

# WOU FACULTY GOVERNANCE CHARTER

## PREAMBLE

Realization of the University's potential requires the cooperative efforts of all its components, including the students, the faculty, the president, other administrators, classified personnel, alumni, and friends. The WOU Faculty Governance Charter and Bylaws serve as statements of agreement between the president and the faculty of WOU regarding the faculty's role in this cooperative effort. The Charter, more specifically, serves as a constitution describing the system of governing principles that guide the Faculty Senate.

## ARTICLE I

### Definitions

**Section 1. Faculty governance** is defined as the principles, democratic processes, and organizational structure by which the faculty arrives at group decisions or takes representative action relative to the structure, function, and general welfare of WOU.

**Section 2. Faculty** is defined as all those members of faculty units who hold academic rank of non-tenure track instructor or above, the title of lecturer, or the title of visiting professor.

**Section 3. Eligible faculty** is defined as those faculty serving

- a) appointments which are
  - i. .50 FTE or above on at least a nine-month appointment at WOU, and
  - ii. in at least their second consecutive nine-month appointment, or
- b) tenured or on tenure-track appointment at WOU.

## ARTICLE II

### Authority and Objectives of Faculty Governance

**Section 1.** The WOU Faculty Governance Charter and Bylaws serve as statements of agreement between the president and the faculty of WOU as to the philosophy, purposes, and means of university governance.

**Section 2.** Faculty governance is lodged in the following bodies:

- a. the Faculty Senate of WOU and its committees;
- b. divisional/departmental faculties and their committees;
- c. and other faculty units identified in Article IV, Section 2.

**Section 3.** Faculty governance bodies shall conform to all laws, regulations, and limits defined by federal and state law, the State of Oregon Administrative Rules as they apply to Western Oregon University, and the WOU Collective Bargaining Agreement.

**Section 4.** Working within the framework of its authority, faculty governance has as its objectives to

- a. determine and establish evaluation policies and activities consistent with the mission of the University;

- b. create, maintain, and protect a curriculum and environment conducive to the full and free development of learning, teaching, and research;
- c. and provide representative faculty opinion and advice to individuals and offices within the University, the Interinstitutional Faculty Senate, and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **The Faculty Senate**

**Section 1.** The Faculty Senate represents eligible faculty as defined in Article I of this Charter and has both the authority and the responsibility to represent the faculty within the limits defined by the Faculty Governance Charter and Bylaws.

**Section 2.** To carry out this responsibility, the Faculty Senate

- a. reviews the overall functioning of the University;
- b. identifies and assigns priority to questions, concerns, and requests which need to be addressed or delegates such action to faculty committees;
- c. coordinates the work of Faculty Senate committees;
- d. provides for the periodic review of work submitted by faculty peers, support staff, and administration;
- e. and, when deemed necessary by the Faculty Senate, studies and prepares recommendations to the President of WOU concerning the welfare of the students and faculty, faculty personnel decisions, academic policies and regulations, educational standards, curricula, and budget.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **Division and Department Faculties**

**Section 1.** Provisions of this article apply to the academic units of the College of Education, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Library & Media Services.

**Section 2.** Governance within the Colleges of Education and Liberal Arts and Sciences, as well as Library & Media Services, is determined by division bylaws. In addition to division bylaws, the colleges may adapt bylaws to deal with college-wide concerns and individual departments may adopt bylaws to deal with departmental affairs. In all cases, the bylaws are drafted by the unit's faculty and approved by a majority of the faculty in the unit. The bylaws shall provide for appropriate participation by the faculty in curricular, personnel, and budgetary decision-making, and bylaws shall be compatible with the provisions of this Charter and with Faculty Senate bylaws. The Faculty Senate is the final body of appeal in case of a challenge to the provisions of unit bylaws or their interpretation.

**Section 3.** Division chairpersons are appointed by and are responsible to the WOU president. Division bylaws govern the nomination process, term length, number of allowable terms, and the terms of evaluation of chairpersons; nomination(s) are forwarded to the WOU president through the applicable Dean.

**ARTICLE V**  
**Amendment**

**Section 1.** An amendment to this Charter may be proposed by either

- a. two-thirds of the members of the Faculty Senate present and voting;
- b. or an initiative petition signed by twenty (20) percent of the eligible faculty and presented to the president of the Faculty Senate.

**Section 2.** An amendment thus submitted shall become a part of this Charter when approved, by secret ballot, by a majority of those voting in Faculty Senate elections.

**Section 3.** The Faculty Senate should review and, if necessary, amend the Senate Charter and Bylaws every five years, or as conditions warrant, subject to Sections 1 and 2 of this article.

**[Last Amended: May 2015]**