

Los Angeles Valley College

Academic Senate Constitution and By-Laws

Preamble

The Los Angeles Valley College Academic Senate promotes the educational goals of the college's students and provides a formal and effective procedure for faculty to participate in the formation of college and district policies on academic and professional matters. The Academic Senate, in cooperation with the Administration, shall endeavor to uphold the mission and vision of the college.

Article I. Name, Purpose, and Function

Section 1. Name

The name of this body shall be the Los Angeles Valley College Academic Senate, hereafter called the Senate.

Section 2. Purpose and Function

The Senate shall serve as the official representative body for the faculty of Los Angeles Valley College with respect to academic and professional matters.

The Senate shall make possible the democratic cooperation and participation of its members in the formulation of educational policies and practices, the upholding of the principles of professional ethics, and the resolution of all matters affecting the academic and professional welfare of the academic program, and the faculty of Los Angeles Valley College.

The LAVC Academic Senate, in accordance with Title 5, Subsection 53200, as the representative of the faculty, has as its primary function, the making of recommendations to the administration of the college and the District's governing board with respect to academic and professional matters.

"Academic and professional matters," as enumerated in Title 5 (and commonly known as the Ten Plus One), means the following policy development and implementation matters:

1. curriculum, including establishing prerequisites and placing courses within disciplines
2. degree and certificate requirements
3. grading policies
4. educational program development

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5. standards or policies regarding student preparation and success
6. college governance structures, as related to faculty roles
7. faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports
8. policies for faculty professional development activities
9. processes for program review
10. processes for institutional planning and budget development Plus One
11. other academic and professional matters as mutually agreed upon

Article II. Membership

Section 1. Electorate Membership

The Senate Electorate shall consist of all faculty (full and part time) of Los Angeles Valley College.

Section 2. Senate Membership

The Senate Membership shall consist of the following:

5 Senate Officers

21 elected Representatives from the faculty at large

3 DAS Representatives appointed from the Senate or faculty-at-large, Immediate Past President (ex-officio – recommended 1-year membership)

3 Adjunct Representatives

Any Emeritus LAVC Senator who has served at least one term

Section 3. Terms of Office for Senate Members

Senate members are elected for three academic years commencing on September 1st. Adjunct representatives are elected to one-year term commencing on September 1st.

Article III. Elections

Section 1. The Electorate

The Electorate shall consist of all full-time and part-time faculty with an active assignment at the time of the elections.

Section 2. Elected Officers

The Electorate shall elect the following constitutional officers: a president, an executive vice president, a curriculum vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer. Only regular contract faculty are eligible to run and hold these offices.

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The above-named Senate officers form the LAVC Academic Senate Executive. During the months in which the Senate is not normally in session and, therefore, not subject to quorum of the full Senate, January, June, July and August, the Executive shall have the power to act on behalf of the Senate on matters requiring urgent action. The Senate as a body will be notified in advance of such action.

Senate constitutional officers shall be elected in the spring semester of odd-numbered years. Term of office shall run from July 1 until June 30 of the next odd-numbered year.

Senators elected to officer positions vacate their Senate seats. Vacant Senate seats may be filled by appointment by the Senate President with the approval of a majority of the Senate.

In considering potential appointments, the President should give preference to candidates who ran in the previous election and were not elected but received the next highest number of votes.

Section 3. Elected Senators

The Electorate shall elect twenty-one members to serve as Senators at large. One third (seven) of the total number of Senators at large shall be elected to overlapping three-year terms on a rotating basis.

Section 4. Adjunct Representative

The Electorate shall elect three Adjunct Representatives to serve a one-year term.

Adjunct Representatives must have an assignment at LAVC in the semester in which the elections occur.

Section 5. Election Process

The Senate shall convene the Senate Elections Committee (SEC) at the February Senate meeting. The SEC will be comprised of at least three Senators not up for election. The SEC will elect a Chair.

Interested parties must submit their full name and a statement of intent to run for election to the Senate President, or designee, during the specified time frame of ten working days. The statement of intent may not exceed two hundred words. Failure to submit a statement of intent to run for election will render any potential candidate ineligible to have their name included on the ballot.

Regardless of the number of vacancies, and the number of candidates submitting statements of intent, an election will be held, and statements of intent published.

Elections will be conducted by a process developed by the SEC and approved by the Senate body at the March Senate meeting.

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Elections must be completed by May 15th.

Following the close of the elections, the chair of the SEC will notify all candidates of the outcome of the election and the Senate President will notify all faculty members at their LAVC email address.

In the case of a tie, a special vote of the Senate will be held electronically within two weeks of the April Senate meeting to break the tie.

Section 5. Special Elections

A special election may be called as necessary by action of the Senate, or by petition of a majority of the Electorate.

Article IV. Senate Officers

Section 1. Term of Office

The term of office shall be for two years commencing July 1st.

Section 2. Duties of Officers

The President of the Senate shall preside over all meetings. They shall be responsible for the execution of all decisions made by the Senate and shall act as their authorized spokesperson. Subject to the approval of the Senate, they may appoint members of the Senate, DAS Representatives, and may appoint or remove members of Senate committees.

The Curriculum Vice President chairs the LAVC Curriculum Committee and shall report on all substantive issues relating to curriculum and its subcommittee's work at Senate meetings.

The Executive Vice President co-chairs the Educational Planning Committee, presides over the Senate when the President is unable to do so, and otherwise assists the President in Senate-related matters.

The Secretary shall keep all minutes of Senate meetings and will forward to the Senate President for distribution prior to the next meeting.

The Treasurer shall collect, hold, and disperse all dues, assessments, or other moneys belonging to the Faculty Association Committee. The Treasurer shall also present a budget/expenditure report to the Senate at each Senate meeting. The Treasurer shall also serve as the chair of the Faculty Association Committee.

No Senator shall hold more than one Officer position and receive one vote.

The Senate President may appoint an officer position if, after the first meeting of the Senate each

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semester, the position is vacant with the approval of a majority of the Senate.

In considering potential appointments, the President should give preference to candidates who ran in the previous election and were not elected but received the next-highest number of votes.

The appointment is for the remainder of the semester. Vacancies that occur within the academic year shall remain vacant until the faculty body votes for the Senate membership the following year.

Article V. Meetings of the Senate

Section 1. Calling Meetings

Meetings of the Senate shall be called by the Senate President who shall establish and distribute a yearly calendar providing for regular meetings once a month, when possible, during the academic year. Meetings shall be open to all members of the Electorate and the public.

Special meetings shall be called by the Senate President at the request of a majority of Senate Representatives or when deemed necessary by the Senate President.

An executive session may be called by the Senate President or by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at a Senate meeting. Executive sessions may only be attended by the Senate membership.

Senate meetings are required to follow the requirements of the California Open Meeting Act, which is composed of the Brown Act (California Government Code §§54950-54960.5) and the Bagley-Keene Act (California Government Code §§11120-11132), which legislate local governments and the executive branch of the state, respectively. These two laws have a direct bearing on how the Senate must conduct business. The Brown Act (1953, amended 2004) governs public meetings, ensuring that meetings and their documents are open to public scrutiny. Any governing body which achieves a quorum, even over the telephone or using e-mail chains, qualifies as a meeting. Subcommittees of the Senate (e.g. councils and committees) are also subject to the Brown Act. However, advisory committees (such as the Senate Executive Board and workgroups) are exempted from the Brown Act.

Section 2. Agendas and Minutes

The Senate President shall establish and distribute the agenda to all Senate members for Senate meetings at least three (3) working days prior to the scheduled meeting.

Senators, non-Senate faculty and staff, students, and administrators may submit requests for items to appear on the agenda by sending them to the Senate President at least seven days prior to the next Senate meeting. However, the Senate President may evaluate the appropriateness of

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requests for inclusion in the agenda.

The Secretary shall distribute the minutes of Senate meetings to the Senate President at least 96 hours before the next meeting. The agenda and the minutes for each meeting shall be posted in the Senate display case and made available to all faculty members.

Section 3. Senate Actions

Actions of the Senate shall be in the form of motions or resolutions approved by a majority of a quorum of the members present, a quorum being 50% plus 1 of the Senate membership.

Section 4. Absences

Senators who will be absent from meetings may send in their place a proxy faculty member. This replacement may vote but may not replace the Senator for the entire year. The Proxy vote will be noted in the minutes, including the names of the absent Senator and Proxy. Proxy Senators may finish out the remainder of the semester of the Senator for which they are substituting.

Article VI. Duties and Code of Conduct

Section 1. Expectations

All At-Large-Senators will participate in sub-Senate committees and workgroups.

Section 2. Collegiality

The Academic Senate is committed to fostering an environment of collegiality, respect, and collaboration. Senators are expected to model collegium through the exchange of ideas, opinions, and differences in positions on specific items for their consideration.

Senators with concerns regarding non-collegiality issues not resolved informally shall report those concerns to the Senate Executive for consideration and resolution.

Repeated violations may result in recall (see Article VII).

Section 3. Limitation of Senate Work

Only elected Senators shall engage in Senate work. This includes, but is not limited to, participation in Committees and engaging in formal discussions. If additional faculty are to be included in a Senate Committee, the Senate President must be notified and approve the inclusion.

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Section 4. Conflicts of Interest

Any member of the Senate or Special Committee or Workgroup to whom a conflict of interest might reasonably be imputed under (1) below shall abstain from voting on any measure to which the conflict applies; and shall speak on it only after declaring and describing the potential conflict.

(1) A member has a conflict of interest whenever the matter before the body:

(a) involves an individual with whom the member has a personal, familial, or close professional investment; or

(b) is one in which the member has a material financial interest.

(2) A failure to recuse oneself under the circumstances described in (1) may be challenged by any other member of the Senate; and the Senate may, after full and open discussion and by an absolute majority of its entire membership, exclude the conflicted member from further participation in the matter.

Article VII. Recall and Replacement of Senators

Section 1. Recall

Any elected officer, Senator-at-Large, or Adjunct Representative shall be subject to recall. To recall an officer or representative, an approval of at least 2/3 of the Senate is required. Reasons for recall include but are not limited to dereliction of duty as defined by Senate By-Laws and LAVC policies which includes missing more than 3 meetings in the academic year. All Senators on official leave retain their seat within their elected term. There is no replacement for Senators on leave; or malfeasance.

Section 2. Recall Process

A recall is automatically initiated by dereliction of duty, violation(s) of code of conduct, or malfeasance as defined above. The Senate President will place the subject of the recall on the agenda as an Action item in advance of the next scheduled Senate Meeting. In the case of a Senate President recall, the Executive Vice President shall place the recall on the agenda three working days in advance of the next scheduled Senate meeting.

Section 3. Replacing Recalled Senator

In the case of a resigned or recalled Senator, the Senate President may appoint a new Senator with the approval of a majority of the Senate. Appointed Senators may finish out the remainder of the term of the Senator they are replacing.

In the case of a recalled Senate President, the Senate Vice-president shall serve for the remainder of the term. The Senate will elect a new Vice President by majority vote from the Senators at-large and may appoint a new Senator from the prior pool of candidates, who were not elected in the year the recall takes place.

Section 4. Vacant Positions

The Senate President may appoint a Senator-at-Large position if, after the first meeting of the Senate each semester, the position is vacant with the approval of a majority of the Senate.

In considering potential appointments, the President should give preference to candidates who ran in the previous election and were not elected but received the next-highest number of votes.

The appointment is for the remainder of the semester. Vacancies that occur within the academic year shall remain vacant until the faculty body votes for the Senate membership the following year.

Article VIII. Committees of the Senate

Section 1. Executive Committee

The Senate Executive Committee shall consist of the Senate President, Executive Vice President, Curriculum Vice President, and two additional Senators selected by the Senate President to serve a term of at least one academic year. Whenever possible, the Senate Executive Committee shall be composed of at least one non-classroom faculty member, either elected or appointed by the Senate President, for the purpose of representing the view of non-classroom faculty on the Senate Executive Committee. In addition to guiding the work of the Senate, the Executive supports students through the granting of scholarships and makes recommendations regarding the disbursement of Senate funds.

Section 2. Curriculum Committee

The Valley College Curriculum Committee (VCCC) acts as an advisory body to the Senate. The VCCC shall be responsible for (1) recommending policies concerning curriculum, general education, graduation requirements, occupational certificate requirements, transfer requirements, academic standards, and related matters; and (2) recommending for approval curricular proposals concerning new courses or programs, and additions, deletions, or changes to existing courses or programs.

Section 3. Educational Planning Committee

The Educational Planning Committee (EPC) acts as a consultative body on behalf of the Senate in regard to FTEF allocations and is responsible for drafting, reviewing, and revising the

College's Educational Master Plan.

The following Tier 3 committees, which report to EPC, also acts as a consultative body on behalf of to the Senate:

- **Campus Distance Education Committee (CDEC)** advises and consults with the Senate in regard to distance education.

Section 4. Program Effectiveness and Planning Committee

The Program Effectiveness and Planning Committee (PEPC) acts as a consultative body on behalf of the Senate in regard to program review.

The following Tier 3 workgroups and committees, which report to PEPC, also act as consultative bodies on behalf the Senate:

- The **Faculty Hiring Prioritization Workgroup** advises the Senate in regard to faculty hiring prioritization
- The **Outcomes Assessments Committee** advises the Senate on all matters relating to student learning outcomes (SLOs) at the campus level

Section 5. Professional Development Committee

The Professional Development Advisory Committee works in concert with the Office of Professional Development and is responsible for making recommendations on faculty professional development and instructional improvement activities in accordance with Title 5, Section 55730 (e). The recommendations should be based upon a comprehensive planning process that includes needs assessment and evaluation, including approval of individual faculty plans for professional growth.

Commented [D51]:
“(e) appoint and hold regular meetings of an advisory committee composed of faculty, students, administrators and other interested persons to make recommendations on staff, student, and instructional improvement activities; and” Cal. Code Regs. tit. 5 § 55730

Section 6. Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee

The Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee is an ad hoc committee of the Senate. The committee is formed when any action that is harmful to or disruptive of the academic process in direct and demonstrable manner is brought before the Senate, or as otherwise needed.

Section 7. Academic Rank Committee

The Academic Rank Committee acts as an advisory body to the Senate in regard to conferring academic rank to members of the faculty. The Chair of the Academic Rank Committee shall be elected every two years by the Senate membership.

Section 8. Faculty Association Committee

The Faculty Association Committee is an ad hoc committee of the Senate which may promote and support the faculty through professional and social activities.

Section 9. Faculty Professional Growth Committee

The LAVC Professional Growth Committee oversees and recommends the award of reimbursements from The Professional Conference and Tuition Reimbursement Fund per Article 23 of the LACCD and AFT Agreement.

Section 10. List of Committees with Academic Senate Representatives

Budget Committee
Facilities Planning Committee (FPC)
Graduation Committee
Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC)
Technology Committee
Tenure Evaluation Committees
Work Environment Committee (WEC)
Other committees as needed

Article IX. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws

Section 1. Proposal of Amendments

Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws may be proposed by a majority of those present at a meeting of the Senate, or by a petition signed by 20% of the regular contract faculty, or by the Senate Executive Committee.

Section 2. Notification and Ratification of Amendments

All proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the entire Senate membership at least ten (10) working days prior to voting. An amendment shall be considered ratified if it receives a two-thirds vote of the Senate membership and will be effective immediately.

Section 3. Copies of the Constitution and By-Laws

The President shall make available to all members of the Senate the latest revised copies of the Constitution and By-Laws and post a copy on the Senate web page.

Section 4. Review of the Constitution and By-Laws

The Senate will conduct a review of the Constitution and By-Laws at least every five years.