

## **Bylaws of the Academic Senate of Quinebaug Valley Community College**

*Approved 26 October 2020*

### Article I: Definition and Purpose

The Academic Senate is the governing body of the Academic Affairs Division. The Senate is both an independent governance structure for the members of the Academic Affairs Division and an advisory body to the Dean of Academic Affairs.

The primary function of the Academic Senate is the development and oversight of policies, procedures, and proposals related to programs, curriculum, and other functions of the Academic Affairs Division and its constituent members. The Senate is the forum where discussion on curriculum, academic matters, and academic policy and procedure occurs.

### Article II: Academic Senate Membership

The voting membership of the Academic Senate consists of all staff and full time faculty in the Academic Affairs Division who report to the Dean of Academic Affairs.

### Article III: Senate Leadership

1. The Academic Senate is led by a Senate President and Senate Vice President who are elected by the Senate (see Article VIII – Elections). Senate officers are responsible for organizing, running, and recording minutes for monthly Senate meetings.
2. Senate officers may be any combination of Academic Senate members. No specific ratio of faculty or staff will be maintained.
  - a. The Senate President is elected to one two-year term, and may be elected for one additional one-year term. The Senate President cannot serve more than three consecutive years. (See Article VIII – Elections).
  - b. The Senate Vice President is elected annually to a one-year term, and cannot serve more than three consecutive terms or years. (See Article VIII – Elections).
3. Senate officers will meet as necessary to organize Senate meetings and conduct necessary business. Meetings can take place in person, or via teleconferencing or email.

## Article IV: Senate Leadership Duties

### 1. Senate President:

- a. The Senate President presides over Senate business and calls for votes as needed. The Senate President is responsible for conducting Academic Senate meetings efficiently and for keeping Senate meetings focused and on task. The Senate President may call and cancel Senate meetings as appropriate. The Senate President may delegate responsibilities or assign tasks to the Senate Vice President, to the Curriculum, Instruction, and Policies Committee (CIP) or its members, or to Senate members.
- b. The Senate President or his/her designee serves as liaison or representative to the QVCC President's Advisory Council or its equivalent, The Community College Governance Assembly (CCGA), other non-elected governing committees of ConnSCU and the Board of Regents, and meets routinely with the Dean of Academic Affairs and the College President. In addition, the Senate President or his/her designees attend all meetings requiring QVCC faculty and non-teaching faculty representation and reports back to the Academic Senate; such meetings could include but are not limited to SGA, CIP, Department Chair, and Foundation meetings, and could include information-gathering meetings with college union representatives and union administrative officers and staff.

### 2. Senate Vice President:

- a. The Senate Vice President assists the Senate President in conducting Senate business, assuming additional responsibilities as assigned by the Senate President, and conducts Academic Senate meetings in the absence of the Senate President. The Senate Vice President records Academic Senate minutes and provides approved minutes to the Academic Dean's office to be archived. The Senate Vice President is also responsible for posting approved minutes internally, via email, and for arranging for approved minutes to be posted to the Academic Senate webpage. Minutes must be submitted within fourteen days of the meeting at which they are approved. If the Senate Vice President is the presiding officer at a Senate meeting, a Senate member will be appointed to take minutes and submit them to the Senate Vice President for subsequent Senate approval.

## Article V: Academic Senate Procedures

1. The Academic Senate shall meet once per month during academic semesters and as needed.
2. The Academic Senate will operate according to modified Robert's Rules of Order except where superseded by these bylaws.

### 3. Senate Quorum and Voting:

- a. A quorum for the Academic Senate is defined to be 50% of membership plus one. For the purposes of voting or taking any other official action a quorum must be present.
- b. Decision-making will be by consensus whenever possible. The views and opinions of all members should be heard and considered. After an issue has been thoroughly discussed, members should aim at reaching general agreement about the course of action to be taken.
- c. Voting, when required, will be considered successful if passed by a simple majority of those present.
- d. In the event of a tie vote, the issue may either be further discussed and re-voted, or tabled for later action at the next scheduled meeting. Attendance is required for voting. However, should a member leave the meeting for any reason during discussion of any issue, the departing member may leave a proxy vote with the Senate President regarding the specific issue under discussion. Such a proxy vote may be used to maintain a quorum for a vote on that issue only.

Votes may be taken between meetings by means of email, teleconferencing or other useful technologies. Such votes shall allow for written or oral discussion in which all members have the opportunity to participate. The quorum for any vote conducted under the provisions of section V.3.e will be the same as for in-person voting, as defined in section V.3.a of this article. A quorum will be determined to exist by the total number of members who have cast votes under the provisions of this section. Once a quorum is determined to exist, a simple majority of those voting is required to successfully pass any item. Any vote taken under the provisions of this article will be open for the casting of ballots for a minimum of two business days (48 hours). When a vote under the provisions of this article is announced, the President of the Senate (or designee) will set and announce the voting deadline.

4. Upon approval of any curriculum, academic matter, academic policy, or procedure by the Academic Senate, the proposal shall be forwarded by the Senate President to the Dean of Academic Affairs or College President, who shall be asked to respond to the Senate's recommendations in a timely manner.
5. The Academic Senate shall have the right to meet in executive session. Any member of the Academic Senate may request an executive session meeting by contacting the Senate President.
6. The Dean of Academic Affairs or College President may be invited to attend Academic Senate meetings as necessary to provide updates, answer questions, or discuss relevant issues needing review.

7. Academic Senate meetings are generally open to all members of the College community. Participation in these meetings is at the discretion of the presiding Senate leader.

#### Article VI: Curriculum, Instruction, and Policy Committee

1. Purpose: The Curriculum, Instruction and Policy Committee (CIP) is the Academic Senate committee responsible for overseeing academic policies, procedures and curriculum review, including all new and revised courses and programs, and making recommendations to the Academic Senate as needed. CIP is also responsible for reviewing the Academic Senate Bylaws each year, with recommendations for revision to be considered by the full Academic Senate.
2. CIP shall meet monthly to complete the work of the committee regarding courses, curriculum and policy.
3. CIP will operate according to modified Robert's Rules of Order except where superseded by these bylaws.
4. Membership: CIP consists of six members elected by the Academic Senate and one seat filled by the Student Services Division.
  - a. CIP members serve two-year staggered terms (see Elections – Article VII). One Academic Senate member will serve as CIP Chair and one Academic Senate member will serve as Vice Chair. Officers are elected by the CIP membership. The CIP Chair must be in his or her second year and the CIP Vice Chair in his or her first year. The Vice Chair becomes Chair in his or her second year.
  - b. CIP members elected by the Academic Senate shall include four faculty members and two Members-at-Large who are either full-time faculty or Academic Division staff. The membership term is two years with one possible consecutive re-election. Members serving a consecutive two-year term will not be eligible for subsequent election to CIP for one year.
  - c. The Student Services Division shall have one voting seat that is filled by the Registrar. If the Registrar declines or is unable to serve on CIP, the Student Services Division may designate an alternate, who will serve on CIP for a one year term. The Registrar or their alternate is a voting member of CIP, but may not serve in a leadership position (Chair or Vice Chair).
5. CIP Chair: The CIP Chair is responsible for setting and controlling the CIP agenda and ensuring that all the business of the committee is completed efficiently. The Chair reports completed CIP business to the Academic Senate

and may be asked by the College President to serve on ad hoc, informal concils.

6. CIP Vice Chair:

- a. The Vice Chair records CIP meeting minutes and provides approved minutes to the Senate President and to the Academic Dean's office to be archived. The Vice Chair is also responsible for posting approved minutes internally, via email, and for arranging for approved minutes to be posted to the QVCC common directory. Minutes must be submitted within fourteen days of the meeting at which they are approved. The Vice Chair will conduct CIP meetings and report completed CIP business to the Academic Senate in the absence of the Chair. If the Vice Chair is the presiding officer at a CIP meeting, a CIP Member-at-Large will be appointed to take minutes and submit them to the Vice Chair for subsequent committee approval.
- b. CIP Vice Chair presides over elections (see Article VII: Elections).
- c. CIP Vice Chair may be asked by the College President to serve on ad hoc, informal councils.

7. CIP Members-at-Large: Members-at-Large should be willing to accept a leadership position (Chair or Vice Chair) if necessary.

8. CIP Quorum and Voting

- a. A quorum for CIP is defined as five members. For the purposes of voting or taking any other official action a quorum must be present.
- b. Decision-making will be by consensus whenever possible. The views and opinions of all members should be heard and considered. After an issue has been thoroughly discussed, members should aim at reaching general agreement about the course of action to be taken.
- c. Voting, when required, requires agreement among four of those present to decide issues.
- d. In the event of a tie vote, the issue may either be further discussed and re-voted, or tabled for later action at the next scheduled meeting. Attendance is required for voting. However, should a member leave the meeting for any reason during discussion of any issue, the departing member may leave a proxy vote with the Chair regarding the specific issue under discussion. Such a proxy vote may be used to maintain a quorum for a vote on that issue only.
- e. CIP meetings are generally open to all members of the College community. Participation in these meetings is at the discretion of the presiding Chair.

- f. CIP shall have the right to meet and/or conduct votes electronically. Any actions taken electronically shall be entered into the minutes of the next scheduled CIP meeting.
- g. The Dean of Academic Affairs may be invited to attend CIP meetings as necessary to provide updates, answer questions, or discuss relevant issues needing review.
- h. Any member of CIP may request a committee meeting by contacting the CIP Chair.

#### Article VII: Academic Proposal Procedure

1. Academic proposals (new courses, new programs, revisions, or policies) must be forwarded to the CIP Chair at least ten business days before the next scheduled CIP meeting. Academic proposals that are not complete will be returned to the initiator (staff or faculty member). At his/her discretion, the CIP Chair may extend the deadline to accommodate holidays and breaks included in the Academic Calendar, or unanticipated or time-sensitive matters. The CIP Chair shall forward all academic proposals to members of CIP and to the Senate President prior to the next scheduled CIP meeting.
2. The initiator who makes the academic proposal will be required to attend the CIP meeting at which the proposal will be discussed. The CIP Chair shall invite the initiator to present the proposal. If the initiator cannot attend the CIP meeting, he or she may, at the discretion of the CIP Chair, send a substitute able to answer questions about the proposal. Proposals with outstanding questions or substantial need for further revision will be returned to the initiator for correction and re-submission.
3. The Academic Senate President will schedule proposals approved by CIP for presentation to the Academic Senate. Any proposals approved by CIP which involve a program change, or any change having an impact on any other disciplines, programs or departments, will be subject to review and vote by the Academic Senate. All other matters will be reported to the Academic Senate for informational purposes. All academic proposals approved by the Academic Senate will be forwarded to the Academic Dean for further action.
4. All proposals for new or revised accredited programs must include the appropriate BOR forms (BOR Application for New Program Approval document or the BOR Application for Modification of an Accredited Program document, or other forms directed by the BOR), the QVCC tracking sheet, and supporting documentation. New or revised courses or programs not falling in the description above must include the QVCC tracking sheet and supporting documentation when submitted to the CIP Chair.

## Article VIII: Elections

1. All full time faculty and staff members of the Academic Affairs Division who have been employed in the Division for at least one full year are eligible for election to Academic Senate offices and the Curriculum, Instruction and Policy Committee (CIP) with the exceptions noted below. Participation in elections is encouraged but optional for part-time staff.
  - a. Members cannot serve as Senate officers and members of CIP at the same time.
  - b. Members cannot be elected to consecutive terms as Senate officers beyond what is described in Article III Section 2 as noted above. The outgoing Senate President is ineligible for election as Senate Vice President for one year.
  - c. Members may serve only two consecutive terms on CIP. Members serving their second consecutive term are ineligible for re-election to CIP the following year.
2. Campaigning for election as Senate President, Senate Vice President or for CIP membership is allowed and recommended. At the February Academic Senate meeting the current CIP Vice Chair will announce the March election, explain the functions of each open position, and encourage interested candidates to consider running for election in March. The current Senate President and Senate Vice President and CIP members shall be present at the February meeting to answer questions about committee functions.
3. Elections for Senate President, Senate Vice President and CIP will be held at the March Academic Senate meeting. Ballots will display the names of all eligible members of the Academic Affairs Division. The names of candidates who have announced an intention to run for Senate President, Senate Vice President, or CIP membership will be bolded, noted, or posted.
4. The CIP Vice Chair will preside over elections. Ballots will be printed at least three days before the March Academic Senate meeting. The CIP Vice Chair will email the Division, noting that members unable to attend the March meeting may request an early ballot from the CIP Vice Chair. Early ballots must be returned to the CIP Vice Chair before the beginning of the March meeting or they will not be counted. The CIP Vice Chair will ensure one vote per member.
5. Elections each year for CIP will be constructed to maintain the bylaw requirement for at least four faculty seats. There is no bylaw requirement specifying faculty or staff seats for Senate Vice President.
6. There will be run-off elections for tie votes. Attendance is required for voting in

run- off elections.

7. Two alternates will also be named, to serve in the event that a seat as a Senate officer or CIP member should become vacant between elections. The alternates will be the faculty or staff members who received the most combined votes but were not elected.

Should a seat become vacated in CIP, the Senate President will meet with the alternates to determine who will fill the vacancy. If both alternates are interested or if no alternate is available, an election will take place at the next Academic Senate meeting.

- a. The alternate will be seated and be eligible to vote immediately upon approval of the CIP Chair or election by the Academic Senate.
  - b. If the Senate President is unable to serve, the Vice President will become Senate President and an election for a new Senate Vice President will take place at the next Academic Senate meeting. Likewise, if the Senate Vice President is unable to serve, an election for a new Senate Vice President will take place at the next Academic Senate meeting,
  - c. If the CIP Chair is unable to serve, the Vice Chair will become Chair. If the CIP Vice Chair is unable to serve, the Members-at-Large will be polled to determine a replacement. The alternate or newly elected member will become a Member-at- Large.
  - d. When an alternate fills a vacancy, it will not affect the term limit nor will it have a bearing on the elections of the officers in the following year. Alternates will serve for the remainder of the term of the person whose seat has been vacated.
8. When a new Senate President or Senate Vice President is elected, the newly-elected officers will meet with and shadow the outgoing officers when and where possible to ensure a seamless transition.
  9. Terms for newly elected Academic Senate officers and CIP members begin on June 1 in the same year following their March election.

#### Article IX: Joint Organizational Meetings

1. Joint meetings of the Senate leadership and CIP shall be held each May, following the May Academic Senate meeting. The joint meeting will include all outgoing and incoming Senate officers and CIP committee members and is intended to ease the transition of new members.
2. The Senate President may also call joint meetings or emergency meetings to



discuss pressing matters. Those present may take action on behalf of the Senate on a provisional basis on a pressing matter, as long as these measures are raised for consideration by any member of the leadership at the next meeting of the Senate. Only members or the designees acting in their place who are physically present at the joint meeting or who are able to be heard through telephone or other means shall be permitted to vote. There will be no provision for absentee or proxy voting.

Approved on 30 March 2015

Amended on 28 May 2015

Amended and approved on 29 February 2016

Amended and approved on 03 April 2017

Amended and approved on 27 April 2020

Amended and approved on 26 October 2020