Part II. - Duties as a Local Senate President

The following job description is not intended to be all-inclusive or wholly reflective of your particular college culture, nor does it reflect additional responsibilities of local senate presidents who are also part of a district senate structure. These general responsibilities have been compiled over the years as a reflection of the collective experiences of other local academic senate presidents; they recognize that their experiences--their courage under pressures, their collaboration, their omissions, their vigilance (or lack thereof) have implications not only for the local presidents who follow them but for other senate presidents across the state who later encounter similar circumstances. This list, then, offers you a starting place from which to shape questions about your new responsibilities; it should not be taken as an official job description against which you should be measured, but rather as a checklist of responsibilities others have encountered. This list is not intended to overwhelm you; indeed, many of these responsibilities may be justly delegated to others. They are, however, responsibilities that must be completed.

**A. JOB DESCRIPTION FOR A LOCAL ACADEMIC SENATE PRESIDENT GENERAL DUTIES**

As local senate president your duties include:

Being Familiar with the Statutory Context in which the Senate Operates

* Protect and honor the governance responsibilities that include but are not limited to providing representation on all college and district committees related to Ed Code and Title 5 mandates:
  1. degree and certificate requirements
  2. curriculum including establishing pre-requisites and placing courses in disciplines
  3. grading policies
  4. faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processing including self study and annual reports
  5. educational program development
  6. standards or policies regarding students success
  7. district and college governance structures as related to faculty roles
  8. policies for faculty professional development activities
  9. processes for program review
  10. process for institutional planning and budget development
  11. others as mutually agreed upon
* Observe the letter and spirit of all applicable laws, especially the Open Meetings Acts.
* Ensure the effective participation of faculty in the joint development of institutional policy, e.g., minimum qualifications and equivalencies, faculty hiring procedures, tenure review, faculty service areas, and faculty evaluation procedures.
* Identify and address regulatory issues, e.g., Education Code, Title 5, etc. as they relate to academic and professional matters and organize a faculty response in a collegial and timely manner.
* Adhere to the specific institutional responsibilities outlined in local constitution and by-laws.
* Ensure the timely publication of the senate agenda to comply with the Open Meetings Acts.
* Disseminate other documents (minutes, reports, supportive evidence, etc.) pertinent to committee or senate discussion and action.
* Implement college and district governance policies, ensuring the effective participation of other governance groups and the primacy of faculty on academic and professional matters.

**Advocating for Faculty Interests**

* Serve as the official spokesperson and advocate for the faculty in academic and professional matters.
* Work to resolve concerns of individual faculty members or to refer faculty members to the bargaining unit on matters of wages or working conditions.
* Provide initiative in identifying and pursuing important institutional issues.
* Meet regularly with the Superintendent/President and the Vice Presidents and with other administrative staff as needed.
* Advocate for appropriate staff development funding, and ask to have such funding called out and earmarked in appropriate grants calling for your signature.
* Archive the senate's historical records.
* Register senate endorsement of certain important documents sent to relevant authorities, e.g., Matriculation Plan, Accreditation Self-study and Annual Report.

**Promoting an Effective Relationship with the Board of Trustees**

* Attend and participate in meetings and retreats of the Governing Board or college administration.
* Serve as the primary source of recommendations to the Governing Board on academic and professional matters.
* Develop recommendations relating to academic and professional matters for presentation to the Board.

**Maintaining Contact with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges**

* Attend and participate in the fall and spring Academic Senate Plenary Sessions, and the Area Pre-session meetings, providing for an official voting delegate.
* Interact with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges and senates of other California community colleges.
* Attend institutes of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, e. g. Summer Institute for Academic Senate Leadership, and ensure that senate representatives attend other such institutes, e.g., Curriculum, Technology.
* Seek information about the deliberations of systemwide organizations that may impact California community colleges.
* Remain vigilant about legislation affecting the California community colleges.
* Ensure good relations with the bargaining agent.
* Ensure the effective participation of faculty in the joint development of institutional policy, e.g., minimum qualifications and equivalencies, faculty hiring procedures, tenure review, faculty service areas, and faculty evaluation procedures.

**Maintaining Effective Relationships with Other Governance Groups**

* Ensure good relations with the bargaining agent.
* Work with the bargaining agent in the joint development of institutional policy, e.g., minimum qualifications and equivalencies, faculty hiring procedures, tenure review, faculty service areas, and faculty evaluation procedures.
* Work to ensure the effective participation of staff and students in the areas that have substantial effect on them.

**Developing Senate Participation and Leadership**

* Conduct orientations of new faculty to explain the functions of the local senate.
* Meet with new senate members once a semester for the first year to discuss any problems and to further familiarize them with collegial governance.
* Encourage other faculty to participate in the events sponsored by the Academic Senate.
* Provide leadership to senate, college, and district-wide committees to ensure productive and efficient completion of tasks and regular reporting to the senate as a whole.
* Coordinate and cause to be conducted the election of local senate officers.

**Fostering Communication**

* Engage in ongoing discussions with faculty on the issues of the day.
* Facilitate in developing and airing faculty views.
* Facilitate communication among the Faculty and with Administration and the Governing Board.
* Ensure that minutes of the local senate meetings, its Executive Council meetings, if applicable, and other meetings of the body are published in a timely manner.
* Engage in and keep record of local senate correspondence, including electronic communications.
* Encourage the maintenance of a local senate website, if possible.
* Communicate with and responding promptly to requests for information from the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges.

**Securing Resources to Ensure Senate Success**

* Assure adequate resources for the Senate and manage them.
* Develop agendas for and conduct meetings of the academic senate.
* Allocate the use of staff support of the senate.
* Archive senate and college materials, using, perhaps both a "chron file" (listed chronically by date of receipt or action) and a topic file; compile a master list of senate files, and employ a check-out system for faculty who wish to "borrow" documents or files. [Too often, the college's institutional memory would be lost were it not for the archival content of the senate files.]
* Assist in the orderly transfer of authority to the senate president-elect.

**Furthering Efforts to Appoint and Retain Qualified Personnel**

* Participate in the search and selection of candidates to fill administrative positions.
* Appoint faculty representatives to college and district-wide committees.
* Participate, as permitted by law, in the evaluation of staff, including administrators with whom you work, as well as staff serving the local senate.
* Assure effective faculty participation on various institutional groups, e.g., Matriculation Committee, Department Chairs, Staff development.

**Your Responsibilities Within a Multi-college District**

In addition to the responsibilities noted above, if the various campuses of your district have agreed to create a District Senate, as local senate president you will have these additional duties:

* Serve as the representative of your campus.
* Serve or appoint others to serve on district committees as requested by the chancellor or district-level administrators.
* Be responsible to see that board rules, particularly those governing curriculum and hiring processes, are adhered to both at the district and campus level.
* Be the major conduit for district-wide information that must reach your faculty--and sometimes other constituencies--in a timely manner.
* Advise the district on your senate's position on present and emergent policy matters.

**B. COLLEGE/DISTRICT REPORTS REQUIRING SENATE SIGN-OFF, REVIEW OR VIGILANCE**

Appendix D contains listings of reports or documents calling for the local senate president's signature and/or senate approval, as well as materials requiring senate vigilance as they move through administrative channels, often without required, local senate review. While we have provided tentative due dates as of this publication, these reports are often fluid and districts may sometimes apply for reporting extensions. Further, new action by the legislature or the Board of Governors may eliminate or increase the reporting obligations of your college. Use Appendix D as a starting point to inquire about the responsibilities you may share with the offices of financial aid, matriculation, transfer centers, economic development, research and grants, and elsewhere across the campus.

Grant applications often require your signature to attest that the faculty has considered the academic implications. In practice, many local senate presidents report that administrators or grant-seeking faculty solicit needed signatures only days or hours before the document is due; other applicants may submit reports or forms without documentation, necessary budget information, or other essential information. To avoid these pressing circumstances, the Academic Senate recommends the following techniques:

* Inform the college faculty and administrators that materials calling for your signature and/or approval must be submitted in their entirety at least 5-7 days in advance of the intended mailing or submission date.
* Refuse to sign materials that are incomplete or are proffered in circumvention of your established process. It's professional to just say, "No."
* Insofar as possible, inform the faculty or administrators that such materials will be taken to the next senate meeting or officers' cabinet meeting as stipulated by your particular bylaws or standing rules. "I'll have to get back to you," is an acceptable and responsible statement.
* Remember and invoke the clichéd expression of resistance: "Failure to plan adequately on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part."

**C. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

All faculty appointments, other than those specifically called out as being appointed by the bargaining unit, are to be appointed by the local senate president; appointments to nonsenate committees are made by the academic senate after consultation between the local senate president and the college president or chancellor. Commonly among such committees and task forces to which faculty are appointed are these:

**College Level**

Accreditation  
Affirmative Action Committee  
Budget Committee  
Campus Safety  
College Bookstore/Cafeteria Committees  
College District Planning  
College Foundation  
Curriculum Committee  
Distance Education Committee  
Facilities Committee  
Faculty Hiring Committees  
Faculty Hiring Prioritization Committee  
Faculty and Administrative Evaluation Committee  
Institutional Planning Committee  
Master Plan Committees (Facilities, Education)  
Matriculation Committee  
Program Review Committee  
President's Cabinet/Council  
Research Committee  
Staff Development Committee  
Technology Committee

**District Level**

Calendar Committee  
Chancellor's Council Committee  
District Budget Committee  
District Curriculum Committee  
District Faculty Priorities and Hiring Procedures Committee  
District Facilities  
District Foundation Committee  
District Marketing  
District Planning Committees  
District Student Services  
Equivalencies [Note: may be a college-level committee as well]  
Technology (and District Distance Education) Committees  
Other ad hoc committees as needed on policy changes recommended by the board or chancellor, or individual issues forwarded by a college within the district.

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