

**BY-LAWS OF THE FACULTY ORGANIZATION
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Adopted February 10, 1978**

**Amended: September 9, 1983; August 20, 1991; April 4, 1993; April 2016; April 2019; March 2021; in accordance with university policy*

PREAMBLE

University Council Philosophy of Shared Governance:

Virginia Commonwealth University values a model of shared governance that furthers the mission of the University within a culture of collaboration, transparency and trust among and within the major constituencies of the university. VCU is a more efficient and effective institution when the interactions of individuals and groups are based on trust and the realization of a shared commitment to work together toward the common good of the university.

VCU values collaboration that appreciates the distinct, but mutually-supportive, responsibilities distributed among the board, the administration, faculty, staff, and students of the university. This collaboration seeks and represents the voice of all constituencies in decisions and all matters that impact those constituencies, recognizing that shared governance is neither consensus nor democratic governance.

VCU values transparency such that constituent groups and individuals at VCU are aware of how university and unit decisions are made and the rationale for these decisions. Groups and individuals should have timely and easy access to information about the decisions for which they are responsible and about decisions that impact them. Such transparency also means that decision-making groups and individuals are accountable for the decisions they make and for involving the appropriate constituencies in those decisions.

The VCU Academic Rights and Responsibilities Statement on University Governance states:

The ultimate authority in University government is vested in the Board of Visitors which, with advice from the faculty, administration, classified employees and students, selects a President to whom it delegates the responsibility for managing the University. A vigorous university develops through the active participation of the faculty in the formal and informal decision-making processes concerned with educational functions and policies at various administrative levels. It is in the interest of the University to provide avenues of communication through which the faculty can provide counsel and advice on other matters of mutual interest.

Every faculty member shares a continuing responsibility for shaping the direction of their department, of their School, and for serving on University-wide councils, committees and offices. Since participation of the faculty in academic matters is vital to the proper governance of the University community, it is incumbent upon the University to provide ample opportunities for faculty participation.

Faculty participation includes the right to discuss on the floor and vote on all matters coming before meetings as described in the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Policy Statement:

- *The right to develop and recommend – or otherwise, to participate in decisions involving – new degree programs, new course offerings, modifications of existing courses, and degree requirements.*
- *Participation in setting standards for admission, retention and graduation of students. The faculty of each School also shall determine which students are eligible for graduation.*
- *Participation in the formal and informal decision-making processes concerned with educational functions and policies at various administrative levels.*
- *Participation in processes relating to faculty appointments, reappointments, promotions and tenure.*

School of Education Faculty Governance

This document has been developed and approved through a collaborative process between the dean and the faculty.

ARTICLE I - NAME OF ORGANIZATION

The name of this organization shall be the VCU School of Education Faculty Organization (hereafter referred to as the Faculty Organization).

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The faculty organization is organized as a collaborative partner with SOE administration to ensure open communication and faculty voice in decisions and governance of the SOE, serving dual advisory and advocacy roles. The Faculty Organization serves as an instrument through which faculty can effectively participate in the formulation of School of Education policies and practices. This organization receives, reviews, and recommends matters relating directly to faculty welfare and rights, and provides a forum for discussion of issues.

To allow for open faculty discussion, the dean or their representative will be invited to attend the monthly meetings for approximately 30 minutes. This will establish an orderly process through which each faculty member will be guaranteed the right to express freely their views and concerns about any and all matters vital to the University, the School of Education, and the faculty of the School of Education.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

All full-time faculty members (including tenured, tenure eligible and non-tenure eligible) who hold appointments, joint appointments, part-time appointments, or affiliate appointments in the School of Education are members of the Faculty Organization, with officers elected from the membership and delegates elected in departments and centers.

ARTICLE IV- REPRESENTATION

Section 1: The Past President, the Current President, the President-elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and delegates of the Faculty Organization serve as the Faculty Council. This committee will meet with the dean at least twice a semester.

Section 2: All faculty members are encouraged to attend the monthly Faculty Organization meetings. To ensure representation from each department at Faculty Organization meetings, there will be two delegates elected from each department and from the Centers collectively by the faculty from that department (Centers) at the first meeting of the academic year. An alternate will be elected. [If the alternate cannot attend, then another faculty member will be asked to attend.] If possible, the elected delegates shall represent two of the three faculty categories (tenured, tenure-eligible and non-tenure eligible). The delegates are expected to regularly report minutes to the faculty in the department.

ARTICLE V - VOTING

Section 1: All members of the Faculty Organization shall have the right to vote on all matters coming before the Faculty Organization. Faculty business will be conducted at meetings of the Faculty Organization. A quorum shall consist of the majority of delegates or designees. A motion shall be carried if it is approved by more than one-half of those present during a quorum session. All new policies and policy changes are approved by a majority vote of Faculty and the approval of the Dean.

Section 2: All members of the faculty have the right to vote on issues deemed by delegates and officers or the Dean to require a full-faculty vote. Should such a vote be needed, it will be conducted using an online platform to ensure maximum participation and anonymity.

ARTICLE VI - NEW POLICIES AND AMENDMENTS

Section 1: New policies or amendments to current policies within the purview of the Faculty Organization may be proposed by the Dean or any member of the Faculty Organization.

Section 2: Proposals to the Dean or to Faculty Organization should receive a response of receipt within 14 calendar days.

Section 3: Administration and faculty organization have 30 days to develop a mutually agreed upon timeline that includes a review period, updates, and proposed disposition date.

Section 4: If the policy or amendment is proposed by the Dean, the dean or dean's designee will work with the Faculty Organization President and delegates to discuss, amend, or create a separate committee to examine the proposal.

Section 5: If the policy or amendment is proposed by a Faculty Organization member, the Faculty Organization will discuss and determine if a 51% majority of Faculty Organization members are in favor of pursuing further exploration. If so, the Faculty Organization President and delegates will invite the Dean or Dean's designee to discuss, amend, or create a separate committee to examine the proposal.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

Section 1: Each year, the previous year's President and President-Elect shall become the Past President and President, respectively. Officers to be duly elected by the faculty each year shall be the President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 2: The term of office for each officer shall be one calendar year and shall begin the first day of the fall semester.

Section 3: Officers of the Faculty Organization shall be nominated during a spring School of Education Faculty meeting.

Section 4: When possible, there shall be a minimum of two nominees for each office.

Section 5: Voting for officers shall be by anonymous electronic ballot and completed within two weeks of the nomination date. A 51% majority of the votes of those casting ballots is required for election. If this does not occur on the first ballot, a run-off election will be held between the candidates receiving the two top numbers of votes for each office.

Section 6: The role of an officer in the Faculty Organization shall be recognized as a service contribution and considered as such in faculty evaluation procedures.

Section 7: The President of the Faculty Organization will receive remuneration for the role, at the current cost for an adjunct instructor teaching a three credit course, which can be used for one of the following: (a) professional development funds; (b) special rate salary adjustment; or (c) one course buy-out.

ARTICLE VII: OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1: The President shall:

- a. Preside over all meetings of the Faculty Organization and co-plan SOE faculty meetings with administration.
- b. Call all special meetings in consultation with the elected officers and delegates.
- c. A week prior to each Faculty Organization meeting, solicit agenda items and, two days prior to each meeting, distribute the agenda to all faculty and administrators.

- d. Appoint all ad hoc, task force, and other non-standing committees in consultation with the elected officers.
- e. Be an ex-officio member of all committees and task forces.
- f. Communicate all faculty concerns directly to the Dean.
- g. Attend the first 30 minutes of the Dean's Cabinet meeting to provide any Faculty Organization updates.
- h. Meet with the Dean, Past President, Secretary, President-Elect, Treasurer, and delegates at least twice per semester as the Faculty Council.

Section 2: The President-Elect shall:

- a. Assume the responsibilities of the President in their absence.
- b. Maintain an accurate roster of committees and task forces and their members.
- c. Assume the responsibility of the Secretary during any Faculty Organization meeting in which the Secretary is absent.
- d. Assume the responsibility of organizing the SOE holiday party, in collaboration with the Dean's office.
- e. Meet with the Dean, Past President, Secretary, President-Elect, Treasurer, and delegates at least twice per semester as the Faculty Council.

Section 3: The Secretary shall, with appropriate clerical assistance provided by the School of Education:

- a. Record all minutes from the Faculty Organization meetings.
- b. Distribute the agenda to all faculty and administrators two days prior to the Faculty Org meeting.
- c. Distribute copies of the draft minutes of the Faculty Organization's previous meeting at least two days prior to the next meeting. Once approved, these minutes shall be distributed to all faculty via e-mail and posted to a secure site.
- d. Record all official correspondence of the Faculty Organization.

- e. Take notes twice per semester during meetings of the Faculty Council with the Dean

Section 4: The Treasurer shall:

- a. Oversee the budget and finances of the Faculty Organization.
- b. Manage the budget provided by the SOE Dean.
- c. Manage the SOE Faculty Organization Scholarship fund, including fundraising in collaboration with the development, alumni, and student engagement SOE office.
- d. Report budget updates at standing meetings.

Section 5: The Immediate Past President shall:

- a. Serve on the Faculty Council
- b. Assume the responsibilities of the President and/or President-Elect in their absence.
- c. Supervise the election of the officers.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

Section 1: Regular Faculty Organization meetings shall be held no less than four times each academic year at such time and place as designated by the President.

Section 2: The order of business at regular meetings shall be:

- a. Disposition of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- b. Reports from standing SOE committees.
- c. Communications and announcements.
- d. Unfinished business.
- e. New business.

Section 3: Special meetings may be called by the President as deemed necessary or upon written request of twenty-five percent of the faculty.

Section 4: The order of business at special meetings shall be only the transaction of business for which the meeting is called.

Section 5: Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all Faculty organization meetings, with exception of recording identifying information of meeting attendees.

ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES

- Section 1:** The President will convene the Faculty Study Research Leave committee who shall consist of Faculty Council members.
- Section 2:** Ad hoc committees may be created by the President or by a majority vote of the faculty. No ad hoc committee may extend for more than one year from the date of establishment.
- Section 3:** The chairperson of each committee shall be appointed by the President or elected by the membership of that committee.

ARTICLE X – BUDGET

- Section 1:** The Dean will provide the Faculty Organization with a \$5000.00 budget each calendar year.
- Section 2:** The Faculty Org Treasurer will solicit budget considerations from the delegates allowing 7 calendar days for consideration in August.
- Section 3:** The Faculty Org President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, and Treasurer will develop the final budget and provide it to the Dean or dean's designee on or before September 15th.

ARTICLE XI - BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

- Section 1:** These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the faculty. The votes will be taken via anonymous electronic ballot.
- Section 2:** Amendments may be initiated by faculty or the dean, by written notification to the Faculty Organization President, and in all cases amendments must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the faculty and the Dean.