

Constitution: Article II *(Effective as of April 6, 2017)*
The Faculty Senate

• **Composition**

1. The Faculty Senate is composed of the Deans of the several Schools and Colleges, elected members, and ex officio members. Elected members are representatives of the Faculties of the Schools and Colleges in accordance with the following distribution [2005] [2010] [2016]:

College of Arts and Science	16
Blair School of Music	2
Divinity School	2
School of Engineering	6
School of Law	2
Owen Graduate School of Management	2
School of Medicine	20
School of Nursing	4
Peabody College	6

2. Non-voting ex officio members of the Senate include the following: the Chancellor, the Provost, the Vice Chancellors, other administrative officers that the Senate may invite, and persons listed as such in the Senate Rules. In addition, the past Chair and Vice Chair of the Faculty Senate shall hold non-voting ex officio status for one year following the end of their term. At the beginning of the academic year, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate will consult with the Provost to invite no more than four administrative staff members as non-voting ex officio members for that year. Such administrators should be those whose responsibilities relate most directly to the faculty matters. Non-voting ex officio members may participate fully in open deliberations. In instances where one person holds both non-voting and voting positions, the voting role takes precedence. [2010] [2016]
3. The Chair of the Senate shall consult with the Executive Committee prior to discharging the Chair's responsibilities under the Promotion and Tenure Grievance Procedure. [2000]
4. The Senate shall at least once every five years review the numbers of elected representatives from the several Faculties, taking into account the relative sizes of the Faculties and of the student bodies of the several schools. Each school shall have at least two Faculty Senators. The number of elected representatives of any one school or college shall be no more than one-third of the total number of elected senators. [2000] Changes may also be proposed to the Senate by any Faculty. Proposed changes in the composition of the Senate shall be made known to the members of the Faculty Assembly at least

one month before Senate action, and shall become effective when adopted by the majority of the Senate voting membership. [1984]

5. Each Faculty shall elect its own representatives, and each representative so elected shall serve for a term of three years, unless specifically chosen to complete the remainder of an unexpired term. Terms shall commence on July first and terminate on June thirtieth. [2004] Elections shall be held before May 1 each year, by a process of secret balloting, with each Faculty electing the number necessary to maintain its full delegation for the following academic year. Only full-time Faculty members with the academic rank of Instructor or above shall be eligible for election to the Senate. No single full-time Faculty member may represent more than one School. All full-time Faculty members with the academic rank of Instructor or above, part-time faculty members having full status, and such other part-time Faculty members as the full-time Faculty of a School or College may designate, shall be eligible to vote for such representatives. Distribution of representation within a School or College shall be arranged in accordance with the will of the Faculty concerned. Terms of Senators shall be staggered so that insofar as possible each year one-third of them will complete their terms. Upon the expiration of his or her full term, a Senator shall be eligible for reelection for one additional consecutive term, but shall not be eligible for reelection to another term until three years have passed (but upon the expiration of a partial term, the period of ineligibility shall correspond only to the length of the term served). This amendment permits members of the Senate to serve up to two terms in a row. [1999] A Senator on leave of absence from the University does not forfeit membership, but during any extended absence a duly elected alternate shall serve. [1977]

• Organization

1. The Senate shall meet at least four times each year, normally during September, December, March, and May. Additional special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chancellor, or the Chair of the Senate, or upon written request of any eight members of the Senate. The number equivalent to a simple majority of the elected members of the Senate shall constitute a quorum. All meetings of the Senate shall be open to members of the Faculty Assembly, to the chief administrative officers, and to other persons invited by Senate action, except as provided in section 2d below. [1982] [2017]
2. At the last regularly scheduled meeting of the Senate each year, the Senate shall elect a Chair-elect and a Vice Chair-elect (not from the same School or College) from among those elected members who at that time are in their first year of service in the Senate. [2006] The persons elected shall at that time become members of the Executive Committee, shall succeed to the offices of Chair-elect and Vice Chair-elect the following July first, and shall succeed to the offices of Chair and Vice Chair on July first of the year following their election. [2004] [2006] The Senate shall have the power to fill vacancies and to resolve questions of eligibility for these offices. In the event of a permanent

vacancy in any of the offices, an election shall be held at the next Senate meeting to fill the vacancy. [1989] Until such special election, the vice-chair of the Faculty Senate serves as acting chair. In the case that the vice-chair cannot serve, then the past chair will serve as acting chair until the election is held. [2017]

3. The Vice Chair shall distribute or publish minutes of each open meeting of the Senate to the members of the Faculty Assembly. The Vice Chair shall distribute or publish copies of the agenda in advance of all open meetings of the Senate, when feasible. [1977] [2006]
4. The Senate may hold special sessions when matters of a confidential nature are being considered. Such sessions may be closed sessions, with only members present, executive sessions, with only voting members present, or special executive sessions, with only elected members present. No action taken at a special executive session shall be binding upon the Senate unless approved by a majority vote at a meeting where all voting members may be present. One special executive session shall be held in each academic year. In addition to the mandatory yearly special executive session, the Senate, acting by majority vote, or the Chair of the Faculty Senate, acting in consultation with the Executive Committee, shall have the authority to call a special session at any time. [2003]
5. Unless otherwise herein provided, the Senate may adopt its own regulations and rules of order. In the event it does not do so, the transaction of business shall proceed according to Robert's Rules of Order. [1967]

• **Jurisdiction, Duties, and Powers**

1. The Senate is the representative, deliberative, legislative body of the Faculties. [1967]
2. The Senate may discuss and express its views about any matter affecting the University. [1967]
3. The Senate shall have the power to review and evaluate the educational policies and practices of the University and may make recommendations concerning them to any individual, Faculty, or other 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 several Schools, and reciprocally among Faculty, students, and administration. It is each Faculty's responsibility to devise internal procedures for facilitating communication between that Faculty and its representatives in the Senate. [1971]

4. The Senate shall act in a consultative capacity when the establishment of new schools or colleges is considered or when new degrees are proposed. Its approval is necessary for the granting of honorary degrees. [1967]
5. The Senate is responsible for defining policies and procedures to be applied in cases involving conscience or academic freedom. [1967]
6. Senate actions which require affirmative implementation by the Chancellor shall be either accepted or rejected. In case of rejection, the Chancellor shall then follow the procedures specified in Chapter II, Section B1 of the Code of By-Laws of The Vanderbilt University. The Chancellor shall report at least annually to the Senate on the status of pending Senate recommendations. Should there be a disagreement between the Senate and a School or College as to the jurisdiction of the Senate, the Chancellor shall make a ruling to resolve the issue. [1981] [2016]
7. The Senate may request the Chancellor to call meetings of the Faculty Assembly and take such other steps as it deems wise in carrying out its duties of providing for discussion and furthering communication as described in section 3c above. [1982]
8. The Senate may establish such committees and subcommittees as it chooses to aid in the performance of its duties, and may invite persons not members of the Senate to serve on these committees and subcommittees. [1967]

- **The Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee of the Senate consists of the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Chair-elect and the Vice Chair-elect, and, from the time of their election until July first following, the persons elected to become the next Chair-elect and Vice Chair-elect. [2004] The immediate past chair and vice chair will serve as ex officio members of the committee for one year following their term. [2003] [2006]

- **The Consultative Committee**

Elected members of the Senate in their final year of office, the Chair-elect, the Vice Chair-elect, and the immediate Past-Chair and the immediate Past-Vice Chair of the Senate, constitute the Consultative Committee, which is charged with consulting and advising with the Chancellor and assisting officers on matters of general University concern. [2006] Should there be no Senator from a School serving in his or her final year of office, the Dean of the School shall designate a Senator from that School to serve on the Consultative Committee. The Consultative Committee shall meet with the Chancellor upon his request, or upon request of a majority of the Committee, or by direction of the Senate. No formal votes shall be taken at such consultations, nor shall the Consultative Committee take any action that might commit the Senate against its will. [1982]