



# Sheridan Senate Terms of Reference

Approved by Sheridan Board of Governors  
May, 2018

# Table of Contents

- 1. POWER AND DUTIES OF SHERIDAN SENATE .....1
- 2. DEFINITIONS..... 2
- 3. SENATE MEMBERSHIP ..... 3
- 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SENATORS ..... 5
  - 4.1. Responsibilities ..... 5
- 5. OFFICERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES..... 5
  - 5.1. Identification of Senate Officers ..... 5
  - 5.2. Responsibilities of Senate Officers and Recording Secretary of Senate ..... 6
- 6. SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND RESPONSIBILITIES ..... 7
- 7. SHERIDAN SENATE MEETINGS ..... 8
  - 7.1. Quorum ..... 8
  - 7.2. Openness of Meetings and the Right of Non-Senators to be Heard ..... 8
  - 7.3. In Camera Consideration ..... 8
- 8. SENATE COMMITTEES AND LOCAL ACADEMIC COUNCILS..... 9
  - 8.1. The Role of Standing, Sub and Ad Hoc Committees ..... 9
  - 8.2. Standing Committees ..... 10
  - 8.3. Local Academic Councils ..... 10
- 9. ADOPTION OR AMENDMENT OF SENATE TERMS OF REFERENCE.....10
- 10. SENATE PROCEDURES ..... 11

Appendix A: Policy One and Schedule One

# PREAMBLE

The Senate of the Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning is responsible for the academic direction, academic policies and related academic decision making of the institution. Subject to the authority of the Board of Governors, the Senate has broad powers that include the regulation of the standards for admission, the establishment of the requirements for graduation, approval of the academic calendar, the provision of a venue for quality assurance, academic policies and related decision making and recommendations to the Board on any matter referred to it by the Board.

## 1. POWERS AND DUTIES OF SHERIDAN SENATE

### 1.1 Exclusive Powers and Duties

The Senate is responsible for initiating, debating and making decisions related to academic policies and the quality of academic programming. Without limiting the foregoing, the Senate specifically has the following powers and duties to:

- (a) approve all Academic policies as set out in Policy One – Development and management of policies and procedures, Schedule One – Policy Register (Appendix A);
- (b) approve the Sheridan annual academic calendar;
- (c) approve the requirements for admissions, content, graduation requirements and standards for all programs of study offered by all Sheridan Post-Secondary Faculties;
- (d) approve the Sheridan undergraduate scholarship, research and creative activities strategy;
- (e) approve the appointment of Professors Emeriti;
- (f) provide a venue for constructive and collegial debate focused on teaching and learning, quality assurance, curriculum, creativity and innovation, and the strategic academic direction of Sheridan;
- (g) establish such Committees as deemed necessary to aid in the operation of the Senate; and,
- (h) make rules for the conduct of its affairs, through associated Procedures.

Decisions relating to any other academic matters at Sheridan remain with the Senate, except for those matters that the Board of Governors reserves to itself.

### 1.2 Advisory Duties

Senate must advise the Board of Governors, and the Board of Governors must seek the advice of Senate, prior to Board decisions regarding the following:

- (a) adoption and/or amendment of the Senate Terms of Reference;
- (b) the academic mission, goals, objectives, strategies and priorities of Sheridan;
- (c) review and recommend endorsement of programs of study that are offered by Sheridan Post-Secondary Faculties and the requirements of those programs;
- (d) consideration of and provision of input to long-range academic strategy;
- (e) the granting of honorary degrees;

- (f) the criteria for the appointment of the President and Provost;
- (g) changes to Policy One; and,
- (h) any other matters as specified by the Board.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- (a) Administration means the senior management of Sheridan, Faculty Deans and Associate Deans and other operational employees of the College;
- (b) Board or Board of Governors means the Board of Governors of Sheridan;
- (c) Chair means a presiding officer, as in Chair of Senate, or Committee Chair;
- (d) Committee means a Standing Committee, ad hoc Committee or sub-Committee of a Standing Committee of the Sheridan Senate;
- (e) Conflict of Interest means actual, potential or perceived situations where a Senator has the opportunity to advance or protect one's own personal interest, the interest of one's immediate family members or friends, or the interest of a non-arm's length personal or business relationship, which may be potentially harmful to the integrity or fundamental mission of Sheridan;
- (f) Day means operating business day in the Province of Ontario;
- (g) Executive Committee means the Committee of Senate set-out in 4.3 below;
- (h) Ex-officio means full voting member (unless otherwise specified) of Senate or a Committee by virtue of her/his office;
- (i) Faculty means a Sheridan academic unit comprised of a number of related programs including the Faculties of: Arts, Animation and Design; Applied Science and Technology; Applied Health and Community Studies; Humanities and Social Sciences; and the Pilon School of Business ;
- (j) Faculty Member means all members as covered under the Academic Employees Collective Agreement and those with non full-time status. (includes counsellors, librarians and faculty employed in CTL)
- (k) Faculty Senator means a Faculty member (full time or non-full time) who is a voting member of the Sheridan Senate;
- (l) LAC means Local Academic Council, the Faculty level academic governance unit;
- (m) Policy One means the Policy document that covers the development and management of policies and procedures. Schedule One – Policy Register is the corresponding list of Sheridan policies indicating whether they are an Academic, Administrative or Board Policy;
- (n) President means the President of Sheridan;
- (o) Quorum means the minimum number of voting members in attendance in order for a meeting to commence or continue;
- (p) Recording Secretary means the Recording Secretary of Senate;
- (q) Representative means a representative of a group or body who may or may not also be a voting member of the Sheridan Senate;
- (r) Resource means a person who serves as a non-voting member of Senate or a Committee by virtue of their expertise that is relevant to the body's work;

- (s) Secretary means the Secretary of Senate;
- (t) Senate means the Sheridan Senate;
- (u) Senate Year shall commence in September of any given year and formally end in August. The term of membership for Faculty Senators will end on 31st August;
- (v) Senator means a voting or non-voting member of the Sheridan Senate;
- (w) Sheridan means Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning;
- (x) Standing Committee means every Senate Committee, except the Executive Committee, with a continued existence, formed to do its designated work on an ongoing basis, and as further set out in Article 8;
- (y) Student means any individual who is admitted, enrolled or registered for study at Sheridan whether physically present at campus or online. Individuals who are active in a program, but not enrolled in classes for a particular term (e.g. on a vacation or coop term) are considered to have a continuing student relationship.
- (z) Student Senator means a Sheridan Student who is a member of the Sheridan Senate.

### 3. SENATE MEMBERSHIP

#### 3.1 Voting Membership (72 members);

- (a) The voting membership of Senate shall be 72 members comprised of:
  - (i) Ex officio Senators (19);
  - (ii) Faculty Senators (48 including 40 FT Faculty, one (1) counselor, one (1) librarian, one (1) Centre for Teaching and Learning faculty, and five (5) NFT Faculty); and,
  - (iii) Student Senators (5 voting).

##### 3.1.1 Ex-officio Senators (19 members)

The following shall be Ex-officio voting members of Senate:

- (a) the President, who is Chair;
- (b) the Provost and Vice President Academic, who is Vice-Chair;
- (c) the Vice Provost, Academic;
- (d) the Vice Provost, Research;
- (e) the Director of Library and Learning Services;
- (f) the Dean of Students;
- (g) the Registrar;
- (h) Six (6) Deans including Five (5) Post-Secondary Deans, and Dean, Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL);
- (i) Five (5) Post-Secondary Faculty Associate Deans; and,
- (j) President of OPSEU Local 244.

### **3.1.2 Faculty Senators (48 members)**

- (a) Two-thirds (2/3) of Senate shall consist of Faculty Senators, which shall be comprised of:
  - (i) Forty (40) Full-Time Faculty Members elected from the Post-Secondary Faculties. Faculty Senators shall be elected by the Full-Time Faculty Members of their Faculty;
  - (ii) Five (5) Faculty Members representing the Non-Full-Time Faculty Members. One Senator shall be elected from each Faculty by its Non-Full-time Faculty Members; and,
  - (iii) Three (3) Senators shall be elected from Faculty Members employed in each of the Library and Learning Services, Counselling Services, and Centre for Teaching and Learning; one(1) from each department.
- (b) The proportion of the total number of Faculty Senators (40) to be elected from any Faculty as Faculty Senators shall, within reason, be in the same proportion as the total number of that Faculty's Full-Time Faculty members is to the total number of Full-Time Faculty members at Sheridan.

### **3.1.3 Student Senators (5 members)**

- (a) Ten (10) Student Senators shall be elected, with two (2) students elected from each Post-Secondary Faculty. Five (5) Student Senators shall have voting rights during any motion.

### **3.2 Non-Voting Membership (6 members);**

- (a) The non-voting membership of Senate serve as resources as required and shall be comprised of six (6) Senators as follows:
  - (i) Vice President, Student Experience and Enrolment Management;
  - (ii) Vice President, Human Resources;
  - (iii) Dean, International;
  - (iv) Chief Change Officer; and,
  - (v) Manager, Centre for Indigenous Learning and Supports (CILS)
  - (vi) Not assigned

**3.3** There shall be no provision for alternates in the event that a Senator is unable to attend a meeting (other than those appointed as temporary replacements in accordance with Article 8.2 of the Senate Procedures).

**3.4** In accordance with Article 3.1.2 (a) the 2:1 ratio of Faculty Senators to Ex-officio/Student Senators will be maintained.

**3.5** The proportions employed in 3.1.2 (b) above in allocating faculty Senate positions shall be re-calculated every two years.

### **3.6 Terms of Membership**

- (a) Ex-officio Senators shall serve for as long as they remain in office with the exception of Ex-officio Associate Deans who shall serve for two (2) years with the possibility of one (1) additional two

- (2) year term;
- (b) Elected Faculty Senators shall serve for a three (3) year term with one (1) additional three (3) year term if so elected;
- (c) Faculty Senators who have served two (2) terms will be permitted to run for Senate after two (2) years have elapsed during which they were not a Senator;
- (d) Student Senators shall serve for a one (1) year term, with one (1) additional term if so elected; and,
- (e) All Senators' terms of membership shall commence at the beginning of the Senate Year.

### **3.7 Elections**

- (a) The Secretary of Senate will manage the Senate electoral process and procedures for voting; and,
- (b) Electoral procedures and processes are prescribed in the Senate Procedures.

## **4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SENATORS**

### **4.1 Responsibilities**

The general responsibilities of Senators shall include the responsibility to:

- (a) attend Senate meetings;
- (b) be familiar with the Senate Terms of Reference, the Senate Procedures and associated guidelines (informed by Bourinot's Rules of Order);
- (c) keep informed regarding the issues which come before Senate;
- (d) read published Senate agendas and other related materials beforehand, and come to the meetings prepared;
- (e) sit as individuals and not as representatives of their specific constituency, and therefore act collectively as stewards of Sheridan in carrying out their Senate responsibilities;
- (f) participate in the membership of Senate Committees;
- (g) vote in accordance with the long-term Academic interests of Sheridan;
- (h) uphold the principles of academic freedom; and,
- (i) be bound by the "Sheridan Senate: Code of Ethical Conduct".

## **5. OFFICERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **5.1 Identification of Senate Officers**

- (a) The following shall be Senate Officers:
  - (i) the Chair of Senate, who shall be the President of Sheridan;
  - (ii) the Vice-Chair of Senate, who shall be the Provost and Vice President Academic;

- (iii) the Speaker of Senate, who shall be elected annually from among the voting members of Senate;
- (iv) the Deputy Speaker of Senate, who shall be elected annually from among the voting members of Senate; and,
- (v) the Secretary of Senate (non-voting), who shall be appointed by the Chair of Senate.

## **5.2 Recording Secretary of Senate**

There shall also be a Recording Secretary of Senate, a non-voting member of Senate, who shall be appointed by the Chair of Senate.

## **5.3 Responsibilities of Senate Officers and Recording Secretary of Senate**

### **5.3.1 Chair of Senate Responsibilities**

- (a) serving as the Chair of the Senate Executive Committee;
- (b) calling, through the Executive Committee, all regular and special meetings of the Senate;
- (c) establishing through the Senate Executive Committee, the agenda of all meetings of the Senate;
- (d) reporting to Senate on current issues at Sheridan;
- (e) conveying recommendations of the Senate to the Board of Governors as necessary and appropriate;
- (f) presiding over the Senate meeting at which the Speaker is elected; and,
- (g) such other responsibilities as may be specified in these Terms of Reference or Procedures.

### **5.3.2 Vice-Chair of Senate Responsibilities**

- (a) fulfilling the responsibilities of the Chair whenever the Chair is temporarily unable or unavailable to do so; and,
- (b) assisting the Chair in the execution of his/her duties.

### **5.3.3 Speaker of Senate Responsibilities**

- (a) conducting all meetings of Senate in accordance with these Terms of Reference, Bourinot's Rules of Order, and the Senate's associated procedures;
- (b) ensuring that all business and operations of the Senate are coordinated through the Secretary and/or Recording Secretary; and,
- (c) such other responsibilities as may be specified in these Terms of Reference.

### **5.3.4 Deputy Speaker of Senate Responsibilities**

- (a) fulfilling the responsibilities of the Speaker whenever the speaker is temporarily unable or unavailable to do so; and,
- (b) assisting the Speaker in the execution of his/her duties.



### **5.3.5 Secretary of Senate Responsibilities**

At the direction of the Chair of Senate and/or Senate Executive Committee:

- (a) assisting the Chair as needed to ensure that Sheridan rules, policies and procedures are properly followed;
- (b) responsible for the operations, interpretations and elections of the Senate;
- (c) serving as an ex-officio, non-voting member of all standing Committees of the Senate;
- (d) organizing and scheduling Senate meetings and acting as a resource person to the Chair and Speaker at such meetings;
- (e) developing the initial draft Agendas for Senate and Senate Executive meetings; and,
- (f) such other responsibilities as may be specified in these Terms of Reference or Procedures.

### **5.3.6 Recording Secretary of Senate Responsibilities**

- (a) preparing the minutes of the Senate and Senate Executive Committee meetings;
- (b) maintaining the Senate website and SharePoint site; and,
- (c) assisting the Secretary of Senate in the execution of his/her duties.

## **6. SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **6.1 Membership**

The membership of the Senate Executive Committee shall be comprised of:

- (a) the Chair of Senate who shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee;
- (b) the Vice-Chair of Senate;
- (c) Four (4) Faculty Senators who shall be elected from the Faculty Senators;
- (d) One (1) Ex-officio Senator who shall be elected from the Ex-officio Senators;
- (e) One (1) Student Senator who shall be elected from the Student Senators;
- (f) Speaker of Senate (see 5.1 (a) (iii)); and,
- (g) Deputy Speaker of Senate (see 5.1 (a) (iv)).

### **6.2 Resources**

The Secretary and Recording Secretary shall serve as Resources to the Senate Executive Committee.

### **6.3 Election**

The elected members of the Senate Executive Committee shall be elected by the Senate at large annually in accordance with 6.1 above.

## **6.4 Responsibilities of the Executive Committee**

- (a) The Executive Committee shall be responsible for calling meetings of the Senate, setting and preparing the agendas of Senate, and ensuring that meeting materials are sufficiently developed to afford fruitful debate at Senate;
- (b) The Executive Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Senate and its Committees are properly recorded and transmitted to those concerned for implementation;
- (c) The Executive Committee shall be responsible for monitoring the work of Senate Committees to ensure that the Terms of Reference of Senate are followed and the work of the Committees is carried out;
- (d) The Executive Committee shall be responsible for reviewing the organization and procedures of Senate and its Committees and making recommendations for improved effectiveness;
- (e) The Executive Committee shall, from time to time, review, revise and recommend the Senate Procedures for approval to the Senate; and,
- (f) The Executive Committee shall have such other responsibilities as may be assigned to it from time to time by the Senate.

## **7. SHERIDAN SENATE MEETINGS**

### **7.1 Quorum**

- (a) The quorum for all Senate and Committee meetings shall be 50% plus 1 of the voting membership;
- (b) If Senate is not called to order within 15 minutes after its scheduled commencement time due to lack of quorum, the meeting shall be deemed lost and the Senate shall stand adjourned; and,
- (c) Should it be confirmed that the quorum has been lost during any meeting in progress after Senate has been called to order, the meeting shall immediately be declared adjourned.

### **7.2 Openness of Meetings and the Right of Non-Senators to be Heard**

- (a) All meetings of Senate shall be open, except when Senate votes to consider specific items of business in camera; and,
- (b) A non-Senator may be recognized and permitted to speak at any open portion of a Senate meeting at the discretion of the Speaker.

### **7.3 In Camera Consideration**

- (a) During a meeting, Senate may vote to consider specific items of business in camera, thereby closing the meeting to non-Senators while these matters are under discussion. Such a motion shall clearly identify all items of business to be considered in camera, and is debatable. Should the motion be carried, all non-Senators in attendance (other than any person required to remain by the Speaker) shall be asked to leave the meeting for the in camera portion;
- (b) Upon completion of all in camera business items, the Speaker shall declare the meeting once again open to non-Senators, and any in attendance will be invited to return to the meeting;
- (c) Motions to consider specific matters in camera shall normally come from the Senate Executive

Committee and appear in the Senate agenda, but they may also be raised during the course of a meeting by any Senator, as a question of privilege;

- (d) Matters where individual students or Sheridan personnel are identified by name or where confidential financial or other information is involved may also warrant in camera consideration; and,
- (e) Notwithstanding (d), and as a matter of principle, unless a legitimate rationale for in camera consideration is evident or is provided, Senate meetings should remain open.

## **8. SENATE COMMITTEES AND LOCAL ACADEMIC COUNCILS**

### **8.1 The Role of Standing, Sub and Ad Hoc Committees**

- (a) The effective conduct of Senate business relies heavily on the work of representative Senate Committees established specifically to consider a broad range of matters related to the academic function of Sheridan and to report on these to Senate, with recommendations as necessary and appropriate;
- (b) For academic matters of an ongoing nature, Senate shall establish a framework of standing Committees, as outlined in 8.4. The Senate Committee structure may include in some cases, subcommittees reporting to the Senate Standing Committees;
- (c) At its discretion, Senate may also form ad hoc Committees or working groups to deal with specific matters of a non-recurring nature. The proposed membership and terms of reference of any such ad hoc Committee or working group shall be specified in the motion to strike the Committee;
- (d) The Senate will approve the Terms of Reference for Standing Committees and Ad Hoc Committees reporting to Senate;
- (e) Committees of Senate shall serve until they are discharged by Senate; and,
- (f) All Senate Standing or ad hoc Committees shall report directly to Senate.

### **8.2 Composition of Standing Committees**

- (a) Each Standing Committee shall determine its own membership numbers and composition in accordance with (b) and (c) below;
- (b) The membership of all Senate Standing Committees should be reasonably representative of the composition of the Senate (i.e. two-thirds of the voting members of all Committees shall be Faculty Senators), but no less than 50% +1 shall be voting Faculty Senators;
- (c) Each Faculty shall be represented on each Standing Committee by at least one voting Faculty Senator;
- (d) Each Senate Standing Committee shall have a Chair and, if appropriate or necessary, a Vice-Chair. The Standing Committee Chairs shall be elected annually from the voting membership of that Committee. The Standing Committee Chair must be a voting member of Senate; and,
- (e) Local Academic Councils (LACs) will select from their Faculty Senators, Faculty members to serve on Senate Standing Committees.

### **8.3 Standing Committees**

At present, the Senate has constituted the following Standing Committees:

- (a) Academic Appeals Committee;
- (b) Academic Policy Committee;
- (c) Learning Partnerships and Academic Pathways Committee;
- (d) Program Quality Assurance Committee;
- (e) Teaching and Learning Committee; and,
- (f) Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activities Committee.

The Senate may form other such Standing Committees as deemed necessary.

### **8.4 Local Academic Councils**

Each Academic Faculty shall have a Local Academic Council (LAC) that is responsible for the academic governance of that Faculty. LACs operate under delegated authority from Senate. Each LAC will provide guidance and advice to Senate, Administration, or the Board of Governors on various matters as requested from time to time.

Faculty LACs will govern themselves as they see fit, provided they adhere to the principles of two-thirds of voting membership being Faculty Members and that LAC and Committee chairs are elected from the entire membership of the LAC or Committee.

Each LAC will draft its own Terms of Reference to meet the needs of its Faculty. However, in general, where appropriate and feasible, the Terms of Reference and procedures of LACs shall parallel those of Senate.

Each LAC shall present an annual report to Senate.

## **9. ADOPTION OR AMENDMENT OF SENATE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- (a) Adoption or amendment of these Terms of Reference shall require:
  - (i) Submission, in writing, of the proposed amendments and their rationale to the Executive Committee for review;
  - (ii) Notice of the proposed amendment, together with any recommendation of the Executive Committee related thereto, at least 14 days prior to the meeting at which approval will be sought;
  - (iii) A motion within the agenda for a regular meeting of Senate;
  - (iv) The support of 66% + 1 of voting Senators for the passage of the motion to recommend to the Board of Governors the adoption or amendment of the Senate Terms of Reference; and,
  - (v) The approval of the Board of Governors.
- (b) Notwithstanding any amendment made to these Terms of Reference in (a) above; Senate will review its Terms of Reference every three years.

## 10.SENATE PROCEDURES

A full description of Senate procedures is included in the Senate Procedures which is incorporated by reference.

Appendix A: Policy One and Schedule One