

Roles and Responsibilities of Senators

Approved By: Senate

Responsible Office(s): Senate Executive Committee

Responsible Officer(s): Senate Chair/University Secretary

Established On: 2022 10 06

Effective Date: 2022 10 06

Revised: 2025 06 12

Category: Academic

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The Senate is the foremost academic decision-making body of NOSM University and Senators have a vital role in fostering and supporting the mission and goals of the University. The Senate is responsible for the establishment and regulation of academic policy, standards, and procedures at NOSM University. In particular, the Senate oversees all matters pertaining to NOSM University's academic resources, academic programming, academic strategic planning, student affairs and any other such matters relating to academic issues. Membership in the Senate consists predominantly of faculty but also includes learner representation and members of the academic administration.

2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Members shall conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner and shall make decisions in the best interests of the University. A member shall have the duty to:

- Act in good faith in the best interests of the University and respect the principles of collegiality and fairness.
- Become and stay informed as to the guidelines, policies and affairs of Senate and the University.
- Assume a shared responsibility, along with the Board of Governors, for a living and learning environment that promotes the well-being of learners, faculty, and staff.
- Commit through policies and programs to an environment at the University that recognizes equity and diversity as being vital to, and in harmony with, its educational purposes and standards of excellence as an institution.

- Ensure that information designated as confidential is held in confidence and disclosed only when appropriate.
- Attend and be prepared for meetings and provide advance notice to the Secretary if unable to attend a meeting.
- Members shall make themselves available to their constituencies and will keep their peers informed of major issues before the Senate.
- Participate in Senate Committees and working groups as opportunities arise and scheduling permits.
- Act in the best interests of the University, trying to foresee probable consequences of each proposed course of action.
- Be knowledgeable of the NOSM University Senate By-Laws including the jurisdiction and function of the Senate.
- Be knowledgeable of the Universities conflict of interest and conflict of interest with commercial Interest policies.

3.0 Orientation

Senators are expected to review all supporting documentation for orientation, including the Online Senate Orientation Modules and any other requirements requested by the University Secretary and/or Senate for onboarding. These materials provide essential information on Senate procedures, governance responsibilities, and the role of Senators in supporting the academic mission of the University. The Online Senate Orientation Modules can be accessed at:

<https://www.nosm.ca/about/governance/senate/membership/orientation/>.

4.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

Senators must disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest at the earliest opportunity, either in writing to the University Secretary or verbally at the beginning of a Senate meeting when relevant agenda items arise. This includes participation in Senate committees and any deliberation or decision-making within those committees where a conflict may exist. Senators with a conflict of interest should recuse themselves from discussions and decisions where their impartiality may be compromised, following the procedures outlined in the University's Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Interest with Commercial Interest Policies.

5.0 SABBATICAL LEAVE AND SENATE PARTICIPATION

Senators who intend to take a sabbatical must notify the University Secretary and Senate Executive Committee in advance. Senators on sabbatical may choose to continue their participation in Senate activities or request a leave of absence. If a Senator is unable to fulfill their duties during the sabbatical, a temporary replacement may be appointed in accordance with the Senate By-Laws and the Nomination and Election Policy.

6.0 SPEAKER AND DEPUTY SPEAKER

Consistent with the Senate By-Laws (Section 7), the Senate will have Speaker and Deputy Speaker, who shall be voting members of Senate. The Speaker shall be responsible for conducting all meetings of the Senate in accordance with the Bylaws of the Senate. The Speaker shall ensure that all meetings follow the basic rules of parliamentary procedure. In the absence of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker shall conduct the meeting.

7.0 ATTENDANCE AND NOTIFICATION

The Secretary of Senate shall inform the Senate Executive Committee or other body which has elected an individual to the Senate of the name of any elected member who has missed three regular meetings in any academic year, and that the seat held by that individual be declared vacant and may appoint a replacement to serve the balance of that individual's term pursuant to the By-laws and other Nomination and Election policy.

8.0 INTERPRETATION

Questions of interpretation or application of this policy or its procedures will be referred to the University Secretary at governance@nosm.ca.

9.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

University Documents and Information:

- NOSM University Senate By-laws
- Senate Nomination and Elections Policy

Review and Revision History

Review Period: 3 years or as required.

Date for Next Review: 2027 10 01