

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

[As amended Sept 10, 2026]

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 expects that all 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 Outreach and Elections 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:

- Seven senators elected from the Division of Humanities.
- Five senators elected from the Division of Biological Sciences and Physical Sciences.
- Three senators elected from SEAS
- Five senators elected from the Division of Social Sciences.
- Five senators elected at-large.

The president, provost, and deans of the FAS and SEAS, Yale College, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences may attend as ex-officio non-voting members of the SENATE. Ordinary members of the FAS and SEAS faculty eligible to vote in SENATE elections may also attend in a non-voting capacity. The Executive Council may invite other groups of university members, such as graduate students, undergraduates, postdocs, instructional faculty not eligible to vote in SENATE elections, and faculty in one or more professional schools to attend when the agenda is particularly relevant to those community members and where their input would be helpful to the SENATE. The SENATE may, however, choose to meet in closed session at the discretion of the Executive Council or by a majority vote of its elected members.

Recognizing that the size and distribution of the FAS and SEAS faculty may changeover time, the Outreach and Elections Committee shall review and, if necessary, recommend adjustments to the proportional representation across divisions and the size of the SENATE every five years. Such recommendations 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 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, or the highest polling instructional faculty in the at-large category, as appropriate, will be elected to fill the vacancy.

4. SENATE Nomination process

The Outreach and Elections Committee is responsible for soliciting and selecting candidates to run in the SENATE election. The Outreach and Elections Committee will solicit nominations for election to the SENATE each spring. Additionally, the Committee may recruit nominees. All nominees supported by at least eight people eligible to vote in the SENATE election and willing to run will automatically be placed on the ballot. If necessary, the Outreach and Elections Committee may place

additional candidates on the ballot based on their number of nominations until there are at least two candidates for each open position.

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

Senate terms are for two years, with no representative able to serve more than three consecutive terms although they may rejoin the SENATE after an absence of at least two years. 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 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. Elections will be by secure electronic ballot and are overseen by the Outreach and Elections Committee. The terms for newly elected senators and for members of the new Executive Council begin on July 1st.

6. Conduct of SENATE elections

The Outreach and Elections Committee is charged with administering both the general and Executive Council SENATE elections.

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.

7. Executive Council

The Executive Council is elected by and from the elected SENATE members. It calls meetings, determines the agenda of the SENATE, appoints committees, and organizes elections in consultation with the Outreach and Elections Committee, and serves as liaison to the administration. It 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 and/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 shall 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, deputy chair, and five others. Terms for members of the Executive Council are for two years, and no member may serve on the Executive Council for more than four consecutive years, though members who have already served may be subsequently re-elected to the Executive Council after a hiatus of one term. The four-year limit is not extended for one-term leaves of absence.

The chair and deputy chair must represent different divisions. The chair and deputy chair are elected for terms of two years. In the event that the chair is unable or unwilling to serve for two years, the deputy chair will take over as chair for the second year. No senator may serve as chair or deputy chair for more than one full two-year term but senators who have already served may subsequently be re-elected to that position after a hiatus of one term.

The chair of the Executive Council runs the meetings of the SENATE and is an ex officio member of all SENATE committees. The 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 deputy chair assumes the duties of the chair.

Although the SENATE does not hold regular meetings during the summer recess, the Executive Council of the SENATE shall continue to work and to consult with the administration on behalf of the SENATE and may call senators-only meetings as needed.

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 (in person or remotely). 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, and Senators unable to meet this commitment should not stand for election/re-election or should resign from the SENATE.

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 end of the current SENATE term. 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 committees that may be appointed by the Executive Council or created by majority vote of the SENATE.

1. **Budget Committee:** focused on evaluating and providing guidance on how FAS, SEAS, and University financial resources are prioritized and allocated
2. **Faculty Advancement Committee:** focused on the status and well-being of faculty, including issues related to salary and benefits, faculty excellence, and collective influence; matters relating to faculty diversity, equity, and campus climate; and support for all faculty on any aspect of their work
3. **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
4. **Instructional Faculty Committee:** focused on the status and well-being of instructional faculty
5. **Science and Engineering Committee:** focused on examining and providing input on priorities and investments in science and engineering at Yale
6. **Student Affairs Committee:** focused on matters relating to teaching and mentoring, and work with undergraduate and graduate students
7. **Outreach and Elections Committee:** focused on FAS-SEAS SENATE outreach and elections and on periodically reviewing and suggesting improvements to 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 includes salary, wages, and benefits for the FAS-SEAS staff coordinator, 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 support 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 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 meets at least once per academic year with designated members of the Yale Corporation, when available. 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. Additional, when unforeseen and critical issues arise, the Executive Council may 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 a majority of sitting senators are present. Changes to SENATE By-Laws require a two-thirds majority of the number of sitting Senators. 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. Remote attendance 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 coordinator will be responsible for preparing minutes of all SENATE meetings, under the supervision of the deputy chair. Detailed written minutes shall be posted on the SENATE web site no more than one week after they are approved. The SENATE staff coordinator may electronically record for purposes of accuracy, but these recordings will not be distributed or permanently preserved.

15. Conduct of 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 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 a majority vote of the SENATE members present. 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, deputy chair 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 open 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 Chair, or by majority vote, the SENATE may enter into closed session, open only to senators.

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.

Within one week of a vote to adopt a report or motion, the full text will be distributed to all members of the SENATE eligible to vote, and will be posted on the SENATE web site after passage.

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' offices 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. Changes to these SENATE By-Laws

Changes to the divisional distribution of senators, total number of senators, or to the SENATE electoral system, shall be referred to the FAS and SEAS faculty for approval by electronic means.

All other changes to SENATE By-Laws may be approved by a two-thirds majority of sitting senators or may be referred to the FAS and SEAS faculty for approval by electronic means.