

Algoma University Senate By-laws [10 JAN 2025]

Preamble

No policies, procedures, or practices external to the Algoma University Senate, except those legislated or mandated by the provincial or federal governments, shall supersede the right of the Senate to self-govern. Self-governance means the right of the Senate and its committees to set their own policies, practices, and procedures unencumbered by directives, policies, practices, or procedures external to the Algoma University Senate.

1. Chapter 1 – Powers of Senate

1.1 Duties and Powers of the Senate

The work of the University Senate will be informed and guided by the Algoma University's Special Mission and its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Charter.

The Senate of Algoma University, established in 2008 by the Legislature of the Province of Ontario by virtue of the The Algoma University Act, 2008, C-13, has the duties, subject to the approval of the board with respect to the expenditure of funds, the power to determine and regulate the educational policy of the University and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, has the power,

- a. To make recommendations to the Board with respect to the establishment, change or termination of programs and courses of study, schools, faculties, divisions and departments;
- b. To advise the President of the University on the staffing needs of the academic departments;
- c. To appoint the faculty deans and the divisional or departmental Chairs as may be required from time to time;
- d. To determine the curricula of all programs and courses of study, the standards of admission to the University and continued registration therein, and the qualifications for degrees, diplomas, and certificates of the University;
- e. To conduct examinations, appoint examiners, and decide all matters relating thereto;
- f. To hear and determine appeals from the decisions of the faculty councils on examinations and on applications for admission;
- g. To award fellowships, scholarships, bursaries, medals, prizes, and other marks of academic achievements;
- h. To authorize the Chancellor, the vice-chancellor or such other person as may be determined by the Senate, to confer degrees, honorary degrees, diplomas, and certificates on behalf of the University in accordance with section 6 of the Algoma University Act;
- i. To create councils and committees to exercise its powers;
- j. To make by-laws for the conduct of its affairs, including by-laws respecting the conduct of the election of its members;

2. Chapter 2 – Definitions

2.1 General Definitions

In these By-laws:

- a. “The Algoma University Act, 2008” means The Algoma University Act, 2008, S.O. 2008, C-13 introduced in the Legislature of the Province of Ontario as Bill 80 titled “An Act to establish Algoma University and to dissolve Algoma University College”;
- b. “University” means Algoma University;
- c. “Board” means the Board of Governors of Algoma University;
- d. “Senate” means the Senate of Algoma University;
- e. “Department” means a department of an academic Faculty of the University recognized by the Senate and representing one or more cognate disciplines of knowledge taught at the University;
- f. “School” means a school of the University recognized by the Senate and representing a coherent group of cognate programs;
- g. “Faculty” means an academic Faculty of the University recognized by the Senate and representing a coherent group of cognate departments and schools;
- h. “Senator” means a voting member of the Senate;
- i. “President” means the President of Algoma University;
- j. “VPAR” means the Vice President, Academic and Research of the University
- k. “Dean” means the Dean of an Academic Faculty of the University;
- l. “Chair” means a presiding officer, for example Chair of Senate, committee Chair, Faculty Chair, department Chair;
- m. “Speaker” means the Speaker of Senate, a senator elected by Senate to conduct the meetings of Senate;
- n. “Deputy Speaker” means the Deputy Speaker of Senate, a senator elected by Senate to fulfill the responsibilities of the Speaker, whenever the Speaker is unable or unavailable to conduct the meets of Senate;
- o. “Secretary” means the Secretary of Senate, who shall be the University Secretary or designate, is responsible for preparing and distributing Senate agenda and minutes and for maintaining the official records of Senate in the manner described in these By- laws;
- p. “University Librarian” means the academic administrator of the library of the University;
- q. “Teaching Staff” means professors, associate professors, assistant professors, lecturers, associates, instructors, tutors and all others employed to do the work of teaching or giving instruction and includes persons employed to do research at the University;
 - i. “Full-Time Teaching Staff” means the full-time faculty and full-time librarians (“Teaching Staff”) covered under the Full-Time Faculty Collective Agreement;
 - ii. “Part-Time Teaching Staff” means the members of the Teaching staff who are engaged on sessional contracts covered under the Part-Time Faculty Collective Agreement;

- r. "Student" means a full-time or part-time student of the University in good academic standing, as determined by the University;
- s. "AUSU Executive" means the elected student members of the Algoma University Students Union Executive;
- t. "SASA Executive" means the elected student members of the Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students Association Executive;
- u. "Alumni Board" means the Board of Directors of the Algoma University Alumni Council;
- v. "APC" means the Anishinaabe Peoples Council of the University;
- w. "Quorum" means the minimum number of voting members in attendance in order for a meeting to commence or continue;
- x. "Day" means operating business day;
- y. Where the singular is used, it shall be considered that plural has also been used if the context so requires;
- z. Where the plural is used, it shall be considered that singular has also been used if the context so requires.

2.2 Definitions Related to Senate Committees and Subcommittees

- a. In defining the membership of Senate committees or subcommittees in these By- Laws; "Teaching staff senator" means a member of the Full-Time Teaching Staff who is a voting member of the Senate.
- b. "Teaching staff non-senator" means a member of the Full-Time Teaching Staff who is not a voting member of the Senate;
- c. "Student senator" means a student who is a voting member of Senate;
- d. "Representative" means a representative (student, staff, Board, Alumni Advisory Board, etc.) who may or may not also be a voting member of the Senate.

2.3 Senate Year

The Senate year shall commence on July 1st of any given year and end on June 30th of the following year.

2.4 Objects

The objects of Algoma University are the pursuit of learning through scholarship, teaching and research, within a spirit of free enquiry and expression.

2.5 Special Mission

It is the special mission of Algoma University to:

- a. Be a teaching-oriented university that provides programs in liberal arts and science and professional programs, primarily at the undergraduate level, with a particular focus on the needs of Northern Ontario; and
- b. Cultivate cross-cultural learning between aboriginal communities and other communities, in keeping with the history of Algoma University and its geographic site.

3. Chapter 3 – Senate Membership and Terms of Office

3.1 General Membership Provisions

- a. The voting membership of Senate shall include, in numbers as specified below:
 - i. Senators by virtue of their office;
 - ii. Student senators;
 - iii. Teaching staff senators; and
 - iv. Non-teaching staff senators
- b. As stipulated in The Algoma University Act, 2008, S.O. 2008, C-13, the number of teaching staff senators at any given year shall be at least twice the total number of all other members of the senate.
- c. In order that the membership of the Senate is as broadly representative of the University's academic community as possible, the various constituencies shall be expected to consider, and strive to reflect, gender balance and the diversity of academic and cultural traditions when choosing or selecting their Senate representatives.
- d. Membership in the Senate cannot be delegated, except according to specific provisions in these by-laws.
- e. *Effective July 1, 2023, the number of teaching staff from each of the four Faculties will be calculated based on the number of active full-time teaching staff as of January 1 of the current Senate year for the subsequent Senate year beginning July 1st. The percentage will include FT faculty that are Contract Limited Term Appointments [CLTA] but exclude those that are on sabbatical during the reporting period.*

3.2 Senators by Virtue of Office

- a. The following persons who are members by virtue of their office:
 - i. The President and Vice-Chancellor of the University;
 - ii. The Vice-President, Academic and Research;
 - iii. The Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, and the Faculty of Cross-Cultural Studies;
 - iv. The Dean of the Faculty of Science;
 - v. The Dean of the Faculty of the School of Business and Economics;
 - vi. The Dean of the Faculty of Computer Science and Technology
 - vii. The University Registrar;
 - viii. The University Librarian;
 - ix. The President of Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig, or their designate;
 - x. The Chairs of each of the five [5] Faculties, who are members of the Full-time Teaching Staff; and
 - xi. The Chairs of each of the fourteen [16] academic departments, who are members of the Full-time Teaching Staff

3.3 Student Senators

- a. The following shall be voting members of the Senate:
 - i. Three [3] students, elected from among AUSU members; and
 - ii. One [1] student elected from among SASA members.

3.4 Teaching staff senators

- a. The following shall be voting members of Senate:
 - i. Such number of persons on the Teaching Staff, elected by the Teaching staff, represented by the Teaching Staff union, from among themselves, as set out in Senate by-laws, which number shall be in at least twice the total number of all other voting members of the Senate in all other categories
 - ii. There shall be one (1) Full-Time Teaching Staff senator, represented by the Teaching Staff union from each Department of the University recognized by the Senate of the University, who shall be the Department Chair or Director or their designate.
 - iii. Each Faculty shall have one (1) Part-Time Teaching Staff elected from and by the Part-Time Teaching Staff represented by the Teaching Staff union.
 - iv. As of July 1, 2024, the Faculties, Departments, and Schools recognized by the Senate of the University are:
 1. Faculty of Cross-Cultural Studies
 - a. Department of Community, Economic and Social Development
 - b. Department of Geography, Geology and Land Stewardship
 - c. Department of Sociology
 2. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
 - a. Department of English and History
 - b. Department of Law and Politics
 - c. Department of Modern Languages
 - d. Department of Music and Visual Art
 - e. School of Social Work
 3. Faculty of Business and Economics
 - a. Department of Applied Business and Executive Education
 - b. Department of Business Administration
 - c. Department of Finance, Economics and Decision Sciences
 4. Faculty of Science
 - a. Department of Biology
 - b. Department of Psychology
 5. Faculty of Computer Science and Technology
 - a. Department of Computer Science and Mathematics
 - b. Department of Information Technology and Professional Studies

3.5 Non-Teaching staff senators

- a. The following shall be voting members of Senate
 - i. One person, other than the President and Vice-Chancellor of the University, appointed by the Board from among the Board members
 - ii. One person from the Anishinaabe Peoples Council ["APC"], appointed by the APC from among their members.
 - iii. One member of the Algoma University Support Staff ["AUSS"], or in lieu an alternate, elected by the members of AUSS;

3.6 Terms of Office

- a. Senators by virtue of office shall serve for as long as they remain in office.
 - i. Serving as Faculty Chair shall not count against an individual's eligibility to serve as Teaching Staff Senators. I.e., terms served as Faculty Chairs do not count as Teaching staff senator terms as specified 3.6 [iv] or in Sections 20 and 22 of The Algoma University Act, 2008, S.O. 2008, C-13.
 - ii. For student senators, the normal term of office shall be one [1] year renewable for one consecutive term of one [1] year.
 - iii. For other non-Teaching Staff senators, the term of office shall be at the discretion of the respective constituencies, but shall not exceed a term of three [3] years, renewable for one consecutive term of three [3] years.
 - iv. For Teaching Staff Senators the normal term of office shall be three (3) years, renewable for one consecutive term of three (3) years.
 - v. For Part-Time Teaching Staff Senators, the normal term of office shall be one [1] year, renewable for one consecutive term of one [1] year.

Loss of Eligibility to Serve as Senators

- vi. If, during his or her term of office, a member of Senate elected or appointed under Chapter 2 ceases to be eligible for election or appointment to the Senate by virtue of a change in position or employment, he or she thereby ceases to be a member of Senate.

Exceptions, Student Graduation

- vii. If a student member of the Senate graduates during her or her term of office, they may continue to sit as a member of the Senate until the next anniversary of the day of his or her re-election.

Renewal

- viii. A member of the Senate is eligible for re-election or reappointment.

Limitation

- ix. A person elected or appointed to the Senate may not be a member for more than two consecutive terms, but is eligible for reappointment or re-election after one year's absence from Senate.

Filling Vacancies

- x. A vacancy on the Senate occurs if,
 - a. A member resigns or ceases to be eligible for appointment or election to the Senate before the end of his or her term;
 - b. A member is incapable to continue to act as a member and the Senate by resolution declares the membership to be vacated; or
 - c. A member is absent from three meetings of the Senate with appropriate reasons.
- xi. If a vacancy occurs in the Senate, prior to the three (3) months before the completion of the term, the Senate shall fill the vacancy according to the procedures provided in the By-laws of the Senate. (i.e. through a request to the Senate Executive for appointment of Senate through the respective Faculty);
 - a. Determine, in accordance with its By-laws, whether or not to fill the vacancy; and
 - b. If the vacancy is to be filled, fill the vacancy within the time period, and according to the procedures, provided in the By-laws of the Senate.

Attendance

- xii. Within the Senate membership year (July 1-June 30), if a member of the Senate, who has not been granted a leave of absence, fails to attend three [3] regular meetings of the Senate, the Senate may by resolution declare such membership vacant. Members of the Senate have an obligation to represent their constituents by attending meetings of the Senate; therefore, regular attendance is a requirement.
 - a. The Secretary of Senate shall remind Senators of the attendance requirement prior to the beginning of the regular meetings of the Senate year (typically early September);
 - b. The responsibility of informing the Senator will be that of the Secretary of Senate.

Note: Senators who find they have an occasional scheduling conflict with Senate meetings such as teaching/laboratory or any other University-related commitment should appeal to the Secretary of Senate for attendance relief from the Senate. Such absences should be communicated in advance to the Secretary of Senate.

3.7 Leaves of Absence

- a. Teaching Staff members who are on authorized leaves of any kind shall not be obligated to serve on the Senate while on leave.
- b. Rejoining the Senate after a leave of one or more years shall make the member re-eligible to serve a first Senate term.

Senate Composition [effective July 1, 2024]:

49 Total Members:

1. Faculty Chairs [5]
2. Department Chairs [16]
3. Full-time faculty members [at-large] [6]
4. Part-time teaching staff [5]
5. Non-teaching staff members [7]
6. Members by virtue of office [9]

4. Chapter 4 – Officers of Senate and Duties

Officers of Senate shall be composed of the following:

- 4.1 The Speaker and Deputy Speaker;
- 4.2 The Secretary of Senate, who shall be the University Secretary or designate (non-voting member);
- 4.3 The Speaker shall be responsible for conducting all meetings of the Senate in accordance with the By-laws of the Senate. The Speaker shall ensure that all meetings follow the basic rules of Robert's Rules of Order. In the absence of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker shall conduct the meeting.
- 4.4 The Secretary or, in the absence of the Secretary, the Secretary's designate, shall be responsible for recording the minutes of each meeting of the Senate, and for such other duties as are stated in the By-laws.

5. Chapter 5 – Elections and Term of Office

- 5.1 Elections and appointments to the Senate and its committees shall be made on or before the June Senate meeting of each year. The Speaker and Deputy Speaker shall be elected annually at June's Senate meeting from among the academic staff members of Senate;
- 5.2 Where a vacancy occurs due to resignation or other reason, the appropriate Faculty may conduct an election to fill the vacancy for the period until
- 5.3 Notwithstanding Ch. 5.1 and 5.2, Part-Time Teaching Staff representatives to the Senate shall be elected on or before the June Senate meeting of each year to serve a one-year term during the next Senate year.
- 5.4 Student members on committees of the Senate shall be nominated by student senators meeting in caucus.
- 5.5 There shall be Senate Representation to the Board, elected by the Senate from academic staff, in such numbers as prescribed by the By-laws of the Board. The representatives shall endeavor at all times to inform the Board of the majority opinion of the Senate in any board decisions pertaining to Senate matters. The representative shall be responsible for ensuring that Senate is informed full of:
 - a. The outcome of all Senate recommendations conveyed to the Board; and
 - b. Any other Board matters which affect Senate, subject to the Board's rules of confidentiality

The representatives shall have such other responsibilities as may be suggested to them from time to time by the Senate. The term of office shall be three years, once renewable.

6. Chapter 6 – Meetings

- 6.1 The Senate year is defined as beginning July 1.
- 6.2 Unless decided otherwise by the Senate or by the Senate Executive Committee, meetings of the Senate shall be held on the first Friday of each month except in January and September when it shall be held on the second Friday depending on the calendar year. No regular meetings shall be held in July and August. Notice of the dates of these meetings shall be given to Senators through electronic communication and shall be included in the academic calendar, where they are available to the public.
- 6.3 The Senate may hold in camera meetings when items of a personal and confidential nature are being discussed.
- 6.4 Unless otherwise decided by the Senate or Senate Executive Committee, regular meetings of the Senate shall begin at 1:00pm, and if, after the lapse of a quarter of an hour, there is not a quorum present, the regular meeting shall be deemed lost. Meetings of the Senate shall terminate at 3:00pm unless extended by a motion to continue. Such a motion requires a two-thirds majority.
- 6.5 All meetings of the Senate shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, unless otherwise determined by the Senate by two-thirds majority.
- 6.6 At the discretion of the Senate Executive Committee, a regular meeting of the Algoma University Senate may be canceled if:
 - a. The volume of business submitted for inclusion in the agenda is insufficient to warrant holding a meeting; and
 - b. There is no urgent or time-sensitive business requiring the disposition prior to the next regular meeting of the Senate

Special Meetings

- 6.7 A special meeting of the Senate, on the request in writing of not fewer than five [5] members, three [3] of whom must be Teaching Staff, shall be called by the Speaker, or Deputy Speaker, in the Speaker's absence, with forty-eight [48] hours notice [excluding statutory holidays and weekends] to be given to each member of Senate. Such a meeting shall consider only business which is specified in the notice of meeting, except that new business may be introduced by the unanimous consent of the members present.

Quorum

- 6.8 The quorum of the Senate shall be fifty (50) percent plus one of voting members of Senate, except at the May and June meetings and at any special meetings which may be called in July and August when quorum shall be one- third plus one.
- 6.9 To be valid and effective, all motions must be adopted at a meeting of the Senate by a simple majority of the members present unless otherwise specified in the By-laws.
- 6.10 The Secretary shall provide each member of the Senate with an agenda not fewer than seventy-two (72) hours prior to each meeting.
- 6.11 The agenda for each regular meeting shall be prepared by the Senate Executive Committee. Senators requesting that business be considered by the Senate shall submit all items and supporting documentation proposed for the inclusion in the agenda to the Secretary of Senate, fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the regularly scheduled meeting of Senate (by noon two Thursdays prior to

the Senate meeting).

6.12 Proceedings of all meetings of the Senate shall be recorded. A copy of the minutes of every meeting of the Senate shall be circulated with the agenda of the next meeting. At this meeting, the minutes shall be adopted after the correction and amendment, if necessary.

6.13 No motion introducing matters other than that listed in the agenda shall be taken into consideration at any regular meeting of the Senate except when accepted for consideration by a two-thirds majority of the members present.

Preserving Order

6.14 The Speaker of Senate:

- a. Maintains a neutral position during the Senate proceedings;
- b. Preserves order and decorum at all meetings of Senate;
- c. Ensures that Senators are given time to respond to the questions;
- d. May occasionally invite non-Senators to respond to the question or contribute to the debate.

Every member may respond a second time on the same question unless other members who have not already spoken wish to do so.

Any person who, in the opinion of the Speaker, engages in conduct unbecoming a member of the Senate shall withdraw from the meeting at the request of the Speaker. In the event that such a person refuses to withdraw, the Speaker may declare a short recess, or adjourn the Senate, and may declare that the continuation of such recessed or adjourned meeting be open only to members and official observers.

Voting

6.15 No member of the Senate may appoint or send a proxy to act or vote in the Senate.

Electronic Voting

6.16 In exceptional circumstances where time is of the essence and there is no reasonable possibility of convening a meeting, electronic voting is permissible. The use of electronic voting is to be determined by the Senate Executive Committee, or when this is not possible, the Speaker of Senate.

In circumstances where electronic voting is necessary, the wording of the motion and any background material shall be circulated to the Senate prior to the date scheduled for the vote. Normally, a period of no less than two working days will be provided for Senators to electronically post comments and/or questions about the motion, with this electronic discussion accessible to all Senators.

Immediately following this period, Senators will be asked to vote on the motion and their votes must be recorded with the Secretary of Senate on or before a specific date and time. Voting will be on the motion as presented. The result of the electronic vote shall be transmitted to the Senate and the number of votes shall be reported in the minutes. Senators may request that their own vote be reported in the minutes.

Note that in cases where secret ballots are necessary, the Senate Executive will consult with the Information Technology department to ensure the anonymity of the responses.

Meeting in Camera

When the Senate declares a meeting or part of a meeting in camera, reasons for so declaring will be clearly stated by the Speaker of the Senate prior to moving in camera. Where the Senate has

resolved to move in camera, the room shall be cleared except for all members of the Senate and individuals requested by the Speaker to stay for purposes of assisting the Senate with its deliberations.

Only members entitled to be present in camera meetings may be informed of the proceedings that transpire. Accordingly, items of business dealt with by the Senate in camera shall appear as appendices to the record and shall be recorded in a spate of minutes, available only to members of the Senate.

If any motions are passed in camera, upon returning to the open meeting, the Speaker will ask Senators for a motion to record the approval of those in camera motions in a manner that does not release confidential information.

7. Chapter 7 – Amendment of By-laws

7.1 By-laws of the Senate shall be adopted or amended by a two-thirds majority vote of all voting members at a regular meeting of Senate upon notice of motion duly made at a regular meeting of Senate.

8. Chapter 8 – Committees of Senate

8.1 There shall be the following standing committees of Senate:

- a. Academic Planning and Priorities Committee;
- b. Academic Regulations and Petitions Committee;
- c. Appeals and Academic Standards Committee;
- d. Board – Senate Liaison Committee;
- e. Curriculum Committee;
- f. Decanal Review/Search Committee;
- g. Senate Governance Committee
- h. I-EDI Committee
- i. Quality Assurance Committee;
- j. Research Advisory Committee;
- k. Senate Executive Committee;
- l. Teaching & Learning and Technical Support Committee;

8.2 The quorum for each committee shall be one-half of the voting membership of that committee.

8.3 The President and Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President, Academic and Research shall be ex-officio members of every committee of the Senate, unless otherwise stated in the By-laws.

8.4 Vacancies occurring in any committee of the Senate shall be those of the Senate.

8.5 The procedures of all committees of the Senate shall be those of the Senate except for 6.10 and 6.11. At their first meeting of the Senate year while reviewing their terms of reference, each committee of the Senate shall determine deadlines for the submission of items and supporting documentation for inclusion in their agendas, the specific support role they require from the Secretariat, and who will prepare their agendas and minutes. Unless decided otherwise by the committee, agendas shall be shared seventy-two (72) hours prior to each meeting.

8.6 Senate committees shall have the power to appoint advisors or consultants or to request their

assistance, except that such persons shall not be members nor have any of the privileges of members.

8.7 Committees shall report in all instances directly to the Senate except that they may report to other Senate committees at their request. In this latter case, the report must be conveyed to the Senate as well.

8.8 All Senate committees shall serve for a one-year term commencing July 1, with the exception of Ad Hoc and Special Committees (eg. Decanal Review/Search Committee), the Quality Assurance Committee, and the Research Advisory Committee whose terms shall be set by the Senate in such Committee's Terms of Reference.

8.9 The Senate may, from time to time, strike ad hoc committees to deal with matters not appropriately or adequately served by the standing committees.

9. Chapter 9 – Chairs of Senate Committees

9.1 When membership to the Senate Committee has been identified and approved, the committee member whose last name is first in alphabetical order shall be responsible for scheduling the first meeting of the committee in the new Senate year. The first order of business for Senate Committees is to elect a Chair.

In all cases, the Committee Chair must be a member of the Senate.

The Committee Chair is responsible:

- a. To ensure that the mandate of the committee is followed and that the business conducted in an orderly and productive manner through regular meetings;
- b. To report the business of the committee to Senate, for example, a report at Senate containing recommendations in the form of a motion;
- c. To provide the committee's annual report, typically, at the June meeting of the Senate.

* revised October 4, 2024

'As per the motion that was approved by the University Senate [03-May-24], the Senate has extended the sunset clause (until June 30, 2025) on proportional representation of the Algoma University Senate.