

# Bemidji State University Faculty Association

## Constitution

### Article I: Title and Purpose

The name of this organization shall be the Bemidji State University Faculty Association, hereinafter referred to as the "BSUFA."

The purpose of the BSUFA shall be to improve the quality of education at Bemidji State University. The BSUFA shall pursue this improvement by promoting such conditions of faculty employment and University governance as are conducive to optimum faculty morale and performance. The BSUFA shall promote these conditions through collective bargaining, faculty participation in governance, and other appropriate means.

### Article II: Subordination

The BSUFA is a subordinate unit of the Inter Faculty Organization (IFO), the state-wide collective bargaining agent for the Minnesota State University System faculty. Provisions of this Constitution or of the BSUFA By-Laws which may become inconsistent with provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the IFO shall be deemed null and void.

### Article III: Membership

The membership of the BSUFA shall consist of faculty members who pay full dues and who comply with the relevant Articles, By-Laws, and obligations of the IFO. Only BSUFA members may serve as BSUFA officers, senators, faculty representatives on committees (elected or appointed), or in any other capacity representing faculty of Bemidji State University.

### Article IV: Elections

#### Section A: Eligibility

Only members of the BSUFA are eligible to participate in BSUFA elections.

#### Section B: Nominations

Whenever an election of regular officers, directors, or representatives to the IFO negotiating team is required, an open nominations process shall be followed so as to allow all members of the BSUFA to submit their names for consideration for the appropriate offices to the BSUFA at a general meeting. Additional nominations from the floor shall be accepted. For regular elections the nominations will be presented at the final regular BSUFA meeting of the

academic year.

### **Section C: Balloting**

Regular officers, directors, the grievance officer, and the representative to the IFO negotiating team shall be elected by secret ballot distributed by mail to all BSUFA members.

### **Section D: Elections**

Regular elections shall be held in April, elected persons to take office the first duty day in the fall semester. In the event of a vacancy during the regular terms of regular officers or, the grievance officer, or the representative to the IFO negotiating team, the Executive Board shall within one month of the effective date of the vacancy hold a special election for the vacant office.

## **Article V: Officers and Their Duties; The Executive Board**

### **Section A: Regular Officers**

There shall be a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. These officers shall serve for a term of two calendar years, beginning with the first day of classes in the academic year following their election. No person shall serve in any one of the positions described in this Article for more than two consecutive two-year terms.

#### Subsection 1: President

It shall be the duty of the president to preside at all meetings of the BSUFA, BSUFA Senate, and BSUFA Executive Board, and to perform all the duties usually devolving on a presiding officer; to serve as a member of the Senate and Executive Board; to be a member of all committees, ex officio, without voting privileges; and to serve on the IFO Board of Directors.

#### Subsection 2: Vice President

It shall be the duty of the vice president to preside over meetings of the BSUFA, BSUFA Senate, and BSUFA Executive Board when the president is absent; to serve as a member of the Senate and Executive Board; to assist with generating membership; and to assist the president as requested. In the event of a vacancy during the term of the president, the vice president shall serve as acting president until such time as a president can be

elected, pursuant to the Article IV "Elections."

#### Subsection 3: Secretary

It shall be the duty of the secretary to perform duties usually devolving on a secretary; to serve as recording officer for the BSUFA Executive Board, Meet and Confer, and BSUFA meetings; to serve as a member of the BSUFA Senate and of the Executive Board; and to assist the president as requested.

#### Subsection 4: Treasurer

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to perform duties usually devolving on a treasurer; to serve as a member of the Senate and Executive Board; to submit to the IFO Board of Directors an annual written report of the financial status of the BSUFA as provided in the IFO Constitution; and to assist the president as requested.

### **Section B: Other Officers**

#### Subsection 1: Grievance Officer

There shall be one grievance officer, elected to a two-year term, whose duties it shall be to pursue and process grievance cases, pursuant to the IFO/MnSCU Agreement; to serve on the Senate and Executive Board; and to assist the president as requested.

#### Subsection 2: Negotiator

There shall be one representative to the IFO negotiating team elected and serving in accordance with the IFO By-Laws; to serve on the Senate and Executive Board; and to assist the president as requested.

#### Subsection 3: Directors

The BSUFA shall elect delegates, herein called "directors," to the IFO Board of Directors at a time, for terms, and in numbers consistent with or as provided by the IFO Constitution. Their duties shall be to serve on the IFO Board of Directors, conveying to it the interests and action of the BSUFA and reporting to the BSUFA the action and decisions of the Board of Directors; to serve on the Senate and Executive Board; and to assist the president as

requested.

## **Section C: The Executive Board**

### Subsection 1: Membership

The Executive Board shall consist of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, grievance officer, negotiator, directors, and the recording secretary of the Senate. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members.

### Subsection 2: Functions

It shall be the function of the Executive Board, under the authority of and subject to review by the BSUFA and Senate, to conduct the business of the BSUFA, including the establishment of such ad interim policies as are essential to the affairs of the BSUFA.

### Subsection 3: Duties

The duties of the Executive Board shall include: the receipt and disbursement of BSUFA monies; preparation of an annual budget for carrying on the BSUFA's activities for the ensuing year; provision for an annual audit of the BSUFA's accounts; preparation of agendas for BSUFA and Senate meetings, including all business and resolutions appropriate to those bodies; provision for the publication and distribution of necessary publications; provision for elections; serving as the BSUFA's meet-and-confer body; to solicit, coordinate, and assemble recommendations from other committees and individuals concerning proposals for the Master Contract; to poll the membership to assess support for the Master Contract; to report recommendations and poll results to the Senate for ratification prior to distribution to the BSUFA membership; to assist the vice president in soliciting membership; and such other duties as may be specified in this Constitution, ordered by the BSUFA or Senate, or required for the management of the BSUFA's affairs.

## **Section D: Recall of Officers, Senators, and Committee Members**

Regular officers, senators, committee members, grievance officer, negotiator, and directors elected under the provisions of this Constitution and By-Laws will be subject to a recall election conducted by the Executive Board upon

receipt of a petition calling for such election signed by a majority of members of the constituency which originally elected the officer or committee member. Said officers and committee members shall be dismissed from their offices if **two-thirds** of the eligible voters from the constituency which originally elected the officer or committee member vote in the affirmative for their recall. The positions of dismissed officers or committee members shall be treated as vacancies under Article IV, Section D.

### **Section E: Removal of Non-participating Senators and Committee Members**

After three unexcused absences in a semester, a senate or committee seat shall be considered vacant and an election shall be held to fill said vacancy.

#### Subsection 1: Excused Absences in the Senate

Senators shall inform the BSUFA president or office secretary in advance when they are unable to attend a senate meeting.

#### Subsection 2: Excused Absences in Committees

Committee members shall inform the committee chair or the BSUFA office secretary in advance when they are unable to attend a committee meeting.

#### Subsection 3: Disputes

If the status of the absence is disputed, the body who elected the person, by **2/3** vote may decide the status of the absence.

## **Article VI: BSUFA General Meetings and Powers**

The BSUFA shall have an annual general meeting during the first month of the academic year. The BSUFA shall be responsible for the adoption of the Constitution, By-Laws, and any Amendments. The BSUFA shall have the power to review policies and actions of the Senate and Executive Board and shall receive reports from the Senate and Executive Board including financial reports. The BSUFA shall be responsible for nominations for election of officers, senators, directors, delegates to the IFO Delegate Assembly, grievance officer, and the representative to the IFO negotiating team.

## **Article VII: BSUFA Senate**

### **Section A: Name**

There shall be a BSUFA Senate, herein referred to as the "Senate."

### **Section B: Meetings**

The Senate shall meet at least once a month during the regular academic year.

Such regular meetings shall be scheduled in accordance with specifications in the BSUFA By-Laws. Notification of a regular meeting and its agenda shall be issued no less than three calendar days before the date of the meeting. Special meetings of the Senate may be called by the Executive Board. Additionally, the Executive Board shall call a special meeting at the written request of seven members of the Senate or of twenty-five members of the BSUFA. Notification of a special meeting and its agenda shall be issued no less than two duty days before the date of the meeting. A quorum shall consist of a 60 percent majority of the Senate membership.

### **Section C: Membership**

The Senate shall consist of:

#### Subsection 1

The president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer of the BSUFA. The president, vice president, and treasurer of the BSUFA shall be the president, vice president, and treasurer of the Senate.

#### Subsection 2

The directors, grievance officer, and negotiator.

#### Subsection 3

Senators representative of the various academic departments and equivalent units of the university, as specified in the BSUFA By-Laws. These senators shall be known as representative senators.

### **Section D: Election of Representative Senators**

Each department, unit, or pool of departments or units shall elect its own representative senator[s] by secret ballot for [a] two-year term[s], using an open nominations process that allows all BSUFA members within the department, unit, or pool to submit their names for consideration. In the event of a vacancy among the representative senators, the Executive Board shall instruct the affected department, unit, or pool to elect a replacement within one month of the effective date of the vacancy. Senators elected by such special elections shall serve only for the remaining portion of the interrupted term. In cases of split assignments which are uneven, the faculty member shall vote in the department or unit of the larger part of her or his assignment. In all other cases, the individual involved shall petition the Senate for a determination of voting eligibility.

### **Section E: Function and Duties of the Senate**

It shall be the function of the BSUFA Senate, under the authority of and subject

to review by the BSUFA, to establish the policies of the BSUFA for implementation by the Executive Board. The duties of the Senate shall include: Establishing its committees and approving the membership thereof; charging its committees and acting on their recommendations; establishing such rules as may be necessary for its continued functioning during academic vacations and summer sessions, or for insuring consistent attendance of its membership; and performing such other duties as may be specified in this Constitution and By-Laws, ordered by the BSUFA, or required for the management of the BSUFA's affairs.

### **Section F: Recording Secretary of the Senate**

The Senate shall elect from among the representative senators one member to serve as recording secretary of the Senate. It shall be the duty of the recording secretary to serve as recording officer and custodian of records for the Senate; to publish promptly a written record of Senate proceedings; and to serve as a voting member of the Executive Board.

### **Section G: Parliamentarian of the Senate.**

The president of the Senate shall appoint a BSUFA member to act as parliamentarian of the Senate; such person shall perform the usual duties of a parliamentarian. If the parliamentarian is not a senator, he/she shall have no voice or vote in the senate.

### **Section H: Attendance Requirements of Senators.**

Active participation in the Senate is vital to the very existence of the Senate. Senators are expected to attend Senate meetings. Senators who fail to attend three meetings within a single semester without just cause shall forfeit their seats.

## **Article VIII: Committees**

### **Section A: Establishment**

The committees of the BSUFA shall include those specified in the BSUFA Constitution and By-Laws and any additional ad hoc committees established by the Executive Board or the Senate. The Senate shall approve the policies, procedures, structures and general charge of all committees. When modification of such policies, procedures, structures, and general charge is proposed, the Senate shall publish the proposed changes to the BSUFA membership at least ten working days before the Senate votes on the proposal.

#### Subsection 1: Relation to University-wide Committees

The Executive Board, with the approval of the Senate, may refer specific issues or requests for

BSUFA representation on university-wide committees to appropriate BSUFA committees. Such referrals will not be construed to be a change in the general charge of the committee; rather, the charge of the committee should indicate that such referrals are appropriate.

#### Subsection 2: University-wide Committee Review

BSUFA members' participation in university-wide committees shall be reviewed annually by the Committee on Committees and a recommendation shall be brought forth to the Senate for any recommended changes in terms, participation, and/or charges.

#### Subsection 3: Membership Requirement

BSUFA membership is required for committee membership and for participation in all BSUFA committee elections.

#### Subsection 4: Meeting Requirement

All committees of the BSUFA with the exception of the Action Committee shall meet at least once each semester and beyond that shall elect a chair and may establish any number of meetings, their time, and place, as is appropriate to the work of the committee.

#### Subsection 5: Ad hoc Committees

Ad hoc Committees may be formed to deal with specific issues and shall disband at the conclusion of their specific charge.

A sunset date will be established when any ad hoc committee is established. Ad hoc committees that have not concluded their charge by the designated sunset date will be reviewed by the Senate to ensure that they are carrying out their charge in a timely fashion.

### **Section B: Elections**

Each year during the month of March, each committee chairperson shall notify the president of the BSUFA and the chair of the Committee on Committees about any existing or anticipated vacancies existing on their respective



committees. The Committee on Committees will then establish a deadline for the completion of an elections process to fill those vacancies and notify the BSUFA president, affected members, and the Senate of the results. An open nominations process will be used by the Committee on Committees to establish candidates for vacancies and a simple plurality will be used to determine election results. All committee members elected from particular colleges or the Student and Academic Support unit of the university shall be voted on only by members of that college or unit in all elections conducted by the Committee on Committees.

### **Section C: Unfilled Committee Vacancies**

Vacancies occurring after completion of the election process may be filled by election or appointment of the BSUFA president subject to confirmation by the Senate. Appointment by the BSUFA president will be deemed appropriate in those cases where the election process has failed to fill positions or in cases where there is less than a year left on a committee term. In those cases where the appointed committee member would represent a particular college or the Student and Academic Support unit of the university, the president of the BSUFA must appoint a member from that college or the Student and Academic Support unit.

### **Section D: Committee Terms**

All elected committee members shall serve staggered three year terms after the initial terms are established in a manner approved by the Senate.

### **Section E: Reporting Responsibility to the BSUFA**

All committees have the responsibility to make timely reports to the Senate and to bring all policy, procedural or financial recommendations made by the committee to the Senate for general approval before they are forwarded to other governing bodies.

#### Subsection 1: Responsibility of the Committee Chair

The chairperson of each standing committee shall be responsible to:

- (a) furnish each member of the committee with a copy of the charge and duties of the committee;
- (b) submit timely, written or oral reports to the Senate during the academic year;
- (c) represent Bemidji State University when there is an IFO statewide

counterpart to the committee;

(d) submit an annual report of the committee's activities and recommendations to be distributed to the Senate by April 1 of each year; and

(e) report to the Executive Board and the BSUFA office secretary the results of the chair election.

#### Subsection 2: Responsibility of Committee Members

Committee members appointed to university-wide committees as representatives of the BSUFA shall be responsible to make timely, written and oral reports to their BSUFA committees and to bring any policy, procedural or financial decisions made by the university-wide committee to their BSUFA committees and to the Senate for general approval.

### **Section F: Committee Types**

There shall be two types of committees: (1) those whose membership is determined by college and Student and Academic Support unit; and (2) those whose membership is determined by the function of the committee. In addition, all committees may invite appropriate members of the faculty, staff, or administration to meet with the committee as resource persons for the committee.

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#### Subsection 1: Membership Determined by College and Unit and Committee List

College and unit committee membership is defined as two representatives from each of the three colleges within the university and one representative from the combined Student and Academic Support unit.

Committees whose membership is determined by college and Student and Academic Support unit are:

--Academic Affairs Committee

--Academic Computing Committee

--Budget, Finance, and Allocation Committee

--Committee on Committees

--Constitutional Review Committee

- Curriculum Committee
- Governmental Relations Committee
- Liberal Education Committee
- Professional Improvement and Development Committee
- Student Services Committee
- Teacher Education Committee

Subsection 2: Membership Determined by Committee  
Function and Committee List

Function committee membership is defined as applying to those committees on which there must be several seats designated for particular BSUFA offices, staff members, or academic areas. Such committees, with the exception of the Graduate Committee shall be limited to seven members, and all non-designated seats shall be elected at-large. Committees represented by function are:

- Action Committee
- Graduate Studies Committee

## **Article IX: Ratification and Amendment of this Constitution**

This constitution shall be ratified after the proposed changes have been presented in full by mail to the entire BSUFA. At least five working days after the constitution has been distributed it will be discussed at a regular Senate meeting. A minimum of fifteen duty days following the Senate meeting, the proposed constitution shall be discussed at a BSUFA meeting. A ratification election will be conducted by secret ballot mailed to all BSUFA members immediately following the BSUFA meeting. The changes will take effect immediately upon their adoption by at least a two-thirds majority of those BSUFA members voting in the ratification election. The Constitution may be amended in the same manner.