

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, BAKERSFIELD

ACADEMIC SENATE

Policies Related to Senate-Initiated and School-Initiated Elections

RES 141539

EC

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of CSU, Bakersfield recommend to the President that the University Handbook be amended to include the following changes:

Academic Senate Elections

Academic Senate Elections Committee (ASEC)

According to the Constitution of the Academic Senate, the Academic Senate Elections Committee (ASEC) is chaired by the Vice Chair of the Academic Senate. The Chair of each School Elections Committee will serve as a member of the ASEC.

The Election Committee of the Academic Senate shall be responsible for conducting all Academic Senate and General Faculty elections and will serve to settle disputes regarding school elections.

Policies and Procedures for Senate-Initiated Elections

All university-wide and school-wide senate-initiated elections shall meet the following requirements:

- a. All members of the general faculty, university-wide or school-wide, as defined in Article 2 of the Constitution of the General Faculty, shall be allowed to vote.
- b. Elections shall be conducted in such a way as to ensure the confidentiality and security of all votes.
- c. A minimum of three working days will be allowed for nominations.
- d. A minimum of three working days will be allowed for voting.
- e. Elections shall be conducted electronically.
- f. The preferential voting system, Single-Transferable Vote, is used to count votes.

In the case no nominations are received after two (2) successive calls for a school to elect a representative, the ASEC shall open nominations to the general faculty of the University. The School Election Committee shall include this notice of pending action on the second call for nominations.

Any elected faculty member may be subject to a recall election by submission of a petition to the relevant SEC signed by one fourth of his or her electorate. Alternatively, after an investigation requested by a majority vote of the Senate, the Senate may initiate a recall election by two-thirds affirmative vote of the Academic Senate. The faculty member is recalled by a two-thirds affirmative vote among ballots cast by members of his or her electorate.

School Elections

School Elections Committee (SEC)

The purpose of the School Election Committee (SEC) is to implement election policies developed by the Academic Senate for University and School based elections, positions, or role responsibilities, and for Departments as requested.

The composition and structure of the SEC is decided by the faculty of the School. However, each committee is to:

- a. have a minimum of three faculty members;
- b. alternate terms of members;
- c. consult with the ASEC when problems arise;
- d. have the Chair of the SEC serve on the ASEC; and
- e. conduct elections using Senate policies and procedures.

The SEC shall be responsible for:

- a. working collaboratively with the ASEC to implement Senate election calls;
- b. initiating calls for nominations;
- c. assisting the Academic Senate, Academic Administration, and faculty bodies in the recruitment and nomination of candidates;
- d. coordinating School initiated elections of faculty, staff, and student representatives to various committees, task forces, or other shared governance efforts and assisting Departments as requested; and
- e. developing policy and procedure recommendations regarding elections and submitting them to the ASEC.

Additional responsibilities of the Chair are to:

- a. orient new committee members;
- b. send the call for nominations;
- c. verify eligibility of the individual to serve if elected;
- d. verify eligibility of voting members;
- e. develop the ballot or work collaboratively with the AS administrative assistant to develop the ballot;
- f. refer an election to the ASEC when a conflict of interest or other special circumstance develops; and
- g. announce election results.

Policies and Procedures for School-Initiated Elections

School-wide elections shall be conducted by the SEC, or in the absence of a properly-elected committee, by the ASEC.

All school-wide elections shall meet the following requirements:

- a. All members of the general faculty of the school, as defined in Article 2 of the Constitution of the General Faculty, shall be allowed to vote in school-level elections.
- b. Elections shall be conducted in such a way as to ensure the confidentiality and security of all votes.
- c. A minimum of three working days will be allowed for nominations.
- d. A minimum of three working days will be allowed for voting.
- e. Elections may be conducted electronically.
- f. The preferential voting system, Single-Transferable Vote, is used to count votes.

Rationale: The Elections Task Force was formed to address concerns that had been raised regarding university-wide and school-wide elections. The Elections Task Force reviewed the existing policies and underlying issues, and has recommended significant changes to the University Handbook related to elections.

The Elections Task Force sought to establish clear policies to guide the Academic Senate Elections Committee (ASEC) and School Elections Committees (SECs). Sections 202.6 and 202.7 are integrated into the new language. The organization of the content is significantly changed in order to improve readability and clarify the roles of the ASEC and SECs in senate-initiated and school-initiated elections. The ASEC and SECs are addressed separately, including descriptions of composition, purpose, responsibilities, policies, and procedures. A new section dedicated to School Elections was added. Previous lack of detail related to School Elections was problematic, and primarily responsible for the original referral to the Task Force.

The ASEC now includes 5 members: the Chairs of each SEC and the Vice Chair of the Academic Senate. This change was made to ensure well-informed representation from all schools. This change also requires an amendment to the Constitution (separate resolution).

The timelines for nominations and voting have been reduced from 5 to 3 days in order to expedite the process. Evidence showed that most nominations and votes are received in the first 48 hours.

“Elections shall be conducted electronically” was added to the policies and procedures for senate-initiated elections to reflect the current—and preferred—practice. This also ensures campus-wide consistency in voting procedures.

The procedure for opening school-level calls to the general faculty (after a lack of response from the school) was rewritten to improve readability.

“Elections may be conducted electronically” was included in the section regarding school-initiated elections to recognize that schools may choose to perform paper/pencil elections *or* utilize the electronic voting procedures.

Approved by the Academic Senate on May 14, 2015
Sent to the President for approval on May 26, 2015
Approved by the President on September 24, 2015