



# THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF KURDISTAN

## Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws



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## **CONSTITUTION**

### **ARTICLE I. NAME AND OBJECT**

#### Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the American University of Kurdistan Faculty Senate.

#### Section 2. Object

The object of this organization is to serve and function as the representative, deliberative, and legislative body of the American University of Kurdistan Faculties.

### **ARTICLE II. SENATE REPRESENTATION**

#### Section 1. Eligibility

- i. The Faculty Senate is composed of the full-time faculty members of the various academic units falling under the leadership of an academic dean.
- ii. All full-time faculty members holding continuous appointments within academic units and with ranks below the rank of academic dean are eligible to serve and vote.

#### Section 2. Composition

- i. Faculty Senators shall be elected from among the eligible faculty, with representation from each academic department following the method of apportionment described in the Bylaws. The apportionment of Senate seats will be checked on an annual basis, with seats added or removed as necessary due to changes in academic units.
- ii. Senators shall serve a term of one year. Senators may be immediately re-nominated for a second term. At the end of two consecutive full terms, a Senator shall wait at least one year before becoming eligible for inclusion again to the Senate. In the event that the university has a limited number of full-time faculty members, a Senator may continue to serve in the Faculty Senate with the approval of the academic department chair. This approval is renewed yearly after a senator serves for two consecutive full terms until solved.
- iii. AUK personnel with full-time, faculty-like appointments in various centers and institutes reporting directly to the Office of Provost, but outside of established academic units, are entitled to serve as Senators in whichever academic unit they teach.

#### Section 3. Elections

- i. Elections shall be held annually following procedures defined in the Bylaws.
- ii. Vacancies due to resignations shall be filled as soon as possible according to procedures defined in the Bylaws, with any replacement Senator serving the remainder of the unfinished term. Filling an unfinished term shall not count against a Senator's limit of two consecutive full terms.
- iii. A Senator who will be absent from a regularly scheduled meeting is expected to send a substitute from the same academic unit in his or her stead. In case a Senator anticipates an extended absence due to a University-related leave, (e.g., sabbatical), he/she may nominate a substitute from the same academic unit to serve during the

Senator's absence. A Senatorial vacancy shall exist when a Senator has missed two regularly scheduled Senate meetings in a given academic semester for reasons other than University-related leaves.

### **ARTICLE III. ORGANIZATION**

#### Section 1. Meetings

The Senate shall meet three times during Fall and Spring semesters. Special meetings may be called by the Chair of the Senate, request from Senators, or upon request of the Provost or President. A two-thirds majority of voting members of the Senate shall constitute a quorum. The Chair may from time to time invite nonmembers to attend meetings.

#### Section 2. Officers

The Faculty shall elect annually from among its members a Chair. The elected Senate will choose a secretary from within its ranks for the purpose of keeping minutes for each meeting which will be made public to all faculty members. In the event of a permanent vacancy of the Chair, an election shall be held at a full Faculty meeting to fill the vacancy as expeditiously as possible.

#### Section 3. Committees

The Faculty Senate may establish such Senate Committees as it deems appropriate and may determine procedures for appointing chairpersons and committee members.

### **ARTICLE IV. JURISDICTION, DUTIES, AND POWERS**

#### Section 1. Academic Governance and the Interests of American University of Kurdistan

The Faculty Senate shall provide a forum for the full and free discussion of all matters affecting the American University of Kurdistan, and it shall have the power to consult with any individual faculty member about such matters whether or not they are members of the Senate. The Senate shall seek to express collective faculty judgment, as appropriate, on such matters as it deems significant. In all deliberation and action, the Senate shall seek effective faculty participation in the formation of the university policies.

#### Section 2. Educational Policy

The Senate shall have the power to review and evaluate policies and practices of the University and may make recommendations concerning them to any individual, faculty, or group within the University. It may provide for appropriate faculty discussion of any educational policy or practice. It may advise and consult with the chief administrative officers and inform them of faculty opinions about such matters. It shall facilitate and encourage communication within the University, among the academic units and reciprocally among faculty, students, and administration.

### Section 3. Matters Referred to the Senate

The Senate shall review and act on matters referred to it by the University President, the Provost, or the individual academic units. Further, any faculty member may bring before the Faculty Senate appropriately any matter of concern, including individual grievances. The Senate shall have the power to establish guidelines and procedures for dealing with such submissions and grievances.

### Section 4. Committees of the University

- i. The Faculty Senate shall aid in selecting University Committees from faculty members both within and without the Faculty Senate and make recommendations to and advise with the University President regarding appointments to the various University committees.
- ii. The Faculty Senate is encouraged to develop and maintain a working relationship with the various committees of the University.

### Section 5. University Administration

The Faculty Senate will meet from time to time with the University President, and /or with the Provost, and other appropriate officers to discuss faculty needs and concerns, review policies, and develop guidelines for the exercise of its stated functions or to develop procedures for identifying and establishing additional functions.

## **ARTICLE V. ADOPTION, RATIFICATION, AND MODIFICATION**

### Section 1. Adoption

This constitution will come into effect when adopted by a majority of the Senators of the Faculty Senate, who will then present and vote at a regular or called meeting of the senate.

### Section 2. Modification

Modifications to the Constitution may be proposed by faculty members by a passing motion at a regular meeting of the Faculty Senate but may not be acted on until the next regular meeting of the Senate. To be approved, such proposed changes shall be made public to the University faculty at least two weeks prior to the next meeting of the Senate. Modifications shall require approval of at least two-thirds of the Senators.

Any proposed changes to the Constitution by non-faculty offices, boards or persons must be approved by 100% of the Faculty Senate. If any change is proposed and not adopted by the Senate unanimously, it will automatically cause a vote of no-confidence, and the Faculty Senate will be immediately dissolved.

## BYLAWS

### ARTICLE I. ELECTIONS, OFFICERS, AND DUTIES

#### Section 1. Senate Elections

- i. The allocation of the Faculty Senate Seats to academic units is based on one seat for each academic department. As the university expands, the Senate will amend the allocation of seats to reflect the university's future growth.
- ii. The academic units shall complete departmental representative selection shortly in the last week of August.
- iii. At the first week of the fall semester, the Chair of the Senate shall ask the provost's office to request all deans to ask the academic departments under their deanship to select one representative from among their faculty assigned the title of a Faculty Senator.
- iv. If a Senatorial vacancy occurs, the Chair will contact the Provost's Office to contact the Dean of the appropriate academic unit and request a replacement be selected.

#### Section 2. Election of Officers

- i. The officers of the Faculty Senate shall be the Chair and Secretary.
- ii. At the first week of the Fall semester, the Faculty Senate Chair will call for a meeting to nominate and elect the Chair for the following academic year.
- iii. If no candidate receives a majority vote, the top two candidates shall be placed in a runoff. When a tie exists for the runoff positions, the tie shall be promptly resolved by the provost. Voting in all cases shall be by secret ballot.
- iv. The secretary shall be nominated and selected from among the serving Faculty Senate Members
- v. Senators shall start their positions at the beginning of each Fall semester, right after the departmental selections, and serve for the entire academic year.

#### Section 3. Duties of Officers and Members

- i. The Chair shall preside at meetings of the Senate and shall be responsible for preparing an agenda for each meeting and distributing it to each Senator one week before the meeting. Except as otherwise provided, the Chair shall recommend the members, and chairs of committees as and when required. The Chair shall communicate the Senate's advice and recommendations to appropriate University officials. The Chair receives a three (3) credits course release in each of the Fall and Spring semesters of the Chair's term of service, provided reasonable accommodations for course coverage can be arranged within the Chair's academic unit. The Chair-Elect should discuss such accommodation for the next academic year with the appropriate Department Chair or Dean prior to course scheduling for the upcoming year.
- ii. The Chair-Elect shall assume the position of Chair at the beginning of the Fall semester. The Secretary shall keep minutes and records of all proceedings of the Senate and



shall receive and keep all reports and correspondence from committees of the Senate, University committees, University officials, and others. The Secretary shall regularly prepare minutes of each meeting of the Senate and shall convey such minutes to the Chair for distribution to members of the Senate. The meeting minutes shall include a roll of those Senators who are absent.

- iii. Senators should communicate with the larger faculty community, advocate for their interests, and share the senate decisions and any discussed information. Senators may gather feedback, share updates, foster collaboration, and represent diverse perspectives within the Faculty Senate. They connect all AUK faculty members and all other administrative units in the university, addressing challenges and promoting transparency. Additionally, senators are required to regularly share all Faculty Senate meeting minutes with their academic department members, ensuring that information is accessible and transparent to all faculty members.

#### Section 4: Removing a Senator

If the actions of a Senator are seen as disruptive, unprofessional, or disrespectful by other Senators, a vote of non-confidence can be requested. If 2/3 of Senators vote for a Senator to be removed from Senate, the decision will be official, the Senator will effectively be removed, and a search for replacement will begin.

### **ARTICLE II. COMMITTEES**

#### Section 1. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

The Senate may establish such Standing and Ad Hoc Committees as it deems appropriate. Except as may be otherwise provided, the Chair shall appoint the members and chair of any such committees; and such members and chair shall serve during the Senate Chair's term of office unless the committee is earlier dissolved or the Chair acts to replace a member or a committee chair.

#### Section 2. Other University Committees

The Senate may form committees related to the university's interests and concerns as needed (e.g., accreditation committees). The members of these committees do not have to be Faculty Senate members and may report to the Faculty Senate or directly to other University offices.

### **ARTICLE III. SENATE MEETINGS**

#### Section 1. Meetings

- i. The Senate shall meet three times during each fall and spring semesters, September through May of each year. The Chair may call a special meeting of the Senate when the Chair deems it necessary, and a special meeting of the Senate may also be called upon receipt of a petition by the Chair signed by at least ten of the regular faculty. The President or Provost may also request that the Senate hold a special session.
- ii. No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present and continues to be present at the meeting. A two-thirds majority of the duly elected and qualified Senators constitutes a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, the Chair may only make announcements of an informative nature, rule on the existence of a quorum, and recess once for a short period to attempt to secure a quorum.

## Section 2. Agenda

- i. The Chair shall prepare an agenda for each meeting and shall distribute it to each Senator one week preceding the meeting. The Chair may allot a time period for agenda items and, if so, the duration of discussion of such items at the meeting shall be restricted unless altered by a majority vote of the Senate.
- ii. Any student, faculty member, or staff member of the University may bring a matter of University concern to the attention of the Senate by communicating with the Chair of the Senate, either directly or through a member of the Senate. The Chair shall make an appropriate announcement of the matter either in writing attached to the agenda or by placing the matter on the agenda. However, only a Senator can introduce a proposition to be voted upon by the Senate.

## Section 3. Procedure

A procedural proposition may be introduced by a Senator at a meeting. A substantive proposition may be introduced by filing the proposition with the Chair in time for it to be attached to the agenda for the next meeting. A matter of significant academic import or a policy recommendation can be introduced without previous inclusion on the agenda only by a two-thirds majority vote of the full Senate.

## Section 4. Voting

Senators will vote on Propositions, Recommendations, and Policies during Senate meetings based on a simple majority rule. The votes will be public (show of hands), unless special circumstances require otherwise (e.g. secret ballot or online vote).

## **ARTICLE IV. MODIFICATIONS OF BYLAWS**

Modifications to the Bylaws may be proposed by faculty members by a passing motion at a regular meeting of the full Faculty, but may not be acted on until the next regular meeting of the Senate. Modifications shall require a two-thirds majority of the faculty members present at said meeting.

Any proposed changes to the bylaws by non-faculty offices, boards or persons must be approved by 100% of the Faculty Senate. If any change is proposed and not adopted by the Senate unanimously, it will automatically cause a vote of no-confidence and the Senate will be immediately dissolved

## **CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS HISTORY**

- a. **Ratified by:** AUK Faculty Senate on April 16, 2020
- b. **Approved by:** Board of Trustees
- c. **Adapted:** May 7, 2020
- d. **Amended:** September 4, 2024