Approved by the President: October 14, 2026

Athens State University Faculty Senate Bylaws

Article I. Name

The name of this representative body shall be the Athens State University Faculty Senate.

Article II. Authority and Relationship to Board Policy

These bylaws are adopted to guide the operational work of the Faculty Senate. They are subordinate to the policies of the Athens State University Board of Trustees, University policy, applicable law, and procedures or directives issued by the President or the President's designee.

The Faculty Senate is an advisory body only. These bylaws shall not be interpreted to grant the Faculty Senate legislative, approval, veto, administrative, managerial, or final decision-making authority. In the event of any conflict between these bylaws and Board policy, University policy, applicable law, or presidential direction, the latter shall control.

Article III. Charge

The charge of the Faculty Senate shall be to:

1. Represent the faculty of Athens State University in matters appropriate for faculty consultation.
2. Serve in an advisory capacity to the President, Provost, and senior academic leadership, with respect to matters pertaining to the academic mission of the University.
3. Provide a structured means of communication between the faculty and University leadership on academic matters, institutional practices affecting the academic enterprise, and issues related to student learning and success.
4. Provide a forum for faculty discussion, advice, feedback, and recommendations on matters within the advisory scope of the Faculty Senate.
5. Support the mission of Athens State University by offering constructive faculty perspectives on academic quality, student success, curriculum, teaching and learning, accreditation, faculty development, institutional effectiveness, and other areas deemed appropriate.

6. Advise the President, Provost, and other senior leadership on matters related to faculty employment, faculty working conditions, professional responsibilities, and the general welfare of the faculty.

Article IV. Purpose and Scope of Work

The Faculty Senate exists to provide organized, responsible, and constructive faculty advice to University leadership. The Faculty Senate may consider matters referred by the President, Provost, senior academic leadership, and may also identify issues for leadership consideration consistent with its advisory role.

The Faculty Senate may make recommendations, provide written feedback, review proposals, conduct discussions, and support advisory consultation processes.

Article V. Membership

The Faculty Senate shall include faculty representatives from each academic college and from the University library. In addition, the Provost, the Dean, the Library Director, and Assistant Deans are non-voting and *ex officio* members of the Faculty Senate and may suggest items on the agenda and may provide academic leadership perspectives.

Each academic college shall have four faculty representatives. Two representatives from each college shall be appointed by the President, and two representatives from each college shall be elected by the faculty of that college in accordance with procedures approved by the President or the President's designee.

The University library shall have two faculty representatives. One library faculty representative shall be appointed by the President, and one library faculty representative shall be elected by the faculty of the library in accordance with procedures approved by the President or the President's designee.

The Faculty Senate Presiding Officer, in consultation with the President, may also invite students, staff, administrators, alumni, external partners, or subject-matter experts to attend meetings or participate in particular discussions when their expertise or perspective would assist the work of the Faculty Senate.

Membership on the Faculty Senate is a form of institutional service. Members are expected to participate in good faith, act professionally, respect institutional roles and responsibilities, and focus on the mission and best interests of Athens State University.

Article VI. Terms of Service

Elected faculty members shall serve one-year terms and may be reelected for additional terms commencing on June 1 of each year.

Appointed faculty members shall serve one-year terms and may be reappointed for additional terms commencing on June 1 of each year.

A member selected to fill a vacancy may serve the remainder of the unexpired term unless otherwise determined by procedures approved by the President or the President's designee.

Elections and Appointments: Early in January, the President will solicit a list of interested, eligible faculty who wish to serve on the Faculty Senate. From that list, the President will appoint two senators from each College and one senator from the Library faculty. Appointees must have been employed as full-time faculty members at Athens State for at least one academic year. These appointments will be made on or before January 31st.

In early February, the Faculty Senate Elections Committee will call for nominations for Senators from the faculty from each College and the Library. Nominations must be received by March 1st. E lections will be conducted by secret ballot for two Senators from the nominees from their College and one nominee from the Library. Nominees for the Faculty Senate must have been employed as full-time faculty members at Athens State for at least one academic year. Election results will be shared by April 1st.

Article VII. Vacancies

If an elected faculty member is unable or unwilling to complete the full term, a successor may be selected by vote of the faculty member's respective college or the library faculty, as applicable, in accordance with procedures approved by the Elections Committee.

If an appointed faculty member is unable or unwilling to complete the full term, the President will appoint a replacement member.

Vacancies shall be addressed in a manner that supports continuity, representation, and the effective operation of the Faculty Senate.

Article VIII. Removal from Service

Members may be removed from service in accordance with applicable law, Board policy, University policy, and procedures established pursuant to Board policy.

Grounds for removal may include, but are not limited to:

1. Failure to conduct Faculty Senate responsibilities in good faith.
2. Failure to operate within the advisory parameters of the Faculty Senate.
3. Repeated failure to attend Faculty Senate meetings.
4. Misconduct.
5. Misuse of the Faculty Senate's role, title, or processes.
6. Breach of confidentiality where confidentiality is required.
7. Conduct that interferes with the effective operation of the Faculty Senate; or
8. Conduct inconsistent with the charge, purposes, and principles of these bylaws or Board policy.

Any Faculty Senate member may be removed for cause by the President. A member may also be removed for cause upon recommendation of the Provost with approval from the President. The Faculty Senate may also recommend to the President the removal of a Faculty Senate member for cause.

Removal from the Faculty Senate shall not, by itself, constitute disciplinary action affecting the member's employment status, faculty appointment, rank, tenure status, compensation, or other employment rights unless separate action is taken in accordance with applicable law, Board policy, University policy, or employment procedures.

Article IX. Leadership

The Faculty Senate shall be chaired by a tenured faculty member appointed by the President from among the members of the Faculty Senate by April 15 of the preceding year. The Presiding Officer shall serve in an advisory and facilitative capacity and shall be responsible for organizing the work of the Faculty Senate, coordinating meetings, developing meeting agendas, facilitating discussion, ensuring that matters considered by the Faculty Senate remain within the advisory scope established by Board policy, and communicating recommendations or feedback to the President, Provost, and other appropriate University officials. The position of Presiding Officer shall not confer legislative, administrative, managerial, approval, veto, or decision-making authority. The Presiding Officer shall not have authority to act on behalf of the Board, the President, the Provost, the

administration, the faculty, or the University except as expressly authorized by this policy, the President, or the Board.

The Faculty Senate shall have a Vice Presiding Officer who will be appointed by the President from among the members of the Faculty Senate in consultation with the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer. The Vice Presiding Officer shall support the work of the Presiding Officer and lead meetings in her/his absence.

The Faculty Senate shall also have a secretary who shall be a faculty Senator. The secretary shall assist the Presiding Officer by maintaining records of meeting dates, attendance, agenda items, and advisory recommendations or feedback provided by the Faculty Senate. This position will be appointed by the President in consultation with the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer.

Article X. Meetings

By June 15 of each year, the Senate shall establish and distribute to the Faculty a meeting schedule (dates/times/places) of the Senate's regular meetings. The Faculty Senate may meet during the summer semester when deemed necessary or appropriate. In addition, Full Faculty Convocations shall be held in conjunction with the Faculty Senate meetings during the first and last months of the regular academic year.

Additional meetings may be called as needed to address time-sensitive academic matters, institutional priorities, accreditation-related issues, or other matters appropriate for faculty consultation.

The Faculty Senate may, by a majority vote of the faculty Senators present, enter into a faculty-only session for a portion of a regularly scheduled or called meeting. During such a session, administrative representatives and other invited participants will be excused so that Senate members may engage in candid discussion of matters within the Senate's advisory scope. No final action or binding decision of the Faculty Senate shall be taken during the faculty-only session. Upon returning to the full meeting, the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer or their designee shall provide a brief report summarizing the general topic(s) discussed and any recommendations, questions, or matters the Senate wishes to bring forward for further discussion or consideration. The report shall respect appropriate confidentiality regarding personnel, student, legal, or other protected matters.

Article XI. Agendas

The Presiding Officer shall coordinate the development of meeting agendas and share those with senators at least one week prior to the meeting.

Agenda items may be submitted to the Presiding Officer by Faculty Senate members, the President, Provost, senior academic leadership, subcommittees, working groups, or other University officials.

The Presiding Officer shall determine whether proposed agenda items fall within the advisory scope of the Faculty Senate and may consult with the President, Provost, or other appropriate University officials when making that determination.

Agenda items should generally be submitted in sufficient advance of a meeting to allow for appropriate preparation, consultation, and documentation.

Article XII. Attendance and Participation

Faculty Senate members are expected to attend meetings regularly, prepare for discussion, participate in good faith, and contribute constructively to the advisory work of the Faculty Senate. Members are expected to bring back appropriate information to their colleagues within their college or the library.

Members who are unable to attend a meeting should notify the Presiding Officer in advance when possible and name their Proxy for the meeting.

Members shall participate as institutional citizens and academic professionals. Faculty Senate members are not delegates with authority to bind their college, department, program, library, or any other unit of the University.

Article XIII. Voting

Because the Faculty Senate serves in an advisory capacity, voting is used as a means of determining the advisory position, preference, or recommendation from the Faculty Senate. Advisory recommendations may be approved by a majority vote of members present and voting.

The Faculty Senate may also provide advisory feedback by consensus, written summaries, discussion themes, or other methods approved by the Presiding Officer.

Voting and meeting processes will be done in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

Article XIV. Records and Communications

The secretary shall maintain records of Faculty Senate meetings, including meeting dates, attendance, agenda items, major discussion topics, and advisory recommendations or feedback.

The Faculty Senate Presiding Officer shall determine the appropriate process for transmitting Senate recommendations or feedback to the President, Provost, senior academic leadership, or other appropriate University officials.

Faculty Senate minutes should include votes taken, themes of discussion, and majority/minority opinions on topics, but should not be a full transcript of the meeting. Minutes will be posted in the Athens State University portal and shared with the Library Archives within two weeks of the meeting.

Article XV. Subcommittees and Working Groups

The Faculty Senate may establish subcommittees and working groups to support its advisory responsibilities and to address specific areas of academic focus, institutional priority, or particular advisory charges.

Subcommittees and working groups shall operate in an advisory capacity only and shall remain subject to Board policy, University policy, applicable law, presidential direction, and these bylaws.

The Faculty Senate may maintain or establish advisory subcommittees in areas traditionally addressed through faculty consultation, including:

1. Academic Affairs
2. Faculty Affairs
3. Elections
4. Learning Resources

The specific charge for each committee is outlined in each subcommittee's charter.

The Faculty Senate Presiding Officer, in consultation with the President or the President's designee, may approve the continuation, modification, consolidation, renaming, or dissolution of subcommittees as necessary to align with University needs, Board policy, applicable law, accreditation obligations, and effective institutional operations. Any new committee would require an updating of these Bylaws.

Subcommittees and working groups shall be chaired or co-chaired by a member of the Faculty Senate unless otherwise approved by the Faculty Senate Presiding Officer, in consultation with the President or the President's designee.

The Faculty Senate Presiding Officer, in consultation with the President or their designee, may appoint or invite additional faculty members, staff, administrators, students, or other University personnel to participate in a subcommittee or working group when their expertise, experience, or perspective would assist the advisory work. Such participation shall not constitute election or appointment to the Faculty Senate.

Subcommittees and working groups may study issues, gather information, consult with appropriate University offices, review proposals, and develop advisory recommendations. They may not enact policy, approve or reject curriculum, direct employees, require institutional action, or bind the University.

Article XVI. Reports and Recommendations

The Faculty Senate may submit advisory recommendations, written feedback, reports, or summaries to the President, Provost, senior academic leadership, or other appropriate University officials.

Recommendations should clearly identify the matter considered, the advisory recommendation offered, the rationale for the recommendation, and any relevant supporting information.

When appropriate, the Faculty Senate may include differing perspectives or minority viewpoints in its advisory communications.

Submission of a recommendation does not require institutional action, response, approval, or adoption unless otherwise required by Board policy, University policy, applicable law, or the President.

Article XVII. Relationship to Other University Committees and Consultation Processes

The Faculty Senate is one component of the University's broader consultation and decision-making processes.

The establishment of the Faculty Senate does not limit the President's or Provost's ability to seek advice from faculty, staff, students, administrators, alumni, external experts,

community partners, employers, accrediting bodies, or other stakeholders through other means.

No matter is required to be submitted to the Faculty Senate before action may be taken by the Board, President, Provost, senior academic leadership, or other authorized University officials unless expressly required by Board policy or applicable law.

Article XVIII. Amendments

These bylaws may be reviewed periodically by the Faculty Senate, the Provost, the President, or their designee.

The Faculty Senate may recommend amendments to these bylaws and proposed changes must be shared with the full Faculty for feedback. Any recommended amendment shall be advisory only and shall not become effective unless approved by the President or the President's designee.

Article XIX. Effective Date

These bylaws shall become effective upon approval by the President or the President's designee, following approval of the Board policy establishing the Faculty Senate.

These bylaws supersede prior Faculty Senate operating rules, procedures, practices, or bylaws.