

## **Section IX**

### **Procedure for Making Changes in the Faculty Handbook**

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#### **Objective**

The intention of this procedure is to inform all faculty and administrators about any proposed changes in the Faculty Handbook, to give anyone who would be affected by the change an opportunity to comment on the proposal, and to ensure that policies and procedures in the Faculty Handbook develop out of dialogue between the Faculty Senate and the administration.

1. Proposals for new or revised policies, descriptions, and procedures for the Faculty Handbook may be initiated by faculty or the administration or may be responses to mandates by institutions such as the Board of Regents and the Louisiana State Legislature. Any change in the Handbook must be submitted in writing to the Faculty Senate Executive Officer and the Provost. A proposal for a substantial change must be submitted with a written explanation and/or justification about the proposal. A proposal for an editorial change does not require a written explanation, unless requested by the Provost or the Senate.
2. Some changes in the Faculty Handbook may be mandated, for example, by state or federal law. In these situations, the Faculty Senate and the administration may have no or limited authority over a proposed policy change. If this is the case, the Ways and Means Committee and the Faculty Senate must be informed of the source and legality of the proposed change. Although limited by the mandate, the Senate and the Senate Ways and Means Committee may consider issues regarding the proposal within the university's control or a response to the mandate, such as a vote of endorsement or disagreement.

#### **Normal procedure**

3. Upon receiving a proposal for a change in the Faculty Handbook, the Executive Officer will publish the proposal on the Faculty Senate's websites and refer the proposal to the Senate Executive Committee. The Executive Committee must determine whether the proposal is a substantial change (a change in policy or procedure) or an editorial change (for example, to improve the grammar, wording, or clarity of a passage or to update the Handbook to reflect changes in the names of offices or positions without changing policy or procedure).
4. A streamlined procedure for making editorial changes in the Faculty Handbook that have no effect on policy or procedure is intended to avoid devoting time during Senate meetings with

minor matters of style, wording, and grammar. If the Executive Committee determines that the proposed revision is an editorial change, the committee shall consult with the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Faculty Affairs, and solicit comments on wording from the Senate. The Executive Committee shall review the proposed revision and either approve the proposed change or work on the wording with the Assistant Vice President for Faculty Affairs, until all parties agree on and approve new language. The Provost and the Faculty Senate shall be provided this revision in writing. If a member of the Senate believes the proposed revision is, in fact, a substantial change, that is, a change in policy or procedure, this question must go before the Senate for discussion and a vote, and the Senate shall vote to begin the normal procedure for changing the Faculty Handbook or vote to accept the revision as an editorial change. The Provost may also require the normal procedure. If no one objects to a proposed editorial change approved by the Executive Committee or if the Faculty Senate votes to accept a proposed revision as an editorial change, the Assistant Vice President for Faculty Affairs shall publish the revised language in the Faculty Handbook.

5. If the Senate, the Executive Committee, or the Provost determines that a proposed change in the Faculty Handbook is a substantial change, that is, a change in policy or procedure, the Executive Officer shall refer the proposal to the Senate Ways and Means Committee and to charge the committee to study the proposal and report to the Senate with recommendations on the proposed revision. The Ways and Means Committee shall recommend action to the Senate regarding the proposal and propose wording for any recommended change. In order to come to a unified, well-informed proposal for the Faculty Handbook, the Ways and Means Committee shall also be charged to work with other relevant Senate and University committees and other university units and offices; solicit comments from faculty, committees, academic units, and offices that may be impacted by the change; consult with the Assistant Vice President of Faculty Affairs, who is responsible for editing and publishing the Faculty Handbook; and report their work on the proposal to the Senate.
6. The Ways and Means Committee shall also be responsible for recommending whether the Faculty Senate constitution should be amended to be consistent with a change in the Faculty Handbook.
7. A proposed change in the Faculty Handbook must be submitted in writing to the Senate at a regular meeting and published on the Senate's websites. The proposal must be published at least twelve days before the proposal can be discussed at a Senate meeting. The Senate shall debate the proposal at the earliest possible meeting after the twelve days have expired; at that meeting Senators may offer amendments to the proposal and the Senate shall vote on these amendments. The proposed change in the Faculty Handbook as amended by the Senate shall be published on the Senate's websites immediately following the meeting, and the Executive Officer or the Secretary shall notify the Assistant Vice-President of Faculty Affairs of any amendments to the proposal. The Senate shall take a final vote to accept or reject the proposed change at its next regular meeting, and the Secretary shall notify Senators of this impending vote. No new amendments to the proposal shall be considered at this meeting. The Executive Officer shall notify the Assistant Vice-President of Faculty Affairs of the vote following the meeting.

8. A majority vote of the Senate is required to approve a substantial change in the Faculty Handbook, unless the change requires an amendment of the Faculty Senate constitution. A majority vote of the Senate is required to approve a substantial change in the Faculty Handbook. Because any amendment of the Senate constitution must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Senate, if a proposed change in the Faculty Handbook requires a change in the Senate constitution, the Senate must first vote on the change in the constitution before voting on the change in the Faculty Handbook. The Ways and Means Committee is responsible for determining whether a proposal to change the Faculty Handbook requires a change to the Senate constitution. If the Ways and Means Committee determines that a proposal from the Provost or the President requires a change in the Senate constitution, the Ways and Means shall communicate this information to the Executive Officer, and the Executive Officer shall inform the Provost of the situation.
9. Any change approved by the Senate will be given to the Provost in writing for the Provost's and/or the President's approval. The Provost or the President will have 30 days to respond to the proposal and may request more time to study the proposal in this response. The Provost shall provide a report on the administration's work on the proposal each month until the administration is ready to begin formal discussions with Senate about the proposal. If the Provost or the President proposes a change in the Faculty Handbook, the Executive Officer of the Faculty Senate shall respond to this request within 30 days, including an explanation of what action the Senate, its officers, and its committees have taken and what procedures they will follow. The Executive Officer shall provide the Provost with monthly progress reports on the Senate's work on the proposal until immediately after the Senate takes a final vote on the proposal.
10. If the administration does not agree with the proposed change, efforts will be made to reconcile their disagreements by appropriate members of the Senate and other faculty appointed by the Executive Officer and appropriate representatives of the administration appointed by the Provost or the President. The Senate shall be informed about the disagreement and the parties involved in the negotiations on the Senate websites and invited to give comments to the faculty negotiating for the Senate. Any proposed emendations of the Senate's proposal must be approved by a vote of the Senate following the procedure in paragraphs 4-9.
11. The Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Faculty Affairs shall be notified in writing to amend the Faculty Handbook once approval from the Faculty Senate and all other necessary approvals have been given. If a change in the Faculty Handbook requires approval from the Board of Supervisors and/or the Board of Regents, the administration shall present the proposal to the board(s).
12. The Assistant Vice President for Faculty Affairs shall notify the faculty when an approved change is published in the Faculty Handbook.

#### **Procedure for time-sensitive changes and summer changes**

13. If a change in the Faculty Handbook is needed in a short time, before the normal procedure could be completed, the Senate Ways and Means Committee has the authority to vote on a change in the Faculty Handbook in lieu of a vote by the full Senate. The Executive Officer shall notify the Senate on the Senate website of the proposal and provide justification for the proposal and justification for using the time-sensitive procedure to change the Faculty Handbook. The Ways and Means Committee and the Executive Officer shall notify relevant

academic units and offices and University and Senate committees about the proposal and solicit comments from them as well as other Senators and faculty in order to inform their decision. Any change approved with this procedure will be considered a provisional change subject to the review of the Faculty Senate.

14. The Faculty Senate Ways and Means Committee will report their decision and justifications to the Senate at the next Senate meeting. The Senate may then approve the change or may initiate a review of the change and, working through the normal procedure, decide to reject, endorse, or amend the change approved by the Ways and Means Committee.
  15. If a time-sensitive change in the Faculty Handbook needs to be made between the regular semesters and the Ways and Means Committee is unable to meet with a full quorum of members, the Senate Executive Committee and available members of the Ways and Means Committee shall be responsible making a provisional decision with the Provost and/or President to change the Handbook, making the required notifications and reports, and soliciting comments, subject to a later review by the Faculty Senate.
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