall be elected in odd-numbered years.

Section 3. The term of office for a Senator shall start at the beginning of the next academic year commencing at the same time as the fall semester.

Section 4. The terms of office for the first election following ratification of this document shall be for two years for the eight (8) nominees with the greatest number of votes and one (1) year for the remaining seven (7). In case the terms of all positions cannot be determined by the differences in votes, the undecided nominees shall first be polled for their preferences, one (1) year or two (2) years. If there still exist undecided terms, the Senators shall decide by vote who receives a one (1) year and who receives a two (2) year term.

### **Article VIII – Vacancies**

Section 1. Vacancies of the Senator positions shall be declared by the President of the Faculty Senate upon direction of the Senate.

Section 2. Vacancies during the academic calendar year shall remain unfilled until the next election, except as noted in Section 3 below. If the term of the vacant position is not expiring, it will be added to the number of Senators elected that year.

Section 3. If a newly-elected Senator is unable to fill the position at the start of the fall term, the candidate with the next highest number of votes will fill the position.

### **Article IX – Removal of Senators/Officers**

Section 1. On the petition of 25 percent or more of the full-time, faculty members, a Senator or an officer may be removed from office by the two-thirds vote of all members of the full-time, faculty (Senator included); before the vote, however, a special meeting will be held to hear the allegations against the Senator and his/her rebuttal.

### **Article X – Officers**

Section 1. The officers of the Senate shall include, but shall not be restricted to, a Senate President, a Senate President Elect and two Co-Secretaries.

### **Article XI – Officers – Election**

Section 1. In a joint meeting following the spring election, the Senators, together with the newly elected Senators, shall elect officers for the coming year. The election of officers shall be a floor nomination and secret ballot process overseen by the outgoing Senate President. The President Elect shall automatically assume the office of President after completing a term as President Elect.

Section 2. A special election by the Senators shall be held whenever an officer vacancy exists.

### **Article XII – Officers – Terms of Office**

Section 1. The regular term of office for the Senate officers shall be one year. Officers elected by a special election to fill vacancies shall serve for the unexpired term.

Section 2. An officer may serve only two consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 3. The term of office for all Senate officers shall begin at the start of the next academic year, except officers selected by a special election to fill vacancies. The term of office for officers selected by a special election, to fill vacancies, shall begin immediately upon election.

Section 4. Immediately following their election, officers shall be invited to attend any subsequent Faculty Senate meetings including Executive Sessions.

### **Article XIII – Officers – Duties**

Section 1. Senate President: It shall be the duty of the Senate President to call and preside at all meetings of the Senate and Executive Committee and to perform all the duties usually pertaining to the office. The Senate President shall have the power to appoint committees and be ex-officio member on all committees. The Senate President may call meetings at his/her discretion, or as directed by a majority of the Senate. The Senate President shall be the spokesperson of the faculty when appropriate.

Section 2. President Elect: It shall be the duty of the President Elect to attend all Executive Committee sessions called by the Senate President, be familiar with the Senate President's plans, preside at all meetings and perform the duties of the Senate President in the absence or disability of the President, and perform any other duties assigned to the office by the Senate President, the Constitution or the Senate.

Section 3. Co-Secretaries: It shall be the duty of the Co-Secretaries to attend all Executive Committee sessions called by the Senate President, cooperatively keep the minutes of all proceedings, collect and retain the minutes of committee meetings, and record the same in permanent records. The Co-Secretaries shall distribute copies of the minutes to the members of the faculty. The distribution may be done by posting on a college bulletin board, posting on a Faculty Senate website, by mail or by email. The Co-Secretaries shall give notice of all meetings, conduct the correspondence of the organization, and distribute copies of unapproved minutes to all faculty members for review prior to approval.

### **Article XIV – Executive Committee**

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the officers of the Senate. It shall act as a steering committee for the Senate by preparing the agenda for each meeting and recommending actions to the Senate, and preparing the Senate calendar.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall meet regularly with the President of the institution.

### **Article XV – Policies and Procedures**

Section 1. The Senate President shall establish policies and procedures necessary to ensure the orderly conduct of the business of the Faculty Senate. Such procedures or rules might include items such as selections for appointments to Faculty Senate committees, representation on college committees, or the scheduling of meetings of the Faculty Senate.

Section 2. Any Faculty Senator may question policies and procedures promulgated by the Senate President and may request that the policy or procedure be voted upon by the Faculty Senate in a Business Meeting.

### **Article XVI – Meetings**

Section 1. *General Senate Meetings* will be held monthly during the semester for sharing information, and fostering collaboration and collegiality among all of the members of the college community. The schedule will be decided upon in April by the newly appointed Senators for the following academic calendar year, and will be fixed for the coming academic year. The meeting times will be set at an appropriate time so as to not adversely impact students. The general meetings are open to all members of the college community. The Senate President or Senate members may invite others for official business with the approval of the Executive Committee or a majority of the Senate. Meeting agendas will be available one week prior to the meeting.

Section 2. *Senate Business Meetings* may be called by the Faculty Senate President or by request of the Executive Committee. These are meetings of the elected Senators, for the purpose of conducting Senate matters in an expeditious manner. Faculty members, as defined in Article III – Definition of Faculty, may participate at any time as non-voting members. A good-faith effort shall be made in scheduling a Senate Business Meeting, such that as many Senators as possible can attend.

Section 3. *Faculty Senate Meetings* at which the Senators shall meet with the members of the faculty at least twice during the academic year, September through May, or more often at the call of the Faculty Senate President or by request of the Executive Committee. These meetings are open only to members of the faculty as defined in Article III – Definition of Faculty.

### **Article XVII – Quorum**

Section 1. The presence of at least seven (7) Faculty Senators at a Business Meeting shall constitute a quorum for conducting Faculty Senate business.

### **Article XVIII – Voting**

Section 1. The President of the Senate shall vote only in the event of a tie.

Section 2. All voting by the Senate, with the exception of the election of Senate officers, shall be in open session.

### **Article XIX – Executive Sessions**

Section 1. By four-fifths vote of the Senators present, the Senate may resolve itself into an executive session where only senators may be present.

Section 2. In executive session, no record shall be kept of debate, except that which is ordered by the Senate, and no Senator shall reveal the nature of the Executive Proceedings to any person without the permission of the Senate.

Section 3. No recommendations either to the college administration or system administration or to any other office shall be enacted during executive sessions.

### **Article XX – Committees**

Section 1. The Executive Committee is the standing committee of the Senate.

Section 2. The Senate may establish additional committees as needed. Committees such as General Education, Academic Freedom, and Ethics, among others, may be established to research and address specific concerns of the Faculty Senate.

Section 3. Members of any Senate committee, other than the Executive Committee, need not be Senators.

### **Article XXI – Agenda**

Section 1. Any member of the college community may submit items to the Executive Committee for consideration by the Senators. The Executive Committee is responsible for reviewing and selecting the matters to be included in the agenda of meetings of the Senate.

### **Article XXII – Focus of the Senate**

Section 1. The Senate shall, of its own determination, concern itself with any academic and professional matters, which it deems important to the welfare of the college or to the enlightened self-interest of the faculty.

Section 2. The focus of the NVCC Faculty Senate includes, but shall not be limited to the following categories and issues:

#### **GOVERNANCE**

- Provide direct faculty voice to the President
- Provide input in steering the future academic direction of the college
- Make recommendations on the academic calendar
- Provide feedback to the President on college planning
- Discuss and make recommendations for institutional planning and budget development
- Formulate recommendations on course and faculty scheduling
- Discuss and provide input on strategic planning

#### **EDUCATIONAL**

- Discuss and review academic integrity
- Review common core requirements
- Discuss grading policies
- Formulate standards or policies regarding student preparation and success
- Foster the development of critical thinking components for all courses
- Encourage writing across the curriculum
- Ensure effective curriculum processes

Stimulate infusion of multicultural perspectives into courses  
Review textbook policies

#### PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

Encourage collaboration between faculty members across the college as well as promote greater faculty collegiality  
Foster inclusiveness with part-time faculty so that they are included as a vital part of the college  
Provide an incubator for faculty ideas  
Provide faculty input on the selection for the Distinguished Service and Educational Excellence Award  
Address faculty related problems mentioned in the latest NEASC Report

#### **Article XXIII – Referendum**

Section 1. If the need for an emergency meeting arises for voting, the Senate shall give three working days notice to all faculty. The agenda for the emergency meeting will be sent along with the notice.

Section 2. The Senate may request the advice of the faculty through written ballots or other communication.

#### **Article XXIV – Amendments**

Section 1. It is expected that this document will change and grow to meet the needs of the NVCC faculty. The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the NVCC faculty present at any general faculty meeting or special meeting called for the purpose or by those faculty returning a written ballot provided that the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing to the members of the faculty at least two (2) weeks preceding the voting.

#### **Article XXV – Ethics**

The Naugatuck Valley Community College Faculty Senate has adopted and observes the *Statement on Professional Ethics* issued by the American Association of University Professors. The actions of the Senators shall be guided by and they will promote adherence to the *Statement on Professional Ethics*.

#### **Article XXVI – Ratification**

Section 1. This Constitution shall become effective by a majority vote of the full-time members of the NVCC faculty, by secret ballot.

Ratified: March 31, 2008

Amended: November 8, 2012

Amended: April 16, 2015