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Simmons College Faculty Senate Bylaws

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Article 1: Name and Purpose

Section 1.1

The name of this organization shall be the Simmons Faculty Senate, hereafter referred to in this document as the Senate. For purposes of these bylaws, the term “faculty” refers to all faculty employed by Simmons College, as defined in the Simmons College *Faculty Policy Manual*.

Section 1.2

The Senate shall provide for the faculty both a forum and a voice so as to allow the faculty to assert its distinctive viewpoint and principles in support of the general welfare of Simmons College, and thus contribute to the growth, development, and functioning of the College. To facilitate this role, the Senate shall:

- (a) act as a coordinating committee and deliberate on any matter within the province of the faculty for the purpose of formulating policy for approval of the faculty. This includes such issues as faculty workload and proposed changes to the *Faculty Policy Manual*.
- (b) facilitate communication with faculty among and between schools and hold all-College faculty meetings biannually.
- (c) seek to safeguard academic freedom across the entire College by identifying relevant issues in individual academic divisions.
- (d) seek to safeguard faculty governance rights across the entire College, for example by addressing violations of the *Faculty Policy Manual*.
- (e) generally serve to represent the faculty to College administrators, trustees, staff, and students and those outside of Simmons College.
- (f) produce consensus statements to advise, recommend, or convey a sense of faculty opinion to any of the above constituent groups.
- (g) discuss and put before the faculty any and all proposed modifications and/or amendments to the *Faculty Policy Manual*.
- (h) provide input on issues that affect all faculty, such as the academic calendar, library policies, and faculty compensation.
- (i) serve as a body for faculty discussion of both the College mission and Strategic Plan and any proposed modifications to either mission or plan.
- (j) allow any faculty member to propose issues for consideration by the Senate. Issues may surface through each school’s senator or directly with the Senate president.

Article 2: Membership

Section 2.1 - Composition

Section 2.1.1: Each of the following academic divisions of the College shall be entitled to representatives to the Senate: the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), the School of Management (SOM), the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS), the School for Health Studies (SHS), and the School of Social Work (SSW).

Section 2.1.2: The voting faculty of each of the five academic divisions shall elect two senators and one alternate, except the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), which shall elect two senators to represent the undergraduate division, two to represent the graduate programs and one alternate. CAS shall be responsible for defining eligibility for graduate and undergraduate positions.

Section 2.2 - Term of Office

Section 2.2.1: Beginning in the 2006-2007 academic year, senators and alternates shall be elected to three-year staggered terms, and elections shall be held in each academic division according to the following three-year, rotating schedule.

- Year 1: CAS (Undergraduate), CAS (Graduate), SOM, SSW, GSLIS alternate, SHS alternate
- Year 2: GSLIS, SHS, CAS (Undergraduate), SOM, SSW alternate
- Year 3: CAS (Graduate), SSW, GSLIS, SHS, CAS alternate, SOM alternate

Section 2.2.2: Senate representatives and alternates may be elected to two consecutive three-year terms. Following at least a one year absence from the Senate, a faculty member becomes eligible once more to serve two consecutive terms. No senator may serve more than six years without a one year absence from the Senate.

Section 2.2.3: Terms of Senate representatives shall begin with the organizational meeting of the Senate in June and end with the adjournment of the meeting immediately preceding the organizational meeting of the Senate the following June.

Section 2.2.4: The term of a senator elected to fill a vacated position shall be for the unexpired term of the senator vacating the position.

Section 2.3 - Eligibility Requirements

Section 2.3.1: To be eligible for membership on the Senate, a faculty member must be a voting member of the faculty of Simmons College with administrative rank no higher than Department Chair. Each academic division's Implementation Guidelines shall determine who composes the voting faculty of each School.

Section 2.3.2: At least half of the representatives from each academic division shall hold a tenured appointment.

Section 2.4 - Election of Representatives to the Senate

Section 2.4.1: Senate representatives from each academic division shall be elected between January 1st and April 30th by the voting faculty of that academic division. The eligible membership of each academic division as defined in their respective *Faculty Policy Manual*'s Implementation Guidelines shall elect the appropriate number of representatives by secret ballot, according to the procedures prescribed in these bylaws. In order to complete the election of Senate representatives in April, the elections process shall be initiated by the end of January.

Section 2.4.2: A full time member of the faculty holding a joint appointment across divisions may vote for representatives in only one of the divisions in which s/he holds an appointment and may only be elected as a representative from the division in which s/he votes. A faculty member wishing to change the academic division in which s/he votes may petition the Senate in writing, which, by simple majority vote of those present, may allow such a change.

Section 2.5 - Vacancies and Leaves of Absence

Section 2.5.1: If an elected representative of the Senate takes a leave of absence (as defined by the *Faculty Policy Manual*) for one year or less or is otherwise unable to attend three or more regular senate meetings in a row, the alternate senator from the affected academic division shall serve in his or her place with full membership in the Senate, and a second alternate shall be elected by that academic division at their next regularly scheduled faculty meeting. In the absence of the alternate senator, the affected academic division shall hold a special election at its next faculty meeting to fill the Senate vacancy.

Section 2.5.2: A senator whose absence from the Senate is one year or less may return to full member status in the Senate upon his or her return to duties at the College by notifying the Senate president of his or her return in writing. An alternate senator from the affected academic division then resumes his or her status as an alternate senator.

Section 2.5.3: If a senator is unable to complete his or her term and more than one year of the senator's term remains, the vacancy shall be filled in the interim (i.e., until the end of the unexpired term of the senator vacating the position) by the affected academic division, which will hold a special election at its next faculty meeting.

Section 2.5.: If an elected Senate representative fails to attend two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings, s/he shall be notified in writing by the president of the Senate that his or her position will be declared vacant in the event of a third consecutive absence. Upon his or her third consecutive absence, s/he shall be notified in writing that his or her position has been declared vacant by the Senate president and will be filled by the alternate senator or if no alternate is available to fulfill the vacancy, filled by a special election as described in Section 2.5.1.

Article 3: Officers and Committees

Section 3.1 - Officers, Eligibility, and Term of Office

Section 3.1.1: The officers of the Senate shall consist of a president and a president-elect.

Section 3.1.2: Any elected representative to the Senate shall be eligible to hold elective office, with the restriction that a president-elect may not be elected from an academic division if another member of that same division has been elected to and served a full term of office as president within the last two years.

Section 3.1.3: The term of Senate officers shall ordinarily be for one year, ending with the adjournment of the Senate at its organizational meeting in June or as soon as his or her successor has been elected (whichever occurs later). The terms of Senate officers elected to fill positions vacated during the Senate year shall begin at the time of their election to office and end with the adjournment of the Senate at its organizational meeting in June or as soon as his or her successor has been elected (whichever occurs later).

Section 3.2 - Election of Officers

Section 3.2.1: The regular election of president-elect shall be held at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the Senate in May. Should no meeting in May occur, the election of the president shall occur at the next scheduled meeting.

Section 3.2.2: With the exception prescribed in Section 3.3.1 of these bylaws, the person whose term as president-elect is ending at the organizational meeting of the Senate in June shall become the president when that meeting adjourns.

Section 3.2.3: The president-elect shall be elected by secret ballot.

Section 3.2.4: The nominee for president-elect who receives a simple majority of votes from the members of the Senate then in office, a quorum being present, shall be declared the president-elect. In the event that no candidate receives a sufficient number of votes, a re-vote shall be conducted until a president-elect is chosen.

Section 3.2.5: Any officer of the Senate may be recalled by a vote of two-thirds of the number of senators then in office, so long as a quorum is present.

Section 3.3 - Vacancies and Leaves of Absence

Section 3.3.1: If the office of president becomes vacant, the president-elect shall become president for the remainder of that term and remain president for the following term.

Section 3.3.2: If the office of president-elect becomes vacant, the Senate at its next meeting shall elect a president-elect from its membership to serve for the remainder of that term.

Section 3.3.3: If the office of president becomes vacant when the office of president-elect is also vacant, the remaining members of the Senate shall convene a special meeting within fourteen calendar days (unless the May election meeting of the Senate is sooner) to elect a president and president-elect from its membership to serve the remainder of the term. The Senate shall choose a chair from among its members not standing for office to run the special meeting and election, as per Section 4.3.2. If, during the special meeting, any member so requests, the chair shall ask the Registrar of the College to tally the ballots of the election. The newly elected president shall be eligible for election as president-elect when the next election is held.

Section 3.3.4: If an elected officer of the Senate is absent for more than three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings, the office shall be considered vacant and shall be filled according to the provisions of these bylaws.

Section 3.4 - Duties of Officers

Section 3.4.1: It shall be the duty of the president to

- (a) provide general supervision over all business of the Senate,
- (b) schedule, open, and preside at all meetings of the Senate,
- (c) schedule, open, and preside at meetings of the all-College faculty,
- (d) coordinate the agenda for both Senate and all-College faculty meetings in consultation with the full membership of the Senate,
- (e) convene any special meetings of the Senate or the all-College faculty,
- (f) meet with the President of the College at least twice per semester,
- (g) keep the President of the College informed about the activities of the Senate,
- (h) meet with the President's Council as necessary,
- (i) meet with the Executive Committee of the Simmons Board of Trustees twice annually or as invited.
- (j) bring such motions as voted by the Senate to meetings of the faculties of the five academic divisions or send a representative in his or her place to submit such motions when necessary,
- (k) oversee the minutes and the Senate's staff assistant,
- (l) serve as a signature authority for financial expenditures,
- (m) communicate with the president-elect as necessary,
- (n) represent the Senate by presenting its recommendations and views, and
- (o) perform such other duties as are prescribed in these bylaws.

Section 3.4.2: It shall be the duty of the president-elect to

- (a) support the president in the execution of his or her responsibilities,
- (b) preside at meetings of the Senate and the all-College faculty in the president's absence,
- (c) serve as the Senate's financial officer (with signature authority) and maintain all financial records of the Senate, and
- (d) perform such other duties as prescribed in the bylaws.

Section 3.5 - Committees

Section 3.5.1: The Senate shall establish and oversee such standing and special committees of the Senate as its business may require. The members and officers of these committees shall be appointed by the Senate president with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Section 3.5.2: The Senate shall establish and oversee standing and special committees of the Simmons College Faculty (i.e., college-wide committees). All committees with faculty representation which represent or serve the College as a whole (i.e., Fiscal Affairs Committee, Review Committee, Hearing Committee, Honorary Degrees Committee, Fund for Research Committee, Information Technology Governance Advisory Committee, Academic Technology Committee, and the College-Wide Curriculum Discussion and Dispute Resolution Committee) which stand in contrast to those convened by and for the individual academic divisions of the College (such as tenure and advancement or curriculum committees) shall have their faculty membership coordinated by the Senate when not specifically prohibited or provided for by the *Faculty Policy Manual*. Normally when there is a vacancy on either a standing, administrative, or *ad hoc* committee, the Senate shall notify the faculty of the academic division from which a representative is needed that such a vacancy exists. The faculties of the individual academic divisions shall choose their own representatives to all such committees as specified by either the *Faculty Policy Manual* or their Implementation Guidelines and inform the Senate of their choice in writing within fourteen calendar days of the selection. In this fashion, the Senate shall advocate for and have oversight of College-wide faculty committees.

Section 3.5.3: All committees described in Section 3.5.2 shall provide a written report to the Senate annually by April 30th.

Section 3.5.4: The Senate shall elect from its membership (including alternate senators) representatives from two different academic divisions to serve on the Simmons College Board of Trustees' Academic Affairs Committee to serve staggered three-year terms. One representative shall be elected in Year 1 (as defined in Section 2.2.1) and the other shall be elected in Year 2 (as defined in Section 2.2.1). The Senate shall also elect from its membership (including alternate senators) a representative to serve one three-year term on the Simmons College Board of Trustees' Student Affairs Committee in Year 3 (as defined in Section 2.2.1). Following at least a one year absence from a Trustee committee, a faculty member becomes eligible once more to serve a three-year term. No senator shall serve more than one term consecutively, nor shall any senator serve on more than one Trustee committee simultaneously.

Article 4: Meetings of the Senate

Section 4.1 - Schedule of Meetings

Section 4.1.1: The Senate shall meet in regular session at least once each month during the year except for the months of December, July, and August.

Section 4.1.2: Special sessions of the Senate may be called as required by the Senate president or at the request of members from three or more different academic divisions. Written notice of the special meeting shall be sent to each member within twenty-four hours of the decision to hold such a meeting.

Section 4.1.3: The Senate shall establish a schedule of regular meetings for the following academic year no later than its February meeting. The schedule shall be published and distributed promptly to all members of the Senate, all members of the voting faculty of the five academic divisions, and to appropriate administrators and staff.

Section 4.2 – Meeting Agenda

Section 4.2.1: Agenda for meetings shall be established by the Senate president (in consultation with its members), who shall establish the priority of items on the agenda.

Section 4.2.2: Agenda prepared for a meeting by the Senate president may be changed at the meeting by a simple majority of the members present. A call for non-agenda items shall be made at each meeting.

Section 4.2.3: The agenda for each meeting of the Senate shall be made generally available to all members of the Simmons Community seven calendar days before each meeting.

Section 4.3 - Meeting Procedures

Section 4.3.1: Ordinarily, the first 30 minutes (or longer at the discretion of the Senate president) of each meeting of the Senate shall be open to all members of the Simmons Community. The remainder of the meeting shall be open only to the senators and those whom a simple majority of those present have agreed to invite.

Section 4.3.2: The president shall serve as the presiding officer of all meetings of the Senate. In his or her absence, the president-elect shall preside. If both are absent, the remaining members shall choose a chair for that meeting.

Section 4.3.3: A quorum of the Senate shall exist when at least half of the members of each academic division are present AND when the number of senators present is more than half of the number of senators then in office.

Section 4.3.4: In the absence of a quorum, no resolutions shall be voted upon nor will any motion (other than a motion to adjourn) be considered. Only general discussion may continue until a quorum is present.

Section 4.3.5: Regularly scheduled meeting of the Senate shall be conducted in person. Special meetings, which are by their nature difficult to schedule in advance, may be conducted via teleconference.

Section 4.3.6: Meetings of the Senate shall be conducted according to the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* (as interpreted by the Senate president), except insofar as the bylaws make express provisions to the contrary.

Section 4.6.7: Before the first regularly scheduled meeting in June, the president shall appoint a parliamentarian from the Senate membership to advise him or her in interpretations of parliamentary procedures.

Section 4.3.8: The right of the floor at meetings of the Senate shall be afforded to

- (a) members of the Senate, and
- (b) any other persons recognized by the president.

Section 4.3.9: Every member of the Senate has the right to be present (either in person or via teleconference), participate, make and second motions, and vote in all Senate meetings.

Section 4.3.10: Only senators may make or second motions, and only senators may vote in Senate meetings.

Section 4.3.11: Unless otherwise specified by these bylaws, actions of the Senate which require voting, except amendments to these bylaws, may be enacted by a simple majority of the members present and voting, so long as a quorum is present.

Section 4.3.12: During a regular meeting, voting shall be by voice or show of hands, unless a roll call vote or vote by secret ballot is requested.

Section 4.3.13: In cases where one or more senators are participating in a meeting via telephone or teleconference, their vote shall be by voice unless a secret ballot is requested.

Section 4.3.14: Any vote taken by the Senate shall be conducted by roll call vote or secret ballot if requested by any senator.

Section 4.3.15: Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

Section 4.3.16: If one or more members of the Senate are not present (either in person or via teleconference) during a meeting where a quorum is present, any two senators may, before a motion is brought to a vote, request that voting take place electronically so that all senators have to opportunity to cast ballots. In such cases, electronic balloting that allows every member of the Senate to cast a ballot shall be permitted for a period of at least twenty-four hours. The means of balloting shall be left to the Senate president so long as they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

Section 4.3.17: Except as specified in Section 4.3.18, resolutions and motions brought before the Senate for a vote must be distributed at a regularly scheduled meeting and presented for a vote at the next regularly scheduled meeting. A two-thirds majority of those present and voting may elect to suspend the rules and vote on the resolution or motion during the meeting at which it is initially presented, so long as a quorum is present.

Section 4.3.18: Motions to adjourn, approve the minutes, commit, postpone, recess, amend, reconsider, or appeal require only a simple majority vote by those present and voting regardless of when moved.

Section 4.4 – Minutes, Reports, and Resolutions

Section 4.4.1: Minutes of every meeting of the Senate shall be recorded by the Senate staff assistant signed by the Senate president, and approved by vote of the Senate. In the absence of the Senate staff assistant, the president shall appoint a person from or outside the Senate membership to take the minutes of the Senate meeting.

Section 4.4.2: The Senate president shall issue a written report on the business of the Senate annually, and make the annual report available to the voting faculty of each of the five academic divisions at least one week before the June organizational Senate meeting. Section 4.4.3: All annual reports provided to the Senate by committees representing the College as a whole shall be made available to the voting members of the faculties of the five academic divisions at least one week before the June organizational Senate meeting.

Section 4.4.4: The minutes of every Senate meeting shall be made available to the voting faculty of each of the five academic units no later than fourteen calendar days after they have been approved.

Section 4.4.5: All resolutions passed by the Senate shall be maintained in a specially designated file of Senate resolutions and shall be available to the voting members of the faculties of the five academic divisions within fourteen calendar days of passage.

Article 5: Finances

Section 5.1 - Budget

Section 5.1.1: The Senate shall request an annual budget from the College to conduct its business. Expenditures shall be authorized by vote of the Senate.

Section 5.1.2: The president-elect shall serve as the Senate's financial officer and both s/he and the president shall serve as signature authority. All financial records of the Senate shall be maintained by the president-elect and made available to members of the Senate, the College President, or his or her designee for examination.

Article 6: Amendments

Section 6.1 - Amendments to the Bylaws

Section 6.1.1: Motions for amendments to these bylaws can only be initiated in the Senate. An amendment becomes effective when approved by (a) a two-thirds vote of the senators then in office, and (b) a simple majority of each of the faculties of the five academic divisions.

Section 6.1.2: Any member of the Senate may propose additions, amendments, or deletions to the bylaws by submitting a written text of the proposal to the Senate president at least fourteen calendar days before the regular meeting at which it is to be considered. The president shall circulate the same to all members of the Senate prior to the meeting.

Section 6.1.3: Amendments take effect immediately upon ratification.

Article 7: Dissolution

Section 7.1 – Dissolution of the Senate

Section 7.1.1: Unless a simple majority of each of the faculties of the five academic divisions vote to continue the Senate prior to June 1st, 2008, the Senate shall dissolve on June 1st, 2008. Should the faculties elect to sustain the Senate, this article shall be removed from the bylaws, unless it is amended rather than revoked.

Section 7.1.2: The Senate may be dissolved at a regular or special meeting of the Senate by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members then in office, a quorum being present, so long as written notice of dissolution has been sent to all members of the faculty fourteen calendar days in advance of the meeting. Dissolution must then be ratified by simple majorities of the five academic divisions, and takes effect upon ratification.

Section 7.1.3: The Senate may be dissolved without action on the part of the Senate if two-thirds majorities of the faculties of each of the five academic divisions vote to do so.