



Senior Senator Handbook Faculty Senate

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Senior senators (SS) represent their specific faculty constituency and serve as a communication liaison regarding matters of concern and opportunities for growth. This handbook is designed to document the evolving role of a SS and onboard new senior senators after the annual election. This is a living document and each SS is encouraged to update and customize this document for their purposes.

Senior Senators

Section 4.5 of the Faculty Senate Constitution indicates that each unit shall have one senator designated as the "Senior Senator." The senior senator is defined as the person with the least time remaining in a current three year term. If there is more than one such person in a particular unit, the senators in question will draw lots to determine seniority.

The following materials are provided to support you in your role as Senior Senator. Please visit the Senate website for the most up-to-date list of your fellow senior senators, <http://facultysenate.unlv.edu/senators/senate-roster>.

Role of the Senior Senator

As the senior senator from your unit to the Faculty Senate you have the role of representing your constituents, helping to express the concerns of all Faculty within your college, setting the agenda and communication with Administration, and mentoring new senators. Further, the senior senator runs all elections for the college to the Faculty Senate and its committees. Appendix 2 of the Faculty Senate Bylaws provides the guidelines that define the role of the senior senator.

Elections and Nominations: According to Section 6.1 of the Faculty Senate Constitution, senior senators are responsible for conducting elections in their respective units. To this end, senior senators are responsible for knowing and following the election procedures specified in their unit bylaws and in Section 6.1 of the Faculty Senate Constitution.

Communication with other Senators: The senior senator serves as the liaison between the Senate Executive Committee and the senators representing their respective units. In this role, senior senators are encouraged to meet with the other senators in their unit on a regular basis to debate issues pending in the Senate, make recommendations for Senate action, relate information from the Senate Executive Committee, and discuss any issues that may affect the Senate and those the Senate represents.

Communication with Constituents: Senior senators will be asked to communicate with their college governing bodies and are also responsible for communicating to their constituents any Senate matters that are likely to concern them. Concerns about failure to communicate information to constituents received by members of the Senate Executive Committee will be forwarded to the senior senator.

Time Commitment

Full Senate Meetings: Senators must attend the Faculty Senate meetings that are conducted

at least once each month during the fall and spring semesters. Senate meetings typically follow a 12:00 P.M. to 2:00 P.M schedule on a Tuesday. Special meetings, though rare, can be called at called by the Chair of the Senate or requested of the Chair by petition of at least one-third of the senators.

Senior Senator Meetings: Typically, senior senators are required to attend monthly meetings with all senior senators, the current chair of the faculty senate, and the vice chair during the Fall and Spring semesters. These are scheduled by the FS office at the beginning of the academic year. Michael Hammer (Senate Office) will schedule these at onset of the new term for senators (e.g., summer session).

Position is Determined by FS Bylaws Section 4

According to the Faculty Senate Bylaws section 4.5, each unit shall have one senator designated as the "senior senator." The senior senator is defined as the person with the least time remaining in a current three-year term. If there is more than one such person in a particular unit, the senators in question will draw lots to determine seniority. The role of senior senator is described in Appendix 2 of the Faculty Senate Bylaws.

Holding Elections

The senior senator is responsible for holding the elections for the college senators to the Faculty Senate and all of the Faculty Senate Committee representative seats (See FS Bylaws Section 6). The senior senator does not hold elections for the Executive Committee nor any At-Large seats for the full senate.

Elections are held annually in the spring of each year and throughout the year when seats become vacant. It is important to have a record from the previous senior senator regarding which seats are up for election in the spring. Remember, elections for the faculty senate are held in April, and terms will begin in August.

Regardless of time of year, when an election needs to be held here are the basic steps to perform; included are examples at the end of the packet:

1. ! **Create call for nominations email** to be sent to the area affected. Include senate office, chair, and EC member in email. Include the nomination form, due date to receive the forms (this has to be a firm deadline to achieve consistency across senior senators), and any other important information necessary (e.g., area of representation, years of term, basic role). See the sample call for nominations here:
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1z8f-DGx_1s3cZ0070RvXYI9DRf_YINNTmaljVI4JM1M
2. ! **Receive/collect nominations.** This can be done electronically and/or through campus mail. Refer to the nomination form here:
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1uX_ru0pUQI1b6TEHwZaRK77CLecFzxEriLbeFCAvpwE
3. ! **Create Qualtrics survey.** Once call for nominations deadline is reached, create

Qualtrics survey that has the bio's for each candidate preceded by a brief introduction to the position.

4. **Email representative area.** You can use Qualtrics to send the survey which will help prevent ballot stuffing (as long as direct Qualtrics to prevent this from occurring).
5. **! Collect survey responses through Qualtrics.** This is done by Qualtrics.
6. **! Close survey at the designated day/time.** Within Qualtrics, you should set this to be performed automatically so you do not run into the issue of closing it past the deadline.
7. **! Send congratulatory email to winner.** Cc all candidates, FS Office,
8. **! Send summer meeting invite and background information about the Faculty senate to any new senators.** Invite the new senator to the upcoming meeting of the FS. You may also invite them to lunch or meeting for on-boarding.

Communicating with Constituents

Faculty Senators are responsible for representing the interests of their constituents and will use the constituency listservs such as the listserv or department listserv to keep their constituents apprised of relevant monthly Senate or Senate subcommittee actions. They are also encouraged to e-mail any highlights from meetings that are of particular interest to their area, including in all updates related to the Faculty Senate, meeting times and schedule as well as the Faculty Senate web address.

Additional Faculty Senate Communications Guidelines

Communication with the UNLV Faculty Senate and the constituents that we represent is two-way, from constituents to Senators and from Senators to constituents. When contacted by a constituent with a question or issue, you may know the answer based on current Senate activities or discussions during meetings. Dissemination of information is also a responsibility.

As Faculty Senators or Proxies, it is our duty to share information with the Faculty of the University in a quick and efficient manner. Some communications are of an urgent nature, or may contain a personal opinion, greeting, or request of the chair. If this is the case, the Faculty Senate Chair may determine to disseminate this type of communication directly from the Faculty Senate Master Listserv. This determination will be based on the level of importance or timeliness of the information.

Most communication, though, will be sent by the senators by request of the listserv. The Senior senator should meet with its constituents in the beginning of each senate year and at other times as needed, to come to a consensus as to how to best disseminate information according to the needs of their constituents. This may be through emailing or posting information. It may be conducted by dividing the constituents among senators or rotating the responsibility among the senators keeping in mind what is the most efficient method of distribution. If information is received and you are not sure whether to communicate it to constituents, contact the Faculty Senate chair to clarify before sending it out. If you will be away from work, arrange with another Senator or proxy in your area to cover for you and send out Senate communications if possible.

Process for communications:

There are two main methods to communicate information:

1. E-mail

In order to more effectively work reach out to constituents.

- ! Avoid forwarding emails to constituents. If you do forward a message be sure to delete the FWD: from the subject line of the email.
- ! When creating a new email message.
 - ! Copy relevant text from the message received (usually from the Chair or Senate Office).
 - ! Review the message in its entirety for errors. Notify the senate office if any errors are present.
 - ! Attach any document to be distributed with your message.
 - ! If applicable, check web links to be certain they are activate and were copied correctly.
 - ! At the beginning of the message, add any comments you think may be needed for your group of constituents.
 - ! At the end of your message, insert your name as a Senior Senator or Senate ! representative of your specific area, along with how to contact you. !
 - ! Email signatures work especially well for this purpose.

Tips for Success

As the senior senator, you are encouraged to establish methods of communicating with the leadership of the area you represent. It is important to confirm and re-establish method and schedule of communication each year.

The results of any and all meetings with unit and Senate leadership should be documented and shared with fellow senators from the unit, except in situations where the topics discussed are of a sensitive and/or confidential nature. Working with your fellow senators it is important to establish a means of communicating information to your constituents.