

University of Prince Edward Island	Policy No: GOVSEN_GNL0004	Revision No. 14
Policy Title: Policy for the Processes and Procedures of the Senate ¹		Page 1 of 13
Creation Date: January 21, 1982	Version Date: TBA	Review Date: XX, 2025
Authority: Senate	Responsibility: Senate	Access: Public

Table of Contents

1. Definitions	2
2. Role of Senate	2
3. Membership	2
4. Roles and Responsibilities	3
5. Nomination and Election of Faculty to Senate	4
6. Nomination and Election of Senators to the Board of Governors	5
7. Committees	5
8. Meetings	6
9. Maintenance and Communication of Processes and Procedures of the Senate and Committees	
Terms of Reference	10
10. Final Authority	10
Appendix	11

¹ These procedures are based on the Senate Procedures dated 5 June 1975, and include modifications and clarifications agreed to by Senate since that time. Archived versions, tracking changes between 1975 and 2022, are available on the Senate VRE website under the Processes & Procedures tab.

1. Definitions

In these processes and procedures, “faculty” includes tenured and tenure track faculty and probationary and permanent librarians.

2. Role of Senate

The role and structure of Senate is outlined in the University Act. For ease of reference, key sections of the University Act have been reproduced within Sections two (2) and three (3) of this document. Minor adjustments, referenced in footnotes, have been made in this document to bring particular terminology to current standards. Senate’s role is not limited to those outlined in Sections 2 and 3. For a complete understanding of the role of Senate, individuals should access the University Act on the Government of Province of Prince Edward Island’s website (see Appendix).

2.1 The Role of Senate

This section of the Processes and Procedures of Senate is derived from Section 24 of the Prince Edward Island University Act, which empowers Senate to:

- a) control, regulate and determine the academic policy of the University;
- b) determine the courses of study and standards for admission to the University and for continued membership therein, and the qualifications for diplomas, certificates, and degrees including honorary degrees; and to authorize the conferring of diplomas, certificates and degrees including honorary degrees;
- c) establish procedures for the evaluation of student performance and to provide for the conduct and supervision of examinations;
- d) deal with all matters arising in connection with the awarding of scholarships, bursaries, medals, prizes and other awards;
- e) create such committees, subordinate bodies, and other organizations as shall be necessary from time to time for the exercise of its powers and to delegate authority to them;
- f) provide for such regulations as may be necessary from time to time for safe and orderly functioning of the University;
- g) prepare and issue calendars and notices of the University and to authorize any other official publications of the University;
- h) make regulations for the management and conduct of the library;
- i) declare void the right of any person to hold any diploma, certificate, or degree, or scholarship, or bursary granted by the University if it has been satisfactorily proven to the Senate that such diploma, certificate or degree, or scholarship or bursary, has been obtained by fraudulent means;
- j) render a final decision on academic appeals and on student discipline appeals;
- k) do and perform all other matters and things which may seem good, fit, and useful for the well ordering and advancement of the academic welfare of the University, the doing of such things not being repugnant to this Act. *R.S.P.E.I. 1974, Cap. U-4, s.25; 1981, c.39, s.16.*

3. Membership

3.1 Composition of Senate

Senate membership is defined by Section 22 of the University Act as follows:

- a) the President of the University;
- b) the Vice-President or Vice-Presidents of the University;
- c) Deans of Faculties of the University;
- d) the Registrar of the University;
- e) the Director of Extension and Summer Sessions;

- f) the Chief Librarian of the University;
- g) six members from the student body of the University, at least one of whom is a mature or part-time student, or both, elected in such manner as shall be set forth in the duly approved constitution of the student body;
- h) one member elected by and from the Alumni Association of the University;
- i) one member of the Board of Governors elected by the Board from those appointed under clause 8(1)(a);
- j) the President of the Students' Union, in the event that they² have not otherwise been elected to the Senate;
- k) members elected from among, and by, all faculty³, subject to the qualification that not more than one member of each department shall be elected under this clause, as follows:

Faculty of Arts	8
Faculty of Science	4
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine	4
Faculty of Education	1
Faculty of Business ⁴	1
Faculty of Nursing ⁵	1

3.2 Members at Large

Faculty Members at Large enumerated below are elected from among and by faculty to ensure members of the faculty shall constitute not less than one-half of the total membership of the Senate:

- Member at Large Faculty of Indigenous Knowledge, Education, Research, and Applied Studies
- Member at Large A faculty member (See Section 1.1 for definition)
- Member at Large A faculty member (See Section 1.1 for definition)

3.3 Public Posting of Senate Membership

A current list of Senate membership shall be posted each year on the public Senate website (i.e. <https://www.upei.ca/about-upei/governance-and-structure/senate>) by the end of July.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Chair of Senate

The President of the University serves as the chair of the Senate. Responsibilities include:

- a) chairing Senate meetings
- b) chairing the Senate Steering and Nominating Committee

4.2 Vice Chair of Senate

The Senate shall accept nominations for and elect one faculty Senator to the role of Vice Chair of Senate for a three year term or until their term on Senate expires. Responsibilities include:

- a) serving as Acting Chair of Senate in the absence of the Chair
- b) serving on the Senate Steering and Nominating Committee

4.3 Secretary

The Registrar of the University is the Secretary of Senate. Responsibilities include:

- a) receiving and compiling submitted agenda items for the Senate Steering and Nominating

² The University Act pronoun is "he."

³ The University Act refers to faculty as "full-time" faculty.

⁴ To date, the University Act identifies this program under the original title; "School of Business Administration."

⁵ To date, the University Act identifies this program under the original title; "School of Nursing."

Committee

- b) providing expertise in Robert's Rules of Order (the most recent edition; the most recent In Brief edition is also acceptable)
- c) working with the Senate Assistant to ensure maintenance of records for Senate
- d) serving on the Senate Steering and Nominating Committee
- e) arrange elections to Senate vacancies as required

4.4 Senate Assistant

The Senate Assistant is assigned from the President's Office and executes duties to the Senate upon direction from the President and the Secretary of the Senate. Responsibilities include:

- a) Disseminating the agenda and supporting materials to 'using a secure and ITSS-approved platform' (see Appendix).
- b) assisting the Secretary of Senate
- c) serving on the Senate Steering and Nominating Committee in a non-voting role

4.5 Senator

The Senate is populated as per Section 3.1. Faculty Senators are members elected from among, and by, all faculty. Responsibilities include:

- a) attending Senate meetings (an absence notice shall be sent to the Senate Assistant prior to the meeting)
- b) reviewing meeting materials prior to meeting on the secure and ITSS-approved platform (see Appendix).
- c) actively participate in Senate deliberations
- d) voting on proposed motions
- e) acting as the point of contact between Senate and the University community
- f) serving on senate committees as needed
- g) completing equity, diversity and inclusion training offered by the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office

5. Nomination and Election of Faculty to Senate

5.1 Eligibility and Term

Eligibility to be nominated and to vote for vacant positions on Senate shall be restricted to faculty and shall exclude faculty who serve on Senate ex-officio. All eligible faculty vote for all vacant Senate seats according to the process described in Section 5.2 of this Policy. Elected members of Senate for vacated seats, with the exception of special circumstances (see Section 5.2 a) of this Policy) shall serve a three-year term in office and are eligible for re-election.

5.2 Process

- a) By February 10 of each year, the Secretary of Senate shall prepare and send a notice for distribution to all faculty, announcing upcoming Senate vacancies, noting special circumstances including but not limited to sabbatical or leave replacement, and including the current composition of the Senate.
- b) The above notice will include details on an information session outlining the roles and responsibilities of Senate for prospective Senators. The information meeting will be held by February 20.
- c) The notice will solicit nominations to the above noted vacancies for positions to commence June 30 of the current year. The deadline for nominations shall be February 28.
- d) When the deadline for nominations has been reached, the Secretary of Senate shall compare the slate of candidates nominated to the vacancies existing. Where the number of nominated candidates is equal to the number of corresponding vacancies, the Secretary of

Senate shall declare the nominees elected by acclamation. If more than the required number of faculty are nominated for corresponding vacancies, an electronic vote will be undertaken (refer to section 5.3 of this policy). If the number of nominations for a vacancy are fewer than the number of corresponding vacancies, the Secretary of Senate shall seek further nominations until the following March 31. For this subsequent round of nominations, the process for acclamation or election shall be as followed in the initial round of nominations.

- e) Notwithstanding the above noted dates, when a vacancy occurs outside the typical annual cycle, the Secretary of Senate shall follow the above process to fill vacancies in a timely fashion.

5.3 Electronic Vote

When an electronic vote is required, the University's ITSS department shall be notified and provided with the required information to set up the electronic voting process. The Secretary of Senate shall then distribute the voting details to all eligible faculty who are qualified to vote. Once the voting deadline has passed, ITSS will provide an electronic summary of the results to the Secretary of Senate.

5.4 Voting Results

The Secretary of Senate shall notify the nominees, the Senate and subsequently the University faculty of the voting results.

6. Nomination and Election of Senators to the Board of Governors

6.1 Board of Governors Representatives

Pursuant to Section 8 (1)(e) of the University Act, two Senators, who are faculty members, are elected by and from the Senate to serve on the Board of Governors. Senators serve on Board for a 3-year term or until their term on Senate ends, whichever is shorter. When a vacancy exists, elections for these positions shall occur at the first Senate meeting of the academic year, or in unusual circumstances, at the first senate meeting after the vacancy is created.

7. Committees

7.1 Standing Committees of the Senate include:

- a) Academic Planning & Curriculum Committee
- b) Board-Senate Liaison Committee
- c) Committee for Emerita/us Status
- d) Graduate Studies Advisory Committee
- e) Honorary Degree Committee
- f) Senate Academic and Student Discipline Appeals Committee
- g) Senate Committee on Admissions and Degrees
- h) Senate Committee on the Enhancement of Teaching
- i) Senate Committee on Scholarships and Awards
- j) Senate Library Committee
- k) Senate Research Advisory Committee
- l) Senate Steering and Nominating Committee

7.2 Constitution of Committees

Membership on committees may or may not be limited to Senators. See committees terms of reference for more details on committee composition.

7.3 For Vacancies where Committee Members do not need to be Senators

The Steering and Nominating Committee shall seek nominations from the University community to fill all vacant committee seats in preparation for the first Senate meeting of the academic year. Senators may make nominations from the floor during Senate meetings, provided they have confirmed acceptance of the nomination with the individual in question. Should the nomination process solicit more than the required number of faculty members to fill corresponding vacancies, an election will be held. When elections are necessary, they will take place by secret ballot during the meeting. Notwithstanding the above process, if a committee requires the addition of new members to function appropriately outside the prescribed timelines, the Steering and Nominating Committee will seek nominations and conduct an election to fill required vacancies in a timely fashion as outlined above.

7.4 For Vacancies Where Committee Members Need to be Senators

The Steering and Nominating Committee shall seek nominations from Senators at the first Senate meeting of the academic year. Senators may make nominations from the floor during Senate meetings, provided they have confirmed acceptance of the nomination with the individual in question if the latter is not present. Should the nomination process solicit more than the required number of faculty members to fill corresponding vacancies, an election will be held. When elections are necessary, they will take place by secret ballot during the meeting. Notwithstanding the above process, if a committee requires the addition of new members to function appropriately outside the prescribed timelines, the Steering and Nominating Committee will seek nominations and conduct an election to fill required vacancies in a timely fashion as outlined above.

7.5 Populating the Steering and Nominating Committee

The Senate Steering and Nominating Committee consists of two faculty members, two administrative members and one student representative. This includes the University President as Chair, the Registrar as Secretary of Senate, the President of the Student Union, a Vice-Chair who is a member of faculty and one additional faculty member as elected by Senate. Members who are not ex-officio serve for a three-year term or until their term on Senate expires.

7.6 Ad Hoc Committees

The Senate may delegate to its Steering and Nominating Committee the power to set up ad hoc committees.

8. Meetings

8.1 Meeting Dates/Timeframe

Senate will normally meet on Friday afternoons from 3-5 p.m. Meeting dates will be set by the Senate Steering and Nominating Committee before the last Senate meeting of the academic year and the dates will be published on the Senate website.

8.2 Extending a Senate Meeting

Senate may extend the length of a meeting by 15 minutes with the agreement of 2/3 of Senate members present.

8.3 Quorum

The quorum of the Senate is 50% of the membership plus one.

8.4 When a Quorum is not Present

When a quorum is not present for an approved meeting date, but the attending membership consists of 25% plus one of the total membership, those Senators present may constitute

themselves as the Executive Committee of Senate. The Executive Committee is constituted and mandated as follows:

- a) The Executive Committee is a committee of the whole Senate;
- b) The Chair of the Senate is the Chair of the Executive Committee;
- c) The Vice-Chair of Senate is the Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee;
- d) The Secretary of Senate is the Secretary of the Executive Committee;
- e) 25% of Senators plus one constitutes a quorum of the Committee;
- f) Any decision taken by the Executive Committee is to be considered for ratification by Senate at the earliest opportunity;
- g) Normally, ratification is at the next approved meeting of Senate. If the Steering and Nominating Committee concludes that earlier ratification is necessary, it may direct that ratification be sought by a poll of Senators, and report the decision at the next approved meeting of Senate.

8.5 Activating the Executive Committee

Senate, at its discretion, may empower the Executive Committee to meet and act at other times.

8.6 Meeting Attendees

All meetings of Senate are open to members of the University community except:

- a) those that deal with the granting of degrees;
- b) those that involve the naming of individuals where this might prove embarrassing to the individual (e.g., academic dismissals);
- c) when Senate votes to move into closed session.

8.7 Special Meetings of Senate

Senate may hold special meetings in cases of emergency or to clear up business. These meetings may be called by the President of the University or by a majority vote in Senate.

8.8 Orientation of Senators

The Secretary of Senate will arrange for orientation materials to be made available online. Senators and prospective Senators are expected and encouraged to read and gain a thorough understanding of the contents.

Agenda

8.9 Order of the Agenda

The order of the agenda for regular meetings will be as follows:

- a) Approval of the agenda
- b) Approval of minutes of previous meetings(s)
- c) Business arising from minutes of previous meeting(s) (time limit of 15 minutes for each meeting)
- d) President's report and question period (suggested time limit: 10 minutes)
- e) Reports of Senate Committees
- f) Visitors' presentations and other reports⁹
- g) Other items in order of receipt by Secretary
- h) Other Business
- i) Adjournment

⁹ The intent is that those wishing to be added to the Senate agenda receive consideration at the earliest possible date. Requests for permission to address Senate should be sent to the Secretary through a member of Senate. Academic matters will be accorded priority within this section of the agenda.

8.10 Agenda Items

Agenda items and their documentation are to be submitted to the Secretary of Senate at least two weeks before a regular Senate meeting. The Secretary, after compiling all submitted items - share them with the Senate Steering and Nominating Committee (SSNC), for setting of the Senate agenda on the basis of a schedule suited to the effective conduct of debate and to the fulfillment of Senate's responsibilities. The SSNC may allocate agenda items to the appropriate channels or bodies for further action and implementation. Decisions regarding submitted agenda items will be communicated to the submitter.

8.11 Availability of Meeting Materials

All necessary documentation will be posted to the secure and ITSS-approved platform (see Appendix) one week prior to the Senate meeting, otherwise that item will be moved to the next regular meeting.

8.12 Agenda Items not Previously Submitted

Items may be added to the agenda of a meeting without prior notification only with the agreement of 50 per cent plus one of Senate members present.

8.13 Informing Non-Senate Members of Upcoming Meetings

In September, the Secretary of Senate will send a communication to the University community containing the dates, times and locations of the scheduled Senate meetings for the academic year. The messaging shall include key functions of Senate, links to online materials and shall encourage participation both in serving as members as well as joining Senate meetings in the gallery as visitors to Senate.

Debate

8.14 Debate

Prior to the debate of an agenda item, a properly moved and seconded motion must be placed before Senate.

8.15 Clarifying a Motion

The mover and seconder of a motion may speak to it as often as is necessary to eliminate misunderstanding. Other Senate members may each speak twice only for a maximum of five minutes. (Senate interpretation: twice for five minutes each time) (Senate interpretation: Questions calling for clarification will not count as a time speaking, but the Chair may interpret and rule on a person's question as being a speech.)

8.16 Non-Members Addressing Senate

Members of the University community in the gallery may be recognized by the Chair and allowed to address Senate provided that no Senate member objects.

8.17 Reconsidering a Motion

Senate may reconsider a motion previously decided under the conditions described in the section on voting procedures and regulations in this Policy.

8.18 Non-Debatable Motions

The following motions are not debatable:

- a) to adjourn;
- b) to table a motion;
- c) to remove a motion from the table;
- d) to close nominations;

- e) to limit, extend, or close debate (call the question);
- f) to withdraw a motion;
- g) to request a recorded vote, a roll call vote, or a secret ballot;
- h) to refer.

8.19 Challenging a Ruling

When there is doubt concerning procedure, the Chair may make a ruling and invite challenges to it. Such challenges do not constitute motions of non-confidence. Votes on such challenges require a simple majority for decision. On a tie vote, the ruling of the Chair is upheld.

Voting Procedures and Regulations

8.20 Carrying a Motion

All motions, except where specified elsewhere in this document, require support of only a simple majority of Senate members voting to be carried.

8.21a Voting

Voting by secret ballot is usually limited to the selection of honorary degree recipients, the convocation speaker, and members of Senate committees. All other voting is normally by a voice vote which will be followed by a show of hands should any Senator express doubt as to the result.

Any member of Senate may request (a) a recorded vote, (b) a secret ballot, or (c) a roll call vote on any motion. To be granted, such requests require the consent of a majority of the Senate members present.

8.21b The Chair's Ability to Vote

In voting on Senate, the Chair may exercise the option to vote, at the same time as other Senate members. The Chair does not vote to break ties.

8.22 Tie Votes

In the event of a tie vote, the motion is lost.

8.23 Motions that Require 2/3 Support

The following motions require the support of 2/3 of the Senate members present to be carried:

- (a) to extend the length of the meeting
- (b) to suspend the time limit on debate
- (c) to suspend the rule requiring documentation of an item to be available 7 days prior to its consideration
- (d) to close debate (i.e., to move that the question be put)

8.24 Reconsidering a Decision

Senate may reconsider a decision taken within the previous 36 months only under the following conditions:

- (e) The motion to reconsider a decision taken within the previous 12 months must be supported by 70% of the Senate membership.
- (f) If the decision were taken between 12 and 24 months previously, the motion to reconsider must be supported by 60% of the Senate membership.
- (g) If the decision were taken during 24 and 36 months previously, the motion to reconsider must be supported by 55% of the Senate membership.

8.25 Ruling Amendments Out of Order

The Chair may rule out of order any amendment to a motion if, in the Chair's opinion, it contravenes the spirit or the intent of the motion; this ruling may be challenged by any member of Senate.

9. Maintenance and Communication of Processes and Procedures of the Senate and Committees

Terms of Reference

9.1 Annual Updates

Each August, the Secretary of Senate will update this policy, incorporating any alterations, additions and corrections agreed to by Senate in the previous academic year.

9.2 Availability of Senate Policy and other Documents

All non-confidential Senate documents, including but not limited to, membership lists, policies and procedures, and committees terms of reference, will be available to the public on the University website.

The Senate Assistant shall publish the approved Senate minutes on the University website within 10 days of their approval by the Senate.

The Secretary of Senate will send a link to the Senate webpage containing the current policy adopted by Senate to each new Senate member upon their election and to continuing Senate members each August.

9.3 Review of this Policy

The Senate has agreed that this policy be reviewed every three (3) years or as required.

9.4 When to Document Approval Dates of committee documents

A new approval date is added to committee documents only when the terms of reference or the composition is changed by a moved and carried motion. Membership updates do not require a new approval date to be added to the document.

10. Final Authority

Senate has agreed that, for situations not covered by this policy, or in the event of procedural deadlock, the final authority will be the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order (the most recent In Brief edition is also acceptable.)

Approved by Senate 24 November 2017

Approved by Senate 13 September 1991

Approved by Faculty, 13 Mar 1992

Appendix

University Act: <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/legislation/university-act>

Secure/ITSS-Approved Platform: <https://senate.upei.ca>

Public Senate Website: <https://www.upei.ca/about-upei/governance-and-structure/senate>