Academic Assembly: Bylaws

Modified: February 27, 2017

I. Scope of the Assembly

Seattle University's mission defines teaching and learning as its foundational dimension. As the core providers of this foundational activity, the university faculty must play an active and integral role in the shared governance of those processes which influence the success of the educational mission.

The role of the Assembly will be to provide an elected faculty body that will serve as a strong and coherent faculty voice in decision-making in academic matters. As the voice of faculty in academic matters, this body will play a key leadership role in determining university policy in all academic areas, including:

- Matters relating to academic quality
- Terms of faculty service (faculty welfare issues)
- Student recruitment and enrollment
- Curricular and co-curricular programs that require significant new resources or may substantially change the academic culture of the university
- Curricula that require coordination across programs

The Assembly will also represent faculty interests in areas which influence student learning including:

- Strategic planning
- Budgets
- Organizational structures
- Technological support
- Physical facilities

II. Authority

The Academic Assembly reports to the Provost, to whom the Board of Trustees and President have delegated responsibility for academic affairs. However, the university recognizes that the special status of faculty requires that their role be more than advisory or recommendatory. Accordingly, the success of the Academic Assembly requires that this body bring faculty representation together with senior academic administrators (either Provost and/or Associate Provost) for consultation and deliberation on academic issues. Therefore, the Provost and/or Associate Provost will serve as *ex officio* members of the Assembly.

Through this model, the assembly will provide a forum where faculty and administrative perspectives can be shared and where early consultation, agreement over processes, adequate feedback and clear communication of decisions can take place. The goal of this process is faculty and administrative consensus on academic decisions. In cases where the Provost makes a

decision at odds with the recommendations of the Assembly, they will be required to provide to the Assembly a written communication of the reasons for that decision.

III. **Membership**

Members:

The membership will include 22 faculty representatives (effective Fall 2014) from the schools. All tenure-track faculty and long-term contract faculty are eligible for election. Apportionment of representatives to Academic Assembly will be reviewed periodically. Each school or unit will have one base representative plus additional representatives determined by its proportional number of full-time-equivalent faculty. The distribution of the representatives (modified Spring 2011 and Spring 2014) will be as follows:

- College of Arts & Sciences, 5 (1 base plus 4 proportional)
- College of Science & Engineering, 3 (1 base plus 2 proportional)
- Albers School of Business & Economics, 2 (1 base plus 1 proportional)
- College of Education, 2 (1 base plus 1 proportional)
- College of Nursing, 2 (1 base plus 1 proportional)
- School of Theology & Ministry, 1 (1 base only)
- School of Law, 2 (1 base plus 1 proportional)
- Lemieux Library, 1 (1 base only)
- Matteo Ricci College, 1 (1 base only)
- School of New and Continuing Studies, 1 (1 base only)
- Part-Time Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members, 2 (2 base)

The Provost (Associate Provost) is an *ex officio* member of the Assembly. The Associate Provost for Academic Achievement will serve as an *ex officio* member of the Assembly. Representatives of SGSU and of the Graduate Student Council may also serve as *ex officio* members. *Ex officio* members do not vote. Unless otherwise specified, the term "member" refers to voting members.

In schools with more than one representative, at least 50% of the representatives should be tenured. Non-tenure track faculty members are encouraged to participate.

The Assembly oversees the election of its part-time non-tenure track members. Eligible part-time non-tenure-track faculty members must have at least the equivalent of three quarters to two semesters of teaching experience at SU prior to their service on the Assembly. After nominations are gathered from across campus, the part-time faculty as a whole elects these members from the pool of candidates. Once elected, part-time non-tenure-track members serve one-year terms, with the possibility for re-election to subsequent terms. Membership on the Assembly requires a year-long commitment, regardless of whether the part-time faculty members are teaching continuously throughout the year. They receive a stipend for their year of service.

Each full-time Assembly member will be given one five-credit dedicated quarter-course release or an equivalent compensation for each full three-year term served. (Examples of equivalent

compensation include, but are not limited to, a stipend, release from other university responsibilities, or funds to hire an assistant.) Members serving terms shorter than three years will receive compensation in proportion to the length of their term. Normally members will receive their compensation during their final year on the Assembly, unless other arrangements are made with the Dean. In addition, the President and Vice-President of the Assembly will be given one five-credit dedicated quarter course release or an equivalent compensation during each year of service.

The President of the Assembly has the right to ask a member to resign after repeated unexplained absences.

Mode of Elections:

The Dean of each College or School (or the Librarian, in the case of the library) must establish and publicize a period for nominations. This period may not be less than two weeks. Any eligible voter may submit nominations for the Assembly. Anyone eligible to serve in the Assembly can be nominated. A person who is eligible can self-nominate. All those who are nominated and are eligible to serve shall be submitted to the vote of the eligible voters.

If a member resigns from the Academic Assembly, the School, College, or Library will hold an election to fill that position for the unexpired term.

IV. **Officers**

The officers of the Academic Assembly shall be President and two Vice Presidents, one in charge of overseeing program review and the other in charge of chairing the faculty handbook committee. The President and the Vice President in charge of overseeing program review must be tenured faculty members. All voting members of the Academic Assembly are eligible to serve as Vice President in charge of Faculty Handbook. Their term of office shall be for two years or for the duration of the Assembly term, whichever shall be the shorter.

The President shall preside at meetings of the Academic Assembly. The President shall call special meetings of the Assembly upon conference with the Vice Presidents, and at such times as in the President's judgment the interest of the Academic Assembly requires.

When the President is unable to attend and preside over a particular meeting, the Vice President in charge of overseeing program review shall act in their absence. If neither the President nor the Vice President in charge of overseeing program review is able to attend or preside over a particular meeting, then the Vice President in charge of the faculty handbook review process shall take over for that meeting. In the event that the President is unable to complete their term, the Vice President in charge of overseeing program review will become Acting President until a new election for President is held. Such an election will take place at the earliest possible meeting after the presidency becomes vacant. The new President shall serve for the remainder of the previous President's term. If either Vice President is unable to complete their term, an election to replace that Vice President will be held at the earliest possible meeting of the

Academic Assembly. The new Vice President shall serve for the remainder of the previous Vice President's term. The respective duties of the President and Vice Presidents shall be clarified.

V. **Meetings and Voting Rules**

Meetings of the Academic Assembly shall be open to all faculty members. Any faculty member may address the Assembly by invitation from the President of the Assembly, or upon approval of the request by the President of the Assembly, provided the request is made one week before the next Academic Assembly meeting.

The Academic Assembly shall meet fortnightly during the academic year. Meetings may be cancelled or additional meetings held at the discretion of the President of the Assembly.

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the voting members of the Academic Assembly. The vote of the Assembly will be published. It is desired that this governance model will allow for extensive consultation with faculty. In cases where time is of the essence, and the Assembly is unable to obtain a quorum, the recommendation of the available members may be used as an expression of faculty voice.

Any member may move that voting be conducted by secret ballot. Such a motion requires a second. In the event that such a motion is made and seconded, the assembly will vote, by open ballot, on the request. The motion requires a majority of those voting for passage.

The minutes shall reflect the division of the Assembly for any votes taken (i.e. the number of votes for and against a motion). At the request of the Assembly, the minutes shall reflect the votes of the individual members of the Assembly, except in the event of a secret ballot. A draft of the minutes from a meeting shall be distributed to the members of the Assembly no later than one week after the meeting takes place.

A majority of the voting members present at any duly authorized meeting may call for the Assembly to meet in an executive session. Only voting members of the Assembly may attend such an executive session meeting. Such executive session meetings shall be held either immediately following the vote, or at some future time and place designated by a majority of the voting members.

The Academic Assembly may vote by e-mail ballot without a meeting on committee appointments and stylistic matters on reports already approved. The President of the Assembly shall send e-mails to all voting members of the Assembly with the question presented. E-mail voting shall be permitted for five days after the President sends the e-mail presenting the questions. An affirmative vote by e-mail requires a majority of all voting members or the Academic Assembly. On the request of two voting members of the Academic Assembly, the matter will be put on the agenda for the next regular or special meeting of the Assembly and no action may be taken as a result of the e-mail voting.

The Assembly normally may not vote on any issue, except for points of procedure, with less than one week's notice that a vote is to occur. Notice may be provided by scheduling the vote on a

distributed agenda, announcing the vote at a meeting of the Assembly, or announcing the vote by e-mail to members of the Assembly. However, this restriction will be waived if an "expedited vote" on the issue is approved by an absolute majority of the voting members of the Assembly. Any voting member of the Assembly may propose an expedited vote.

Academic Assembly will maintain a list of its subcommittees, those committees to which the Assembly is expected to appoint members, and those committees that report to Academic Assembly but are not its subcommittees.

VI. **Amendments**

Amendments to these by-laws require a majority vote at any meeting of the Academic Assembly subsequent to the meeting at which said amendment was first introduced and at the concurrence of the Provost.

Table 1: Distribution of Representatives

FTEs Based on June 2011 and June 2014 Revisions

School/College/Division	Base Representation	Proportional Representation	Total Representation
College of Arts & Sciences	1	4	5
College of Science & Engineering	1	2	3
Albers School of Business & Economics	1	1	2
College of Education	1	1	2
College of Nursing	1	1	2
School of Theology and Ministry	1	1	1
School of Law	1	1	2
Matteo Ricci College	1	0	1
Lemieux Library	1	0	1
School of New and Continuing Studies	1	0	1
Part-Time Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members	2	0	2
TOTAL			22

Editorial Note: Academic Assembly has elected to use the gender-neutral terms "they" and "their" in place of "he/she" and "his/her."