

BY-LAWS
SENATE OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES AND
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND APPLIED SCIENCES
YALE UNIVERSITY

[As amended March 10th, 2022]

1. Purpose

As an elected body created by and representative of the Faculties of Arts and Sciences (FAS) and Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS), the FAS-SEAS SENATE (hereafter, “SENATE”) is intended to facilitate faculty input into FAS and SEAS policies and practices. The SENATE provides a clear voice for FAS and SEAS faculty and serves as a forum and deliberative body for the discussion of FAS and SEAS issues. It also creates a formal conduit between the administration and the faculty of FAS and SEAS. The SENATE serves as a forum for the president, provost, the deans of the FAS and SEAS, and other deans, to present on issues that affect the faculty of FAS and SEAS, with the intention of improving transparency, communication, and the quality of decision- making. The SENATE operates with the assumption that major initiatives and policies affecting FAS and SEAS faculty will be brought for discussion to the SENATE in a timely manner.

The SENATE should fully represent the FAS and SEAS faculty in terms of divisional distribution, gender, and ethnicity, as well as other important aspects of diversity. Divisional and rank representation is built into the SENATE seat allocation, while the nomination committee for the SENATE should also consider other aspects of diversity in encouraging faculty to run for election.

The SENATE speaks only for the FAS and SEAS, not for Yale’s other schools, although the SENATE may consider university policies to the extent that they affect FAS and SEAS members.

2. Constituency

The SENATE is the representative body of the FAS and SEAS faculty. Those eligible to vote in SENATE elections include all ladder faculty, as well as full-time adjuncts in all ranks, full-time instructional faculty who hold multi-year appointments, and full-time research scientists and senior research scientists who also hold multi-year teaching appointments as lecturer or senior lecturer.

3. Membership

The SENATE consists of 25 members, with five at-large representatives and the other twenty members distributed according to the proportion of ladder faculty in each division:

- 7 senators elected from the Division of Humanities;

- 5 senators elected from the Division of Biological Sciences and Physical Sciences;
- 3 senators elected from SEAS;
- 5 senators elected from the Division of Social Sciences;
- 5 senators elected at-large.

The president, provost, and deans of the FAS, Yale College, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the SEAS may attend as ex-officio non-voting members of the SENATE. Ordinary members of the FAS ladder and instructional faculty eligible to vote in SENATE elections may also attend in a non-voting capacity. The SENATE may, however, choose to meet in closed session at the discretion of its Executive Council or by the majority vote of its elected members.

Recognizing that the size and distribution of the FAS and SEAS faculty may change over time, the Elections Committee (see below) shall review and, if necessary, recommend adjustments to the proportional representation across divisions and the size of the SENATE every five years. Such decisions shall be subject to the approval of the FAS and SEAS faculty.

Tenured faculty as well as untenured and instructional faculty members with multi-year appointments are eligible for election to the FAS SENATE. There shall be one seat reserved for an untenured member of the ladder faculty in the Humanities, Social Sciences and (combined) Science and Engineering Divisions (i.e., three total seats), and one seat reserved for an instructional faculty member in the at-large category. Election of additional untenured and instructional faculty through the normal election process is not precluded. When one of these seats falls vacant, the highest polling untenured faculty member in the given division, and/or the highest polling instructional faculty member in the at-large category, as appropriate, will be elected to fill the vacancy.

4. Nomination process

The Nominations Committee is responsible for soliciting and selecting candidates to run in the SENATE election. It consists of five members, including: one member not in the final year of his or her term; one tenured non-SENATE member of the faculty from each division; and one FAS or SEAS member of the Women Faculty Forum. The Nominations Committee shall be recommended by the Executive Council and approved by the SENATE each year.

Candidates who wish to stand for election to the SENATE may petition the Committee directly, or they may be nominated by departments. Additionally, the Nominating Committee may recruit nominees. All nominations shall be supported by the signatures of the candidate and eight other people eligible to vote in the SENATE elections, or roughly 1% of the eligible voters for the SENATE. To ensure a broad slate, no person may nominate more than five candidates.

All faculty eligible to vote in SENATE elections, as described in Section 2, may serve as members, with the exception of faculty appointed to a central or full-time administrative role (i.e., the president, provost, deans, and divisional directors). Chairs and others serving in part-time administrative roles may also serve in the SENATE.

5. Term of SENATE members and timing of elections

Terms are for two years, with no representative able to serve more than three consecutive terms. SENATE elections are held each spring, with nominations being solicited and gathered by March, the elections being held in April, and internal SENATE leadership elections held in late April/early May. Electors for the following year's Executive Council will consist of members of the SENATE with continuing terms, plus any newly elected Senators who have not yet taken office. The newly elected Executive Council takes office on July 1st. Elections will be by secure electronic ballot and are overseen by the Elections Committee.

6. Conduct of SENATE elections

The SENATE maintains a standing Elections Committee, charged with administering both the general and Executive Council SENATE elections. The elections committee consists of three members of the SENATE who are not in the final year of their term, and two outside members.

Voting for the SENATE is by electronic secure ballot. The voting is conducted over the course of no more than fifteen days, with provision for electronic reminders. To encourage people to stand, and in accordance with practices elsewhere, the SENATE announces the names of those elected, but neither the vote counts nor the names of those not elected. The results will be transmitted to the SENATE Deputy Chair. The full election results shall be available for consultation by any voter who wishes to examine them in the office of the SENATE Deputy Chair. The SENATE uses the single transferable vote method (STV) for the election of both divisional representatives and at-large representatives. This system is described in Appendix B of the Implementation Report, available on the SENATE website.

7. Executive Council

The Executive Council calls meetings, determines the agenda of the SENATE, appoints committees, and organizes elections in consultation with the Elections and Nominations Committees. The Executive Council serves as liaison to the administration and has the power to act on behalf of the SENATE in matters arising between meetings. It also acts as the SENATE's by-laws committee, examining and reviewing SENATE rules, procedures, and by-laws at least once per year, and recommending changes to the full SENATE. The Executive Council meets approximately once per month, roughly two weeks in advance of SENATE meetings, though meetings may occur more often or at other times as necessary.

The Executive Council includes seven members of the SENATE, with at least one member from each of the FAS Divisions of Humanities, Social Science, and Biological/Physical Science, and one member from the SEAS faculty. The Executive Council should include one instructional faculty member and one non-tenured ladder faculty member.

If no untenured or instructional member agrees to serve following election, the Executive Council may consist of seven tenured members. The Executive Council is elected by and from the elected SENATE members. Vacancies created by outgoing members will be voted on after the yearly SENATE elections, and as vacancies arise during the year. The Executive Council shall consist of the chair, secretary/deputy chair, and five others. Executive Council members serve for a term of one year, renewable by re-election up to a total of four consecutive one-year terms. The Executive Council changes each year on July 1st, two months before the instatement of the new SENATE.

The chair and deputy chair/secretary must represent different divisions. The chair and secretary/deputy chair are elected for one year, with the possibility of re-election to a second year in the position. No senator may serve as chair or deputy chair/secretary for more than two consecutive years.

The chair of the Executive Council runs the meetings of the SENATE and is an ex officio member of all SENATE committees. The secretary/deputy chair prepares minutes of meetings, made available in electronic form for all members of the FAS and SEAS. If the chair is absent, the secretary/deputy chair assumes the duties of the chair.

In the summer recess, the SENATE will not be in session, but the Executive Council of the SENATE may continue to consult with the administration on behalf of the SENATE.

8. Faculty leave

A recognized off-campus university leave (triennial faculty leave, medical leave, etc.), or teaching relief for childcare, not exceeding one semester will not invalidate the term of a SENATE member. However, SENATE members will be expected to attend monthly meetings during the semester on which they are on leave via Zoom (or other electronic means). Attendance at all SENATE meetings, whether or not on leave, is a central responsibility of membership. A leave of longer than a semester is incompatible with continued SENATE service, unless senators are willing and able to attend meetings during their absence.

9. Resignation or inability to fulfill the obligations of an elected member

If an elected member should resign or otherwise be unable to fulfill the obligations of a member of the SENATE—for example by missing three or more meetings during a year—the Executive Council of the SENATE is empowered to appoint a temporary replacement member to serve until the next spring election. These members should be

chosen from a list of alternates, the runner-up vote-getters for the divisional or at-large seats in the previous SENATE election, or, if the number of candidates on the list is insufficient, from the previous two SENATE elections. If the number of such previous candidate alternates is still insufficient to fill the vacancies, members may be nominated by the Executive Council from among the FAS and SEAS faculty

10. Committees

The SENATE maintains the following standing committees, in addition to other ad hoc and standing committees that may be appointed by the Executive Council or created by majority vote of the SENATE:

1. **Faculty Advancement Committee:** focused on the status and well-being of faculty, including issues related to salary and benefits, faculty excellence, and collective influence.
2. **Governance Committee:** focused on evaluating changes in the governance of the FAS, SEAS, and the University and reviewing the status of faculty rights and responsibilities.
3. **Budget Committee:** focused on evaluating and providing guidance on how FAS, SEAS, and University financial resources are prioritized and allocated.
4. **Committee on Instructional Faculty and Academic Support:** focused on the status and well-being of instructional faculty and academic support for all faculty ranks.
5. **Diversity Committee:** focused on matters relating to faculty diversity, equity, and campus climate.
6. **Science and Engineering Committee:** focused on examining and providing input on priorities and investments in science and engineering at Yale.
7. **Undergraduate Admissions and Education Committee:** focused on matters relating to Yale College, with a particular focus on admissions and undergraduate education.
8. **Outreach, Nominations, and Committee on Committees:** focused on identifying people to serve Yale in various capacities.
9. **Peer Advisory and Ombudsperson Committee:** focused on providing advice to faculty who have concerns about any aspect of their work and advising the administration on setting up a University Ombuds Office.
10. **SENATE Elections Committee:** focused on administering FAS-SEAS SENATE elections and on periodically reviewing and suggesting improvements to FAS-SEAS SENATE election procedures.

11. Staffing and budget

The annual operating budget of the SENATE is allotted from the FAS and SEAS budget, in consultation with the FAS and SEAS deans. The operating budget does not include salary, wages, and benefits for the FAS staff director, who is paid directly through FAS funds. The SENATE is afforded sufficient dedicated staff support to help plan and administer SENATE meetings, coordinate the activities of the Executive Council, maintain the SENATE web site, communicate with members, provide accurate and timely minutes of SENATE meetings, plan and administer SENATE-sponsored events, assist with SENATE research, and run the elections and other activities of the SENATE.

12. Schedule of meetings

The SENATE meets once per month during the academic year, usually on Thursday afternoons, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., with the first 30 minutes closed for SENATE business, during the designated time slot for university meetings. All members of the SENATE, as well as those eligible to vote for the SENATE, shall receive a written notice of the FAS and SEAS meeting schedule at the beginning of each semester. The agenda for each meeting, as well as relevant supporting documents, is sent out and posted online to all FAS and SEAS faculty eligible to vote in SENATE elections at least one week before each meeting.

The SENATE also can sponsor two annual events outside of regular SENATE meetings: an address, discussion, and reception with the university president and a “State of the FAS and SEAS” address, discussion, and reception with the FAS and SEAS deans. In addition, the Executive Council or full SENATE also meets at least once per academic year with designated members of the Yale Corporation, when available. Finally, once per academic year, the SENATE meets for a retreat to discuss overall direction and strategy.

Additional meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the Executive Council or by a vote of the SENATE.

By a majority vote of the SENATE, the Executive Council may call for a meeting of the FAS and SEAS as a whole. This meeting will be presided over by the deans of the FAS and SEAS. Additionally, when unforeseen and critical issues arise, the Executive Council may also call an “Extraordinary Meeting of the SENATE” with at least two days’ notice to SENATE members. For an Extraordinary Meeting to proceed, the Executive Council must confirm in advance that at least 13 members of the SENATE (the organization’s quorum) will be present. An agenda for an Extraordinary Meeting should be presented to SENATE members at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

13. Voting in SENATE meetings

Motions and votes of the SENATE are decided by a majority, provided that at least 13 senators are present. Changes to SENATE rules require a two-thirds majority. Voting in SENATE meetings is by voice or hand vote. A vote will be by secret ballot at the request of any senator. In the case of a secret ballot vote, the minutes will note that the vote was conducted by secret ballot but will not identify which senator requested the secret ballot in order to protect the discretion inherent in the secret ballot process. Electronic attendance via Zoom (or similar means) is allowed for SENATE meetings. All senators who cannot attend meetings are encouraged to express their views in writing to the SENATE chair at least two days in advance of SENATE meetings. The chair will convey the views of absent senators during the meetings, where appropriate.

14. Minutes and recording

The SENATE staff director will be responsible for minutes at all SENATE meetings, under the supervision of the secretary/deputy chair. Detailed written minutes will be posted on the SENATE web site no more than one week after they are approved. The SENATE staff director may audio-record or record via Zoom for purposes of accuracy, but these recordings will not be distributed or permanently preserved.

15. Conduct of FAS SENATE meetings

Unless otherwise determined prior to meetings, all meetings of the SENATE are conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. The chair and/or deputy chair/secretary of the Executive Council presides over the meeting and sets the agenda for the meeting, in consultation with the Executive Council. SENATE members as well as non-members may submit a written request for new agenda items to the Executive Council no later than ten days before a regular business meeting. In addition, a SENATE member may request the inclusion of an agenda item for future discussion by making a motion under new business at any regular meeting. Such a motion requires majority vote of the SENATE members. Eligible faculty members who are not senators may request an item for inclusion on the agenda simply by contacting one or more members of the SENATE, who will use their own discretion in making a recommendation to the Chair.

Meetings are normally open to any individual who is qualified to vote in SENATE elections. For major items of discussion, the chair first recognizes senators who wish to speak, then opens discussion to all faculty in attendance. Non-senators may be asked to attend and/or speak with the permission of the chair, secretary or (in their absence) the council member serving as chair. The president, provost, and deans of the FAS, Yale College, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and the School of Engineering and Applied Science may attend all regular meetings of the SENATE without invitation.

Faculty members who wish to address the SENATE concerning subjects not on the

agenda may register to do so by signing up in advance, either by email or at the start of a SENATE meeting. The SENATE reserves a ten-minute period at each meeting in which to hear faculty comments. Up to five faculty members may address the SENATE at any meeting, with slots accorded on a first-come, first-served basis. At the discretion of the Executive Council, or by vote of the SENATE, the SENATE may declare a closed session open only to elected SENATE members.

16. Distribution of reports

The full text of all documents scheduled for discussion, motions, or a vote at SENATE meetings (including draft reports, minutes, committee proposals, etc.) are distributed by email to senators within four days in advance of SENATE meetings. Draft documents—clearly labeled as preliminary drafts—are normally posted online at the SENATE’s web site at least one week in advance of meetings, at the discretion of the Executive Council as well as the SENATE committee in question. Where desirable, the SENATE may choose to allow online comments by eligible SENATE members on draft reports.

Once the SENATE has voted to adopt a report or motion, the full text will be distributed to all members of the SENATE eligible to vote in SENATE elections and will be posted on the SENATE web site (within one week of its adoption).

17. Ongoing communication with the FAS and SEAS faculty

One of the most important jobs of the SENATE is to communicate regularly with the full FAS and SEAS faculty. Approximately one week after each SENATE meeting, the SENATE chair should distribute a newsletter describing the SENATE’s activities and providing updates on SENATE activities. At least one week before each meeting, the chair distributes the meeting agenda and posts supporting documents on the SENATE web site. At least two days before each meeting, the chair sends an email reminder to all faculty, along with a redistribution of the agenda. At the beginning of each academic year, the FAS and SEAS deans' office provides the SENATE with an updated email list of FAS and SEAS faculty eligible to vote in SENATE elections. That list should be updated periodically as necessary.

18. Major changes to the SENATE constitution

The SENATE has been created by the FAS and SEAS faculty. Changes to the SENATE in terms of its divisional distribution, total number of SENATE members, and the SENATE electoral system, should be referred to the FAS and SEAS faculty for approval, ideally by electronic means. All other changes to SENATE rules may be approved by a 2/3 majority in the SENATE itself unless there is a deadlock, in which case changes shall be referred back to the faculty of FAS and SEAS.