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**The Constitution  
of the  
Faculty Senate  
of the  
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth**

**Preamble**

Whereas shared governance is a set of practices under which the faculty participate in making significant decisions concerning the operation of their institution and encompasses a mechanism for academic staff with training and experience in curriculum, teaching and research to have primary responsibility in academic matters and faculty status; and

The principles of shared governance expressed here have been endorsed by accrediting bodies as well as organizations dedicated to advancing higher education, including the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education, the American Federation of Teachers, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges; and

The Board of Trustees for the University of Massachusetts, in its Statement of University Governance, T73-098, has endorsed the right, responsibility and privilege of the faculty to advise on policies within the faculty’s primary areas of responsibility affecting the University, to engage in shared governance, and to organize into governing bodies, such as a Senate, with a constitution approved by the Board;

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1 We, the Faculty of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, therefore establish this Constitution of  
2 the Faculty Senate to provide a process to assure faculty have a voice in decision making, a role in  
3 shaping policy and for other matters related to the academic life of the faculty.

4  
5 In exercising its role in shared governance, the Faculty will have primary responsibility for: curriculum,  
6 subject matter, and methods of instruction; policies regarding research, admissions, libraries, and those  
7 aspects of student life which relate to the educational process; articulating the requirements for degrees  
8 and certificates, determining when the requirements have been met, and recommending candidates for  
9 degrees to the Chancellor and President; and matters of faculty status, such as appointments,  
10 reappointments, promotions, and tenure.

### 11 12 13 **Name**

14 This organization shall be known as the Faculty Senate of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

### 15 16 **A. Authority**

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- 18 1) The Faculty Senate, in its responsibilities and relationships with other governing components of  
19 the Campus and of the University as a whole, shall follow the Board of Trustees' Statement on  
20 University Governance (Trustee Document T73-098, as amended), which grants to the Faculty  
21 "primary responsibility" in academic matters and faculty status, as defined in that document.
  - 22 2) In the case of conflict between this Constitution and the policy, procedure or constitution of any  
23 college, school or other academic unit, this Constitution will take precedence.

### 24 25 **B. Role**

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- 27 1) The Faculty Senate shall be concerned with academic matters and matters relating to the  
28 intellectual life of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth including, but not limited to:
    - 29 a) Standards and policies for the admission of students, including transfer students.
    - 30 b) Standards and policies for the granting of honorary degrees and honors awards for students.
    - 31 c) Standards and policies for awarding a University of Massachusetts Dartmouth degree.
    - 32 d) The setting of curricula and curricular standards.

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- 1 e) Standards for grading and academic regulations.
- 2 f) Policies affecting student activities.
- 3 g) Policies governing University research.
- 4 h) Policies governing the library.
- 5 i) Policies governing faculty usage of computers and technology.
- 6 j) Assumption by the University of research or service obligations to external organizations.
- 7 k) Expression of the faculty membership on matters brought to it under Section G as reported
- 8 by the Senate Standing and ad-hoc Committees.
- 9 l) Recommendations regarding the University budget as it relates to resources provided for
- 10 teaching, scholarship and research.

### 11 12 **C. Composition of the Senate**

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- 14 1) The membership of the Senate will be defined in the By-laws, but these definitions may not
- 15 contradict the following principles:
- 16 a) Every Academic Department will be a member of a Senate Council as defined in the By-laws.
- 17 b) Each Senate Council will be represented by at least one Senator.
- 18 c) The Senators representing each Senate Council will be elected by the faculty members
- 19 therein.
- 20 d) There will be members-at-large elected from the University as a whole. The number of
- 21 members-at-large will be at least equal to the number of Senators elected to be designated
- 22 representatives of Senate Councils.

### 23 24 **D. Faculty Senate Officers**

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- 26 1) The President of the Faculty Senate will be elected annually by the members of the Senate from
- 27 among its members. The duties of the President will be defined in the By-laws.
- 28 2) The Secretary of the Faculty Senate will be elected annually by the members of the Senate from
- 29 among the members of the Steering Committee. The duties of the Secretary will be defined in
- 30 the By-laws.

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- 1        3) The Steering Committee will consist of the President of the Faculty Senate together with other  
2            members elected annually by and from the members of the Senate. The membership and duties  
3            of the Steering Committee will be defined in the By-laws.  
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### 5    **E. Faculty Senate Committees**

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- 7        1) The Faculty Senate will have Standing Committees and ad hoc committees, reporting to the  
8            Faculty Senate, which will:  
9            a) consider items related to curriculum, subject matter, the methods and means of instruction,  
10            policies regarding research, admissions, libraries, those aspects of student life that relate to  
11            the educational process, degree requirements and the granting of degrees, and other items  
12            related to academic matters,  
13            b) prepare motions regarding their areas of responsibility,  
14            c) review, evaluate and report to the Senate on University policies, procedures and programs  
15            in their areas of responsibility,  
16            d) advise the Senate and the appropriate University administrators regarding the  
17            implementation of existing policy.  
18        2) Standing Committees will include Department Curriculum Committees, College Curriculum  
19            Committees, a General Education Committee, and a University Curriculum Committee, which  
20            will review and make recommendations regarding all curricular matters involving courses or  
21            programs offered under the auspices of the University. Curricular matters include: approval of  
22            new courses or degree programs; discontinuance of existing courses and programs; substantial  
23            changes in either title or content of existing courses or programs; requirements for earned  
24            degrees; requirements for majors, minors, and special options in a field; general education  
25            requirements; and approval and discontinuance of courses in the general education program.  
26        3) The scope, membership, and procedures of Senate Committees will be defined in the By-laws.  
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### 28    **F. Constitution and By-laws Amendment Procedures**

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- 30        1) Amendments to this Constitution will be submitted for referendum by the faculty membership  
31            by a vote of a majority of the elected members of the Faculty Senate. All Senators will have an  
32            opportunity to cast a vote on amendments to the Constitution.

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- 1        2) All faculty members eligible to vote in elections to the Faculty Senate will be eligible to vote in a  
2            referendum. The Faculty Senate Steering Committee will conduct such a referendum within  
3            thirty (30) academic working days of action by the Faculty Senate. Minutes of the Faculty  
4            Senate debate on the proposed amendment will be distributed with the ballots. At least ten  
5            (10) academic working days will be provided for the return of the ballots.
- 6        3) A proposed constitutional amendment will be approved by achieving both the support of a two-  
7            thirds (2/3) majority of those faculty members participating in a duly conducted referendum  
8            AND by the support of a majority of the Senate Councils, in which the position of each Senate  
9            Council will be evidenced by the majority vote of the participating faculty in the Council.
- 10       4) Any amendment approved by referendum will be forwarded to the appropriate University  
11           officials and to the Board of Trustees for its approval.
- 12       5) The Faculty Senate shall adopt, amend or rescind the By-laws of the Faculty Senate by a two-  
13           thirds (2/3) majority of those voting, provided that a majority of the elected members also vote  
14           in support. All Senators will have an opportunity to cast a vote on changes to the By-laws.
- 15       6) This constitution shall be ratified by meeting the same requirement as those for an amendment,  
16           as outlined in F-1-3 above.

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### 18    **G. Procedures for Faculty Senate Recommendations**

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- 20       1) An item of concern may be brought to the attention of the Faculty Senate through the President  
21           of the Senate, its Steering Committee or any Senate Committee. Items may be raised during the  
22           course of regular Senate meetings.
- 23       2) In all cases where there exists an appropriate University Standing Committee, the items will be  
24           sent to it by the Senate President upon receipt of the item. Where no such Standing Committee  
25           exists and where the item falls within the scope of the Faculty Senate, the Steering Committee  
26           itself will take the item under consideration. The Steering Committee will indicate a date for  
27           reporting the item out of Committee. In no case will this time exceed the third subsequent  
28           regular meeting of the Faculty Senate. All Standing Committees, including the Steering  
29           Committee, will be urged to hold open hearings as part of their procedure for considering items  
30           referred to said Committees.
- 31       3) Following due consideration of the item, the Senate Steering Committee will be notified of any  
32           resolution to be placed on the agenda of a future Senate meeting.

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- 1 4) The Steering Committee will, at the same time, forward the resolution to the Provost with an  
2 expected date of consideration of the item before the full Senate.
- 3 5) Following final Senate action on the item, the Steering Committee will send notice of the Senate  
4 recommendation to the Chancellor. The recommendations of the Senate, including those of its  
5 Committees, on matters involving powers previously delegated to the Chancellor by the Board  
6 of Trustees or the President will become policy unless the recommendation is disapproved or  
7 sent back for reconsideration by the Chancellor within twenty (20) working days of receipt of  
8 notification. The recommendations of the Senate, including those of its Committees, on matters  
9 involving powers maintained internal to the Board of Trustees or the President will become the  
10 official recommendation of the Chancellor unless the recommendation is disapproved or sent  
11 back for reconsideration by the Chancellor within twenty (20) working days of receipt of  
12 notification.
- 13 6) If the Chancellor disapproves or seeks reconsideration of any recommendation, the Chancellor  
14 will notify the President of the Faculty Senate of intended action within twenty (20) days of  
15 receipt of notification.
- 16 7) In those cases where the Chancellor disagrees with the recommendation of the Senate, the  
17 Senate may reconsider its recommendation and either develop an alternate recommendation or  
18 reaffirm its original recommendation by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate membership. An  
19 alternate recommendation developed by this procedure will be processed by the Chancellor as  
20 would an initial recommendation received from the Faculty Senate.
- 21 8) When the Chancellor disapproves a Senate recommendation involving powers maintained  
22 internal to the Board of Trustees or the President, and the Senate reaffirms its original  
23 recommendation by a two-thirds vote, the Chancellor will present the Senate's reaffirmed  
24 recommendation along with the Chancellor's own comments to the President and/or to the  
25 Board of Trustees.
- 26 9) Where the Chancellor disagrees with a Senate recommendation, the Chancellor may propose an  
27 alternative and request that the Senate consult with individuals of the Chancellor's choice prior  
28 to conducting the vote on reaffirmation.

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*Ratified April 2014*  
*Amended April 2017*