THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE GASTON COLLEGE FACULTY SENATE

Revision April 29, 2009

This constitution was adopted March 25, 1996.

I. Purpose

The purpose of the Faculty Senate shall be to provide the means by which the faculty is enabled to fulfill its function with respect to academic and educational policies and other affairs of Gaston College. The Senate is established in accordance with the Gaston College Board of Trustees Resolution, as adopted March 28, 1994, whereby the said Senate is designated and empowered as the official representative voice of the faculty. The Senate shall be a representative body, and the general faculty shall be the electorate. The Senate shall serve as an advisory body representing the general faculty, and shall consist of elected and ex-officio members. The Faculty Senate and the various committees on which the faculty serve shall be the official media for the essential joint effort of faculty and administration of Gaston College. The Senate shall work to facilitate communication which will enable continuing and effective faculty participation in the operation and affairs of the college.

II. Definitions

A. Unless otherwise specified, the designation “President” as used herein shall mean the President of the Faculty Senate.

B. The term “Faculty” as used herein shall mean those individuals employed by Gaston College on a full-time basis in a teaching or instructional capacity.

III. Membership

A. Qualifications

1. To be eligible to serve in the Senate as an elected representative one must be a full-time (9-12 month contract) Faculty member of Gaston College.

2. The Vice President for Academic Affairs of the college shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Faculty Senate.

B. Selection

1. The Senate shall consist of a minimum of twelve members apportioned by percentage according to the number of full-time faculty members assigned to each division or current organizational equivalent. Accordingly, each division will stagger the term of its representatives so that its odd-numbered representatives will serve a two-year term, and the even-numbered representatives will initially serve a one-year term in order to establish staggered terms. Odd and even numbers will be determined alphabetically. Thereafter, elections shall be for two-year terms.
2. Elections shall be held in March. The new terms will commence at the April meeting.

3. The President of the Senate shall appoint tellers to receive and tally the votes from each division. The tellers shall submit the names of elected Senate delegates to the President of the Senate immediately following annual elections, or the filling of a vacancy.

4. When a member fails to attend three consecutive regular Senate meetings for reasons other than from nine-months employment and/or official leave, and unless the individual sends a proxy/substitute, a vacancy will exist and the division represented by that individual will elect another representative to serve the remainder of that individual’s term of office.

5. When a Senate member is to be away from campus for a period of two or more months, the President of the Senate may ask the representative’s division to appoint an alternate from the same division to serve for this period of absence.

C. Term of Office

1. Senate terms of office for elected representatives shall be two years, except when one-year terms are necessary to insure staggered representation.

2. A division can, by two-thirds vote of its total membership, recall any of its senators.

3. When a vacancy occurs in any elected senatorial position, the division wherein the vacancy occurred shall elect a representative to complete the unexpired term.

4. A senator who wishes to resign shall submit a letter of resignation specifying the effective date of resignation to the President of the Senate. Copies shall be sent to the Secretary of the Senate.

5. When a member fails to attend three consecutive regular Senate meetings for reasons other than from nine-months employment and/or official leave, and unless the individual sends a proxy/substitute, a vacancy will exist and the division represented by that individual will elect another representative to serve the remainder of that individual’s term of office.

6. When a Senate member is to be away from campus for a period of two or more months, the President of the Senate may ask the representative’s division to appoint an alternate from the same division to serve for this period of absence.

IV. Meetings

Regular meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be held once a month during the calendar year. Special meetings may be called by the President of the Senate, or upon the written request of five members of the Senate or ten members of the Faculty.
A. Agenda

1. The agenda for each meeting shall be prepared by the President of the Senate in consultation with the officers of the Senate.

2. The agenda of regular meetings shall include:
   - Call to order
   - Approval of the Minutes
   - Special Reports
   - Report of the President of the Senate
   - Committee Reports
   - Old Business
   - New Business
   - Announcements

3. Items for Senate consideration may be presented, in writing, by any member of the Faculty. Such requests shall be sent at least one week before the scheduled meeting to the President of the Senate, who may add the items to the agenda of the next meeting. Items presented by five or more members of the Faculty shall be added to the agenda of the next meeting.

4. The agenda shall be followed unless set aside by two-thirds majority of those present.

5. The agenda and the minutes of Senate meetings shall be distributed via the Faculty Senate homepage on the Gaston College Intranet.

B. Conduct of Business

1. A quorum of the Senate shall consist of a simple majority of the voting members. When a meeting cannot be held or must adjourn because the quorum needed to conduct business is not present, a formal roll call shall be entered in the minutes.

2. Any proposal which comes before the Senate under “New Business” but has not been included on the distributed agenda, shall be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration. Such a proposal shall not be acted upon at the same session in which it is introduced except by a vote of two-thirds of those present.

3. Committee reports placed on the agenda should be presented by a representative of that committee, who shall have the implied consent of the Senate to speak during any debate concerning that report.

4. Faculty who are not members of the Senate may be present at Senate meetings but shall not be entitled to vote or make motions.

5. The President of the Senate may grant non-senators the privilege to speak.

6. All meetings of the Faculty Senate, excepting those which have been called into executive session, are open to all Faculty members and interested others.

7. Robert’s Rules of Order shall be followed in each meeting.
C. Voting

1. Voting in the Senate shall be by voice vote unless a majority of the members call for a secret ballot. The record of the vote shall be announced and entered into the minutes.

2. The President of the Senate shall have a vote only in case of a tie.

3. All elections shall be by written ballot. The President shall appoint tellers for each election and shall read into the minutes the names of those elected.

4. For elections conducted within the Senate, an individual must receive a plurality of the votes cast to be elected.

5. A member of the Senate may send a full-time faculty member to act as his/her substitute. The substitute must have a written proxy. All proxies must be available at the time any vote is taken.

D. Executive Session

1. The President of the Senate shall have the power to declare an executive session. In addition, a majority vote of the Faculty Senate members have the power to call an executive session of the Senate.

V. Officers

A. Elected Senate Officers

1. President. The President shall preside at Senate meetings, serve as President of the Faculty, oversee the work of the Senate and its committees, and carry out the responsibilities specified in these Bylaws. The Faculty Senate President may request from the Vice President for Academic Affairs three (3) contact hours of release time to perform the duties of the office.

2. President–Elect. In addition to duties delegated by the President, the President-Elect shall carry out the responsibilities of the President when the President is absent. The President-Elect shall succeed the President if the office of President becomes vacant. The President-Elect is slated for assumption of the office of President after serving a year in the President-Elect position.

3. Secretary. The Secretary shall oversee the work of the Faculty Senate, keep the minutes and maintain the records of the Senate and the Senate officers, and shall provide for faculty access to such records.

4. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep and maintain all budgets and conduct the financial business of the Senate.

B. Election of Officers and Terms of Office

1. All Senate officers shall be elected at the April meeting. The past year’s president will preside over the election of his/her successor. The newly
elected President of the Senate will then take over the meeting. All Faculty Senate officers shall take office effective immediately upon election.

2. In the event that an officer’s position (except the position of President) becomes vacant, the President shall promptly conduct an election to fill the

3. Terms of office for officers of the Senate are one year.

C. Officers’ Duties

The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

1. The President of the Senate shall appoint members of all standing committees of the Senate as needed.

2. Advise the President of the College and other college administrators on matters of mutual concern to both administration and faculty at such times that the full Senate is unable to convene.

3. Assist the President of the Senate in preparing the agenda of Senate meetings.

D. Appointees

1. Parliamentarian. The President of the Senate shall appoint a parliamentarian to advise the Senate on matters of parliamentary procedure necessary to the orderly conduct of business. The term of the appointment shall be one year.

2. Tellers. The President of the Senate shall appoint tellers for the purpose of counting ballots.

VI. Committees

A. Types of Committees

1. Standing Committees of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall appoint standing committees as needed.

2. Ad Hoc Committees. The President of the Senate may appoint various ad hoc committees to deal with specific issues or to assist the officers. These committees may include any combination of Senators or members of the general faculty. The Senate may also establish ad hoc committees and specify the method of selecting their members.

B. General Provisions

1. Standing Committees of the Senate

   a. General Duties. Standing committees of the Senate exist to assist the Faculty Senate in the performance of the duties assigned by the President of the Senate. A committee assists the Senate by:

      i. studying and reporting its recommendations to the Senate regarding any matter that may be submitted to it by the
Senate or the General Faculty. A committee may also consider matters within its jurisdiction submitted to it by the Administration, the Student Government Association, or any faculty member or group of faculty members.

ii. providing to the President of the Senate a list of all recommendations considered and the actions taken on all such recommendations. This shall be done promptly after each committee meeting.

iii. In addition to preparing recommendations for action by the full Senate, committees are responsible for gathering assimilating, and disseminating information for use by the faculty and the Administration. Therefore, each committee should at its own discretion or at the request of the Senate conduct hearings and polls, and use other means of acquiring information, and should make reports in a timely manner.

b. Membership Selection. Members of standing committees shall be appointed by the President of the Senate.

c. Term of Office. Except where other terms of office are specified, faculty members shall serve two-year staggered terms, and may be reappointed for an additional term.

d. Conduct of Business

i. Quorum. To conduct business a majority of the voting members of the committee shall be present.

ii. Alternates. A committee member may appoint an alternate. Alternates may attend committee meetings to observe or report, but may not vote or act in any other official capacity.

e. Records

i. The Chair of each committee shall be responsible for minutes of committee meetings.

ii. Copies of minutes of committee meetings shall be sent to the President of the Senate with a file copy for the secretary.

iii. Outgoing committee chairs shall provide information to newly appointed chairs when requested to do so.
f. Reports

i. After each meeting of the committee, the chair shall provide the Faculty Senate with a list of all recommendations considered and the action taken on each recommendation, as well as a list of current or pending issues.

ii. Periodic reports may also be made to the Senate at a Senate meeting.

VII. Constitutional Amendment

A. Proposed amendments may be initiated by majority vote of the Senate, or by written petition by twenty-five percent of the entire faculty.

B. Upon receipt of a proposed amendment in written form, the secretary of the Senate shall distribute copies of it to the faculty. The President of the Senate shall wait at least seven (7) days, but not more than fourteen (14) days after the above distribution before convening the faculty to vote on the proposed amendment. The President of the Senate must call a meeting of the faculty during the above period to allow discussion of the proposed amendment. Voting shall be by e-mail or Division and shall be counted by a committee of three (3) appointed by the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate or Vice-President shall preside over these proceedings.

C. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in any constitutional referendum.