

**Agendum  
Oakland University  
Board of Trustees Formal Session  
December 4, 2023**

**AMENDMENTS TO THE  
OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE CONSTITUTION**

**A Recommendation**

1. **Divisions and Departments:** Academic Affairs.
2. **Introduction:** The Board of Trustees ("Board") has delegated full authority and responsibility for the governance of Oakland University ("University") to the President, subject to Board limitations and policies. The Board has also recognized the University Senate as an organization to advise the President in regard to academic policies and programs. The University Senate is organized and functions in accordance with a constitution that has been approved by the Board ("Senate Constitution").

The Senate Constitution provides that the University Senate must "approve, disapprove and make recommendations regarding the constitutions proposed by the various organized faculties of the University". "Organized faculties" refer to the various schools and colleges approved by the Board. The constitutions of the various schools and colleges require not only Senate approval, but also Board approval.

3. **Previous Board Action:** This constitution was originally approved by the Board of Trustees on June 2, 1977. It was amended February 15, 1984.
4. **Budget Implications:** N/A.
5. **Educational Implications:** The Oakland University Senate is the venue of shared governance for all academic policies and programs. Updating the Constitution is accurately reflecting the current state of academic units and streamlining the governance process supports our academic efficiency.
6. **Personnel Implications:** N/A.
7. **University Reviews/Approvals:** A proposed, amended Constitution was ratified by the faculty October 15, 2023; approved by the University Senate May 18, 2023; and is acceptable to the Provost and the President.
8. **Recommendation:**

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Oakland University Senate, as authorized by the Board of Trustees, provides for organization and functions of the Senate with certain functions to be assigned to the organized faculties of the College and Schools; and

**Amendments to the Oakland University Senate Constitution  
Oakland University  
Board of Trustees Formal Session  
December 4, 2023  
Page 2**

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has acted to approve internal constitutions in order to obtain the input and recommendations of faculty, staff, and students on matters relating to the programs of Oakland University, but has retained unto itself the full authority granted to it by law; now, therefore, be it

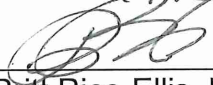
RESOLVED, that notwithstanding any provision of the proposed, amended Constitution of the Oakland University Senate, the Board of Trustees reconfirms its legal authority to grant, modify and rescind internal constitutions when the Board of Trustees determines such action to be in the interest of the institution or required to comply with its obligation; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees, under the conditions set forth above, approves the amended Constitution of the Oakland University Senate, attached hereto, effective December 4, 2023.

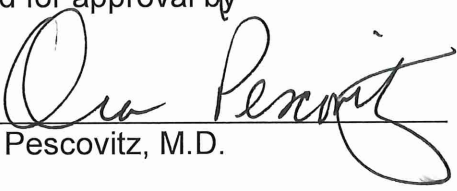
**9. Attachments:**

- A. Redline version of the proposed, amended Senate Constitution.
- B. Final version of the proposed amended Senate Constitution.


Submitted to the President  
on 11/14/23 2023, by

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Britt Rios-Ellis, M.S., Ph.D.  
Executive Vice President for  
Academic Affairs and Provost

Recommended on 11/9, 2023  
to the Board for approval by

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.  
President

Reviewed by

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joshua D. Merchant, Ph.D.  
Chief of Staff and  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

**ATTACHMENT A**

**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE**

***HISTORY OF PRIOR ACTION***

*Approved by the University Senate April 1977, February 11, 1982, May  
18, 2023*

*Ratified by the Faculty May 2, 1977; October 15, 2023*

*Approved by the Board of Trustees  
June 2, 1977; February 14, 1984.*

## Constitution

### Constitution of the Oakland University Senate

#### ARTICLE I

- i. The Oakland University Senate shall be organized and shall function as provided herein.

#### ARTICLE II

##### The Organized Faculties

In this Constitution, the term "organized faculties" shall refer to the various schools and colleges approved by the Board to provide educational programs and to recommend candidates for appropriate degrees.

~~i. The term "member of an organized faculty" shall refer:~~

~~i. To all Professors, Associate Professors, and Assistant Professors other than those on visiting status; and~~

~~To all Instructors and Special Instructors who have served a minimum of two years at the University.~~

~~-The term "member of an organized faculty" shall refer to all Bargaining Unit Faculty Members, plus the full time tenured and tenure-track faculty of Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine. Such members of organized faculties shall possess rights to participate in the governance of their faculties and of the University as described in the articles below.~~

- ii. Every individual eligible to hold membership in one or more organized faculties shall be awarded such membership in accordance with the procedures established by the respective faculties and the University. Persons who are members of more than one faculty shall indicate to the University Senate one (and only one) affiliation from which they wish to exercise their Senate franchise and to stand for candidacy. Each eligible University-wide appointee shall give similar indication.

- iii. Each organized faculty shall propose to the University Senate a constitution for the conduct of the business of that faculty. Upon the approval of the University Senate, each faculty shall have the authority to:

1. present to the University Senate candidates for degrees in course, recommend candidates for University honors, and approve candidates for departmental honors;
2. determine major and elective distributions and degree requirements, subject to review and approval by the University Senate;
3. approve courses offered within that faculty;
4. adopt resolutions on matters of concern to that faculty or to the University and request actions of the University Senate;
5. elect, in accordance with procedures established by the University Senate, the members of that faculty who will serve as Senators;
6. carry on such other functions as the University Senate may authorize.

iv. All actions of these faculties shall be reported to the University Senate in accordance with Article IV, Sec. x, of this Constitution.

v. By action of the University Senate, other academic units of the University may be granted such powers of organized faculties as are deemed appropriate.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **The University Senate: Powers and Responsibilities**

The University Senate shall:

- i. be responsible for consideration of University academic policies, including the establishment of degrees and the general requirements within which the organized faculties of the University shall devise degree programs, and other academic programs sponsored by the University;
- ii. recommend to the President candidates for undergraduate degrees in course, and candidates for University honors;
- iii. advise the President in all matters they wish to bring before it;
- iv. have the right to initiate proposals on all matters relevant to the general welfare of the University;
- v. have the right to be consulted on all matters of academic importance to the University;
- vi. approve, disapprove and make recommendations regarding the constitutions proposed by the various organized faculties of the University;

vii. receive reports of the actions taken by the organized faculties and, where appropriate, approve or disapprove or make recommendations regarding such actions

## ARTICLE IV

### The University Senate: Membership and Organization

i. The University Senate shall be composed **initially** of ~~forty-seven~~ **sixty-five** Senators, as follows:

~~Thirty-three Senators shall be elected by the faculties of Arts and Sciences, Education, Engineering and the Performing Arts.~~

~~Two Senators shall be elected from among the administrative and professional staffs, including the librarians, in manner to be prescribed by the Elections Committee of the University Senate. Three Senators shall be chosen by the students of Oakland University. Six Senators shall serve ex officio with full voting rights and privileges. These are: the Provost of the University, the University Librarian, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of Education, the Dean of Engineering and the Dean of Performing Arts.~~

~~There shall be **forty-seven** seats apportioned among the organized faculty.~~

**ii. Two** Senators shall be elected from among the administrative and professional staffs, in a manner to be prescribed by the Elections Committee of the University Senate. Three Senators shall be chosen by the students of Oakland University. **Ten** Senators shall serve ex officio with full voting rights and privileges. These are: the Provost of the University, the Dean of University Libraries, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of the School of Education and Human Services, the Dean of the School of Engineering and Computer Science, the Dean of the School of Business, the Dean of the School of Nursing, the Dean of the School of Health Sciences the Dean of the School of Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine, and the Director of the Eye Research Institute.

Three Senators shall be appointed by the President after all faculty and staff seats have been filled.

Each time a new faculty is authorized by the Board of Trustees and established at the University, the size of the University Senate shall increase by four seats. The Dean of the newly organized faculty shall receive a seat ex officio, and the faculty shall be entitled to a minimum representation of one elected Senator, and such additional seats as may be warranted by the apportionment procedure.

iii. Beginning with the Winter semester, 1967, and every two years thereafter, the elected faculty membership of the Senate shall be apportioned as follows:

Elective seats shall be assigned by the Elections Committee of the University Senate among the faculties in proportion to the number of members of organized faculties, with the proviso that no organized faculty shall be awarded more than forty-nine percent of the seats in the Senate, and that each organized faculty shall receive a minimum of one elective seat in addition to the Dean of that faculty who sits ex officio. In determining Senate seats, each organized faculty shall be deemed to include all individuals who exercise their franchise from that faculty. For the election of 1967 only, Senators shall be assigned as described in this article, except that full-time faculty of all ranks shall be the basis of assignment. Until such time as a procedure for electing Senators has been approved as part of a faculty constitution, the manner of electing the appropriate number of senators from each faculty shall be prescribed by the Elections Committee. Until such time as a procedure for the election of student Senators has been developed by the Students and approved by the University Senate, the manner of choosing student Senators shall be prescribed by the Elections Committee.

iv. The term of office for elected and appointed Senators shall be two years, except that the term of office of student Senators shall be one year. The terms of all Senators shall be subject to the limitations of the recall provisions of Article V, Sec. iii of this Constitution. No student may serve as Senator for more than two full terms of office. Under procedures to be established by the Elections Committee, Senators shall be elected during the Winter semester to take office in the following fall semester. In cases where a Senator may be absent for an extended period, a replacement may be named for them on recommendation of their constituency and by approval of the Steering Committee of the University Senate.

v. All members of organized faculties shall be eligible to serve as Senators. All students in good standing shall be eligible to serve as Senators.

vi. The Senate shall meet regularly once a month during the Fall and Winter semesters at a convenient time to be fixed by the Steering Committee. Such additional meetings as may be needed shall be called by the Steering Committee.

vii. At all times other than the Fall and Winter semester, the University Senate shall meet as often as necessary. At such meetings the quorum rule of Article IV, Sec. viii. shall be suspended. The agenda of such meetings shall be limited to the awarding of degrees and the conferring of honors, unless, by action of the Senate during the preceding Winter semester, specific additional items are authorized for the agenda.

viii. The presiding officer of the Senate shall be the Provost or, in their absence, a designated representative of the Provost. The Provost shall appoint a secretary of the Senate and a parliamentarian. A copy of the minutes of all Senate meetings shall be made available by the secretary of the Senate to the Board of

Trustees at the Office of the Secretary to the Board. **An additional copy of the minutes shall be available in the University Library archives.**

ix. For the conduct of ordinary business, a majority of the Senators shall constitute a quorum of which quorum a majority vote shall suffice. All substantive motions, together with relevant committee recommendations and reports, shall be circulated to all Senators and to all members of the faculty and staff before a motion receives its first reading in the Senate. Each substantive motion shall receive readings on two separate meeting days of the Senate; amendments may be moved during both readings, but final votes may be taken only during the second reading. By a vote of three-fourths of the Senators present and voting, the Senate may proceed directly from the first reading to the second reading and take final action on the motion. Upon the demand of more than one fourth of the Senators present and voting, at least one hearing open to faculty, staff and students shall be held before the second reading of any substantive motion. **Non-substantive motions shall receive one reading with a final vote. Non-substantive motions include but are not limited to staffing university committees, edits for style, grammar, punctuation, updated titles and format, and minor changes to policies with no adverse consequences to other units or policies. Non-substantive motions do not impact the intended goals of university programs and operations. If challenged by a Senator, the Senate may vote to treat a non-substantive motion as a substantive motion.**

x. The University Senate shall have a Steering Committee composed of the Provost of the University, (or their designee) who shall serve as chairperson, and six other Senators elected at the first Senate meeting of the Fall semester. The Committee's term of office shall be two years. No more than two seats shall be held by Senators from any one faculty.

xi. The Steering Committee shall:

1. call all meetings of the University Senate, except the first of the Fall semester, which shall be called by the President;
2. prepare the agenda for the University Senate, including the call of all matters from committee;
3. present to the University Senate a slate of nominees for all standing committees;
4. create such ad hoc committees as it judges necessary to study matters outside the province of any standing committee;
5. designate the membership and fix the terms of all ad hoc Senate committees;
6. receive reports of all actions taken by the organized faculties and other academic units as authorized under Article II, Sec. vi. When such actions are deemed by the Steering Committee to fall within the authority of the



reporting body and not to contravene accepted policies of the University, the report shall be received and shall have the status of University policy. The Steering Committee shall inform the University Senate of the disposition of reports. In all cases where the Steering Committee decides that the reported actions go beyond delegated powers or contravene University policies, the Steering Committee shall have the power to return the report with a statement of its reasons for doing so, or shall present the matter to the University Senate for full debate and consideration; and

7. recommend, on behalf of the Senate, candidates for undergraduate degrees in course.

xii. The Elections Committee of the University Senate shall conduct elections and referenda and make apportionments as described in the various articles of this Constitution. It shall consist of three Senators appointed by the Steering Committee. For the purposes of conducting the elections necessary to the establishment of this constitution, the Elections Committee of the Academic Senate of 1966-67 shall serve.

11. xiii. The University Senate shall establish other standing committees and ad hoc committees as it deems necessary. Unless otherwise specified by the Senate, the term of office for all standing committees shall be two years with members serving until new committees have been elected to replace them. Committee membership shall not be restricted to Senators. Whenever a committee of the University Senate is presenting a motion or making a report, all members of the committee shall have the right to attend that meeting of the Senate and take part in debate, but only Senators shall have the power to vote on the report or the motion.

## ARTICLE V

### Referendum and Recall Procedure

i. Within five class days of the final vote of the University Senate on any matter, fifteen percent of the members of the organized faculties, or fifty members of the organized faculties, whichever is less, shall have the right to petition the President to call a meeting of all the faculties to discuss the action of the Senate.

ii. A majority of the faculty members present at such a meeting shall have the right to instruct the Elections Committee to conduct a referendum by mail ballot of all the members of the organized faculties. The referendum shall ask for a yes or no vote on the action taken by the University Senate. If a majority of those returned valid ballots indicates disapproval, the action of the University Senate shall be disallowed.

iii. If no election to the University Senate has intervened and if the Senate decides to act again on the disputed matter, the action of the Senate shall again be presented to all members of the organized faculties by a mail ballot. If the Senate's action is rejected again by the referendum, the terms of all elected

members of the Senate shall be terminated and a special election conducted for new members. As a first order of business, the newly constituted Senate shall make a decision with respect to the disputed matter. This decision will be regarded as final and no further appeal to the referendum procedure shall be allowed on the issue.

## ARTICLE VI

### Graduate Council

i. A Graduate Council shall be established as a permanent standing committee of the University Senate. It shall make recommendations to the Senate regarding graduate study, as provided in this Article of the Constitution. The Senate shall review the recommendations of the Council and submit its recommendations to the Provost and the President. The Graduate Council shall be chaired by the ~~Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Study~~ **Dean of the Graduate School**, with its membership otherwise consisting of one representative from each organized faculty currently sponsoring a graduate degree program, plus three other representatives to be appointed by the ~~Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Study~~ **Dean of the Graduate School**.

ii. The representatives from each organized faculty shall:

1. be a full-time, non-visiting faculty member of any rank;
2. be selected by the organized faculty to be represented according to procedures established by the organized faculty;
3. serve terms determined by the units represented.

iii. Representatives appointed by the ~~Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Study~~ **Dean of the Graduate School** shall;

1. be full-time, non-visiting faculty members of any rank;
2. serve terms determined by the ~~Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Study~~ **Dean of the Graduate School**.

iv. The Graduate Council shall be responsible for:

1. making recommendations to the University Senate regarding proposed and existing graduate programs, including recommendations for program suspension or discontinuance. The Graduate Council shall seek, when necessary, the advice of other appropriate University bodies concerning the impact of new programs or changes in existing programs.
2. rendering advice to the ~~Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Study~~ **Dean of the Graduate School** on all matters concerning graduate program administration and support and ongoing graduate study activities as the

~~Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Study~~ Dean of the Graduate School may request;

3. conducting periodic reviews of graduate programs with reports of findings submitted to the University Senate and other appropriate bodies;
  4. appointing subcommittees as necessary to assist the Graduate Council in its recommendations. The subcommittees shall report their recommendations to the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council may make specific delegations of authority to the subcommittees to assist the Graduate Council in carrying out its responsibilities;
  5. recommending to the President all candidates for graduate degrees.
- v. The Graduate Council shall meet as often as the ~~Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Study~~ Dean of the Graduate School deem it necessary in order to fulfill its responsibilities, but it must meet at least once each academic semester.

## ARTICLE VII

### Student Participation in University Senate Governance

- i. The students of Oakland University shall have the right to be represented in the University Senate, as prescribed in Article IV of the Constitution.
- ii. In accordance with a procedure to be approved by the University Senate, the student body or representative student groups shall nominate students for membership on such committees of the Senate as the Senate shall designate.

## ARTICLE VIII

### Amendment

- i. The University Senate shall have the right to propose amendments to the Constitution. After distribution to the members of the organized faculties and following an open hearing, a proposed amendment shall be submitted to the members of the organized faculties for ratification. If an amendment is ratified by a majority of the returned valid ballots in a mail referendum, it shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval. An amendment shall be effective following approval by the Board of Trustees.

*Editor's note: This constitution was originally approved by the Board of Trustees on June 2, 1977. As printed above, it contains amendments approved through February 14, 1984.*

***Issued March, 1987***

**ATTACHMENT B**

**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE**

***HISTORY OF PRIOR ACTION***

*Approved by the University Senate April 1977, February 11, 1982, May  
18, 2023*

*Ratified by the Faculty May 2, 1977; October 15, 2023*

*Approved by the Board of Trustees  
June 2, 1977; February 14, 1984.*

## **Constitution**

### **Constitution of the Oakland University Senate**

*Approved by the Board of Trustees with amendments through February 15, 1984.*

#### **ARTICLE I**

- i. The Oakland University Senate shall be organized and shall function as provided herein.

#### **ARTICLE II**

##### The Organized Faculties

In this Constitution, the term "organized faculties" shall refer to the various schools and colleges approved by the Board to provide educational programs and to recommend candidates for appropriate degrees.

- i. The term "member of an organized faculty" shall refer to all Bargaining Unit Faculty Members, plus the full time tenured and tenure-track faculty of Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine. Such members of organized faculties shall possess rights to participate in the governance of their faculties and of the University as described in the articles below.
- ii. Every individual eligible to hold membership in one or more organized faculties shall be awarded such membership in accordance with the procedures established by the respective faculties and the University. Persons who are members of more than one faculty shall indicate to the University Senate one (and only one) affiliation from which they wish to exercise their Senate franchise and to stand for candidacy. Each eligible University-wide appointee shall give similar indication.
- iii. Each organized faculty shall propose to the University Senate a constitution for the conduct of the business of that faculty. Upon the approval of the University Senate, each faculty shall have the authority to:
  - 1. present to the University Senate candidates for degrees in course, recommend candidates for University honors, and approve candidates for departmental honors;
  - 2. determine major and elective distributions and degree requirements, subject to review and approval by the University Senate;
  - 3. approve courses offered within that faculty;
  - 4. adopt resolutions on matters of concern to that faculty or to the University and request actions of the University Senate;
  - 5. elect, in accordance with procedures established by the University Senate, the members of that faculty who will serve as Senators;
  - 6. carry on such other functions as the University Senate may authorize.

- iv. All actions of these faculties shall be reported to the University Senate in accordance with Article IV, Sec. x, of this Constitution.
- v. By action of the University Senate, other academic units of the University may be granted such powers of organized faculties as are deemed appropriate.

### ARTICLE III

#### The University Senate: Powers and Responsibilities

The University Senate shall:

- i. be responsible for consideration of University academic policies, including the establishment of degrees and the general requirements within which the organized faculties of the University shall devise degree programs, and other academic programs sponsored by the University;
- ii. recommend to the President candidates for undergraduate degrees in course, and candidates for University honors;
- iii. advise the President in all matters they wish to bring before it;
- iv. have the right to initiate proposals on all matters relevant to the general welfare of the University;
- v. have the right to be consulted on all matters of academic importance to the University;
- vi. approve, disapprove and make recommendations regarding the constitutions proposed by the various organized faculties of the University;
- vii. receive reports of the actions taken by the organized faculties and, where appropriate, approve or disapprove or make recommendations regarding such actions

### ARTICLE IV

#### The University Senate: Membership and Organization

- i. The University Senate shall be composed of sixty-five Senators, as follows:  
There shall be **forty-seven** seats apportioned among the organized faculty.
- ii. **Two** Senators shall be elected from among the administrative and professional staffs, in a manner to be prescribed by the Elections Committee of the University Senate. Three Senators shall be chosen by the students of Oakland University. **Ten** Senators shall serve ex officio with full voting rights and privileges. These are: the Provost of the University, the Dean of University Libraries, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of the School of Education and Human Services, the Dean of the School of Engineering and Computer Science, the Dean of the School of Business, the Dean of the School of Nursing, the Dean of the School of Health Sciences the Dean of the School of Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine, and the Director of the Eye Research Institute.

Three Senators shall be appointed by the President after all faculty and staff seats have been filled.

Each time a new faculty is authorized by the Board of Trustees and established at the University, the size of the University Senate shall increase by four seats. The Dean of the newly organized faculty shall receive a seat ex officio, and the faculty shall be entitled to a minimum representation of one elected Senator, and such additional seats as may be warranted by the apportionment procedure.

- iii. Beginning with the Winter semester, 1967, and every two years thereafter, the elected faculty membership of the Senate shall be apportioned as follows: Elective seats shall be assigned by the Elections Committee of the University Senate among the faculties in proportion to the number of members of organized faculties, with the proviso that no organized faculty shall be awarded more than forty-nine percent of the seats in the Senate, and that each organized faculty shall receive a minimum of one elective seat in addition to the Dean of that faculty who sits ex officio. In determining Senate seats, each organized faculty shall be deemed to include all individuals who exercise their franchise from that faculty. For the election of 1967 only, Senators shall be assigned as described in this article, except that full-time faculty of all ranks shall be the basis of assignment. Until such time as a procedure for electing Senators has been approved as part of a faculty constitution, the manner of electing the appropriate number of senators from each faculty shall be prescribed by the Elections Committee. Until such time as a procedure for the election of student Senators has been developed by the Students and approved by the University Senate, the manner of choosing student Senators shall be prescribed by the Elections Committee.
- iv. The term of office for elected and appointed Senators shall be two years, except that the term of office of student Senators shall be one year. The terms of all Senators shall be subject to the limitations of the recall provisions of Article V, Sec. iii of this Constitution. No student may serve as Senator for more than two full terms of office. Under procedures to be established by the Elections Committee, Senators shall be elected during the Winter semester to take office in the following fall semester. In cases where a Senator may be absent for an extended period, a replacement may be named for them on recommendation of their constituency and by approval of the Steering Committee of the University Senate.
- v. All members of organized faculties shall be eligible to serve as Senators. All students in good standing shall be eligible to serve as Senators.
- vi. The Senate shall meet regularly once a month during the Fall and Winter semesters at a convenient time to be fixed by the Steering Committee. Such additional meetings as may be needed shall be called by the Steering Committee.
- vii. At all times other than the Fall and Winter semester, the University Senate shall meet as often as necessary. At such meetings the quorum rule of Article IV, Sec. viii. shall be suspended. The agenda of such meetings shall be limited to the awarding of degrees and the conferring of honors, unless, by action of the Senate during the preceding Winter semester, specific additional items are authorized for the agenda.
- viii. The presiding officer of the Senate shall be the Provost or, in their absence, a designated representative of the Provost. The Provost shall appoint a secretary of the Senate and a parliamentarian. A copy of the minutes of all Senate meetings shall be made available by the secretary of the Senate to the Board of Trustees at the Office of

the Secretary to the Board. An additional copy of the minutes shall be available in the University Library archives.

ix. For the conduct of ordinary business, a majority of the Senators shall constitute a quorum of which quorum a majority vote shall suffice. All substantive motions, together with relevant committee recommendations and reports, shall be circulated to all Senators and to all members of the faculty and staff before a motion receives its first reading in the Senate. Each substantive motion shall receive readings on two separate meeting days of the Senate; amendments may be moved during both readings, but final votes may be taken only during the second reading. By a vote of three-fourths of the Senators present and voting, the Senate may proceed directly from the first reading to the second reading and take final action on the motion. Upon the demand of more than one fourth of the Senators present and voting, at least one hearing open to faculty, staff and students shall be held before the second reading of any substantive motion. Non-substantive motions shall receive one reading with a final vote. Non-substantive motions include but are not limited to staffing university committees, edits for style, grammar, punctuation, updated titles and format, and minor changes to policies with no adverse consequences to other units or policies. Non-substantive motions do not impact the intended goals of university programs and operations. If challenged by a Senator, the Senate may vote to treat a non-substantive motion as a substantive motion.

x. The University Senate shall have a Steering Committee composed of the Provost of the University, (or their designee) who shall serve as chairperson, and six other Senators elected at the first Senate meeting of the Fall semester. The Committee's term of office shall be two years. No more than two seats shall be held by Senators from any one faculty.

xi. The Steering Committee shall:

1. call all meetings of the University Senate, except the first of the Fall semester, which shall be called by the President;
2. prepare the agenda for the University Senate, including the call of all matters from committee;
3. present to the University Senate a slate of nominees for all standing committees;
4. create such ad hoc committees as it judges necessary to study matters outside the province of any standing committee;
5. designate the membership and fix the terms of all ad hoc Senate committees;
6. receive reports of all actions taken by the organized faculties and other academic units as authorized under Article II, Sec. vi. When such actions are deemed by the Steering Committee to fall within the authority of the reporting body and not to contravene accepted policies of the University, the report shall be received and shall have the status of University policy. The Steering Committee shall inform the University Senate of the disposition of reports. In all cases where the Steering Committee decides that the reported actions go beyond delegated powers or contravene



University policies, the Steering Committee shall have the power to return the report with a statement of its reasons for doing so, or shall present the matter to the University Senate for full debate and consideration; and

7. recommend, on behalf of the Senate, candidates for undergraduate degrees in course.
- xii. The Elections Committee of the University Senate shall conduct elections and referenda and make apportionments as described in the various articles of this Constitution. It shall consist of three Senators appointed by the Steering Committee. For the purposes of conducting the elections necessary to the establishment of this constitution, the Elections Committee of the Academic Senate of 1966-67 shall serve.
- xiii. The University Senate shall establish other standing committees and ad hoc committees as it deems necessary. Unless otherwise specified by the Senate, the term of office for all standing committees shall be two years with members serving until new committees have been elected to replace them. Committee membership shall not be restricted to Senators. Whenever a committee of the University Senate is presenting a motion or making a report, all members of the committee shall have the right to attend that meeting of the Senate and take part in debate, but only Senators shall have the power to vote on the report or the motion.

## **ARTICLE V**

### Referendum and Recall Procedure

- i. Within five class days of the final vote of the University Senate on any matter, fifteen percent of the members of the organized faculties, or fifty members of the organized faculties, whichever is less, shall have the right to petition the President to call a meeting of all the faculties to discuss the action of the Senate.
- ii. A majority of the faculty members present at such a meeting shall have the right to instruct the Elections Committee to conduct a referendum by mail ballot of all the members of the organized faculties. The referendum shall ask for a yes or no vote on the action taken by the University Senate. If a majority of those returned valid ballots indicates disapproval, the action of the University Senate shall be disallowed.
- iii. If no election to the University Senate has intervened and if the Senate decides to act again on the disputed matter, the action of the Senate shall again be presented to all members of the organized faculties by a mail ballot. If the Senate's action is rejected again by the referendum, the terms of all elected members of the Senate shall be terminated and a special election conducted for new members. As a first order of business, the newly constituted Senate shall make a decision with respect to the disputed matter. This decision will be regarded as final and no further appeal to the referendum procedure shall be allowed on the issue.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### Graduate Council

- i. A Graduate Council shall be established as a permanent standing committee of the University Senate. It shall make recommendations to the Senate regarding graduate

study, as provided in this Article of the Constitution. The Senate shall review the recommendations of the Council and submit its recommendations to the Provost and the President. The Graduate Council shall be chaired by the Dean of the Graduate School, with its membership otherwise consisting of one representative from each organized faculty currently sponsoring a graduate degree program, plus three other representatives to be appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School.

ii. The representatives from each organized faculty shall:

1. be a full-time, non-visiting faculty member of any rank;
2. be selected by the organized faculty to be represented according to procedures established by the organized faculty;
3. serve terms determined by the units represented.

iii. Representatives appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School shall:

1. be full-time, non-visiting faculty members of any rank;
2. serve terms determined by the Dean of the Graduate School.

iv. The Graduate Council shall be responsible for:

1. making recommendations to the University Senate regarding proposed and existing graduate programs, including recommendations for program suspension or discontinuance. The Graduate Council shall seek, when necessary, the advice of other appropriate University bodies concerning the impact of new programs or changes in existing programs.
2. rendering advice to the Dean of the Graduate School on all matters concerning graduate program administration and support and ongoing graduate study activities as the Dean of the Graduate School may request;
3. conducting periodic reviews of graduate programs with reports of findings submitted to the University Senate and other appropriate bodies;
4. appointing subcommittees as necessary to assist the Graduate Council in its recommendations. The subcommittees shall report their recommendations to the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council may make specific delegations of authority to the subcommittees to assist the Graduate Council in carrying out its responsibilities;
5. recommending to the President all candidates for graduate degrees.

v. The Graduate Council shall meet as often as the Dean of the Graduate School deem it necessary in order to fulfill its responsibilities, but it must meet at least once each academic semester.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Student Participation in University Senate Governance**

i. The students of Oakland University shall have the right to be represented in the University Senate, as prescribed in Article IV of the Constitution.

ii. In accordance with a procedure to be approved by the University Senate, the student body or representative student groups shall nominate students for membership on such committees of the Senate as the Senate shall designate.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

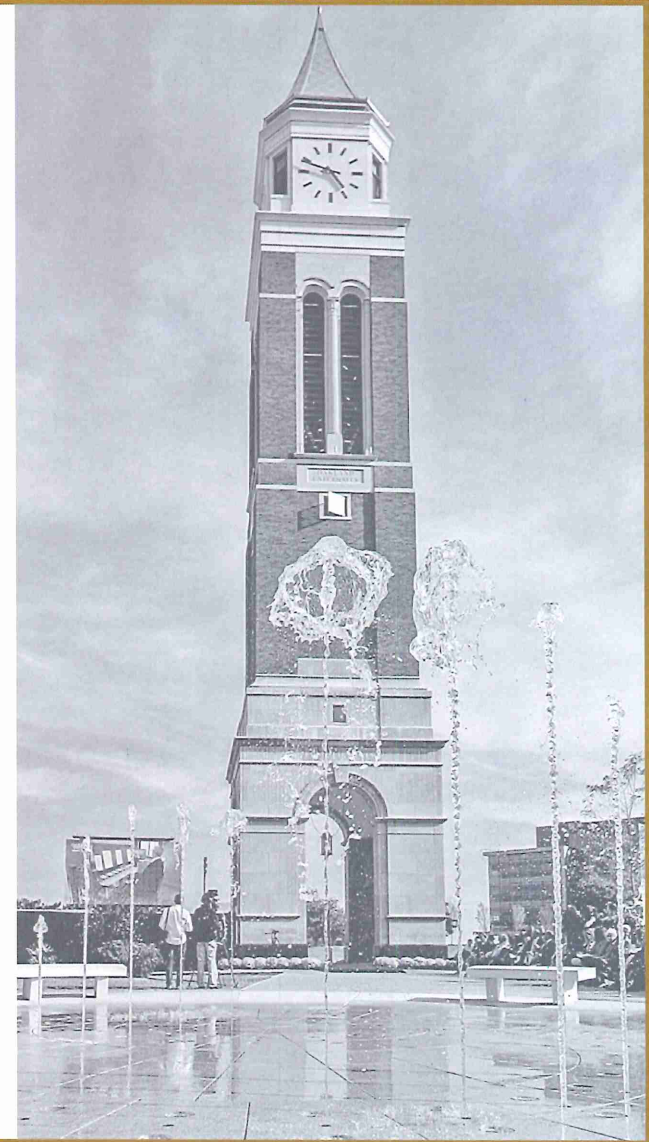
## Amendment

- i. The University Senate shall have the right to propose amendments to the Constitution. After distribution to the members of the organized faculties and following an open hearing, a proposed amendment shall be submitted to the members of the organized faculties for ratification. If an amendment is ratified by a majority of the returned valid ballots in a mail referendum, it shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval. An amendment shall be effective following approval by the Board of Trustees.

*Editor's note: This constitution was originally approved by the Board of Trustees on June 1, 1977. As printed above, it contains amendments approved through February 14, 1984.*

**Issued March, 1987**

# OU Senate Constitution Amendments



# **Rationale for Updates**

**The Constitution of the Oakland University Senate was last amended almost 40 years ago in 1984.**

**Our current structure and shared governance processes need updating at Oakland University.**

# Summary of Process to Update the Constitution

- A motion to amend the constitution was made at the April 2022 Senate meeting.
- The Senate Steering Committee prepared a list of proposed amendments to discuss with the full Senate.
- Following a review, second reading, and approval the six proposed amendments were approved by the Senate at the May 2023 meeting.
- Two open forums were held (May and September) to facilitate questions and comments about the proposed amendments and ratification process.
- The vote to ratify the amendments was conducted electronically in October 2023.
- The vote was held open for two weeks as required. An overwhelming majority approved each update.
  - Voter approval ranged from 80% to 100% for each respective amendment.

## **Summary of Changes Ratified by the Faculty and Senate**

**We are proposing to update:**

- **Current apportionment status requires 65 vs 47 senators**
- **Additional academic units needs inclusion (SHS, SON, SBA, OUWB, ERI)**
- **Updates to the title of the Dean of the Graduate School**
- **The term “Organized Faculty” includes OUWB**
- **Expansion of Senate meeting minutes storage to reflect current practice of storing minutes in both the library and the BOT office**
- **Define substantive and non-substantive motions to increase efficiency and expedite decision making**

# **Outcome of Amendments**

**The maintenance of accurate governance documents facilitates clarity and efficiency.**

**Illumination of the amendment and ratification process has catalyzed constitutional updates within OU's respective units.**

- **The College of Arts and Sciences is currently revising its constitution**
- **The ERI has submitted their first constitution for consideration.**



# Request

We are asking the BOT to approve the amendments to the OU Senate Constitution as approved by the OU Senate and ratified by the faculty.