

**NORTHWEST VISTA COLLEGE  
FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION**

**Preamble**

The mission of the faculty of Northwest Vista College is to facilitate learning. The atmosphere in which this takes place requires a commitment to excellence. Fostering learning and excellence necessitates cooperation and communication among the trustees, administration, support staff, faculty and students. The Faculty Senate was founded as a means to examine issues of concern to the faculty and institution, and we accept responsibility for promoting and maintaining the mission and values of the college as they pertain to institutional development and professional interests.

**ARTICLE I: Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Faculty Senate of Northwest Vista College and will be referred to as the "Senate."

**ARTICLE II: Purposes**

Section 1. To serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information, and to discuss problems and propose solutions.

Section 2. To encourage professional growth and competence.

Section 3. To participate and share in the planning, policymaking and decision-making processes of the institution and of the District.

Section 4. To make constructive recommendations about matters of concern to the faculty.

Section 5. To make recommendations about faculty welfare, grievance review and professional ethics.

Section 6. To support students' personal growth, higher academic achievement and personal integrity.

Section 7. To address issues concerning academics at both college and district levels.

**ARTICLE III: Membership of the Electorate**

Section 1. The faculty electorate of Northwest Vista College shall include all fulltime tenured or tenure-track faculty with any rank from instructor to full professor.

Section 2. Individuals in college management positions are ineligible to serve in the electorate and in the Senate. Management positions include President, Vice Presidents, Deans and other positions with similar duties.

Section 3. Academic area Leaders are eligible to serve in the electorate and in the Senate.

Section 4. Individuals in administrative positions are eligible to serve in temporary Senate capacities at the discretion of the Senate President with the concurrence of a majority (50% + 1 vote) of the Senate.

#### **ARTICLE IV: Dues**

No regular dues will be assessed. If an occasion arises when funds are needed, the issue will be addressed and decided by a vote.

#### **ARTICLE V: Composition of the Senate**

Section 1. Fulltime tenured or tenure-track faculty are eligible to serve on the Senate as specified in Article III.

Section 2. The Senate will be constituted of an equivalent number of Senators who represent their respective academic areas and at-large Senators.

Section 3. One Senator will be elected by and from each academic area, with the remaining Senators elected at large.

Section 4. If NVC reorganizes academic areas, existing Senators will then serve out the terms to which they were elected.

Section 5. If an NVC reorganization of academic areas results in an academic area having no Senator elected from within an academic area by the academic area, the unrepresented academic area will elect a new senator as soon as possible and no later than 100 days after the announced restructuring. Senators elected pursuant to this Section will serve out a partial term lasting until the next regular election in the Fall.

Section 6. In the event that a Senator must be absent from a Faculty Senate meeting, the absent Senator may designate a voting representative as an alternate for no more than three meetings in a calendar year.

Section 7. If a Senator misses more than three meetings in a calendar year, the Senate may recommend removal from the Senate and replacement using a special election.

Section 8. Senate elections will be run by the Secretary of the Senate, under the supervision of the Senate President, pursuant to the Senate Constitution, Senate Bylaws and *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Section 9. The Senators or the electorate may vote to remove a Senator from office if a majority of either group petitions or motions that such a recall take place. A two-thirds vote from either group is required for the recall of a Senator to take effect. A special election would then be held within 100 days of the removal of the Senator to replace the recalled Senator for the remaining term of office, and the position will be open for regular election in the Fall.

Section 10. Senators who vacate their positions due to reassignment, retirement, illness, death, or other reason will be replaced by a special election held within 100 days of the removal of the Senator to replace the recalled Senator for the remaining term of office, and the position will be open for regular election in the Fall.

#### **ARTICLE VI: Officers and Executive Committee**

Section 1. The officers of the Faculty Senate shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, Parliamentarian, and Historian.

Section 2. The officers of the Faculty Senate will be elected by and from the Senate members pursuant to the Bylaws and *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Section 3. The Senate Executive Committee will be constituted of the five elected Officers of the Senate.

Section 4. The Senate Executive Committee will act on behalf of the Senate between meetings pursuant to *Robert's Rules of Order*.

#### **ARTICLE VII: Powers, Duties and Responsibilities of Officers**

Section 1. The President will be the presiding officer at all meetings and will be the spokesperson for the faculty electorate in official business with the administration and ACCD Board of Trustees. The President will edit and approve all formal communications and statements of policy issued in the name of the Faculty Senate and electorate.

Section 2. The Vice President shall preside over Senate meetings and Executive Committee meetings in the absence of the President. At the request of the President, the Vice President will represent the President and the Senate at appropriate external and internal meetings.

Section 3. The Secretary/Treasurer will be responsible for maintaining accurate minutes of the meetings and for distributing, to both the Senate and the electorate, copies of the minutes or other records of the official proceedings of the Senate and/or the Executive Committee. The distribution of the minutes will be accomplished as quickly as practicable. The Secretary will maintain a file of minutes, correspondence, policy decisions, Committee reports and other records of the Senate for the duration of his/her

term of office and turn over these files to the Historian at the end of his/her term of office. The Secretary/Treasurer will conduct and oversee all elections of all types except when the Secretary/Treasurer has a direct conflict of interest, in which case the President will appoint a designee who does not have a direct conflict of interest to conduct and oversee this particular election. The Secretary will be responsible for calculating the apportionment of delegates among the college's academic areas according to the procedures established in the Bylaws. If needed, the Secretary/Treasurer will keep financial records of the Senate and will give a monthly financial report at each regular meeting.

Section 4. The Parliamentarian shall advise the President, other Senate Officers, committees and members on matters of parliamentary procedure.

Section 5. The Historian shall gather and archive all Senate information, maintain the historical records of the Senate, make arrangements for permanent recording of information, and maintain the Senate web page.

Section 6. The President may appoint any other officer she/he deems necessary for the organization and management of the Senate, subject to approval by a simple majority of the Senate.

## **ARTICLE VIII: Committees**

Section 1. The Executive Committee will consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, Parliamentarian, and Historian. The Executive Committee shall act on behalf of the Senate in matters requiring immediate action, and any such actions of the Executive Committee are subject to review at the next Senate meeting with a properly constituted quorum. It will carry out the policies of the Senate consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 2. The Faculty Senate shall have the following standing committees: Academic Affairs Committee and Administrative Affairs Committee. Each standing committee will be comprised of approximately one-half of all senators (excluding Officers). Both committees shall act on behalf of the Senate in matters requiring immediate action, and any such actions of these committees are subject to review at the next Senate meeting with a properly constituted quorum. Committees will carry out the policies of the Senate consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws.

- a. The Academic Affairs Committee will review and make recommendations concerning policies and standards related to academic welfare. This includes, but is not limited to, curriculum, maintaining and improving academic excellence, degree plans, and other related issues.
- b. The Administrative Affairs Committee's main purpose is to maintain high standards and effective practices in our administrative processes. This includes,

but is not limited to, fiscal affairs, promotion and tenure, campus development, registration and scheduling processes, and other related issues.

Section 3. The Senate and the Senate President may create standing or special (*ad hoc*) committees as deemed necessary for the conduct of the business of the Senate.

Section 4. All committee appointees must be confirmed by a majority of the Senate at the next Senate meeting following the appointment(s).

Section 5. The Senate may replace any committee member by a vote of at least two-thirds of the Senate at a properly called meeting.

#### **ARTICLE IX: Official Business of the Senate**

Section 1. *Robert's Rules of Order* and the Senate Bylaws will govern the parliamentary procedures of the official business of the Senate. The officers and present Senate members will conduct the official business of the Senate. Two-thirds of the elected Senate will be considered a quorum.

Section 2. Senate meetings are open to all members of the Faculty body including tenured, tenure track, fulltime temporary and adjunct faculty; however, voting privileges are reserved for Senate members only.

Section 3. The President or Senate may invite non-faculty members to meetings.

#### **ARTICLE X: Amending the Constitution**

Section 1. Proposed amendments to this Constitution must be formally proposed in writing to the President by either a petition of at least one-third of the electorate or by a petition of at least two-thirds of the Senate.

Section 2. For purposes of discussion, debate or revision, any proposed constitutional amendment will be considered at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Senate after the submission of proposed amendments to the Secretary/Treasurer.

Section 3. In order to be adopted, amendments to this constitution require at least a two-thirds vote of the electorate.

#### **ARTICLE XI: Bylaws**

The Senate shall have bylaws that with *Robert's Rules of Order* govern the parliamentary procedures of the Senate. The Senate Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the Senate at any properly called meeting of the Senate.

#### **Senate Constitution and Revised Bylaws 3/12/10**

## **NORTHWEST VISTA COLLEGE FACULTY SENATE Bylaws**

### **ARTICLE I: Nomination of Candidates for the Senate**

Section 1. Senators representing academic areas must be nominated from and within their respective academic areas.

Section 2. Members of each academic area may nominate up to two members of their academic area for at large Senator positions for each election.

### **ARTICLE II: Election of Senators**

Section 1. The term of office is two years. Whenever possible, terms should be staggered in such a way that approximately half of the Senate is elected every year.

Section 2. Each academic area will have one Senator who is nominated and elected within the academic area. An equivalent number of at-large Senators will be nominated and elected by the faculty electorate.

Section 3. Nominations must be submitted to the Senate Secretary at least 4 days before the election. For elections within an academic area, voting will be by secret ballot. A majority of votes cast will determine the winner of all elections. If no candidate receives a majority vote, there will be a runoff between the two candidates receiving the most votes; if there is a tie for second place (or first place), the runoff will be among all the candidates tied for first or second.

Section 4. In the election for at large Senators, the candidates with the most votes equaling the number of open positions will be declared the winners (e.g., if there are eight vacancies, the eight candidates who receive the most votes will be elected; if there is(are) a tie(s) for the last position(s), there will be a runoff pursuant to *Robert's Rules of Order*).

Section 5. Regular elections will be held in March and runoff elections in April of each year. Newly-elected Senators will assume their duties on the first Monday of the beginning of the Fall Semester.

Section 6. There are no term limits for Senators. Senators may serve an unlimited number of two-year terms, consecutively or non-consecutively.

### **ARTICLE III: Election of Senate Officers**

Section 1. Nominations of Officer candidates will occur at the first full Senate meeting following the election of new senators and will be conducted by the outgoing Senate Secretary.

Section 2. Senate officer candidates may be nominated by current and newly-elected Senators; Senators may also nominate themselves for Officer positions.

Section 3. The names of all Senators who accept nomination for Officer positions will be made public to the faculty electorate. The electorate will then have 30 days from the date of the nominations to provide feedback to their existing academic area Senators, their at-large Senators, or anonymously. The process for soliciting and obtaining feedback will be determined by the existing Faculty Senate President.

Section 4. Election of Officers will occur at the meeting held in the month following the meeting at which nominations were made. Newly-elected Senators will provide feedback to the existing Senators; however, they do not have voting privileges until the beginning of the upcoming Fall semester. Existing Senators will elect the new Officers. A quorum of existing Senators must be present in order for elections to be held.

Section 5. If the incumbent Secretary chooses to be a candidate for an Officer position, an existing Senator who is not being considered for an Officer position will volunteer to conduct the election for Secretary.

Section 6. A majority of votes cast by the existing Senators will determine the winner of Officer elections. If no candidate receives a majority vote, there will be a runoff between the two candidates receiving the most votes; if there is a tie for second place (or first place) the runoff will be among all the candidates tied for first or second. Runoff elections will take place immediately following the first round of elections.

Section 7. The names of newly-elected Senate Officers will be made public to the faculty electorate following the meeting at which elections are held.

Section 8. Newly-elected Officers will assume their duties at the beginning of the Fall semester. Outgoing Officers will be responsible for training new Officers before the first meeting of the Fall semester.

Section 9. Officer positions are one-year positions. If an Officer leaves the Senate at any time before the end of the one year, a special election will be held within 30 days of the vacancy of that position. Special elections will follow the procedures listed in Article III, Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7; the new Officer will assume the duties of that office immediately upon election.

Section 10. There are no term limits for Senate Officers. Officers may serve an unlimited number of one-year terms, consecutively or non-consecutively.

#### **ARTICLE IV: Faculty Senate Meetings**

Section 1. The first regular Senate meeting will be called within the first four weeks following the beginning of the fall semester. The time and place will be designated by the President of the Senate. The Senate will meet once a month during the academic

year, or more often at the call of the President, or as established by Senate resolution. The President may call emergency meetings, as needed, with twenty-four hour notice. Properly called meetings are announced by the President or the Secretary through email to the entire faculty electorate, with significant agenda items enumerated, at least twenty-four hours in advance.

Section 2. Two-thirds of the most recently elected Senate will be considered a quorum.

Section 3. When not specified by the Senate Constitution and/or by the Senate Bylaws, *Robert's Rules of Order* will govern Senate parliamentary procedures.

## **ARTICLE V: Amending the Bylaws**

Section 1. Proposed amendments to these Bylaws must be formally proposed in writing to the President by any member the Senate.

Section 2. For purposes of discussion, debate or revision, any proposed Bylaw amendment will be considered at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Senate after the submission of proposed amendments to the Secretary/Treasurer.

Section 3. In order to be adopted, amendments to these Bylaws require a majority vote at the next Senate meeting with a properly constituted quorum.

## **Senate Constitution and Revised Bylaws 3/12/10**