



UNIVERSITY SENATE HANDBOOK

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Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Senate Executive Committee, I would like to welcome all new and continuing Senators to the University Senate. Participating in the University Senate is an important commitment that requires time, dedication and great care for our university community.

This Handbook outlines the role of the University Senate, Senate processes, and its essential functions. It has been compiled as a tool for Senators so that they may have a quick reference for information about Senate processes and their role.

A more detailed orientation will take place immediately before the first University Senate Meeting in September, which will provide more information about the role and an opportunity to ask questions

We are grateful to all Senators for their service and commitment to their position in the University Senate and appreciate everyone's participation in shared governance at UConn.

Sincerely,



Michelle Everard
Senate Administrator
Office of the University Senate

I: Role & Responsibilities

By-laws Regulating the Work of the Senate:

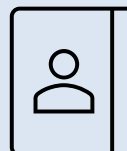
Senators are responsible for advancing the work of the University Senate as defined by the By-Laws of the University of Connecticut.

“The University Senate is a legislative body responsible for establishing minimum rules and general regulations of the educational program and mission of the institution, excluding the University of Connecticut Health Center, that are not reserved to the Board of Trustees, to the administration, to the Graduate Faculty Council, or to the several faculties. The University Senate shall be regularly consulted by the Administration on matters pertaining to the Senate's purview ^{1. 8}

The University Senate also governs its own By-Laws, Rules & Regulations and it is important for all Senators to be familiar with both documents. Links to both documents are below.



By-Laws of the University of
Connecticut



By-Laws, Rules, and
Regulations of the University
Senate

**click on the links in images above to view each by-law document online*

Senator Engagement:

In order to fulfill the duties of the role successfully, Senators are asked to attend all Senate meetings throughout the academic year and also participate as a member of a Senate

¹ *By-Laws of the University of Connecticut, Article IX*

Standing Committee. The Senate also appoints representatives to several other university committees throughout the academic year. Detailed information regarding Senate Standing Committee membership and other appointments can be found in Section III.

Senators are encouraged to engage with their colleagues within their Senate constituency to ensure a variety of perspectives are included in the Senate's work. Senators are also encouraged to share what is being discussed at Senate meetings with their colleagues on the local level, for example, during a department or staff meeting.

Senators may use their UConn email when communicating with colleagues regarding their work in the Senate and are reminded that all communication is public record and subject to FOIA regulations.

Senate Office Support & Resources:

The University Senate is supported by the University Senate Office located in the William H. Hall Building (362 Fairfield Way, Storrs, CT).

The University Senate website (senate.uconn.edu) is also an excellent resource for Senators and the public, containing information such as the below (*hyperlinks in title bar*):

Membership Lists

- Searchable list of active Senators, including Senate Committee assignments, constituency, and term dates

Senate Meeting Information

- Includes agendas and additional materials for upcoming Senate meetings
- Also includes meeting information, such as Livestream links and in-person location information (*note: only Senators will receive a WebEx link to join Senate meetings; all public attendees must use either the Livestream link or join in-person*)
- PDF copies of slides for presentations made during Senate meetings are also made available online within 48 hours of each meeting
- Senate meeting minutes are made available online within 7 days of the meeting in draft format. Approved minutes are available online for recent years; additional meeting minutes available in the University Archives

University Senate By-law Changes

- A comprehensive list of recent University Senate by-law changes and revisions is available online, with a news post, typically available within 7 days of a Senate vote approving the change
- By-law change revisions will be reflected in the official University Senate By-laws when the approved change goes into effect

University Senate Newsfeed

- The University Senate newsfeed contains all public announcements regarding recent Senate actions, such as results of a vote or passed resolution
- The University Senate Newsfeed will also contain information concerning Senate Election results; Election-specific posts can also be found here.

All Senators are encouraged to contact the [Senate Office](#) in case of any questions, concerns or to request information.

II: Senate Structure & Elections Process

In accordance with University of Connecticut By-laws, the Senate contains 104, voting members comprised of faculty, staff and students, as well as *ex officio* members, who have a voice, but cannot vote on Senate business. The *ex-officio* members of the University Senate as defined by the By-laws of the University of Connecticut shall be the President the Provost, all Vice Presidents (except the Executive Vice President for Health Affairs), and all Vice Provosts.

All voting faculty or staff members are elected by a specific constituency, as outlined below. Elected Senators in the faculty and staff constituencies are elected to the Senate for a three-year term and may only serve two consecutive three-year terms before being [wymanized](#). Senate terms begin on July 1 of each year, ending on June 30. In case of a sabbatical or other leave of absence, the University Senate Office follows procedures for alternative Senator appointments. Within the Faculty and Professional Staff groups are additional constituency groups (such as at-large or school/college constituencies) that each have their own unique electoral processes.

Undergraduate and graduate student senators are also voting members of the Senate and are appointed following processes determined by the Undergraduate Student Governments of each campus, and the Graduate Student Government, respectively.

Additional details can be found in the By-laws of the University of Connecticut, Article IX.

Elected Member Constituencies:

Elected Constituency Members		
Deans 3	Faculty Constituencies 72	Professional Staff 17

Appointed Members:

Appointed Members		
Ex-Officio Members	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
17	9	3

**Details of electoral processes are laid out in the University By-laws*

Constituency Election Cycles:

The election cycle for each constituency may vary, but generally follows the below schedule:

October	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faculty At-Large Nominating Slate (Review Only) 2. Professional At-Large Nominating Slate (Review Only)
November	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faculty At-Large Voting Ballot 2. Professional At-Large Voting Ballot 3. Faculty Review Board Voting Ballot
January (late)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constituency Elections Nominating Ballot: School/College Faculty Elections, Professional Staff Constituency Elections – ex: Academic Development
February	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constituency Elections Final Voting Ballot 2. Deans Election (Single Ballot) 3. <i>Senate Administrator performs outreach to current and incoming Senators requesting preferences for Senate Standing Committee Appointments for the upcoming academic year</i>
March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Senate Executive Committee Nominating Ballot 2. Nominating Committee Nominating Ballot
April	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Senate Executive Committee Voting Ballot 2. Committee of Three Voting Ballot 3. President’s Athletic Advisory Committee Voting Ballot 4. Nominating Committee Voting Ballot 5. Chair of Senate Executive Committee Voting Ballot (preferential voting)

May

1. *Senate Standing Committee lists voted on/approved by the Senate during the final Senate meeting of the Academic Year*
2. *Announcement of results of Senate Executive Committee, Committee of Three, Nominating Committee, and Chair of Senate Executive Committee elections via Senate's webpage, the final SEC Report to the Senate, and a notice in the Daily Digest*

III: Senate Committees & Appointments

The University Senate completes a large portion of work in both Standing and Special Committees, as defined by the University Senate By-laws². The work of the Senate is also organized by the Senate Executive Committee.

Senate Executive Committee:

The Senate Executive Committee is a group of faculty, staff and students elected for three-year terms to serve on the Executive Committee via an election process following all annual elections of the Senate³. The Senate Executive Committee Chair is elected on an annual basis from the faculty or staff members of the Senate Executive Committee for a one-year term.

The Senate Executive Committee organizes the work of the Senate throughout the year, makes a report at each Senate meeting, and issues an [Annual Senate Summary of Actions](#) report each year. The Senate Executive Committee typically meets twice per month during the academic year and engages in monthly meetings with the President, the Provost, the President's Cabinet, and Senate Standing Committee chairs to advance the work of the Senate.

Senate Standing Committees:

The Senate performs much of its work in Standing Committees, which are defined in the Senate By-laws. The University Senate has eight standing committees which are composed of both Senators and non-Senators and attend to different areas important to the work of the senate and the university. Additionally, "the Provost shall be or assign a delegate to be an *ex officio* member of all standing committees"⁴. Standing committees may be tasked with work by the SEC or topics may be raised for discussion and action by committee members themselves. Senate committee actions and outcomes may be

² By-laws, Rules & Regulations of the University Senate, Article I.C.Senate Committees

³ By-laws of the University of Connecticut, Article IX.G.1

⁴ By-laws of the University of Connecticut, Article IX.G.3

motions raised to amend the University Senate By-laws (if applicable) or issuing of reports and recommendations of action to other units at the university.

The standing committees of the University Senate are:

University Planning: This committee shall review the University planning processes and consider their potential outcomes. The committee may provide on behalf of the Senate an evaluation and review of specific issues and activities related to institutional advancement.

Faculty Standards: This committee shall continuously review University policies and practices relating to tenure, academic freedom, equitable distribution of work, rank and promotion, remuneration, retirement and other matters affecting the faculty and shall propose any desirable expression of Senate opinion on these matters, including proposals to the Trustees for modifications in their rules and regulations.

Student Welfare: This committee shall review the conditions that contribute to the academic success, personal development, physical and mental well-being of students, and available forms of financial aid. It may seek the opinion of the Senate on such matters and make recommendations.

Scholastic Standards: This committee shall prepare legislation within the jurisdiction of the Senate concerning those scholastic matters affecting the University as a whole, and not assigned to the Curricula and Courses Committee, including academic programs, the marking system, scholarship standards, and the like.

Curricula & Courses: This committee shall prepare legislation within the jurisdiction of the Senate on course requirements for general education of all undergraduate schools and colleges, UNIV, 1000 and 2000 levels, and other courses as designated in these by-laws.

University Budget: This committee shall review the planning, and allocation of the University operating, capital, and other budgets, the process of making budgetary and financial decisions and the determination of priorities among academic and other programs having financial implications.

Enrollment: This committee shall review all matters relating to the recruitment, admission, enrollment, and retention of an outstanding and diverse student population.

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI): This committee shall review University policies, practices, and conditions relevant to supporting and promoting justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion among students, faculty, and staff.

Standing committees typically meet once/month (C&C and Scholastic Standards meeting more frequently), or as needed, and all meetings take place virtually. All materials for Senate Standing Committees, including the meeting schedule, minutes and annual reports, are published on the Senate website. Each standing committee issues an annual report during the end of the Spring semester, which is presented to the Senate by each Committee Chair, which summarizing the work of the committee. Senate Committee meetings are open to the public by request, and Committee Members are given access to a Microsoft Team site which includes all documents related to the committee's work.

Senators typically serve on one Senate Standing Committee at a time and may choose to be a member of the same committee for the full duration of their Senate appointment term, or may choose to change Senate Standing Committee membership when annual renewals take place. Any Senator who is a member of a standing committee may be nominated to be the Chair of that committee by the Nominating Committee for a one-year term that is renewable. Chairs of Senate Standing Committees meet monthly with the Senate Executive Committee to ensure smooth communication on the work of each committee.

Senate Nominating Committee:

The Senate Nominating Committee is a Senate Standing Committee whose six members are elected by the Senate for a three-year term, and whose work is solely focused on making nominations and appointments on behalf of the Senate⁵ to Senate election ballots or committees. Each Spring semester, the Senate Nominating Committee compiles a list of prospective committee members and presents it to the Senate for approval by the end of the Spring term. Prospective membership is compiled by the Senate Nominating Committee, considering Senators' preferences, typically via an online submission form or

⁵By-laws, Rules & Regulations of the University Senate, Article I,C.3

email. The Senate Nominating Committee will also review nominations for the Faculty Review Board and Committee of Three elections each year.

Special (“ad hoc”) Senate Committees:

As defined in the University By-laws, the Senate may also appoint and define the duties of special committees,⁶ which may be established to work on a specific topic or issue for a defined purpose and duration. Typically, the Senate votes to approve charging a special committee into action and the Nominating Committee appoints members to these ad hoc groups. Additional information regarding active groups, and an archive of recent ad hoc committees and their corresponding reports, can be found on the [Senate website](#).

Senate Representation on Committees across the University:

The University Senate also makes appointments to other University Committees, listed below:

- [Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics \(COIA\)](#): one faculty member is appointed by the Senate Executive Committee for a two-year term
- [Committee of Three](#): three faculty members, excluding those who have administrative titles of department head or higher, are elected by the university Senate from a slate determined by the Nominating Committee to serve a three-year term (elections held in the Spring)
- [Faculty Review Board](#): six faculty members are elected by the University Senate from a slate of full professors without administrative office, slate determined by the Nominating Committee for a three-year term (elections held in the Fall)
- [President’s Athletic Advisory Committee \(PAAC\)](#): two faculty members are elected by the University Senate from a slate determined by the Nominating Committee to serve a two-year term
- [UConn Foundation Board of Directors](#): one faculty member is appointed by the Senate Executive Committee to serve a two-year term
- Board of Trustees Honors & Awards Committee: three faculty members are appointed by the Senate Executive Committee to serve a five-year term
- [Representatives to the Board of Trustees](#): nine faculty or staff Senators are appointed by the Senate Executive Committee to serve as Senate

⁶ By-laws of the University of Connecticut, Article IX.G.3



Representatives to the UConn Board of Trustees for a two-year term. These representatives have full participation on the Board of Trustees and their appointed committee meetings, but without vote. As of April 2024, Senate Representatives to the Board of Trustees are on the agenda of each committee meeting to report on Senate initiatives and updates related to their assigned committee.

Additional details on these appointments can be found on the [Senate website](#).

IV: Senate Meetings

Senate Meetings:

Meetings of the University Senate are typically scheduled to take place the first Monday of each month during the academic year from 4 – 6 p.m. with variation for holidays and other special circumstances. As of Spring 2024, all University Senate meetings are hosted in a ⁷hybrid format and Senators are invited to join either in-person or via WebEx. Calendar invitations including WebEx links to join are only shared with Senators to ensure that meeting participation follows parliamentary procedure.

The Senate Executive Committee (SEC) is “responsible for organizing and coordinating the business of the Senate and of Senate Committees”⁸ and thus Senate Meeting Agenda items are determined and approved by the SEC. The order of business at regular meetings of the Senate is defined in the University Senate By-laws. Meeting materials are posted on the [Senate website](#) no later than five calendar days before each meeting and are also sent via email to all Senators.

A special meeting of the University Senate can be called “at the request of at least twenty-five percent of the members, [and] the presiding officer shall be the Chair of the Senate Executive Committee”⁹. Full procedures related to the calling of a Special Meeting of the University Senate can be found in the University By-laws, Article IX.E and details related to votes to change the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Senate during a Special Meeting can be found in the University Senate By-laws, Article I.D.

A meeting can only be run if a quorum has been reached, which according to the University Senate By-laws, is defined as “not less than twenty-five percent of the members of the University Senate.” If a quorum is not present during a meeting, no official action may be taken in the name of the group.

University Senate meetings are open to the public either in-person or via livestream. Non-Senators can participate in a Senate meeting in a speaking capacity if recognized and approved by the Senate, only on the discussion topic at-hand.

⁷ By-Laws, Rules & Regulations of the University Senate, Article I.B.3

⁸ By-laws of the University of Connecticut, Article IX.G.1

⁹ By-laws of the University of Connecticut, Article IX.D

Senate Officers:

The University Senate meetings are supported by three officers:

- **Moderator:** a Senator responsible for moderating the Senate Meetings and elected by the membership for an annual term beginning in September.
- **Recording Secretary:** a non-Senator responsible for recording and distributing minutes, and is elected by the Senate, typically in September.
- **Parliamentarian:** a non-Senator responsible for aiding the University Senate in abiding by parliamentary procedure, appointed by the Senate Executive Committee for an annual term beginning in September.

Parliamentary Procedure:

All Senate meetings follow parliamentary procedure governed by Robert's Rules of Order. Parliamentary rules are intended to balance the rights of the majority, minority, and individual Members with due regard for every Member's opinion, and to ensure a meeting is run in a timely and organized manner. Senators are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these rules and a [Motion Guide](#) is available on the Senate website as a quick reference for use during meetings.

All Senators are also advised to familiarize themselves with the Standing Rules of the University Senate, available on the [Senate website](#) which includes further details on rules of order during Senate meetings.

Typically, any vote on a resolution presented to the Senate may pass by majority vote. However, any proposed changes to the Senate By-laws requires advance notice for a majority vote, and a two-thirds majority is required if notice is not given.¹⁰

Customs Observed by Senators during a Senate Meeting:

Below are some important excerpts taken from the [Senate Standing Rules](#):

- The Presiding officer is addressed as “the Moderator” or “the Chair”
- Senators are asked to sit in the center/front of the room as much as possible, to leave space for members of the public
- Only Senators can participate in the question-and-answer period following each

¹⁰ By-laws, Rules & Regulations of the University Senate, Article I.D

presentation. A Senator may request permission of the Senate for a visitor to speak if they have specific information or expertise to offer. Such permission may be granted by the Moderator “without exception” but otherwise requires a 2/3 majority vote to be given.

- Senators should stand before speaking, as possible, identify themselves, and address each other with the title “Senator.”
- To make a motion or speak in debate, a Member must be recognized by the Moderator.
- Only one question may be considered at a time (i.e. a main motion, amend, postpone, refer to committee, etc.)

Common Actions:

A table of common actions and how they are handled in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order are highlighted below. This list is not intended to be comprehensive and additional information is available online in the [Robert’s Rules Cheat Sheet](#).

To:	You Say:	Recognition by Moderator Required:	Second Needed:	Debatable:	Amendable:	Vote Needed:
Make a Main Motion	“I make a motion to...”	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a Motion	“I move that this motion be amended by...”	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Postpone Consideration to Another Time	“I move that we postpone this matter until...”	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Postpone Consideration Indefinitely	“I move to postpone the question indefinitely”	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
End Debate	“I move the previous question”	Yes	Yes	No	No	2/3
Call for a “division of the house”	“I move to call for a division of the house”	No	No	No	No	Moderator Decides

Object to procedure or personal affront	“Point of Order”	No	No	No	No	Moderator Decides
Request information	“Point of Information”	Yes	No	No	No	Moderator Decides
Adjourn a Meeting	“I move that we adjourn”	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority

New Business:

If a Senator would like to raise a topic for consideration at an upcoming University Senate Meeting under New Business, they need to give advance notice of their New Business item. This can be done either in writing to the University Senate Administrator or during a Senate Meeting when New Business is called. No New Business may be introduced after New Business has been called by the Moderator. If a Senator would like to raise a specific motion during New Business, Senators are encouraged to send the motion language in advance to the Senate Administrator. There are additional pathways outlined in the next section regarding how individual Senators can engage in the work of the Senate to advance a specific motion, topic of interest, or concern.

V: Senate Actions from Start to Finish

Below is an outline of the typical pathways on how work flows through the Senate. Ultimately, the Senate Executive Committee is charged with organizing the work of the University Senate, so any proposed actions not brought up during a meeting as New Business will go through the SEC at some point during the process. The University Senate Office staff is also available for support and guidance on any particular issue or motion.

Topics of interest can be brought to the SEC in various ways:

Senate Committees:

- The Senate Executive Committee meets monthly with Senate Standing Committee Chairs and regularly communicates with Committee Chairs to direct the work of the Senate in Committee, as well as potential presentations and motions for Senate agendas sourced from Standing Committees. If a Standing Committee Chair would like to present a report or resolution to the Senate on behalf of their Committee, they communicate this during the monthly meetings with the SEC or vial email with the SEC Chair and/or Senate Office.

Individual Senators:

- Any Senator may contact the SEC or Senate Office to raise a concern or topic of interest for discussion within the SEC. If a topic of interest is raised by a Senator, the SEC may request additional information or documentation to inform the discussion and will determine next steps for any idea presented. That next step may be inclusion on an upcoming Senate Meeting Agenda, or it may be sent to a Senate Standing Committee for additional work. Senators may also bring a motion to the University Senate as a part of New Business during a Senate Meeting. Information on how to raise New Business is outlined in Section IV. The easiest way to contact the Senate Office, and by extension the SEC, is to email universitysenate@uconn.edu.

Non-Senator Faculty or Staff Member:

- Any faculty or staff member may raise topics for consideration by the Senate by contacting either their Senate representative or the Senate Office directly. The easiest way to determine who represents a specific constituency is to search the online Senate Membership List. The easiest way to contact the Senate Office, and by extension the SEC, is to email universitysenate@uconn.edu.

Annual Reports to the Senate by UConn Units or Offices:

- There are several annual reports from various UConn offices which are regularly considered for inclusion in Senate Agenda's, such as the Enrollment Report, presented by the VP for Student Life & Enrollment, and The Graduate School Report presented by the Dean of The Graduate School. The Senate Executive Committee reviews the list of units that typically make annual reports to the Senate to determine the schedule and format of presentations. These reports typically include important updates that are relevant to the Senate, and oftentimes Senate Committees will follow up on relevant reports within Committee that may result in an eventual Senate action.

Finalizing Senate Actions:

The Senate votes on resolutions that express standing opinion or take action on topics within the purview of the Senate, as outlined in the University By-laws and described in Section II. Typically, Senate Actions are motions to change the By-laws, Rules & Regulations of the University Senate. Occasionally, the Senate may pass a resolution, which is a statement of opinion or a recommendation to another university unit or office that is outside of the purview of the Senate. Those resolutions are communicated to relevant parties as required by the Senate Office.

All Senate actions are publicly available in the following locations:

- Any Senate action that results in a motion passed by vote is posted on the Senate website in the [News & Updates page](#)
- Any approved By-law Changes are posted on the [By-law Changes page](#)
- All Senate actions, whether a presentation, discussion or vote, are available in the [Annual University Senate Summary of Actions](#).