

ACADEMIC SENATE - 2nd READING – Nov. 6, 2014- APPROVED

**CONSTITUTION OF THE
VICTOR VALLEY COLLEGE
ACADEMIC SENATE**

PREAMBLE

The Victor Valley College Academic Senate exists to ensure democratic participation of the faculty in the development of policies and procedures of the college and to foster the long-range interests and well-being of the College.

ARTICLE I: AUTHORIZATION AND POWERS OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

The Academic Senate is established for the purpose of participating in the formation of educational and professional policy. **Academic Senate powers and duties include, as per AB 1725, the following academic and professional policy development matters:**

- 1. Curriculum, including establishing prerequisites.**
- 2. Degree and certificate requirements.**
- 3. Grading policies.**
- 4. Educational program development.**
- 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.**
- 8. Policies for faculty professional development activities.**
- 9. Processes for program review.**
- 10. Processes for institutional planning and budget development.**
- 11. Other academic and professional matters as mutually agreed upon.**

The ~~Senate~~**Representative** Council shall include the Executive Board and the Area Representatives, which serve as the official representative body of the Academic Senate. The Senate is empowered to make recommendations to the College President. It also has the right to lay directly before the governing board its views on any matter pertaining to the conduct and welfare of the college.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

All full-time faculty and ~~part-time~~ **Adjunct** faculty are members of the Academic Senate, **and are represented by the Academic Senate Executive ~~Committee~~ Board and Area Representatives in academic and professional matters.**

~~Full-time faculty are and thus permitted~~ eligible to vote on Senate issues such as, but not limited to, governing documents (Constitution and By-Laws) revisions and amendments. Adjunct faculty, via their Area Representatives, are eligible to vote on issues brought before the Representative Council (general Academic Senate meetings) before any issue or document goes out for a vote to the full-time faculty.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD

The officers of the VVC Senate shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Past President.

ARTICLE IV: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1: Process and Timelines

Academic Senate elections shall be conducted by the Elections Committee. The Executive Board Vice-President serves as the chair of the Elections Committee. The Elections Committee shall consist of a total of 3 members. Two members of the Executive Board, or two designees nominated by the current Vice-President and approved by the Executive Board.

~~At this time, only Full-time~~ **F**ull-time faculty are eligible to vote for Senate **Area and At-Large Representatives** ~~or and~~ Executive Officers. ~~Part-time Adjunct~~ **Part-time Adjunct** Faculty Representatives (23) will be elected by ~~Part-Time Adjunct~~ **Part-time Adjunct** faculty only. **If no full-time faculty are available for Area Representative positions, after the election is concluded, the Academic Senate President, with the advice and consent of the Academic Senate Executive Board, can appoint an Adjunct faculty member whose teaching assignment is primarily in an Area (for example, Science building). Should no faculty (full-time or Adjunct) be available for an Area, it is the responsibility of the At-Large Representatives to inform that Area of Academic Senate business.**

March - April: Solicit nominations from faculty on the offices of Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and ~~s~~**S**enate representatives.

April - May: Open nominations and a last call are to be taken from the floor at the Senate meeting.

~~May - June~~ **Late April-Early May:** Election takes place (secret ballot) and the results are to be presented to the membership ~~prior to the last day of the semester~~ **within one week five (5) business days of the election concluding, so those elected can adjust their Fall academic schedules to accommodate duties associated with elected office.**

Secret Ballot Process:

1. Ballots will be prepared under the direction of the Academic Senate Vice-President. The placement of names may be determined by using the state random alphabet for the current year, or by having names chosen by an agreed upon random drawing.
2. Election may take place through secure electronic voting or through a paper ballot process (described below.)
3. The Election Committee Chair shall submit the final report to the President or designee who shall inform all candidates of the results. The President shall announce the results as prescribed by the timelines.

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AS 1st Reading 05_01_2014
AS 2nd Reading 11_06_2014 APPROVED

Process for Electronic Ballots

1. The electronic voting process will be managed through a secure and confidential online program to ensure one vote per person. **At this time, only voting for Adjunct Area Representatives is completed via electronic voting, due to the large percentage of Adjunct faculty and their varied schedules, which may prohibit onsite voting. The period for any group to vote electronically is concurrent with onsite voting.**

Process for Paper Ballots

1. ~~The VVC faculty ballot box will be placed in the mail~~ **Ballot boxes will be placed in centrally located and accessible** areas, and the key will be retained by the Executive Board President. A second key is to be held in the Academic Senate office in case of absence of the President. All ballots are to remain in the box until the end of the election. Faculty will be given at least one week for voting.
2. All ballots are to be signed on the outside of the large envelope by the voting member. Without a signature, the vote is ineligible to be counted (NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS REQUIREMENT). Instructions will be typed on the ballot.
3. The Election Committee will count the votes. If a member of the Elections Committee is on the ballot, the Election Committee Chair will appoint a replacement for the purpose of counting ballots. Ballots and results will be held in the Academic Senate office for a minimum of six months (for review by any faculty member, if requested).

Section 2: Campaigning/Endorsements

The Executive Board is prohibited from endorsing and/or campaigning for or against any nominee or group of nominees on the ballot. The Executive Board (as a group) is to remain impartial. However, as individual faculty members, Executive Officers may campaign for or endorse nominees, **with the provision that any campaign or endorsement be clearly stated as coming from an individual faculty member.**

ARTICLE V: RECALL ELECTIONS

Section 1: The recall of any person in an Academic Senate elected position may be initiated by a petition signed by one-third (1/3) of the active Senate membership. A statement of the reasons for the proposed recall petition shall be part of the recall petition.

Section 2: Each person named in the recall petition shall have the right to make a rebuttal statement, which shall be distributed to his/her constituency at least 7 days before the recall election.

Section 3: Recall elections shall be by secret ballot, and regular election procedures (e.g., election of officers) shall be followed including voting times.

Section 4: A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate membership shall be necessary to affect the recall.

Section 5: Any vacancy, in any office, created by recall shall be filled according to the procedures provided in Article IV for election of officers.

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ARTICLE VI: TERMS AND VACANCIES

Section 1: Officers and representatives shall be elected for a period of two years, commencing on August 1 and ending on July 31 two years later with the exception of the Vice-President, who will automatically ascend to the Presidency and then to the position of Past-President. Members should be reminded to take this into account when voting for the office of Vice-President.

Section 2: A vacancy shall be deemed to exist in the case of death, resignation, or inability to serve in any of the offices of the Senate. Any vacancy in the office of Secretary, Treasurer or Vice-President, shall be filled by holding a special election.

Section 3: In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of the President, the Vice-President shall assume the office.

Section 4: If the Vice-President leaves office with one year or less remaining on his or her two-year term, the newly elected Vice-President will fulfill the remainder of the aforementioned officer's term plus one year before ascending to the presidency. If and when this should occur, the incumbent President's term will be extended to correspond with the Vice-President's term.

Section 5: The replacement for the Past-President must be drawn from the ranks of Past-Presidents and filled by special election. In the event that there are no Past-Presidents available, the position may be filled from the ranks of past Executive Officers by special election.

Section 6: All replacement elections shall be held according to the procedures provided in Article IV, sections 1 and 2. A meeting to solicit nominations shall be held within two weeks but not sooner than five school days following the notification of the vacancy.

Section 7: In the event that an executive board office is vacant as a result of no one running for that position, the Senate President shall assume the duties and/or assign the duties to a designee or conduct a special election.

Section 8: A quorum of Senate Representatives is required for voting purposes. If a representative misses two consecutive meetings without cause, the President may hold a special election or appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE VII: EMPOWERMENT

The Academic Senate shall make recommendations and have direct access to the College President and the Board of Trustees. It shall be further empowered to develop its own internal organization, to initiate studies, and to discuss problems and propose policies for administrative consideration.

ARTICLE VIII: MEETINGS

Academic Senate shall meet as often as business requires but not less than once each semester. **Robert's Rules of Order (RRO) will be the procedural model for Academic Senate meetings, except when public meeting requirements demand additional actions or information not contained in RRO.**

ARTICLE IX: ORGANIZATION OF THE SENATE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Section 1: Purpose. It shall be the purpose of the Senate Council to serve as the official voice of the Academic Senate.

Section 2: Membership. The Senate Council shall be composed of the President, Immediate Past-President, Vice- President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Academic Senate, and representatives from each area. The officers of the Academic Senate shall serve as the officers of the Senate Representative Council. The Faculty Areas shall be established by the Executive Board dependent upon the number of faculty in each area, including at-large representatives.

Section 3: Meetings. The Academic Senate Representative Council shall meet as often as business requires, but not less than once each semester month. Area Representatives missing more than two Academic Senate meetings without designating a proxy, or four meetings during an academic year (August through June) can be replaced by special election or appointment, as determined by the Academic Senate President, with the advice and consent of the Academic Senate Executive Board.

Section 4: Empowerment. The Senate Representative Council is the executive body representing Academic Senate. The Senate Representative Council shall be empowered to conduct investigations and such business as shall be referred to the Senate Representative Council or initiated by council members. In the conduct of official business a quorum shall consist of one more than half of the area representatives. Recommendations to the President of the College or the Board of Trustees must be authorized by a majority vote of the Senate Representative Council.

Section 7: Committees. The Senate Representative Council shall be empowered to establish such committees as are needed to conduct investigations and to conduct such business as shall be referred to the Senate Representative Council or initiated by Senate Representative Council members. The Senate Representative Council defines the power and duties of committees.

Section 8: Proxy voting. Area representatives can use a proxy vote for Academic Senate monthly meetings where they cannot be present to vote. Any full-time or Adjunct faculty member can serve as a proxy for an Area Representative; Area Representatives should make every effort to designate as a proxy a faculty member from their area. An Area Representative is entitled to two proxy votes per academic year without being counted as absent; if an Area Representative misses more than four Academic Senate monthly meetings per academic year, the provision for replacement of that Area Representative will be conducted according to Section 3 above.

ARTICLE X: DEPARTMENT CHAIR REPRESENTATIVE TO COLLEGE COUNCIL.

Section 1: A full-time faculty member, representing the voice of department chairs, sits on the College Council for a two-year period. The College Council meets twice monthly. The Department Chair Representative will provide regular reports to College Department Chairs on College Council business affecting Chairs, and should report at the Academic Senate meetings as needed.

Section 2: The Academic Senate Executive Officers shall facilitate the election of the

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Department Chair Representative to College Council in the Fall Semester, no later than September 30. Service on College Council shall be from October 1 to September 30 for two academic years.

Section 3: Department chairs shall be contacted by the Academic Senate Vice President to solicit nominations. A full description of duties shall be provided to all department chairs.

Section 4: Ballots will be distributed to department chairs no later than mid-September, with the names of all candidates.

Section 5: Ballot boxes will be placed in centrally located and accessible areas, and the key will be retained by the Academic Senate President. A second key is to be held in the Academic Senate office in case of absence of the President. All ballots are to remain in the box until the end of the election. Department chairs will be given at least one week for voting.

ARTICLE XXI: AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by the Academic Senate or by petition of 30 percent of the members of the Academic Senate.

Section 2: All proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the full-time faculty membership at least ten days prior to voting.

Section 3: An amendment shall be considered adopted if it receives a simple majority vote by full-time faculty membership.

Upon ratification in Fall 2014, the revised Constitution will take effect Fall 2015.

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