

BYLAWS THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

Article I Name

The name of this organization shall be the University Council of Virginia Commonwealth University.

Article II Preamble (Purpose)

Traditionally in an academic community in general and of Virginia Commonwealth University in particular, the faculty, students and administrators participate in the governance of the University. It is recognized that the legal authority to guide and regulate the University is vested by the Commonwealth of Virginia in the Board of Visitors and the President. It is also recognized that as a corollary of academic freedom, the University community has a collective responsibility for guiding the scholarly pursuits of the University. The University Council, as a representative body of faculty, classified staff, students and administrators is established to communicate its views on University-wide issues to those exercising authority over the institution. To that end, the University Council serves to aid communication and understanding among the faculty, staff, students, and administration, and thereby to assist the President of the University to develop and evaluate University programs and policies.

Article III Membership

The University Council shall be composed of the President of the University, and of administrators, faculty, classified staff and student members.

Section 1. Administrators

- a. There shall be thirteen (13) administrative members to include the following:

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Health Sciences, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, Vice President for Research, Vice President for Advancement, Executive Director for University Outreach, Executive Director for Government and Community Relations, Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services, and Executive Director for Human Resources. Four academic deans and two alternates shall be elected by and from the deans of the academic schools.

- b. The following University administrators shall be ex-officio members of the University Council (with voice, without vote): Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs, Associate Vice President for Health Sciences, Chief Information Officer, Technology Services, and University Librarian, VCU Libraries.

Section 2. Faculty

- a. There shall be two (2) faculty members elected from each of the schools. Of the two (2) Faculty members elected per school, at least one (1) shall be tenured except for in the University College, the Honors College, and in the Graduate School. There shall also be two (2) members elected from the administrative professional faculty of the VCU Libraries, two (2) from VCU Life Sciences, and four (4) elected by and from the Faculty Senate.
- b. The elected faculty members of the University Council shall be known as the Faculty Caucus and shall elect a chair from its membership.
- c. Each school shall elect one (1) faculty member to serve as an alternate on the University Council. The Faculty Senate and the professional faculty of the VCU

Libraries, likewise, shall each elect one (1) faculty member to serve as an alternate. The alternate shall have voice and vote when substituting for a faculty member of the University Council.

- d. Nominations of each school's faculty representative shall be made by a Nominating Committee appointed by the dean of each school. This committee shall be composed of faculty eligible to vote. The definition of eligible faculty shall include all full-time faculty members not holding university administrative positions such as "dean" and above. The Nominating Committee shall solicit nominations from throughout their school by mail and email and/or as well as from an open meeting of the school, to which all members of a school's faculty have been invited two (2) weeks in advance and at which nominations have been indicated to be an agenda item. A secret ballot of the nominees shall be mailed to all faculty eligible to vote and shall be returned to the Nominating Committee. An election shall be by a majority vote of those voting.

Section 3. Students

- a. There shall be eleven (11) student members and four (4) alternates to be proportioned as follows: five (5) students plus two (2) alternates shall be appointed by the MCV Campus Student Government Association, and six (6) students plus two (2) alternates shall be appointed by the Monroe Park Campus Student Government Association. Of the eleven (11) student members, there shall be at least one (1) graduate student and one (1) undergraduate student selected from each campus and one (1) professional degree student.

- b. Student representatives and alternates shall be selected in accordance with established procedures for representation on University governance bodies as outlined in the respective governance document of each campus student association. Alternate student representatives, two (2) from each campus, shall have voice and vote when substituting for a student member.
- c. The student government groups on each campus, in conjunction with established graduate student groups, shall ensure that the graduate student positions are filled.

Section 4. Classified Staff

- a. There shall be ten (10) classified staff members and two (2) alternates selected by the Staff Senate.

Article IV
Terms of Office of University Council Members

Terms of office for all members of the University Council shall begin at the start of the academic year.

Section 1. Administrative Members

- a. Other than the four (4) academic deans and two (2) alternates elected by and from the deans of the schools, the administrative members of the University Council named in Article III, Section 1 are members by virtue of their administrative office and there are no specified terms of office. However, the four (4) academic deans and two (2) alternates elected by and from the deans of the schools shall serve for a two (2) year term renewable once for no more than four (4) years. Eligibility for re-election after the completion of two successive terms is allowed

after the dean has sat out a full academic year .

Section 2. Faculty Members

- a. Faculty members, not holding administrative positions such as “dean” and above, elected from the schools, the college, and from VCU Libraries, University College, the Honors College, Life Sciences and the Graduate School shall serve on the University Council for a two (2) year term renewable one time for a total of no more than four (4) consecutive years of service while in the same representative capacity. Eligibility for re-election on completion of two (2) successive terms is allowed after the faculty member has sat out a full academic year. Faculty Senate members shall serve on the University Council for a one (1) year term renewable for three (3) times for a total of no more than four (4) consecutive years of service while in the same representative capacity. Eligibility for re-election of a Faculty Senate member on completion of four (4) successive terms is allowed after the Faculty Senate member has sat out a one (1) year term. If a Faculty Senate President has served on University Council for four (4) years, he/she may continue to serve on University Council for the duration of his/her term of office as Faculty Senate President. A term of less than one-half of an academic year shall not be considered a full term for the purposes of this provision; a term of one-half of an academic year or more shall be considered a full term for the purposes of this provision. There is no limitation on the number of successive terms a faculty member may serve as an alternate.
- b. Faculty representatives from the same school shall serve staggered terms.

Section 3. Student Members

- a. Student members shall serve on the University Council for a one (1) year term and are eligible for re-appointment. No student may serve on the Council for more than four (4) consecutive years while in the same academic program. There is no limitation on the number of successive terms a student may serve as an alternate.

Section 4. Classified Staff Members

Classified staff members shall serve on the University Council for a two (2) year term renewable once for no more than four (4) years. Eligibility for re-selection on completion of two (2) successive terms is allowed after the classified staff member has sat out for a full academic year. A term of less than one-half of an academic year shall not be considered a full term for the purposes of this provision; a term of one-half of an academic year or more shall be considered a full term for the purposes of this provision. There is no limitation on the number of successive terms a classified staff member may serve as an alternate.

Section 5. Vacancies

- a. Should a vacancy occur for any member of the University Council, the alternate chosen by the appropriate representative body shall fulfill the unexpired term. A new alternate shall then be elected or selected.
- b. Administrator vacancies other than Deans shall be filled on an interim basis through appointment by the President of the University.

Article V

Officers

Section 1. Officers of the Council

- a. The President of the University shall serve as Chair of the Council.
- b. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs shall serve as Vice Chair of the Council.

Section 2. Duties of Officers

- a. The President of the University shall serve as Chair of the University Council and shall preside over the Council meetings.
- b. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair.

Section 3. Recording Secretary

The Chair shall annually appoint a Recording Secretary who shall be responsible for preparing the minutes of Council meetings; for ensuring that proper notice is given of Council meetings and sufficient copies of documents or papers pertaining to the actions of the Council are distributed and/or available for review. In addition, the Recording Secretary shall ensure that attendance records are maintained. All records and documents relating to the Council shall be maintained in the President's Office. In the absence of the Recording Secretary, the Chair shall appoint a temporary replacement to assume the duties of the Recording Secretary.

Section 4. The Parliamentarian

The Chair shall annually appoint a Parliamentarian who shall advise the Chair and be available for consultation by any Council member.

Article VI Meetings

Section 1. Schedule

- a. Regular monthly meetings of the Council shall be scheduled during the academic year.
- b. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Chair or shall be called upon written petition of fifteen (15) Council members.

Section 2. Agenda

The agenda for University Council will be set by the Chair and will include any agenda items submitted by members of the Council.

Section 3. Quorum

The quorum for regular and special meetings of the Council shall be a majority of voting members.

Section 4. Observers

Any member of the University faculty, administration, classified staff or student body may attend a meeting of the Council as an observer without voice or vote. Permission to speak may be granted at the discretion of the Chair of the Council.

Section 5. Attendance

Members shall be expected to attend Council meetings. The Recording Secretary shall take attendance at each meeting. If a member is absent and not represented by an alternate for two (2) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings or three (3) regularly scheduled meetings in one academic year, the Recording Secretary shall inform that member's appointing or electing

constituency.

Article VII Functions

Section 1. Policy Recommendations

- a. The University Council shall receive reports or recommendations from appropriate subunits or an assignment from the President of the University to review and recommend new policies or changes in existing policies on various matters of concern to the University community. Reports, recommendations and/or assignments may be in the areas of University-wide policies; such as promotion, tenure, leave, records, and grievances; academic affairs such as new degree proposals, grading and curriculum, curricula plans and policies regarding reorganization, reduction or termination of programs; issues affecting the quality of student life; matters affecting the conduct, climate and support of scholarly activity; and planning of facilities and programs in pursuit of University goals and objectives. Upon review by the appropriate committee of the University Council, the Council shall formulate, deliberate, and vote on final recommendations to the President of the University.
- b. In performing its function, the University Council may initiate discussion and review recommendations and reports from other sources. Issues considered by the University Council shall be comprehensive in nature, entailing broad policy or governance principles. In order to ensure that the various University constituencies have adequate time to provide feedback to University Council on

proposed policies, and other matters of concern, the Council will, except in emergency situations, ensure the Faculty Senate, the MCV Campus Student Government Association, the Monroe Park Campus Student Government Association, and the Staff Senate receive copies of pertinent reports, policies, and other matters of concern at least one (1) month before Council issues any recommendations on matters of major University concern. Recommendations of the Council shall be transmitted directly to the President of the University.

Section 2. School Governance

- a. The University Council shall ensure that school governance bylaws have been developed and adopted by each school. The nature of the school governance structure shall be left to the individual school.
- b. The Committee on Faculty Affairs shall regularly review the governance structure of each school in order to ensure that there is representative governance in each school.
- c. Representative governance shall be defined as the right of participation in the school or college's governance structure by all full-time faculty members (including tenure and non-tenure track) who hold appointments or joint appointments in that school or college. Participation includes the right to discuss on the floor and vote on all matters coming before meetings. Part-time faculty members should have the prerogative to take part in meetings of the faculty. Voting privileges for part-time faculty should be decided by each school or college.

Article VIII Committees

Section 1. Creation and Classification

- a. There shall be two types of committees: standing committees and special committees. There shall be four (4) standing committees of the University Council and a Faculty Caucus:
 1. Committee on Academic Affairs
 2. Committee on Faculty Affairs
 3. Committee on Student Affairs
 4. Committee on Classified Staff Affairs
- b. The Chair and/or University Council shall have the power to establish any special committees deemed necessary to the performance of its functions. If it deems it necessary, a special committee may include other VCU employees who are not University Council members.
- c. All elected members of committees shall serve for a term concurrent with and not to exceed their terms on University Council.

Section 2. Committee on Academic Affairs

Members of the Committee on Academic Affairs shall include the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs who shall chair the committee; six (6) faculty members selected by the Faculty Caucus (three from each campus); two (2) administrators elected by and from the four (4) deans serving on the University Council; two (2) students elected by the eleven (11) student members of the University Council (at least one shall be a graduate student). The Vice President for Health Sciences, the Vice President for Research, and the University Librarian of

VCU Libraries shall serve ex-officio (with voice, no vote). Among its duties shall be to:

- a. Serve as a deliberative and consultative body with authority to study, report and recommend action on matters relating to the curriculum and academic policies of the University.
- b. Receive, review and upon approval, transmit to the Council proposals for new degrees, policies for termination of degrees, and other academic plans and policies of institutional importance.

Section 3. Committee on Faculty Affairs

Members of the Committee on Faculty Affairs shall include: eight (8) faculty members elected by and from the Faculty Caucus, four (4) from each campus, one (1) of whom must be a faculty senator. The Faculty Caucus shall elect one (1) of its members to chair the committee. This committee shall also include two (2) administrators elected by and from administrators serving on the Council, two (2) students elected by and from student members of the Council and two (2) classified staff elected by and from the classified staff members of the Council. This committee shall:

Serve as a deliberative and consultative body with authority to study, report, and recommend for or against approval by the University Council policies and procedures bearing on faculty concerns, and quality of the work environment related to issues such as recruitment, appointment, promotion, tenure, retirement, educational leave, and fringe benefits.

Section 4. Committee on Student Affairs

Members of the Committee on Student Affairs shall consist of nine (9) students selected as follows: three (3) students from the Monroe Park Campus appointed by and from the student members of the University Council; two (2) students from the MCV Campus appointed by and

from the student members of the University Council; two (2) students appointed by the MCV Campus Student Government Association and two (2) students appointed by the Monroe Park Campus Student Government Association; two (2) faculty members elected by and from the Faculty Caucus of the Council; and two (2) administrators, the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services and one (1) administrative member elected by and from the administrative members of the Council; and two (2) classified staff elected by and from the classified staff members of the Council; the Dean of Student Affairs for the Monroe Park Campus; the Dean of Student Affairs for the MCV Campus, and the student representative to the Board of Visitors shall serve as ex-officio members (with voice, no vote). A student member shall chair this committee. This committee shall:

Serve as a deliberative and consultative body with authority to study, report, and recommend for or against approval by the University Council policies and procedures bearing on student concerns and the quality of student life.

Section 5. Committee on Classified Staff Affairs

Members of the Committee on Classified Staff Affairs shall consist of six (6) classified staff members elected by and from the University Council classified staff members; two (2) faculty elected by and from the University Council faculty members; two (2) administrators elected by and from the University Council administrative members; and two (2) students elected by and from the student members of the University Council. A classified staff member shall chair this committee. This committee shall:

Serve as a deliberative and consultative body with authority to study, report, and recommend for or against approval by the University Council policies and procedures bearing on

classified staff concerns, and the quality of the work environment.

Article IX Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the University Council in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the University Council may adopt.

Article X Amendment and Periodic Review of Bylaws

Section 1.

- a. These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the University Council by a two-thirds vote of the Council membership provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting. Such amendments shall not become effective until approved by the President and Board of Visitors.
- b. A review of these bylaws shall occur at least every five (5) years.

Approved by University Council: March 21, 1982

Effective: March 21, 1982

Revised document approved by University Council: May 1, 1986

Revised document approved by University Council: April 6, 1994

Revised document approved by University Council: October 2, 1997

Revised document approved by University Council: May 9, 2002

Revised document approved by VCU Board of Visitors: May 17, 2002

Revised document approved by University Council: May 5, 2011

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