



Pennsylvania Highlands Community College

College Senate Bylaws

Amended April 15, 2025

Article I. Name

This organization shall be called the College Senate of Pennsylvania Highlands Community College.

Article II. Preamble

Pennsylvania Highlands Community College establishes these bylaws in order to provide for the democratic government of the College and make recommendations to the College President in the execution of the President's responsibilities as Chief Executive and Administrative Officer of the College.

The College Senate of Pennsylvania Highlands Community College is a constituent body of the Pennsylvania Highlands Community College Congress. As such, it provides a structure to ensure that representatives of the various governance bodies of the College have a venue and a voice in the decision-making processes of the College and that these representatives have an opportunity to hear the various opinions of their colleagues.

Article III. Purpose

Serve as an advisory group and provide recommendations to the College President and to President's Cabinet.

- To celebrate and advance the mission and vision of the College and its strategic initiatives.
- To deliberate issues the College community considers important for the operation of the College.
- To promote effective communication among faculty, administration, staff, and students.
- To contribute to College planning and decision making.
- To examine and assess College practices and policies and to recommend changes.
- To promote unity and collegiality among College students and employees.

Article IV. Organization

4.1 The College Senate is chaired by a member of the College Senate who is elected by the College Senate at its first meeting of each academic year. The Chair will use Robert's Rules of Order, as prudent, to effectively and efficiently lead College Senate meetings. The College Senate Chair will create a proposed meeting schedule for the next academic year to be presented at the April College Senate meeting for discussion and approval. Once approved, the meeting schedule will be posted on the College's intranet for all employees and students to review.

4.2 The Student Senate, the Faculty Senate, the Administrative Senate, or the Staff Senate may request special meetings of the College Senate and may place items on the agenda at any College Senate meeting.

4.3 The College Senate will make every effort to reach consensus on the issues that are brought before it; however, the College Senate Chair may find need to call for a vote at such times when consensus does not appear imminent. A simple majority vote will carry the motion. For items requiring a vote, a quorum of the College Senate shall consist of more than 50% of voting members.

Article V. College Senate Membership

5.1. The College Senate consists of four (4) representatives from each of the Student Senate, the Faculty Senate, the Administrative Senate, and the Staff Senate.

5.2. College Senate representatives will be the only voting members of the College Senate. Ex-officio members are non-voting.

5.3 Voting members who cannot attend a College Senate meeting may request that another member of their Senate submit a proxy vote in his/her place. The member requesting the proxy vote must communicate, in writing, with the Chair of the College Senate.

5.4 Any employee or enrolled student may attend a College Senate meeting and participate in the discussion, however, only designated College Senate members are allowed to vote.

5.5 Committee Chairs or designees will provide a written report before each College Senate meeting and be present to answer related questions from College Senate members.

Article VI. Officer Responsibilities

6.1. The President of the College shall preside over the first meeting of the academic year solely to complete the election of officers.

6.2. College Senate has the following officer positions:

- Chair: The Chair will preside over and report to the College Senate at all meetings. After seeking input from College Senate membership, the Chair will create and disseminate an agenda for each meeting and shall oversee the adherence of the meeting to said agenda, adjusting the agenda if urgent issues arise. Each April, the Chair, in consultation with the Vice-Chair, shall propose to College Senate a meeting schedule for the forthcoming academic year. The Chair will also create ad hoc committees as deemed necessary and appoint a Chair of that ad hoc committee. The Chair will communicate with the College President about any College Senate business.
- Vice Chair: The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair in the creation of the College Senate agenda, perform other College Senate work as assigned by the Chair, and carry out the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence.
- Secretary: The Secretary shall notify all College Senate members of the upcoming agenda as well as proposed bylaw amendments and other documents and/or communications required by the College Senate. The Secretary shall take minutes at all meetings and distribute to College Senate members for review and approval at the following meeting. The Secretary shall be responsible for publishing the approved minutes to all College Senate members, the President of the College, and the archives found on the intranet. The Secretary will maintain the College Senate's archives. Additionally, the Secretary shall prepare and process the ballots for any and all elections.

Article VII. Standing Committees

7.1. There shall be three (3) standing committees of College Senate:

- The **Community Involvement Committee** is responsible for generating and communicating ideas that lead to increased involvement by students, faculty, and staff in projects that benefit the residents of the College's service area. The Committee shall consist of twelve (12) members with three (3) representatives each from Administrative, Faculty, Staff, and Student Senates.
 - Example initiatives include organizing volunteer opportunities such as participation in the backpack project, the Soup Kitchen, the College food pantry or organizing a clothing donation collection drive.
 - Standing Advisory Member(s) (1-2): Employee(s) from Marketing and/or Student Activities.
- The **Diversity Committee** is responsible for reinforcing the College's commitment to the Diversity plan by responding to College data collected through the Diversity Plan by enhancing communication efforts and organizing activities and events open to all employees and students that relate to Diversity. The Committee shall consist of twelve (12) members with three (3) representatives each from Administrative, Faculty, Staff, and Student Senates.
 - Example initiatives include organizing communication plans, lecture series, and field trips.
 - Standing Advisory Member(s) (1-3): Employees from the Student Success Center, Student Activities, and/or the library.
- The **Employee Development Committee** is responsible for identifying needs and developing programs for learning opportunities that will enhance job skills, communication, performance, personal excellence, or physical and mental wellbeing for all employees. The Committee shall consist of nine (9) members with three (3) representatives each from Administrative, Faculty, and Staff Senates.
 - Example initiatives include organizing the employee awards ceremony, lunch-n-learn presentations and an annual speaker series.
 - Standing Advisory Member (1): Employee of Human Resources

7.2. A Cabinet member, as appointed by the College President each August, will serve as a presidential liaison and convene the first meeting of each academic year. Committee liaisons will be invited to attend committee meetings by the Chair, if needed, and will help provide guidance, answer questions and act as a committee advocate to the College President, but in no case will a liaison participate in any committee voting.

7.3. Chairs or co-chairs of each committee will be elected at the first meeting of the academic year. Committees will meet at least three times each semester per academic year. Each committee is responsible for posting minutes and committee members' attendance to the College's intranet (using the approved template) and to

send a member to College Senate meetings to provide updates. Each February, the Chairs of each committee are encouraged to work with the College President to develop an annual budget for any committee activities.

7.4. Each standing committee will have 1-3 standing advisory member(s) that can be supportive to the committee due to their specific job responsibilities at the College. Advisory members will provide input, feedback, and recommendations but will not be responsible for initiating or participating in any committee event or project.

Article VIII. Ad Hoc Committees

The College Senate Chair can create ad hoc committees as deemed necessary. Ad hoc committees will report recommendations to the College Senate and may receive charges from the College Senate Chair (or designee) or the College President. Each February, the Chairs of each ad hoc committee are encouraged to work with the College President to develop an annual budget for any committee activities. The following are the most common ad hoc committees and include:

- The **Ethics Ad Hoc Committee** will be formed on an as needed basis as indicated in the College Constitution.
- The **Academic Calendar Ad Hoc Committee** will be formed each year at the first College Senate meeting of the academic year in September and will consist of ten (10) members with the Chief Academic Officer, the Registrar, and two (2) representatives each from Administrative, Faculty, Staff, and Student Senates. The ad hoc Academic Calendar Committee will be charged with creating the academic calendar two years past the current academic year, to be presented to College Senate no later than November of each year for approval by the Board of Trustees in February of each year. Once the calendar is approved by the Board of Trustees, the ad hoc Academic Calendar Committee shall be disbanded.
- The **Holiday Party Ad Hoc Committee** will be formed each fall semester to plan and organize an employee holiday party that will take place after the fall semester final exams and before the official beginning of classes of the spring semester.
- The **Employee Picnic Ad Hoc Committee** will be formed each spring semester to plan and organize the employee picnic that will take place after commencement and before the classes begin for the fall semester.

Article IX. Amendments

9.1 Any member of the Senates may propose an amendment to these bylaws by submitting the proposed amendment in writing to the College Senate Chair. Amendments may not contradict the College Constitution.

9.2 The College Senate Chair will present the proposed amendment to the College Senate, and the appropriate Senators will, in turn, present the proposed amendment to their Senates. The proposed amendment will receive preliminary discussion at the Senate meetings at which it is first introduced and will receive additional discussion and a vote by the members during the subsequent meeting according to the bylaws governing these respective bodies.

For an amendment to be approved by the Senates, it must receive two-thirds of the vote from participating voting members of each of the bodies. If the proposed

amendment has been passed by the Senates, the College Senate Chair will refer it back to the College Senate which will then vote on ratification. College Senate's ratification vote will require a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the College Senate. Proxy votes are not permitted.

9.3 If an amendment is not passed by a two-thirds majority in each of the Senates, the body/bodies in opposition to the amendment must present, in writing, its objections to the amendment at the next College Senate meeting. The objections will be discussed, and the amendment changed, if necessary, and the process will revert to the initial step (9.1).

9.4 Editorial changes to these bylaws to adjust for titles and/or new classifications of employees may be made upon review and approval of the College Senate.