

## **Charter of the RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) Academic Senate**

### **Article I Preamble**

1. The task of higher education governance must be apportioned and delegated among the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students of the institution. The interdependence of these members of the RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) community and their delegated responsibilities establishes the basis for effective shared governance between them within the institution.
2. It is the faculty's responsibility to lead in the formulation of recommendations relating to academic matters. The academic governance of the institution provides for the exercise of the faculty's role in academic decisions, the protection of legitimate faculty aspirations, the implementation and preservation of academic standards, and the promotion of the academic welfare of students. It is the obligation of each member of the faculty to participate in these governance activities to the fullest extent possible. At the same time, the faculty has the responsibility to collaborate with other governance bodies who may be formulating recommendations of university-wide concern.
3. It is the faculty's responsibility to organize itself effectively to carry out its governance responsibilities in an efficient manner. For academic issues, the RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) Academic Senate (hereinafter the "Senate") is the forum for the discussion and determination of faculty recommendations. It is intended that, in normal circumstances, matters will come before the Senate for discussion and recommendation after scrutiny by the relevant committees.
4. The Senate is primarily a forum for the members of the RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) academic staff, i.e., the faculty. However, the interests of students and administration shall be considered in the deliberations of the Senate through the participation of non-voting, ex-officio members representing these stakeholders. The Senate is committed to ensuring the academic integrity of the institution and enhancing the role of the faculty in academic and professional matters.

### **Article II Faculty**

1. The Faculty consists of full-time faculty and adjunct faculty.
2. All members of the Faculty are entitled to full freedom in their teaching, studies, creative activities, and research, and in the publication of the results of their research.

Likewise, they are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subjects and material relating to them. It is expected that the aforementioned teaching will be aimed toward achieving the educational objectives agreed upon by the faculty, administration, and the board of trustees.

3. The Faculty are aware that the public may judge their profession and the university by their statements. They shall, therefore, strive to be accurate and to exhibit appropriate professional conduct. They shall respect the views, opinions, and sensibilities of others, give appropriate professional consideration to the body of belief held by their audience, and clearly indicate when they are not speaking on behalf of the institution.

4. Faculty is entitled to academic due process. Academic due process means that all faculty evaluations shall be carried out according to the norms, criteria, and standards expressed in university policies, and that their application shall be substantive at each stage of the evaluation process.

### **Article III**

#### **Responsibility of the Faculty**

1. The Faculty has primary responsibility to formulate and propose all educational policies subject to final approval by the President and where appropriate by the Board of Trustees. The Faculty must identify issues of academic concern, discuss and formulate recommendations, and recommend approval for implementation. Academic issues include such matters as the establishment or dissolution of all degree programs; faculty hiring, retention, promotion, tenure, development, and dismissal; curriculum; admission standards; scholastic standards; examination and testing programs; the award of honors; the approval of candidates for earned degrees; and the establishment or dissolution of all colleges, departments, or independent centers or institutes.

2. In addition, the Faculty has a responsibility to advise and make recommendations to the appropriate persons or bodies concerning other policies and decisions affecting university development and welfare. The Faculty's advice and recommendations in such matters are offered to the President. The subjects of the advice and recommendations include, for example, the appointment, retention, promotion, and tenure of individual faculty; the appointment of administrative and academic officers; faculty personnel policies; student responsibilities and discipline; the academic calendar; the setting of fund-raising priorities; the formulation of priorities for and review of the annual operating budget of the university; the development and expansion of the campus; and the expression of university views on matters of public concern.

## **Article IV**

### **The Senate**

1. The Senate shall be the representative body of the Faculty. It is a collegiate body where all Faculty members have equal status and voting rights.
2. The Senate is empowered to formulate policies, regulations, decisions, and other proposals, such as advice and recommendations in areas of academic policy as set out in Article III of this Charter. The proposals of the Senate are submitted to the President for further action.
3. The Senate shall act upon other resolutions, recommendations, or proposals submitted by the Faculty pertaining to the academic governance or the general welfare of the university.
4. The Senate works in tandem with the President and the Dean of Faculty to develop the policies and procedures, which govern the academic affairs of the institution.
5. The Senate may enact and amend its own bylaws.
6. The Senate shall be composed as follows:
  - (a) President of the institution (ex-officio, non-voting).
  - (b) Dean of Faculty (ex-officio, non-voting).
  - (c) Chief Administrative Officer (ex-officio, non-voting)
  - (d) President of Student Government (ex-officio, non-voting).
  - (e) All full-time faculty members (ex officio)
  - (f) Two adjunct faculty members (elected)
7. Upon request by the Senate, other members of the RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) community shall advise on specific issues relevant for the Senate within its purview.

## **Article V**

### **Membership in the Senate**

1. All full-time Faculty members are ex officio members of the Senate. They are required to attend Senate meetings and, commensurate with their teaching and administrative responsibilities, actively participate in Senate committees and proceedings.
2. Two adjunct Faculty members shall be elected to the Senate from among the adjunct Faculty.

3. Elections to the Senate for adjunct Faculty and the election of the Senate Chair are conducted by secret ballot on the first full Faculty meeting of the fall term. There will be two voting rounds. In the first round, adjunct Faculty will elect two members of the Senate. In the second round, all eligible Senate members will elect the Senate Chair.
4. For the first round, the Dean of Faculty will submit a list of eligible adjunct Faculty candidates to the Senate. Members of the Senate representing adjunct Faculty are elected to a one-year term, which begins on the date of their election and ends on the day of the election of the new Senate. They may be re-elected for one additional consecutive year. Senators representing adjunct Faculty elected for two consecutive years are again eligible to serve in the Senate twelve months after the expiration of their final term in office.
5. Adjunct Faculty will vote for the candidates on the list of eligible adjunct Faculty candidates with each adjunct Faculty having one vote. The top two (2) candidates with the highest scores will be elected automatically as Senate members from the group of adjunct Faculty members. Ballots will be counted in the presence of the President, the Dean of Faculty, and the Presiding Chair of the Senate.
6. In the second round, i.e., the election of the Senate Chair, all full-time Faculty and the elected adjunct Faculty are eligible to vote for the Senate Chair.
7. The Senate Chair will be elected from among the full-time Faculty. Faculty members who opt not to participate in electoral roles will be removed from the list by the Dean of Faculty. Faculty may be excluded from being elected as Senate Chair, because of additional teaching or administrative responsibilities, which may prevent the Faculty member from effectively discharging the responsibilities of the Senate Chair.
8. The Senate Chair is elected for a one-year term with the possibility of being re-elected for one consecutive year. A Senate Chair elected for two consecutive years is again eligible to serve as Senate Chair twelve months after the expiration of the final term in office as Senate Chair.
9. Full-time Faculty and elected adjunct Faculty will vote for the Senate Chair based on the list of eligible full-time Faculty with each of them having one vote. The candidate with the highest score will automatically be elected as Senate Chair. Ballots will be counted in the presence of the President, the Dean of Faculty, and the Presiding Chair of the Senate. After certification of the results by the President and the Dean of Faculty, the results will be published by the end of the business day on election day.
10. The candidate with the second highest score will automatically serve as acting Senate Chair if the elected Senate Chair is unable to discharge the functions of Senate Chair.

11. Full-time Faculty, who are under disciplinary action, will not serve in the Senate or be considered in calculating the quorum. Adjunct Faculty members who are under disciplinary action are not eligible Senate candidates.

12. Full-time Faculty Senators who are absent without valid reasons for more than three meetings in any calendar year shall be in violation of contractual terms and conditions and will be referred to the Dean of Faculty. Adjunct Faculty representatives who are absent without valid reasons for more than three meetings will be replaced with the next most voted candidate from the list and shall be referred to the Dean of Faculty. This shall be without prejudice to any disciplinary action which may be initiated against them in accordance with RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) regulations.

13. Full-time Faculty members must be employed at RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) for at least one (1) academic year to be considered eligible to serve as Senate Chair. Adjunct Faculty must be employed at RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) for at least one (1) academic year to be eligible to serve as adjunct Faculty representative in the Senate.

14. The Dean of Faculty and Heads of Departments are not eligible to serve as Senate Chairs.

## **Article VI**

### **Procedures and Actions of the Senate**

1. The Chair of the Senate is the presiding officer. The Chair is responsible for conducting the meetings in a collegial and responsible manner and for presenting the conclusions of the Senate to the President, the Dean of Faculty, the Faculty, and the administration. The Senate Chair shall be assisted by the member of the administration responsible for faculty management.

2. The President and the Dean of Faculty may address the Senate at the beginning of each session. It is the President's responsibility to present all business concerning the health and welfare of the institute to the Senate. Similarly, the Dean of Faculty has the responsibility of presenting all business concerning the health and welfare of the academic programs and academic initiatives to the Senate.

3. The Senate may decide if it has a quorum. A quorum is established if the majority of the Senators are present. An action of the Senate is approved by majority vote of the members present and voting unless otherwise determined by the present Charter.

4. All Senate meetings are open to Faculty who are not a member of the Senate, members of the administration, students, and interested members of the public. They are not allowed to speak or vote. The Senate Chair will announce this rule at the opening of every meeting. Sessions may be held in camera when emergency situations exist or when

sensitive personnel issues are discussed. In the latter case, attendees who are not Senate members may be asked to withdraw.

5. The Senate will meet once a month. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair of the Senate if deemed necessary. The regular monthly meeting date will be selected at the beginning of each Senate term and placed on the RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) Academic Calendar.

6. The Senate Chair shall ensure that agendas and minutes of Senate meetings are prepared and distributed to all members of the Senate and made available to the university community.

7. The Senate Chair shall be recalled from office by a a super majority (2/3) vote of the Senate members if he/she fails to discharge his/her duties as set out in the present Charter. A new Senate Chair shall be elected immediately in accordance with the provisions of this Article. The term of office of the newly elected Senate Chair shall not exceed the term of office of the Senate Chair recalled from office.

## **Article VII Committees**

The Senate may form committees to address specific issues within the Senate's purview. Each committee is approved by the Senate by a super majority of 2/3 votes. A committee must have at least two full-time faculty members. Any member of the faculty is eligible to serve on a committee. Staff and other members of the RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) community may be appointed to committees subject to approval by the President. Committees shall establish their rules of procedure following best RIT practices.

## **Article VIII Reporting**

The Senate shall report all actions in a timely manner to members of the RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) community. All approved policies will be posted on the RIT Kosovo (A.U.K) webpage.

## **Article IX Amendments to the Charter**

Amendments to the present Charter may be proposed by a majority vote of the Senate members present and voting and shall become effective upon approval by a super majority (2/3) vote of the Senate members.

**Article X**  
**Entry into Force**

This Charter was accepted by the Senate on February 6, 2024, and shall enter into effect on the same day.