

Bylaws of the Faculty of Sweet Briar College

PREAMBLE

Recognizing that open discourse, active cooperation, and broad participation in decision-making are hallmarks of a strong and vibrant academic community, these *Bylaws of the Faculty* provide a framework for meaningful participation of faculty in the shared governance of Sweet Briar College. These *Bylaws* are supplemented by two separate documents, the *Faculty Rulings* and the *Faculty Personnel Manual*. The Faculty is responsible for *Faculty Rulings*. The Dean of the College is responsible for the *Faculty Personnel Manual*.

ARTICLE I THE FACULTY

The "Faculty" includes the President of the College, the Dean of the College, those giving instruction in the College who hold the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer, or Instructor, the Director of Libraries, and any member of the Library staff who holds a faculty rank.

ARTICLE II MISSION

The mission of the Faculty to is to provide a liberal arts education.

ARTICLE III SHARED GOVERNANCE

The Board of Directors, the Administration, and the Faculty share in the governance of the College. The *Bylaws of the Sweet Briar Institute* delegates the day-to-day operations of the College to the President, who in turn, by long-established practice, delegates the responsibility for academic matters to the Faculty.

ARTICLE IV ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The College subscribes to the tenets of academic freedom as stated in the *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*. The Faculty exercises full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties. The Faculty exercises freedom in the classroom in presentations and discussions of their subjects.

ARTICLE V COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FACULTY

Section 1. Academic policies are generally formulated and implemented by the Faculty.

Section 2. The Faculty makes policies, rules, and regulations pertaining to curriculum,

admissions, and matriculation standards; degree requirements; courses of study; course offerings; attendance and grading policies; instruction; honors; faculty procedures; and faculty committees.

Section 3. Faculty recommendations, by way of the appropriate program and committee structures, largely determine decisions in faculty personnel matters, although final authority rests with the President and the Board. Personnel matters include faculty hiring and dismissals, reappointment, tenure, promotion, leave, appeals, and grievances. Faculty personnel actions within the College are conducted in accordance with the specific policies and procedures provided in the *Faculty Personnel Manual*.

Section 4. The Faculty provides consultation to the Administration regarding proposed revisions to policies and procedures relative to faculty personnel matters, and the Administration allows opportunities for faculty analysis and discussion of any such revisions prior to their implementation. The Administration consults the Faculty prior to making substantive changes to the *Faculty Personnel Manual* and notifies the Faculty of editorial changes.

Section 5. The Dean of the College consults with the Faculty, through the Academic Council, prior to implementing changes in the size and composition of programs, divisions, and in the overall size of the Faculty. In other areas where the Faculty has an appropriate interest but not primary responsibility, the Faculty works with the Administration in formulating and applying policies that uphold the quality of the institution. Such matters include but are not limited to the mission statement, the budget, the College's strategic plan, the calendar, capital planning and building design, enrollment growth, tuition policy, student discipline, faculty and staff benefits, and libraries and other research facilities.

Section 6. The Faculty may express, by formal resolution, its opinion or desire on any matter relating to the administration or policy of the College.

Section 7. The Faculty participates in formal searches for academic administrators through membership on search or hiring committees and works with the Administration to maintain effective procedures that enable members of the faculty to participate in the evaluation of senior administrators. It is the practice of the Administration to include faculty members on all searches that may affect the Faculty.

ARTICLE VI

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF FACULTY GOVERNANCE

The role of the faculty regarding its collective responsibilities in shared governance is implemented through faculty committees. Details of committee structures, membership and responsibilities are included in the *Faculty Rulings*.

Section 1. Committees of the Faculty. Committees of the Faculty include:

a. The Faculty Senate. Members of the Faculty Senate serve as the elected representatives of the Faculty in interactions with the Administration and serve as a steering committee for the business of the Faculty. In this capacity it represents the interests of the Faculty with respect to

the governance of the College and faculty welfare. Members of the Faculty Senate are elected from the tenured faculty and faculty who have seven years of continuous full-time teaching at Sweet Briar College. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Faculty Senate meets regularly with the President, Dean of the College, Executive Committee of the Board, and the Academic Council. The Faculty elects a Faculty Senate Chair.

b. The Curriculum Committee. The primary responsibility of the Curriculum Committee is to maintain the College's program of instruction in accordance with policies set by the Faculty. Members of the Curriculum Committee are elected from a slate of full-time faculty.

c. The Faculty Advancement Committee. The primary duty of the Faculty Advancement Committee is to evaluate and make recommendations to the President with respect to faculty tenure and promotion. Members of the Faculty Advancement Committee are elected from the tenured faculty. The Faculty Advancement Committee reviews and makes recommendations for revisions to policies and procedures related to faculty employment and advancement.

d. The Academic Council. The Academic Council is composed of all teaching faculty. The Council meets to discuss issues and priorities of the Faculty at regularly scheduled meetings with the Faculty Senate.

e. Other Committees. The Faculty may create other elected or appointed committees as deemed appropriate and necessary.

f. Ad-hoc Committees. The Faculty Senate may create ad-hoc committees to gather information, investigate issues of importance to the faculty, or perform specific tasks in support of the faculty's interests.

Section 2. College-Wide Committees. Committees charged with matters affecting the College community include members of the Faculty. These members may be appointed by the Board of Directors, the President, or one of the Vice Presidents. The Administration consults with the Faculty Senate about such appointments. With the concurrence of the Administration, the Faculty may choose to elect the faculty members to an appointed committee.

Section 3. Elections. Elections to committees of the Faculty are held once a year following procedures defined in the *Faculty Rulings*.

ARTICLE VII FACULTY MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Faculty Meetings. Regular faculty meetings are scheduled during the academic year by the Faculty Senate. The Chair of the Faculty Senate presides. The Faculty Senate establishes the agenda of faculty meetings after meeting with the Academic Council, the President, and the Dean of the College. Changes to *Faculty Rulings* or to the curriculum may be made at any regular faculty meeting by a majority vote. A notice of motion to amend the curriculum or *Faculty Rulings* may be brought from the floor by any voting member of the Faculty.

Section 2. Specially Called Faculty Meetings. Additional meetings may be called at any time by the Chair of the Faculty Senate or by the President. At meetings called by the President, he or she reserves the right to preside. In addition the Chair of the Faculty Senate shall call a special meeting of the Faculty at the written request of any six voting members of the Faculty. Such a meeting may be called for the purpose of discussion only or in order to conduct business. A minimum notice of five business days must be given and must state whether the purpose of the meeting is discussion or business.

Section 3. Quorum. A quorum exists when 50% plus one of the tenured and tenure-track faculty are present. Tenured and tenure-track faculty on leave are not counted toward the number required to achieve a quorum.

Section 4. Attendance at Meetings of the Faculty. All members of the Faculty are eligible to attend meetings of the Faculty. All full-time members of the Faculty are expected to attend meetings of the Faculty. Other officers of the College may be invited by the Faculty to attend faculty meetings as observers without voting privilege.

Section 5. Voting Eligibility.

The privilege of voting at faculty meetings is granted to the following:

- a. faculty who teach full time and hold the rank of Instructor or above,
- b. faculty on leave who taught full time the previous year,
- c. the Director of the Libraries and any member of the Library staff holding faculty rank,
- d. the directors of minor and certificate programs holding faculty rank,
- e. faculty on a continuing or multi-year contract who teach at least half time
- f. faculty on a single-year contract who have taught at least half time for at least three consecutive years, and
- g. the President and Dean of the College, with the exception of elections for the Faculty Senate and its chair.

Section 6. The Secretary of the Faculty. The Secretary of the Faculty is elected by the Faculty and keeps the minutes of all regular and special meetings.

Section 7. Parliamentarian. The Parliamentarian and Deputy Parliamentarian are appointed by the Faculty Senate Chair. The duty of the Parliamentarian is to rule in meetings of the Faculty on the matters of parliamentary procedure using *Robert's Rules of Order, the Revised Edition*. The Deputy Parliamentarian serves in the absence of the Parliamentarian.

Section 8. Remote Faculty Meetings and Remote Attendance. Occasionally, there may be extenuating circumstances that necessitate that faculty meetings be held remotely, or for individual faculty members to attend faculty meetings remotely. The Faculty Senate (or President, in the case of specially called faculty meetings called by the President) decides whether circumstances require a remote meeting or remote attendance. In the case of remote meetings, the Faculty Senate (or President, in the case of specially called faculty meetings called by the President) provides reasonable notice and remote access to the meeting for all faculty members. The communication platform used should allow for anonymous voting; otherwise, a second application should be used for anonymous remote voting. When individual faculty members need to attend a faculty meeting remotely, they may request remote access from the

Faculty Senate Chair, but such access should be the result of unusual circumstances and is not guaranteed. For remote faculty meetings and remote attendance, in all cases mentioned in Article VII and throughout these Bylaws, the terms “meeting,” “attendance,” “quorum,” “voting,” as well as all other aspects of conducting business in faculty meetings, shall be understood to apply to those attending remotely under the terms of this Section as though they were attending in person.

Section 9. Consent Agenda.

A consent agenda may be presented by the chair at the beginning of a faculty meeting. All relevant materials for the consent agenda shall be provided to the faculty at least three days before a faculty meeting. Items shall be removed from the consent agenda upon the request of any one member. Items not removed shall be adopted by general consent without debate or vote. Removed items may be taken up either immediately after the consent agenda or placed later on the agenda at the discretion of the chair.

ARTICLE VIII
AMENDMENT AND REVIEW OF THE *BYLAWS*

Section 1. Amendments to these *Bylaws* may be proposed through either of the following process:

- a. The Faculty Senate may initiate an amendment at any regularly scheduled meeting of the Faculty by posting it as a notice of motion for action at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- b. Any ten percent of voting members of the Faculty may initiate an amendment by bringing the proposed amendment to the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate must study the amendment and bring a notice of motion to the Faculty, together with a positive or negative recommendation, within two regularly scheduled faculty meetings.

Section 2. The proposed amendment must be approved by a two-thirds majority.

Section 3. These *Bylaws* shall be reviewed by the Faculty Senate at intervals not to exceed five years.

ARTICLE IX
COMPLIANCE

A strong tradition of shared governance is essential to the exercise of academic freedom, the promotion of intellectual growth, and excellence in teaching of any institution of higher learning. If any of the three governing bodies of the College perceive that another is not in compliance with one or more aspects of these *Bylaws*, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Faculty Senate, the Dean of the College, the President, and the Chair of the Board of Directors, who will work with all parties to achieve a resolution.

ARTICLE X
RATIFICATION OF THE *BYLAWS*

These *Bylaws* shall become effective immediately after their adoption by a two-thirds majority of the voting faculty present. Once the *Bylaws* are adopted, the Faculty will seek the endorsement of the Dean of the College and the President.

_____ Date _____
Chair of the Faculty Senate

_____ Date _____
Dean of the College

_____ Date _____
President of the College