

## College of San Mateo – Academic Senate

### Academic Senate Roles and Responsibilities

Title 5 §53200 (b): Academic Senate means an organization whose primary function is to make recommendations with respect to academic and professional matters.

#### Senate purview and responsibilities

Section 53200 (c) “Academic and professional matter” means the following policy development and implementation matters, known as the “10+1:”

1. Curriculum including establishing prerequisites and placing courses within disciplines
2. Degree and certificate requirements
3. Grading policies
4. Educational program development
5. Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success
6. District and college governance structures, as related to faculty roles
7. Faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports
8. Policies for faculty professional development activities
9. Processes for program review
10. Processes for institutional planning and budget development
11. Other academic and professional matters as mutually agreed upon between the governing board and the academic senate

#### The Role/Responsibilities of the Senator:

1. Attend and vote at all regular and special meetings of the Academic Senate.
2. Inform the faculty in your school/area (not just your department) on senate issues, including providing a senate report soon after each senate meeting.
3. Represent the faculty in your school/area at senate meetings, including reporting to the senate comments from faculty in your school/area regarding agenda items, as well as casting your vote to reflect the will of the faculty in your school/area.
4. Serve on senate subcommittees and taskforces as needed.

#### Where information is codified:

1. CA Education Code – primary source: Title 3-Postsecondary Education, Division 7-Community Colleges
2. CA Code of Regulations – secondary to Ed Code: Title 5-Education, Division 6-Community Colleges

### Implications of Brown for Academic Senate and Subcommittees:

Quorum: Number of senators, entitled to vote, who must be present in order to legally transact business. A quorum for meetings of the Academic/Faculty Senate shall be one half plus one of the voting Academic/Faculty Senate membership.

Majority: Means more than half.

#### Agendas

1. Must include meeting time and location, including address;
2. Post agenda in a 24/7 publicly accessible area 72 hours before meeting (physically and virtually);

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3. Special meetings require 24 hour notice and are limited to agenda items;
4. Senates do not call emergency meetings (which do not require 24 hour notice) as public safety is not under senate jurisdiction;
5. Allow for public comments before or during discussion of agenda items;
6. Include all action items on the agenda, with a brief description;
7. Can change order of agenda

### Action is Limited to Items on the Agenda, Except Where:

1. That the need for immediate action was discovered after the agenda was posted, and
2. If approved by the body with a vote of 2/3 of members present if more than 2/3 of the total membership are present, or a unanimous vote if less than 2/3 of the total members are present

### Meetings and Votes are Open

1. All votes are open! It is required that all ayes, nays and abstentions on motions be attributed to member casting a vote!
2. Members may respond to public comments but not take action
3. All items distributed by the Senate before or during meetings must be available to the public at the meeting.

### The general procedure for the conduct of business is as follows:

1. A member addresses the chair and seeks recognition.
2. The chair recognizes the member to speak.
3. The member states the motion.
4. The chair calls for a second.
5. If seconded, the motion is restated by the chair.
6. The chair conducts the debate on the motion.
7. The chair puts the question to a vote.
8. The chair announces the voting result.

### Watch out for:

1. Serial meetings are explicitly not allowed. Serial meetings occur when a majority of the members have communicated about an issue and have developed a collective concurrence. A collective concurrence is developed when “**Members have either directly or indirectly heard each other’s opinion on a topic enough to collectively develop or begin to develop an agreement on an issue.**”
  - a. Daisy-chaining
    - i. Rep A emails Rep B, then Rep B emails Rep C, Rep C emails Rep D, etc
    - ii. A majority of the senators have talked about the topic and a collective concurrence has been established.
  - b. Hub and Spoke
    - i. Rep A emails Rep B, Rep A emails Rep C, Rep A emails Rep D, etc
    - ii. telling each what the other has said, eventually a majority of the senate may have indirectly discussed the topic without public notice and is therefore in violation of the Brown Act.
2. This can be done in person, on the phone, via email
3. Intent is to preserve openness and transparency
4. We need to be especially careful of our email communications to one another
  - a. Bringing up an issue for discussion is ok, having discussion about the issue itself is not ok