

Virginia Tech Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws

Approved by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors on March 22, 2021

Constitution

1. Name

The name of this organization is the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate (hereinafter referred to as the A/P Faculty Senate) of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

2. Authority

1. The A/P Faculty Senate derives authority independently through the voice and intentions of the Administrative and Professional Faculty (hereinafter referred to as A/P Faculty), as described in the Faculty Handbook.
2. The existence of the A/P Faculty Senate does not preclude the existence of or the right of any university employee to belong to any other organization.

3. Purposes

The purposes of the A/P Faculty Senate are:

1. To serve as the representative body for the A/P Faculty employees of the University.
2. To act in an advisory capacity to the University administration and governance.
3. To appoint or recommend A/P Faculty representatives to University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils, Committees, and other ad hoc committees as appropriate.
4. To provide a medium for the exchange of information between A/P Faculty and the university community.
5. To foster a spirit of unity and cooperation.
6. To provide referrals for individual concerns and problems to appropriate organizations or personnel.
7. To accept and share responsibility with the administration, staff, faculty, and students in all efforts to attain the stated goals of the University.

4. Membership

1. The A/P Faculty Senate will initially consist of thirty voting senators elected from among the following constituent areas, as defined in the faculty handbook, at the university: Extension, Research, Academic Support, Student Affairs, Athletics, General Professional, and General Administrative.
2. There will be six possible non-voting members representing university organizations:
 1. One representative from the Staff Senate,
 2. One representative from the Faculty Senate,
 3. One representative from the Student Government Association,
 4. One representative from the Graduate Student Assembly,
 5. Past-President of A/P Faculty Senate, if no longer serving as a senator,
 6. The senior university administrator responsible for Human Resources or their designee.

5. Term of office

1. The term of office for A/P Faculty Senators will be three years. Each term will begin on July 1. Terms will be staggered to permit the election of approximately one-third of the Senate body each year.
2. Transfer of a member from one constituent area to another will result in the replacement of that individual by the elected alternate until a permanent replacement is elected.
3. Movement of a member within the same constituent area will not affect their unexpired term on the A/P Faculty Senate.
4. A senator may be reelected for up to two consecutive three-year terms. There are no restrictions on serving as an alternate.
5. Vacancies may occur as a result of termination of employment, transfer, retirement, resignation, or by a majority vote of the A/P Faculty Senate to remove a senator following three consecutive unexcused absences from regular meetings during any calendar year.
6. The retiring President of the A/P Faculty Senate will serve as a non-voting advisor to the Executive Committee for one year. If their elected term as a senator has expired, they will serve as a non-voting member of the A/P Faculty Senate and Executive Committee.

6. Elections

1. Elections by the A/P Faculty Senate will be conducted in accordance with the A/P Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws.

7. Officers

1. Elected officers of the A/P Faculty Senate will consist of
 1. President,
 2. Vice President,
 3. Secretary/Treasurer,
 4. Parliamentarian.
2. Officers will be elected annually by the A/P Faculty Senators. Each term will begin at the end of the June regular meeting.
3. Officers will be eligible for re-election but may not serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.
4. The A/P Faculty Senate may, by a two-thirds vote of the A/P Faculty Senate membership eligible to vote and present at the meeting, remove any officer.
5. In the event an officer, excluding the president, will take office and for some reason be unable or unwilling to complete their term of office, a special meeting will be called and a special election held to fill the vacated office for the remainder of the vacating officer's term.
6. In the event that the president for some reason is unable or unwilling to complete their term of office, the Bylaws address how the vacancy is to be handled.

8. University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils, and Committees

1. Senators and A/P Faculty representatives to the University Council and Commissions will be elected by the A/P Faculty Senate in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the University Council by a simple majority vote of the A/P Faculty Senate eligible to vote and present at the meeting. Nominations for election may include A/P Faculty Senators-elect. Terms of office and procedure to fill vacancies in unexpired terms are prescribed in the Constitution and Bylaws of the University Council.
2. Senators from the General Administrative constituent area will not be able to represent the A/P Faculty Senate on University Council.
3. Nominations of senators and A/P Faculty employees requested by the President or other administrator of the University to serve on University Advisory Councils and Committees will be approved by a majority vote of the A/P Faculty Senate. Nominations may include Senators-elect. Terms of appointment and responsibilities are prescribed in the Constitution and Bylaws of the University Council.

4. Senators and A/P Faculty representatives to the University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils, or Committees will
 1. Represent the position of the A/P Faculty Senate and A/P Faculty in the discharge of responsibilities,
 2. Inform the A/P Faculty Senate of pertinent matters to be considered and action taken by either
 1. Forwarding copies of meeting minutes to the Secretary/Treasurer within ten business days after approval of minutes by the respective University Council, Commission, Advisory Council, or Committee, or
 2. Summarizing discussions and actions taken at meetings of each University Council, Commission, Advisory Council, or Committee and forwarding to the Secretary/Treasurer within ten business days after each meeting if no official minutes are kept at the meeting, and
 3. Bringing matters of A/P Faculty concern before the respective University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils, or Committees.

9. Committees

The A/P Faculty Senate will form the following committees. The charge of each will be defined in the bylaws.

1. An Executive Committee consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, Parliamentarian, Chair of each Senate standing committee, and the past-President of the A/P Faculty Senate serving in a non-voting advisory capacity.
2. Standing Committees will initially consist of
 1. Policies and Issues Committee,
 2. Communications Committee, and
 3. Elections and Nominations Committee.
3. The President of A/P Faculty Senate may designate standing, special, and/or ad hoc committees as approved by the A/P Faculty Senate.

10. Quorum

A quorum of the Senate or one of its committees is defined as a majority of the total eligible voting membership of the Senate or committee, respectively. A quorum is

required at all A/P Faculty Senate and committee meetings in order to conduct business. Meetings may be held without a quorum, but votes cannot be taken.

11. Initial Adoption of the Constitution and Bylaws

The Constitution will be ratified by a simple majority vote of the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs' voting members and by the University Council, President of the University, and Board of Visitors.

12. Amendments to the Constitution

1. Notice of a proposal to amend the A/P Faculty Senate Constitution will be given on the A/P Faculty Senate agenda and considered at no fewer than two meetings of the Senate prior to voting.
2. A copy of the proposed amendments will be distributed with the agenda.
3. A vote may be taken on an amendment at the second meeting.
4. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the membership is required for approval of changes followed by approval by the University Council and president of the university.
5. One-fifth of employees eligible for election to the A/P Faculty Senate may petition the president of the university to convene employees eligible for election to the A/P Faculty Senate to make changes to the A/P Faculty Senate Constitution.
6. Amendments to the Constitution will become effective upon approval by the membership, University Council and president of the university.

13. Amendments to the Bylaws

1. Notice of proposal to amend the bylaws will be given in the agenda and considered at not fewer than two meetings of the A/P Faculty Senate prior to voting.
2. A vote may be taken at the second meeting.
3. An affirmative vote of the majority of the membership eligible to vote and present at the meeting is required for adoption.
4. Amendments to the bylaws will become effective upon approval of the A/P Faculty Senate.

14. Corrections to the Constitution and Bylaws

Corrections of typographical/grammatical errors and updating terminology, where appropriate, are permitted without going through the amendment process for both the Constitution and Bylaws. These corrections should be noted in the changelog.

Bylaws

1. Duties of officers, senators, and non-voting members

All officers are responsible for ensuring a smooth transition to their successor and an orderly transfer of official records.

1. The President will

1. Preside at all regular and special meetings.
2. Enforce all regulations and policies.
3. Preside over the Executive Committee.
4. Prepare the organizational chart of the Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate (hereinafter referred to as the A/P Faculty Senate).
5. Submit the budget at the July regular meeting for approval each year.
6. Call special meetings.
7. Prepare an agenda for the Secretary to distribute to the Administrative and Professional Faculty (hereinafter referred to as A/P Faculty) Senators and non-voting members seven days prior to the next regular meeting.
8. Authorize disbursement of funds. (Such disbursements will be made by the Secretary/Treasurer.)
9. Designate chairs of the standing committees in consideration of committee recommendation.
10. Establish ad hoc committees as approved by the A/P Faculty Senate, appoint members and designate chairs of these committees as appropriate.
11. Perform other such duties as associated with this office.
12. Ensure a smooth transition to the president-elect at the end of the president's term and an orderly transfer of official records.

2. The Vice-President will

1. Preside in the absence of the President.
2. Serve as the principal assistant to the President.
3. Serve as Chair of the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs of University Governance.
4. Coordinate legislative activity.

5. Fulfill any term vacated by the President.
 6. Perform other such duties as associated with this office.
3. The Secretary/Treasurer will
1. Conduct a roll call, record attendance and advise the President if a quorum is present at the beginning of each meeting.
 2. Prepare minutes of all A/P Faculty Senate meetings and maintain them as permanent records.
 3. Distribute copies of the minutes to each member within ten days after meetings. The use of electronic mail is encouraged whenever possible.
 4. Distribute copies of agenda and information packages to each member within seven days prior to the next regular meeting. The use of electronic mail is encouraged whenever possible.
 5. Maintain all records of the A/P Faculty Senate including
 - Fiscal records,
 - Mailing lists (electronic and campus),
 - List of senators including term of office, and
 - List of senators serving on the University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils and Committees including term of office.
 6. Make authorized disbursements of funds. Submit quarterly financial reports of expenditures to the Executive Committee. Both the President and the Secretary/Treasurer will authorize all payments.
 7. Perform other such duties as required by this office.
 8. Receive and retain the summaries and/or minutes from Councils, Commissions, and Committees on which A/P Faculty serve.
4. The Parliamentarian will
1. Advise the President on parliamentary procedures in accordance with the parliamentary rules used by University Council, subject to special rules adopted by the A/P Faculty Senate to govern the procedures of the A/P Faculty Senate, cabinet, and standing committees.
5. The A/P Faculty Senators will
1. Make informed decisions.
 2. Vote on matters brought before the A/P Faculty Senate.
 3. Serve on at least one standing committee.

4. Serve on University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils and Committees when appointed.
5. Communicate to their constituent area on issues brought before the A/P Faculty Senate.
6. Seek opinions of their constituent area on pertinent matters concerning the A/P Faculty Senate.
7. Represent the position of their constituent area and be accountable to their constituent area.

6. The Alternate Senators should

1. Attend A/P Faculty Senate meetings whenever possible.
2. Vote only when their senator is absent.
3. Serve on University Councils, Commissions, Advisory Councils, and Committees when appointed.

7. All members will attempt to attend meetings of University Councils, Commissions, and Committees to which they are assigned. If unable to attend the member will send an alternate if possible.

2. Elections

1. The elections for A/P Faculty Senators, from the constituent areas will be conducted by the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs before March 31 each year. This process will be assisted and monitored by the Elections and Nominations Committee.
2. The number of Senators elected will be from the following constituent areas:
 - Extension: 3 Senators,
 - Research: 3 Senators,
 - Academic Support: 6 Senators,
 - Student Affairs: 3 Senators,
 - Athletics: 3 Senators,
 - General Professional: 9 Senators and,
 - General Administrative: 3 Senators

Each constituent area will elect a minimum of one alternate to serve on the A/P Faculty Senate.

3. The Elections and Nominations Committee will begin taking nominations for President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, Parliamentarian, representatives to the University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils, and Committees and other appointments at the February regular meeting.
4. Permission must be obtained from candidates before names are placed in nomination.

5. Election of officers will be held by April 1. Election and/or nomination of representatives to the University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils, and Committees and other appointments will be completed by May 1.
6. A majority vote of those present and voting will be necessary to elect officers and/or representatives. In case no candidate receives a majority, the candidate receiving the fewest votes will be removed from each successive ballot until one candidate receives a majority.
7. All those elected will assume responsibilities at the end of the June regular meeting.
8. The Vice President will automatically be nominated for the office of the President when a vacancy in that office will be slated to occur. If the Vice President's term on the A/P Faculty Senate is expiring or the VP refuses the nomination then the Elections and Nominations Committee will be charged with finding another nominee from among the members of the Executive Committee or Past Presidents of the A/P Faculty Senate whose terms on the Senate are not expiring. If no member of the Executive Committee or a Past president will accept the nomination, the Election and Nominations Committee will open nominations for President up to the current Senators.

3. Committees

1. Executive Committee

1. Screens proposals from A/P Faculty for A/P Faculty Senate consideration,
2. Acts on behalf of the A/P Faculty Senate between regular meetings. All such actions will be reported for confirmation at the next Senate meeting,
3. Approves, by majority of those eligible to vote and present at the meeting, initial composition, changes and additions to the membership of standing committees made by the President,
4. Implements the rules and regulations of the A/P Faculty Senate,
5. Assists in interpreting the intent of the A/P Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws,
6. Determines if a senator's absence from a regular meeting is excused,
7. Assists the President in preparing the budget,
8. Meets at least once a month prior to the regular Senate meeting, and
9. Addresses occasional changes to the regular meeting schedule of the A/P Faculty Senate.
10. Is sensitive to the inclusion of employees who are representative of the various types of full and part-time A/P Faculty employees, occupational classifications, and organizational units.

2. Standing Committees

1. General Guidelines

1. Members of standing committees will be appointed by the President and approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. The President will also designate a chair for each standing committee.
 2. Unless requested by the senator, membership on a standing committee will not change during the senator's term of office.
 3. Each member of the A/P Faculty Senate will serve on at least one standing committee.
 4. Minutes will be kept for each standing committee meeting. Each standing committee will also submit an annual report of its activities and any pending matters to the Executive Committee at the June Executive Committee meeting.
 5. The scope of the charges of the standing committees will be established by the A/P Faculty Senate in accordance with the bylaws.
 6. Standing committees will establish goals, objectives, and priorities. They have the authority to investigate, carry out activities necessary to perform their charges, prepare reports, offer recommendations, and make parliamentary motions.
 7. Standing committees may establish subcommittees to address specific issues as needed. Membership of subcommittees will consist of members of the respective standing committee. Chairs of subcommittees will be appointed by the chair of the respective standing committee.
 8. Standing committee chairs will convene their committees no less frequently than once a month unless approved by the Executive Committee.
 9. At the end of each term, each committee chair will provide to the respective incoming chair appropriate information to facilitate continuity (e.g., charges, goals, unfinished business, investigatory materials, past and pending parliamentary motions).
- a. Policies and Issues Committee - Primary Responsibilities
1. Serves as a link between the A/P Faculty Senate and the Office of Human Resources and/or University Administration in general on personnel and related matters.
 2. Brings to the A/P Faculty Senate's attention changes in policies and procedures that may affect A/P Faculty and advises the Senate on these issues. This includes monitoring the activities of the

University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils, and Committees that may affect A/P Faculty.

3. Provides assistance to A/P Faculty in obtaining educational leave, tuition waivers, and other educational opportunities.

b. Communications Committee - Primary Responsibilities

1. Coordinates communications to employees and the university community and supports the executive committee in matters pertaining to the Board of Visitors and the Virginia State Legislature as to the mission of the A/P Faculty Senate.
2. Communicates information to A/P Faculty concerning new employee orientation, employee training and development, incentives and rewards, benefits, retirement planning, and related matters utilizing university and non-university media and/or other appropriate means as needed.
3. Interfaces with university and non-university media sources to provide information on A/P Faculty Senate activities when appropriate.
4. Fulfills communications needs of the A/P Faculty Senate as requested by the President or Executive Committee.

c. Elections and Nominations Committee - Primary Responsibilities

1. Coordinates the A/P Faculty Senate elections process. Ensures that the A/P Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws are followed and deadlines are observed when electing Senate members, officers, and representatives to the University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils, and Committees.
2. Compiles a list of nominations for A/P Faculty Senate officers and representatives to the University Council, Commissions, Advisory Councils, and Committees as needed.
3. Makes recommendations to the President for the appointment of members and chairs to A/P Faculty Senate committees.
4. Monitors elections of senators managed by the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs and oversees votes on proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the A/P Faculty Senate.

4. Meetings

1. Regular meetings of the A/P Faculty Senate will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Occasional conflicts to this schedule, such as University holidays or inclement weather, will be addressed by the Executive Committee.
2. The A/P Faculty Senate will invite the President of the University to meet with the Senate at least once each academic year.
3. All meetings will be open to the university community unless the A/P Faculty Senate approves a motion to enter into closed session. However, a person who is not an A/P Faculty Senate member may not participate in the discussion unless recognized by the President of the Senate.

5. Procedures

1. A/P Faculty employees may submit items to any senator for inclusion in the agenda of the next regular A/P Faculty Senate meeting. A senator wishing to have an item (or items) included on the agenda of a regular meeting may submit the item(s) to the President of the A/P Faculty Senate. The President will then decide whether items should be included on the next regular meeting agenda or passed to the appropriate Senate committee.

6. Parliamentary Authority

1. The parliamentary rules used by University Council, subject to special rules as may be adopted by the A/P Faculty Senate, will govern the procedures of the A/P Faculty Senate, cabinet, and standing committees.