

Faculty Senate Pocket Guide

2025-26

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Purpose of the Faculty Senate

Statement adopted on May 1, 2004:

“The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter, and methods of instruction; research; faculty status and working conditions; and those aspects of student life that relate to the educational process.” ([AAUP](#), 1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.)

The University of Louisiana at Monroe Faculty Senate shall serve as the agency for faculty participation in the government of the university. Accordingly, the Faculty Senate represents and supports the entire faculty. The Faculty Senate shall advise the administration regarding the selection of academic officers, the policies and procedures governing salary determination, and other matters concerning the general welfare of the university, either on its own initiative or upon referral of proposals from others.

Senators are elected by the faculty to represent their colleges and the faculty as a whole, in conformance with the Faculty Senate Constitution and By-Laws.

From the ULM Faculty Senate Constitution:

The purposes of the Faculty Senate are:

1. To provide a framework for cooperation between the faculty, administration, and students in order to accomplish the goals of the University of Louisiana Monroe.
2. To afford each faculty member an opportunity to offer suggestions concerning the development and operation of the University and the improvement of the general welfare of the faculty.
3. To provide a means whereby the administration can refer academic, operational, or common interest matters to a body representing the entire faculty.
4. To provide a means whereby representatives of the faculty can offer recommendations to the administration pertaining to the academic and operational improvement of the University and matters concerning the improvement of the general welfare of the faculty.

Senators

Membership

- **Eligibility:** All general faculty, meaning full-time faculty who do not evaluate other faculty and who do not have a university budget at their disposal, are eligible.
- **Representation:** The colleges and their constituent bodies, currently schools, are represented proportionally with a 15:1 ratio with fractions rounded up. For example, if the School of Allied Health in the College of Health Sciences had 35 general faculty, then it would be entitled to three senators (one for the first fifteen faculty, one for the next fifteen, and the third for the remainder of five).
- **Terms:** Two academic years, with the majority of duties occurring during the fall and spring semesters. Summer tasks are handled mainly by Senate officers and volunteers.

- Election of senators: These take place during the first half of March each spring and are conducted by the Elections Committee. New senators take office on July 1 the year they are elected.
- Unfilled seats: In cases where too few people run for available seats, senators from other units in the same college may fill the vacancies. For example, if the School of Humanities had three people run for four open seats but the School of Sciences had six run for five open seats, the extra candidate from Sciences could fill the empty Humanities seat. If there are no eligible candidates for an open seat, the president can appoint a faculty member from the appropriate school to fill it for a two-year term, subject to approval by the full senate.
- Resignations, removal of senators for non-participation, and other vacancies that arise during a term: Resignations and the like leave a term incomplete. The president, subject to approval by the full senate, may appoint a senator from the appropriate school to complete the remainder of the term.
- Temporary replacements: A senator may select a temporary replacement if he or she will miss more than two meetings in a semester. The replacement will have full voting ability during that semester and will step down from the role at the end of the semester. The primary senator with the conflict should inform the senate secretary/president no later than 24 hours before the replacement will attend the first meeting and provide the name of the replacement.

Duties of all Senators

- Communicate information from meetings with constituents. Communication mechanisms or processes may differ between schools.
- Communicate concerns of faculty with senate officers. Raised issues may become agenda items.
- Prepare for meetings by reading posted materials in advance of the meetings.
- Vote on various items such as agenda items, policies and resolutions. Voting may occur in person during meetings or asynchronously via the learning management system (LMS).
- Provide feedback when asked for input. This may include formal or informal polling of constituents.
- Serve as good role-models of shared governance.
- Each senator should be on no more than two standing committees but can serve additionally on any number of ad hoc committees.
- Senators may be asked to participate in committees affiliated with Academic Affairs as a representative voice for the faculty senate. This advances shared governance.
 - Senate appointees to these committees should serve to represent the entire faculty on these committees.
 - Senators should report important developments from these committees to the senate officers so that any faculty related changes can be communicated.

Officers

Key Points

Elections: Officers are elected during the first regular meeting of the Faculty Senate each academic year. They take office on July 1 of the following year.

Replacement: When an officer resigns, passes away, or is otherwise unable to fulfill the duties of his or her position, a replacement will be chosen by the Faculty Senate.

Meetings: any officer that presides at/for a meeting can only vote to break a tie; all other officers may vote.

The Positions

Past President

Definition: The former president whose term expired upon the accession of the sitting president.

Key responsibilities:

- **Advise** the sitting President.
- **Assist** the other officers as needed.
- **Attend all events at which the rest of the Executive Committee will be present**, with the goal of contributing as needed but also learning about the functioning of the university and the senate's role in it.

President

Definition: The presiding officer of the Faculty Senate.

Votes and Voting:

- Does not vote except in the case of ties.

Key tasks:

- **Keep in touch with the faculty and represent their concerns.** – Record feedback from faculty through emails, calls, conversations and other confidential means of communication. Also, check the [Contact the Faculty Senate webform](#) at least once a month, ideally before any scheduled meetings with the ULM President and/or Provost. This feedback should be relayed to appropriate university officials. If you are unsure of whom is the best point of contact, consult the [University Organizational Chart](#) or simply ask the ULM President or Provost during a scheduled meeting. Representing the faculty is the most important duty of the Faculty Senate President.
- **Schedule at least eight meetings, with times and locations.** – These typically take place on the third Thursday of each month from August to November and January to April and will need to have a location reserved in advance. To encourage faculty guests to attend, consider rotating the meetings among the different colleges. In recent years, the standard meeting time has been set from 12:30-2 pm. December, May, and special meetings may also be scheduled.
- **Prepare meeting agendas.** – According to the by-laws, senators should be provided an agenda at least one week prior to a meeting. Recently agenda items have been posted to the Faculty Senate Canvas site, with continuous real-time updates made as items are received.
- **Facilitate meetings.** – The president facilitates the meetings, abiding by *Robert's Rules of Order (revised)*. The appointed Parliamentarian will help guarantee that meetings operate according to the appropriate standards. Typical items of consideration include but are not limited to the following:
 1. Receiving reports from Faculty Senate Committees.

2. Consideration of issues raised by faculty, including methods of addressing them through direct communication with administrators or the passage of resolutions.
 3. Hearing from invited guests, such as the ULM President or Staff Senate President.
 4. Consideration of ULM policy proposals.
 5. Planning for future Faculty Senate Activities.
- **Implement decisions of the Faculty Senate**, working with the appropriate faculty, staff, and administrators.
 - **Meet regularly with the ULM President and/or Provost**, in advance of monthly meetings.
 - **Invite the ULM President and/or Provost to address the Faculty Senate** at least once a year.
 - **Communicate Faculty Senate activities with the faculty at large.** – Frequently, this is done by a monthly email sent a week after each regular meeting. These can be sent using the faculty listserv, which is faculty@ulm.edu, subject to approval by the Provost/VPAA's office. All general faculty as well as administrators with a faculty appointment should receive anything sent to this address.
 - **Appoint committee members** to the standing committees and any *ad hoc* committees, organized for specific purposes, and guiding these committees in their charges.
 - **Appoint senators for unfilled seats.** – This situation most commonly occurs because of resignations or an insufficient number of candidates during an election. In the latter case, excess candidates from other schools in the same college should simply be moved to fill the unoccupied seat. If none are available or a senator leaves the senate through resignation or becomes ineligible for other reasons, then the President can appoint someone from the same school to fill the vacancy, subject to the approval of the full senate.
 - **Liaise with the Staff Senate.** – Faculty and staff have many similar concerns as well as quite a number of differences. Speaking regularly with the Staff Senate President is wise, and it is recommended that the Faculty Senate invite him or her to address it once a year. It may also be beneficial to have at least one officer, or senator if an officer is unavailable, from each body sit in on the meetings of the other. The [Staff Senate portion of the ULM website](#) has useful information about its composition, meeting times, and structure.
 - **Attend all events at which the rest of the Executive Board will be present**, with the goal of contributing as needed but also learning about the functioning of the university and the senate's role in it.
 - **Attend events invited to by the ULM President/Provost/Administrators** (ULS Board of Supervisors, budget steering committee, etc.)
 - **Advocate for faculty senate membership** during general faculty orientation sessions.

- **Carry the Mace and represent the faculty on the graduation stage** during fall and spring commencement ceremonies.

Secretary

Definition: The Secretary is the chief record keeper of the organization and works closely with the president to keep the Faculty Senate on task.

Votes and voting:

- In cases of amendments to the constitution and/or bylaws, the President will notify him or her thirty days in advance. The Secretary will then notify all general faculty in writing no less than ten days earlier.
- In cases when amendments to the Constitution and/or Bylaws have been proposed, the Secretary must be notified in writing at least thirty days in advance.

Key responsibilities:

- **Take attendance** during each meeting, notifying the president and executive board of anyone who has been excessively absent.
- **Record the minutes** of each meeting, including those present, each agenda item, motions, and the number of votes for and against each motion.
- **Submit minutes** approved by the senate to Information Technology for posting to the appropriate Faculty Senate webpage.
- **Work with the President to revise** the Faculty Senate Canvas course, web pages, and any other documents, electronic or print.
- **Attend all events at which the rest of the executive committee will be present**, with the goal of contributing as needed but also learning about the functioning of the university and the senate's role in it.

President-Elect

Definition: The President-Elect is the officer selected to become the next president.

Key responsibilities:

- **Act in place of the President** whenever s/he is unable to fulfill the duties of the office. If presiding over a meeting, the President-Elect can only vote to break a tie.
- **Serve as the chair of the Faculty Handbook Revision Committee** composed of the executive board of Faculty Senate officers, one at-large senator (chosen by the senate president), and the ULM Provost/VPAA. The chair will work with the senate president to determine how best to communicate the business being accomplished in this committee to the senate.
- **Attend all events at which the rest of the Executive Board will be present**, with the goal of contributing as needed but also learning about the functioning of the university and the senate's role in it.
- **Work with the president and secretary to transition the membership between terms.**

Secretary-Elect

Definition: The Secretary-Elect is the officer selected to become the next Secretary.

Key responsibilities:

- **Act in place of the Secretary** whenever s/he is unable to fulfill the duties of the office.
- **Attend all events at which the rest of the Executive Board will be present**, with the goal of contributing as needed but also learning about the functioning of the university and the senate's role in it.

Parliamentarian

Definition: His or her primary purpose is to ensure that meetings are conducted according to the procedures laid out in *Robert's Rules of Order (revised)*.

Appointment: The Parliamentarian is appointed by the President, subject to approval by the senate ~~at large~~.

Key responsibilities:

- **Ensure parliamentary procedure is followed** during Faculty Senate meetings.
- **Advise** the Executive Board as requested.

The Executive Board

Definition: A body composed of all officers of the senate, excluding the Parliamentarian.

Functions:

- Serves as an excellent way for the officers to communicate among each other in advance of meetings, helping each other to foresee opportunities and pitfalls of different courses of action.
- Typically attends as a body for regularly-scheduled meetings with the ULM Provost and/or President.
- Serves as the majority of the Faculty Handbook Revision Committee, alongside the ULM Provost and one at-large faculty senator.
- Serves as the majority of emerita/us committees, alongside the relevant college dean and school director as well as one at-large faculty member, chosen by the Dean, from the candidate's discipline or a related one.

Terms: Members of the Executive Board do not rotate off the senate if their regular senatorial terms expire during their tenure of office. They will, instead, leave office once their term in office expires. If changes in faculty numbers cause their seats to be eliminated, they will continue as at-large members of the faculty senate until their tenure in office expires. Moreover, there is no restriction on their ability to seek reelection to any available seat in their school if they so desire.

General Duties of Committee Chairs & Committee Members

Chairs: each standing and ad hoc committee shall appoint a chair from its' membership. The president may appoint a chair if the group is unable to select one. The chair receives charges from the senate president, leads committee meetings, schedules meetings, and documents attendance and minutes if a secretary is not otherwise identified. The chair is responsible for informing the senate president and senate of items of business the committee addresses and any actions/decisions made by its' members.

Members: members are expected to attend meetings scheduled by the chair and contribute on items being addressed. Members are encouraged to submit topics for consideration to the chair for discussion by the committee, and senate as outcomes of the discussion warrant.

Miscellaneous Things to Remember

Open Meetings Laws: There is some debate as to whether Louisiana's Open Meetings Law applies to faculty senates. While the text of the law seems to indicate it does not, most university administrators and several faculty senates consider it to do so. To align with what the majority of faculty senates do, and enhance public transparency, we post our scheduled meetings to the Faculty Senate portion on ULM's website at least twenty-four hours in advance and allow members of the press to attend our meetings. Closed executive sessions are permitted in the following cases, following a vote of all members present:

1. "Discussion of the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of a person" as long as that person is notified twenty-four hours in advance
2. "Strategy sessions or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining, prospective litigation after formal written demand, or litigation"
3. "Discussion regarding the report, development, or course of action regarding security personnel, plans, or devices"
4. "Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of misconduct."
5. "Cases of extraordinary emergency, which shall be limited to natural disaster, threat of epidemic, civil disturbances, suppression of insurrections, the repelling of invasions, or other matters of similar magnitude"¹

For more information on the law, see the following:

- [Text of the Law](#)
- [Summary of the Law from the Legislative Auditor's Office](#)
- [LSU's "Brief Summary of Louisiana Open Meetings Law"](#)
- [Attorney General's "Louisiana Open Meeting Laws"](#)

ULM Organizational Chart

<https://www.ulm.edu/23budget/fy23-organizationalchart.pdf>

Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty Senate

<https://www.ulm.edu/facultysenate/constitution.html>

Faculty Handbook

<https://ulmapps.ulm.edu/policies/download-policy/883>

¹ Quotes from the law as recorded at <https://biotech.law.lsu.edu/cases/la/adlaw/la-openmeetings.htm>