

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY



University Faculty Senate

NEW SENATOR ORIENTATION



Congratulations and Welcome to the Senate!

- Welcome to Faculty Senate! Your election represents a recognition of your accomplishments and your successful engagement with colleagues. Your efforts have earned you the trust of your peers and the privilege of participating in shared governance at the highest levels. Service in the senate carries great responsibility, one you've already demonstrated you are more than capable of managing.
- **Always remember what got you here!** The volume and range of issues senate address are significant. Many challenges are difficult and are without perfect solutions. Staying current with senate matters and staying in constant dialogue with your college and university colleagues will make you a better and more effective representative. It also ensures that the senate will do its best possible work which, in turn, advances the interests of our institution and the students and communities we serve.

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**University Faculty Senate (UFS)
Mission and Shared Governance**



Faculty Senate: An Overview

- The University Faculty Senate (UFS) is a governance body concerned with matters of general university educational policy, including curriculum, academic calendar and schedule, admissions, registration, and degree programs. It may also consider and provide advice to the University President and other university members on a wide issues of general faculty concern, including university budgeting and planning and any organizational changes or policies affecting more than one campus, college, or division.
- The organization and operation of the Faculty Senate are outlined in the bylaws, which can be accessed [here](#).
- Additional information about Senate meetings, senators, committees, and more can be found [here](#).



What is Shared Governance

- Many of you are familiar with the concept of *Faculty Governance* – the concept that as an educational institution faculty are the most qualified to shape the policies and practices that dictate the direction of a university.
- “*Shared Governance*” acknowledges the legal and practical realities that, per the Florida Constitution and state Board of Governors (BOG) regulations, the university Board of Trustees (BOT) has the authority to manage the university. The BOT divests much of the operational authority to the university president. To view the BOT bylaws and the specific duties of the Board and the president, see [here](#).
- The Senate constitution and bylaws, however, enshrines the notion the faculty play an essential role at all levels of the institution “in the development of the policies and practices by which the university fulfills its academic mission” (p.4).
- Shared Governance describes the partnership between the Board of Trustees, the Administration – as led by the president, and the faculty.



FACULTY ROLES

Faculty members play a central role in shared governance at FAU at every level:

- Departments and Programs
- Institutes and Centers
- Colleges
- University
- Public/Private Partnerships
- Statewide





WHY SERVE IN SHARED GOVERNANCE

- To maintain the faculty's involvement in crafting university policies and guidance
- To ensure the university operates according to best academic practices and delivers academic excellence
- To be aware of regulations, university priorities and opportunities to advance your program and student outcomes
- To connect with faculty outside your program and college
- To ensure a continuity of practices and institutional memory resulting in stability and more effective governance
- To present a faculty face to university efforts
- To cultivate development of leadership and partnership skills

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UFS Operations and Officers



SENATE MEMBERSHIP AND PRINCIPLES

- Senate membership is proportional according to the number of faculty in each college (see bylaws Article III, Section B).
- The University President, Provost and College Deans are considered University Faculty (Article III, Section A) and are invited to attend all senate meetings. The President and Provost are non-voting members (Article III, Section D).
- Senators are elected for two-year terms (unless filling a suddenly vacant seat), in staggered terms such that each year half of the membership is elected to their terms which begin in April before the academic year of their service.



FACULTY SENATE OFFICERS AND STAFF

Faculty Senate President

- Chairs senate meetings
- Chair of the Steering committee
- Member of the Board of Trustees and member of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates

President-Elect *or* Past-President (only one of these offices exist at any time)

- Chairs senate meetings and/or Steering committee in absence of president
- Chairs the Academic Planning and Budget committee
- Steering committee member
- Member of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates

Administrative Assistant

- Prepares and distributes minutes of the senate
- Organizes and distributes agendas for senate steering and senate meetings
- Maintains senate attendance records
- Maintains website presence and resources



Voting Principles and Procedures

- Because faculty senate is designed to be a deliberative body in which active discussions shape policy no proxy or absentee votes are permitted.
- Decisions are made by majority vote of the members present and voting.
- Quorum: as established by senate bylaws a quorum must be in place in order for official business (such as voting) to occur. Unless otherwise specified, for both the senate meetings and for any committee meeting of the senate thirty-three percent of the voting members must be present for the meeting to have crossed the quorum threshold.
- All actions, including voting, will adhere to Roberts Rules of Order. For resources on Roberts Rules see [here](#).
- At the Senate President's discretion, votes may be tallied by voice vote, a show of hands or written communication (in print or electronic).

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SENATE COMMITTEES



Standing Committees

UFS bylaws establish a number of standing committees (see Article VI for a full description of each committee and its responsibilities). It is ***strongly recommended*** that senators seek membership on at least one committee to ensure the greatest possible faculty representation. To view the current committee membership and committee chair see [here](#). These committees include:

- Steering Committee
- Academic Planning and Budget Committee
- Academic Freedom and Due Process Committee
- Graduate Programs Committee
- Honors and Awards Committee
- Intercollegiate Athletics Committee
- Library Advisory Committee
- Policies and Procedures Committee
- Promotion and Tenure Committee
- Research Committee
- Undergraduate Programs Committee
- University Graduate Council



Steering Committee

- All senate committees play an essential role in helping to manage the business of the senate while ensuring that faculty take the lead in developing, reviewing and refining policies to ensure shared governance of the institution and the best possible academic outcomes for the institution.
- With the exception of the Steering Committee, all of the standing committees are “topical” in the sense that they have an area of interest related to governance that they oversee.
- Steering, in contrast, functions as an executive committee of the senate. It is charged with overseeing the functioning of senate including crafting the senate agenda, overseeing the standing committees, tasking committees with a charge to review a particular concern and, if necessary, acting on behalf of the UFS in the case of an emergency.
- Unless they emerge as a motion from the floor during the senate meeting, all items for consideration by the UFS first come before the Steering Committee for consideration on the agenda. In most cases (such as resolutions, policy proposals, revisions to university practice and course, degree or program matters) Steering will issue a “recommendation” on the matter to the senate body.



STEERING COMMITTEE OF SENATE, 2024-2025

- **Chair: Kim Dunn (President)**

Members:

- William Trapani (President-Elect)
- Bruce Arneklev (AY 23-25)
- Charles Dukes (AY 23-25)
- Khaled Sobhan (AY 24-25)
- Chris Beetle (AY 24-26)
- LeaAnne DeRigne (AY 24-26)
- Meredith Mountford (AY 24-26)

More Information about Steering can be found [HERE](#).

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SENATE MEETINGS



Overview to Senate Meetings: Standard Conventions

- The bylaws require the senate to meet twice a semester, however in current practice the senate meets approximately eight times per academic year, once each in the months of September through April.
- Senate meeting dates, times and location are noticed well in advance (see [here](#) for meetings scheduled for AY 2024-2025). It is the responsibility of the Steering Committee to formalize the agenda for senate meetings. Except in cases of emergency, senate agendas are distributed no less than one week prior to meeting.
- It is expected that **ALL** senators attend each senate meeting unless they are otherwise prevented from doing so. As a representative of your college and colleagues it is important that you fulfill the responsibility you have been bestowed.
- Meetings typically last two hours. In recent years meetings have been held from 1:00-3:00 pm on Mondays. Meetings are video livestreamed to all campuses.
- It is the responsibility of each senator to ensure that their schedules allow the maximum possible attendance and participation in senate meetings.



Overview of Senate Meeting: Conventional Format

- While the bylaws do not specify any particular agenda or content to the meetings a history of practice has developed. While open to change as needed or at the direction of the president, the typical senate meeting includes:
- Approval of the previous meetings' minutes by the senate body.
- A "President's Report", to include any topical information or concern as the president deems fit.
- "Guest Speakers", to include any member of the university or community that has been invited to speak at senate.
- "Committee Reports", as needed
- "Approval of course and program proposals", divided into "Undergraduate Programs" and "Graduate Programs" and further divided by a "consent agenda" and an "action items" agenda.
- "Old Business", as needed
- "New Business", as needed
- "Open Forum with the Provost" (or their designee)
- "Open Forum of Senate"
- Statements toward the "Good of the Senate"
- Adjournment



Consent Agenda vs. Action Items

- A consent agenda is any item, or set of items, that have been reviewed by a particular committee and deemed ready for final voting. Consent agendas are used to create a more efficient meeting by identifying some proposals as so standard that they do not warrant any additional discussion unless a senator wishes. Examples include: new course proposals, course modifications such as a title or credit hour changes etc.
- Action items typically merit discussion and so are not placed on a consent agenda. These often include new programs or degrees or a significant change to policies or regulations.
- Consent agendas and Action Items typically come to the senate body from steering with a recommendation (e.g. a “positive recommendation from Steering”). This means that the item (or all items in a consent agenda) have been considered and are recommended for passage by steering recommendation. In some cases, either because steering felt it had insufficient information for a recommendation or because they wished the senate to consider the agenda more thoroughly, the item/set may come with “no recommendation”. Recommendations are not binding
- Any senator may remove any item from a consent agenda by requesting to do so. This moves the item to the “action item” so that it must be considered on its own for voting purposes.



Meeting Access and Recordings

- As both a conventional practice and in keeping with Florida's broad Sunshine Law requirements, all senate meetings, including the meetings of the UFS body and senate committees, are considered open to the public.
- Senators should be aware of the access and recording practices of any committee on which they serve.
- Senate meetings are recorded and accessible for viewing with FAU credentials. Access is restricted to those within FAU; external parties cannot view or access the meetings. ***However, recordings can be requested through public records requests.***
- Effective Fall 2024, an FAU credential will be required to gain virtual access to UFS Steering Committee meetings. Steering committee meetings are not recorded.

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WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE AS A SENATOR



Ways of Contributing to Shared Governance as a Senator

- There are numerous ways to contribute impactfully as a senator. These include:
 - Attending senate meetings and representing your/your colleagues' views
 - Staying informed on matters related to faculty concern especially as they take place in various standing committees and/or the steering committee
 - Interacting with your colleagues to discuss matters related to faculty concern to take stock of their views on the issue
 - Sharing information concerning the senate, including its meetings and actions, with your colleagues, college faculty assemblies, unit colleagues and with other members of the university community
 - Offering suggestions on areas of discussion or revision to existing practice to the appropriate senate committee members or chair or to the UFS president or past/future president
 - Promoting senate sponsored events or meetings
 - Encouraging colleagues to participate in shared governance, including encouraging them to attend assembly and senate meetings or to seek a position in the assembly or senate



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