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## Constitution of the Faculty Senate of Butler University

October 18, 2011; May 9, 2014, September 18, 2015; March 31, 2020

### PROLOGUE

The purpose of this constitution is to create a senate whose objective is to represent the faculty members of Butler University in all areas where they have authority or interest. For the purposes of this constitution and the attending bylaws, the term faculty member refers to all full-time teaching faculty and professional librarians of the university both tenure and non-tenure tracks.

### ARTICLE I. Name

The name of the body shall be the Faculty Senate of Butler University.

### ARTICLE II. Purposes and Responsibilities

**Section 1.** The faculty is the professional body of the University primarily responsible for educational policies, faculty productivity, curriculum, and instructional practices. The Faculty Senate is the forum and deliberative body for the expression of the faculty's recommendations regarding these matters. The Faculty Senate also has interests in the economic welfare of the institution and in protecting the rights and interests of the faculty.

**Section 2.** The Faculty Senate, or bodies to which it delegates its authority, is the primary body with responsibility to formulate, review, revise, and adopt for recommendation to the President, all University policies having to do with the following matters:

1. Curriculum and student learning;
2. Standards and criteria for determining faculty promotion, tenure, and evaluation;
3. Aspects of student life which relate to the teaching and learning policies of the institution;
4. Granting of degrees and setting of degree requirements;
5. Scholarship and creative efforts of faculty;
6. Other matters of primarily academic or instructional import.

**Section 3.** The Faculty Senate shares with other units of the University responsibility to formulate, review, revise, and adopt for recommendation to the President, University policies having to do with the following matters:

1. Size and composition of the student body in relation to educational resources;
2. Institutional mission including the creation and discontinuation of academic program areas;

3. Existing or proposed physical facilities with special emphasis on those having primarily an educational purpose;
4. Budgeting priorities that affect educational programs;
5. Matters relating to faculty compensation;
6. Selection procedures for academic administrative personnel;
7. Faculty productivity;
8. Other matters of primarily administrative nature that also have significant academic or instructional import.

**Section 4.** Recommendations of the Faculty Senate shall be forwarded to the Provost. The Provost will inform the chair of the Faculty Senate of the disposition of recommendations. Recommendations passed by the Faculty Senate that require the approval of the Board of Trustees shall be forwarded through the President. If the President of the University cannot support a recommendation of the Faculty Senate, he or she shall ask the Faculty Senate to designate a representative to present the views of the Faculty Senate to the board.

### **ARTICLE III. Senators**

**Section 1.** Each college and the library shall be entitled to representation in the Faculty Senate according to the following method. In the spring of each year when representation is determined for the following academic year, the total number of full-time faculty in the college or library (tenure and non-tenure track) at that time is divided by the number 10 and rounded to the nearest whole number. The result is the number of senate seats for each college and the library in the coming academic year.

**Section 2.** Each college must produce written procedures for how it will elect its senators. While each college can have its own procedures, they must conform to these requirements:

1. Senators must be full-time faculty members and must be elected by March 30 for what will normally be two-year terms except as necessary to ensure a staggering of terms for a college or the library. Terms begin on August 15 and end on August 14 two calendar years later.
2. A faculty member may serve multiple terms as a senator over the faculty member's career at Butler University so long as the faculty member does not serve more than six consecutive years as a senator.
3. Senators must be elected by the faculty (not appointed by deans).
4. Senators who miss more than three Senate meetings in an academic year will not be eligible to return to the senate the following year.
5. Senators are responsible for informing the faculty in their colleges of senate proceedings and discussions and are responsible for bringing concerns of their faculty colleagues to the senate as needed.

### **ARTICLE IV. Officers**

**Section 1.** The chair and vice chair of the Faculty Senate shall be elected from and by the entire faculty to serve simultaneous two-year terms. Such an election will be held no later than March 1 of the academic year in which the Chair's term of office ends. The election shall be conducted by the Faculty Senate. The chair and vice chair will take office on August 15 and serve through August 14 two calendar years later. A faculty member may serve multiple terms as chair over the faculty member's career at Butler University so long as the faculty member does not serve more than two consecutive two-year terms as chair. A faculty member may serve multiple terms as vice chair over the faculty member's career at Butler University so long as the faculty member does not serve more than two consecutive two-year terms as vice chair. The vice chair will be a full voting member of the Faculty Senate but is not a representative of a particular college. The chair votes only in the case of ties and does not represent any particular college.

**Section 2.** Responsibilities of the chair include the following:

1. Serve as presiding officer for meetings of the Faculty Senate; Represent the faculty at meetings of the Board of Trustees and other administrative meetings as the need arises;
2. Oversee the creation and full distribution of Faculty Senate minutes and other documents to all faculty members;
3. Coordinate the formation of faculty grievance committees;
4. Serve as Chief Faculty Marshall for commencement ceremonies.

**Section 3.** The responsibilities of the vice chair include the following:

1. Fulfill all duties of the chair in his or her absence;
2. Assist the chair in coordinating Senate elections, appointments to various councils and Board of Trustees committees, and honorary degree nominations;
3. Perform other duties as requested by the chair of the Faculty Senate.

**Section 4.** Parliamentarian

1. The parliamentarian must be a full-time faculty member or a faculty member emeritus but may not be a voting member of the senate.
2. The parliamentarian shall be nominated by the chair and approved by a majority vote of the senate. The nomination and approval process is to begin after January 1 and be completed by April 1 in years when there is no election for chair and vice chair.
3. The term of the parliamentarian shall be for two years beginning on August 15 and ending on August 14 two calendar years later. A parliamentarian may serve an unlimited number of terms.

4. The parliamentarian shall assure that rules of the senate are followed during senate meetings as outlined in Article IX below. The parliamentarian may also be called upon to rule on procedures between senate meetings.
5. The parliamentarian shall endeavor to attend all meetings of the senate. In the absence of the parliamentarian, the vice chair of the Senate shall fulfill the Parliamentarian's duties during meetings. The vice chair would then forfeit her or his voting rights during such a meeting.

#### **ARTICLE V. Relations with Board of Trustees**

**Section 1.** The chair of the Faculty Senate shall represent the senate at each meeting of the Board of Trustees as a guest of the board.

**Section 2.** For the core committees of the Board of Trustees, the chair shall nominate faculty members to attend all meetings as guests of the committees. These appointments shall be subject to approval by the Faculty Senate, the President of the University, and the chairs of the respective board committees. The appointees shall assume their duties on June 1 of each year.

#### **ARTICLE VI. Meetings**

The Faculty Senate shall hold regular meetings at least once every month during the academic year. In addition, special meetings shall be called upon petition to the senate chair from 20 percent of the Senate membership.

#### **ARTICLE VII. Quorum**

A quorum at any regular or special meeting of the Faculty Senate will consist of two-thirds of the members of the Faculty Senate.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. Amendment of the Constitution**

Amendments to this constitution must first be approved by the Senate upon the motion of any senator. To take effect they must be approved by a two-thirds vote of all faculty members voting at a special meeting or through an electronic ballot and by the Board of Trustees of Butler University. Senators must have 30 days written notice of the amendment before the vote is taken and a quorum must be present at the meeting.

#### **ARTICLE IX. Procedural Rules for Meeting**

The Faculty Senate shall have the authority to establish its own rules and procedures and to implement the general principles established in the constitution. Where no rules are specified, the senate will adhere to standard parliamentary procedure as outlined in the most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*. The Parliamentarian has the

responsibility and authority to assure that proper procedures are followed and to rule on any challenges on procedural grounds.

#### **ARTICLE X. Exclusions**

Nothing in this constitution alters the traditional authority of each college over its unique professional standards and regular and special functions.

#### **ARTICLE XI. Effect**

This constitution shall go into effect when ratified by two-thirds of the faculty members voting and upon the approval of the Board of Trustees of Butler University, but not sooner than June 1, 2008

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**Bylaws of the Faculty Senate of Butler University**  
**Amended and approved by the Faculty Senate, October 2, 2012;**  
**March 4, 2014;**  
**December 6, 2016;**  
**February 4, 2020;**  
**April 27, 2021;**  
**April 5, 2022; April 19, 2022; April 23, 2024**

**Preamble**

The Faculty Senate is the main deliberative body through which the faculty participate in shared governance at the university level. As provided in the Constitution of the Faculty Senate of Butler University, the Faculty Senate's primary purpose is to represent the faculty in matters affecting all aspects of Butler University's academic life, including its educational policies and curriculum at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Faculty Senate also represents the faculties' interests in the general and economic welfare of the institution and in protecting the rights and interests of the faculty.

**ARTICLE I. Faculty Senate Committees**

**Section 1.** The Faculty Senate's standing and special committees assist the Faculty Senate in fulfilling its purpose by developing and making policy recommendations to the Faculty Senate within their areas of responsibility, and by carrying out the Faculty Senate's resolutions within those areas. Ultimate faculty responsibility for matters that fall within a committee's area of responsibility remains with the Faculty Senate. The standing Faculty Senate committees are University Curriculum, Academic and Student Affairs, Faculty Affairs, Professional Appeals, University Promotion and Tenure, and Faculty Nomination.

**Section 2.** By March 31 of each academic year, the full-time faculty members in each college and the library shall elect full-time faculty members to serve as their standing committee representatives filling the open committee positions for the upcoming academic year. Standing committee members need not be senators, although each standing committee must designate a member to attend and represent the committee at senate meetings. By April 30, the standing committee members who will serve during the upcoming academic year must elect one of their number who is currently serving on the committee to act as committee chair during the upcoming academic year. If the committee members determine that the committee should have co-chairs for the upcoming academic year, they may elect two eligible members to serve in that capacity. The current committee chair is responsible for conducting the election of the upcoming committee chair and

reporting the election results to the Chair of the Faculty Senate prior to that date. In the event that a standing committee fails to elect a committee chair by April 30, the current committee chair and the current Chair of the Faculty Senate shall jointly appoint one of the eligible members to serve as committee chair for the upcoming academic year.

**Section 3.** The term of standing committee service will be for two years, and the standing committee appointments will be staggered. No more than one-half of the membership of any standing committee will normally be replaced in any year, with exceptions necessitated by resignations and retirements. Standing committee appointees will take office on August 15 for the coming year unless they are filling a vacated position. The Chair of the Faculty Senate may increase or decrease committee member term lengths to retain the balance of new and continuing committee members. No faculty member may serve more than two consecutive two-year terms on any standing committee.

**Section 4.** The Faculty Senate standing committees, their areas of responsibility, composition, non-voting ex-officio members, and standing subcommittees (if any) shall be as follows.

1. University Curriculum Committee with responsibility for undergraduate and graduate curricular matters, including policy recommendations for degree requirements, the addition or deletion of degrees or majors, curricular issues affecting more than one college, and matters related to the university core curriculum (e.g., approval of new core courses, changes to core courses, and deleting core courses). This committee shall also be responsible for ensuring that each college has adopted written curricular decision making procedures, and that those procedures establish a curricular decision making process that maintains faculty control over that college's curriculum and is independent of that college's administration. Policies and procedures for curricular change are contained in the Guide to University Curriculum Committee Authority and Review, which is maintained by the committee and made public by the Faculty Senate.

Composition: Three members from LAS, one member from each of the other colleges, one faculty librarian.

Non-voting ex-officio members: The senior academic officer or designated representative, the faculty director of the core curriculum, and the registrar or designated representative.

2. Academic and Student Affairs Committee with responsibility for policy recommendations regarding teaching, student learning, support services for academic programs, academic quality, institutional mission, the creation or discontinuation of academic programs or units, and the

admission, enrollment, and retention of students.

Composition: Three members from LAS, one member from each of the other colleges, one faculty librarian.

Non-voting ex-officio members: The senior academic officer or designated representative.

3. Faculty Affairs Committee with responsibility for policy recommendations regarding the status, rights, and responsibilities of faculty, including faculty hiring, rank and compensation, annual evaluations, promotion, tenure, leaves, and emeritus status. This committee is also responsible for policy recommendations regarding the selection of academic administrative personnel.

Composition: One member from each of the colleges, one faculty librarian.

Non-voting ex-officio members: The senior academic officer or designated representative.

4. Professional Appeals Committee with responsibility for deliberating on faculty grievances, and for making policy and procedural recommendations regarding the faculty grievance policy.

Composition: One tenured faculty member from each of the colleges and one faculty librarian at the rank of associate professor or above. Deans, associate deans, and assistant deans in the colleges or the library may not serve on this committee.

- E. University Promotion and Tenure Committee with responsibility for conducting an annual review of promotion and tenure applications after all college-level evaluations are complete.

Composition: One tenured faculty member from each of the colleges and one faculty librarian at the rank of associate professor or above. If possible, each faculty member or librarian should have prior college- or library-level Professional Standards Committee (“PSC”) service, but not be currently serving on that committee. When a college or the library does not have a faculty member or faculty librarian satisfying the preceding criteria, a faculty member or faculty librarian who is not currently serving on the college’s or library’s PSC may fill the college’s spot on the University Promotion and Tenure Committee. When a college or the library does not have a faculty member or librarian satisfying either of the preceding criteria, a faculty member or librarian who is currently serving on the college’s or library’s PSC, but who is not the chair of that



committee, may fill the college's or library's spot on the University Promotion and Tenure Committee. The term limit in Article I, Section 3 shall not apply to this committee for colleges with fewer than ten tenured faculty members or to the library when it has fewer than three faculty librarians at the rank of associate professor or above.

F. The Faculty Nomination Committee with responsibility for suggesting names to the senate chair when the chair receives requests for faculty representatives on various special committees, including core Board of Trustee committees, task forces, and other university obligations.

Composition: Three members from LAS, one member from each of the other colleges, one faculty librarian.

In the event of administrative reorganization, the new officer charged with the central duties of the officer listed shall assume the ex-officio position for all Faculty Senate committees.

**Section 5.** The chair and vice chair of the senate and the chairs of the standing senate committees will meet as needed to discuss senate policies, procedures, and operations, and may bring recommendations to the senate floor in the form of written motions made by the Faculty Senate Vice Chair. Such motions do not require a second.

**Section 6.** The Faculty Senate may create special committees to address specific issues, regardless of whether those issues fall within a standing committee's area of responsibility. When the Faculty Senate creates a special committee, the Senate Chair appoints that committee's members unless the Faculty Senate suspends the Senate Chair's appointment authority for that committee by a two-thirds vote before the chair's appointments are made. When a suspension occurs, the Faculty Senate must appoint the special committee's members. Each special committee created by a Faculty Senate automatically terminates at the end of that Faculty Senate's annual term unless the Faculty Senate explicitly authorizes a duration for the special committee that extends beyond that date.

## **ARTICLE II. Faculty Senate Committee** **Procedures**

**Section 1.** Each standing and special committee shall meet at least once per month during the fall and spring terms, and may meet during the summer as needed. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, a committee will not hold a summer meeting unless all members who are outside of their contract period receive supplemental compensation for the time they spend participating in, and

preparing for, that meeting. Although a committee's chair has discretion to set the committee's meeting schedule, the chair must call a committee meeting upon receiving a request for a meeting from at least one-third of the committee's members.

**Section 2.** Committee meetings are open meetings for all full-time faculty members unless the committee is discussing an individual personnel matter or ongoing litigation. Any full-time faculty member may attend any open meeting and express that member's views to the committee during the meeting. Each chair must ensure that any full-time faculty member who contacts that chair asking to attend an upcoming meeting is notified of the meeting's time and place. To avoid any uncertainty, all meetings of the Professional Appeals Committee connected with specific faculty grievances and all meetings of the University Promotion and Tenure Committee connected with the review of specific promotion and tenure applications are closed meetings where only the committee members and those they invite may be present and participate.

**Section 3.** Each committee shall forward its policy recommendations to the Faculty Senate in the form of written motions. Regardless of whether the committee chair is also a senator, the committee chair is authorized to make committee-approved motions in the Senate without the need for a second.

**Section 4.** Each committee shall be responsible for periodically reporting committee activities to the Faculty Senate. Each committee chair shall ensure that the committee keeps minutes of its meetings and shall provide those minutes to the Faculty Senate Secretary, who will make the minutes available to the faculty at large. Each semester, each committee chair shall also submit a written report summarizing the activities of the committee during that semester to the Faculty Senate Chair for inclusion in the agenda of the final Senate meeting of that semester.

**Section 5:** Each standing committee is expected to coordinate with other committees as appropriate and necessary for carrying out its responsibilities. Standing committees may constitute ad hoc subcommittees, as needed, to conduct their business. Standing committee chairs should report the composition and charge of each of their committees' ad hoc subcommittees to the Faculty Senate. Each ad hoc subcommittee created by a standing committee automatically terminates at the end of that standing committee's annual term unless the standing committee explicitly authorizes a duration for the ad hoc subcommittee that extends beyond that date.

### **ARTICLE III. Faculty Senate Meeting and Voting Procedures**

**Section 1.** The Faculty Senate shall hold regular meetings at least once every month during the fall and spring terms, and at least twice during the summer

terms (collectively, these latter two meetings are referred to as the “summer meetings”). Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, the Faculty Senate will not hold a summer meeting unless all senators on 9-month contracts receive supplemental compensation for the time they spend participating in, and preparing for, that meeting. The Chair may cancel any regular scheduled meeting where there is no business to conduct at that meeting.

**Section 2.** The Chair may call special meetings of the Faculty Senate when the Chair deems such meetings are necessary. The Chair must call a special meeting upon receipt of a petition requesting such a meeting from at least 20 percent of the senators. Senators must receive notice of a special meeting at least seven calendar days prior to that meeting and only business mentioned in that notice may be conducted during the special meeting.

**Section 3.** All faculty members will have access to the agendas and minutes of the senate in a timely fashion; however, the agendas for the summer meetings identified in Section 1 shall be made available to the faculty at least seven calendar days prior to the scheduled meeting.

**Section 4.** The Chair and Vice Chair will determine whether each Faculty Senate meeting is held in-person, remotely, or a combination thereof, with the exception that any summer meetings include a remote option. In advance of each meeting, the Chair and Vice Chair must inform the senators how they may participate in that meeting. They must also establish procedures to ensure that a quorum is present. The Chair shall ensure that such procedures are shared with all senators in a timely manner.

**Section 5.** Except as provided in Article II, Section 3, regarding the committee chairs’ ability to make motions on behalf of their committees, only senators may introduce motions, call for any other formal action, or vote on issues before the senate. However, senate meetings are open to non-senators unless closed or in executive session described under the procedures in this section. At open senate meetings, faculty members may attend and be recognized to speak on an equal basis with senators. There will a minimum of one closed meeting per semester and will be scheduled at the joint discretion of the Chair and Vice Chair. There are two additional procedures for closing a senate meeting. First, upon the request of at least one-fifth of the senators, before or during a regularly scheduled meeting, the chair will close that meeting or upcoming meeting. Second, the chair and vice chair may close a regularly scheduled meeting, or a portion of such a meeting, by jointly declaring that it must enter into executive session. Whenever a meeting is closed or in executive session, only the senators, special invitees, the chair, the vice chair, the parliamentarian, and the secretary of the Faculty Senate may be present and participate. A majority of the senators present at the closed meeting must approve special invitee status for each proposed guest.

**Section 6.** Substantive motions such as approval of new policies or curricular changes proposed in one meeting may not be voted on until a subsequent meeting unless two-thirds of senators present vote to suspend this rule and permit an immediate vote on that motion. During summer meetings, senators may also approve by a majority vote holding an electronic vote on a substantive motion within two weeks of the meeting's end to give the senators additional time to discuss the motion and to seek the input of their constituent faculty members. Procedural motions such as a motion to adjourn or limit debate may be voted upon immediately.

**Section 7.** Voting on the election of the Faculty Senate Chair and Vice Chair must be done by all full-time faculty members rather than solely the Faculty Senate. Furthermore, other agenda issues may be put to a vote of all full-time faculty members if at least 40 percent of the senate present and voting demands it.

**Section 8.** Except as otherwise provided in this section, all votes by the Faculty Senate must be conducted by confidential electronic ballot during the relevant meeting with only Senators present at that meeting eligible to vote. The Chair and Vice Chair must establish procedures necessary to ensure that votes are properly collected and verified, and the Chair shall distribute those procedures to the senators at the start of each Faculty Senate term.

#### **ARTICLE IV. Load Release for Senate Officers**

Normally, the chair of the senate will receive two course releases per academic year, and the vice chair will receive one course release per academic year. The respective deans and department chairs/program directors must be consulted and approve of the course release and finalize details of teaching assignments. In rare cases, it may not be possible to provide this course release. In such cases, the officer(s) will be asked to serve with reduced or no course release. Funding for course releases will come from the Provost's office at a rate equal to the average cost for adjunct replacements in LAS and the core curriculum. Should the costs for release time exceed this amount, additional funding would be supplied by the chair's or vice-chair's college and/or department.

#### **ARTICLE V. Amendment of Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the Faculty Senate present and voting at a regularly scheduled meeting. Written notice to all faculty members of the proposed amendments will be provided prior to the Faculty Senate meeting at which such a vote is to be taken. A quorum must be present at the Faculty Senate meeting in order for a vote to change the bylaws to be taken.

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The Board of Trustees has ultimate authority over this handbook and over working conditions at the University, within the parameters established by local, state, and federal law. It is in the best interest of all parties, however, for appropriate consultation to occur before changes are made to the Faculty Handbook. To that end, the following protocol for changing the handbook should be observed:

- A. Chapter 10 should be changed only after a vote of the Faculty Senate. As described in Items 10.30.10 and 10.30.20, special conditions are necessary before changes can be made to the constitutions and bylaws. Should the President make changes to the administrative structure of the University, these changes should be presented to the Faculty and the appropriate changes to Item 10.10.20 should be approved by Faculty Senate before they are included in the Faculty Handbook.
- B. Chapter 20 may be changed by the Board of Trustees after consultation with the faculty through the regular governance structure of the Faculty Senate and subsequent to review and recommendation by the President.
- C. The Faculty Handbook will be updated annually. The vice chair of the Faculty Senate is charged with this responsibility. The vice chair will appoint a subcommittee to execute the update, made up of one faculty member from each college, a faculty librarian, and the Provost or her/his designee (in an ex-officio capacity). This committee will operate as a subcommittee of the Faculty Affairs Committee and is charged with completing and submitting its work for review by the Faculty Senate no later than April 1 of each academic year. The vice chair will then add to the handbook any policies approved by the Board of Trustees at their spring meeting and forward this final version of the handbook to the chair and provost. This will then be the official version of the Faculty Handbook for the following academic year.
- D. The chair of the Faculty Senate will hold the single authoritative copy and/or electronic file of the most recently revised version of the Faculty Handbook. The chair will make sure that this authoritative copy is electronically accessible to the Butler community. This revision supersedes all previous versions.
- E. The Handbook Committee may make changes to the Faculty Handbook to correct errors in capitalization, URLs, grammar, spelling, parsing, sentence structure, or syntax that do not result in substantive changes to the handbook. Such changes can be made upon approval of the Handbook Committee without approval of the Senate or the Board of Trustees.