

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
SCHOOL OF DENTAL MEDICINE SENATE

PREAMBLE

The Senate is the voice of the faculty and a voice for students in student affairs, pre-doctoral dental education, postdoctoral clinical education, continuing education, research, the academic environment, and similar matters. Through active participation in its Senate, the faculty and students of the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine (SDM) ensure the vigor of the School's programs in education, research and patient care. To those ends, the Senate, which was previously called the SDM Council, has been reconfigured, and its Constitution and Bylaws, which govern the election, structure and function of this body, have been rewritten.

Much of the Senate's work will be carried out by its standing Councils and their respective working committees. Service on these Councils and committees affords faculty and students with opportunities to participate directly in setting the direction of the SDM. The Senate will communicate fully and regularly with the faculty and students through open Senate meetings, prompt distribution of their minutes, reports of activities of Senate Councils and committees, and active engagement of Senators with their constituents. The Senate will maintain a dialogue with the administration and Department Heads to facilitate joint initiatives and to allow the faculty and students to deal rapidly and proactively with issues of importance.

Because Senators are elected by and represent their Departments and student bodies, service on the Senate is both an honor and a responsibility to be taken seriously. Attendance by Senators at Senate meetings ensures the energetic function of the body; thus, Senators who fail to attend meetings will be replaced. The faculty and the students of the School of Dental Medicine rely on their elected Senators to be their voices in School governance.

CONSTITUTION

Article 1 – Name

School of Dental Medicine Senate

Article 2 – Authority and Purpose

The faculty¹ of the School of Dental Medicine (SDM) delegates to the SDM Senate (the Senate) responsibility for establishing faculty policies on academic matters including student affairs, predoctoral dental education, postdoctoral clinical education, and continuing education and for commenting and providing advice on the academic environment and research. The Senate also reserves the right to review and comment on issues pertaining to the School of Dental Medicine, which are of interest.

The policies established by the Senate shall not contradict those established by the Board of Directors or the Board of Trustees, nor shall the actions of the Senate abridge the responsibilities assigned to administrative officers of the University by the Board of Trustees. Such administrative responsibilities include the authority to call meetings of the faculty, to preside at faculty meetings, and to serve, or to have their representatives serve, as non-voting members of all standing committees.

Article 3 – Membership

The Senate shall consist of fifteen elected Senators from the full- and part-time SDM clinical faculty, seven elected Senators from the full-time basic science faculty, one elected Senator from the predoctoral dental student body, and one elected Senator from the postdoctoral dental student body.

Each of the three Clinical Science Departments in the SDM shall be represented by five Senators; no division shall have more than two Senators. The Basic Science Departments shall be represented by a total of seven Senators. Each Basic Science Department shall have one Senator.

Each Clinical Science Department will elect an alternate Senator who will be responsible for attending Senate meetings in the absence of the regular Senator. The alternate will have voting privileges when substituting for the regular Senator, but only if their vote does not bring the voting rights of a division to more than two votes. The basic science faculty shall elect one alternate Senator. The Dean, Associate Deans, Assistant Deans and Clinical Department Heads of the SDM, and the Executive Vice President for Health Affairs, or their designees, shall be non-voting members of the Senate. The aforementioned SDM officers as well as Department Heads are not eligible for voting membership in the Senate.

Article 4 – Officers and Responsibilities

The officers of the Senate shall be the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson. The Chairperson shall preside over Senate meetings and over meetings of the Steering Committee of the Senate. The Chairperson shall call meetings of the Senate and of the Steering Committee on a regular basis. The Chairperson may call meetings of the SDM faculty. The Chairperson shall be responsible for conducting the elections of members of the Steering Committee and of the Vice-

¹ Faculty members, for the purpose of this document, are defined as those with at least a 50% appointment (paid halftime or more by the University).

Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall record minutes, shall communicate with the Senate webmaster, and shall preside at Senate meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

Article 5 – Steering Committee

The Senate shall be guided by a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall meet monthly or more frequently if necessary. The Steering Committee shall be responsible for the Senate agenda and for the prior review of matters brought to the Senate for action. The Steering Committee may appoint *ad hoc* committees as necessary.

Article 6 – Standing Councils and *ad hoc* Committees of the Senate

Standing Councils and *ad hoc* committees of the Senate shall possess suitable representation and expertise to deal with matters within Senate purview. The three standing Councils of the Senate shall be the Council on Education, the Council on Research, and the Council on the Academic Environment. The Council on Education and the Council on Research will be joint Councils, with voting participation of faculty, students, department heads and/or administration (see Council descriptions). There shall be student representation on the Council on Education, and there may be student representation on the Council on Research. These student representatives shall be selected from the appropriate constituencies of predoctoral, resident, graduate, and combined degree students.

BYLAWS

Article 1 – Composition and Election of the Senate

1.1 For voting and election purposes, the SDM faculty consists of Clinical and Basic Science constituencies. The Clinical Science constituency shall comprise all faculty in the Departments of the SDM and their constituent divisions. The Basic Science constituency shall comprise all full-time faculty in the basic science departments of the School of Medicine. Any faculty member with a joint appointment in two or more departments shall, for voting and election purposes, be considered a member of the department in which the primary appointment is held.

1.2 The Clinical Science constituency shall have five Senators from each of the SDM's three clinical departments, with no more than two Senators from any one division. One of the five Senators from each Department shall be elected from the part-time faculty with at least a 50% appointment in that Department. Each Department shall elect a single alternate Senator. The Basic Science constituency shall have a total of 7 Senators, one each from the seven Basic Science departments. The Basic Science constituency shall elect one alternate Senator.

1.3 Election of the faculty Senators shall be by ballot of the faculty within the appropriate department. Each department will decide on the mechanism for electing their Senators, as well as their alternate.

1.4 All faculty Senators shall be elected for three-year terms, which start July 1 and end June 30. Approximately one-third of the Department Senators shall be elected each year.

1.5 One Senator representing the predoctoral dental student body shall be elected for a one-year term. Predoctoral dental students in the first, second and third year classes are eligible to vote and stand for election. The election shall be conducted by the Dean and shall employ a two-ballot system².

1.6 One Senator representing the postdoctoral dental student body³ shall be elected for a one-year term. Students with at least one year remaining in their program are eligible to vote and stand for election. The election shall be conducted by the Dean and shall employ a two-ballot system.

1.7 If the number of departments in the Clinical or Basic Science constituencies changes, departmental representation shall be adjusted (increased or decreased as necessary) so that the total number of Senators in that constituency remains the same.

1.8 Election of the Senators shall occur no later than May.

1.9 If a vacancy in the Senate occurs, it shall be filled for the period of the unexpired term by the alternate from the appropriate constituency, or by a special departmental election if the alternate is either unavailable or no longer eligible.

1.10 Alternate status shall terminate at the end of one year or when the alternate is called upon to fill the unexpired term of a Department Senator. Until called upon to serve, alternates shall not have a vote in the Senate.

1.11 An alternate Senator may attend Senate meetings in place of a Department Senator when the Department Senator is unable to attend. The alternate Senator will have voting privileges when serving as a substitute for the Department Senator.

1.12 Any Senator who has two successive unexcused absences⁴ or who attends less than fifty percent of Senate meetings in a year shall be dismissed by the Steering Committee.

1.13 All members of the Senate, including its officers and Council and committee members, shall serve until succeeded by newly elected members.

Article 2 – The Election and Duties of the Officers

2.1 The Senate shall elect a Chairperson to be its presiding officer and to chair the Steering Committee of the Senate (the Steering Committee). The Chairperson must be a member of one of the constituencies described in Article 1.1 of the Bylaws. In June, the Dean shall convene a special meeting of the new Senate, elected in May, to nominate and elect its Chairperson. If, at the June meeting, no candidate receives the votes of a majority of the entire Senate, a vote of the entire Senate shall be taken by a mail ballot listing the names of the two candidates with the highest numbers of votes. The Chairperson's term of office shall be two years, starting July 1 after the election. No Chairperson shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

² A nominating ballot is circulated to the eligible voting constituency. The names of six members of the constituency with the most votes are placed on a second ballot to stand for election after ascertaining the candidates' willingness to serve. The candidates with the most votes on the second ballot shall be elected.

³ Postdoctoral dental students include dental residents, postdoctoral students in clinical certificate programs, advanced degree programs or combined certificate/degree programs, but not postdoctoral research fellows.

⁴ An unexcused absence occurs when a Senator fails to notify the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson or Administrative Assistant when an absence is anticipated or could not be avoided.

2.2 Following the May election of Senators, the newly constituted Steering Committee (see Article 3.1) shall elect, from its membership, a Vice-Chairperson of the Senate to preside in the absence of the Chairperson and to record the minutes of Senate and Steering Committee meetings. Minutes of meetings shall be submitted to the appropriate body for approval by a vote of the majority of those in attendance. The Vice-Chairperson's term of office shall be one year, starting July 1 following election.

2.3 Upon their agreement to serve, each newly elected Senator will receive a package which will consist of the following documents: (1) a cover letter in which the specific duties, responsibilities and expectations of Senators are delineated; plus copies of (2) the SDM Senate Constitution and Bylaws; (3) the Guidelines of the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine; and (4) Robert's Rules of order.

Article 3 – The Election and Duties of the Steering Committee

3.1 The Steering Committee shall consist of six elected members, all of whom are voting members. Five of the six elected members shall be elected by and from the Senators. The sixth shall be one Clinical Department Head from the SDM, elected by the three Department Heads. The Dean of the SDM and the Chairperson of the Senate shall be non-voting members of the Steering Committee. The Chairperson of the Senate shall conduct the election of the Faculty members of the Steering Committee, following the May election of Senators. In the event of a tie vote for the final position, the names of those tied shall appear on a second ballot. Of the five elected faculty members of the Steering Committee, two members must be from the Basic Science constituency and three from the Clinical Science constituency. The Steering Committee members shall serve terms of one year, and no member shall serve more than three consecutive terms.

3.2 The Steering Committee, at any time, may appoint *ad hoc* committees to deal with issues of importance to the faculty and students. The Steering Committee shall submit the names of the Chairpersons and the members of any *ad hoc* Senate committees for approval by a majority vote of those in attendance at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Senate. The Steering Committee may appoint faculty or students with appropriate expertise to any *ad hoc* Senate committee.

3.3 The Steering Committee shall meet monthly, at a minimum, and set the agenda for Senate meetings.

3.4 The Steering Committee, when appropriate, may refer new business directly to a Senate Council or committee for review. The Steering Committee shall provide oversight for Senate Councils and committees through regularly scheduled or *ad hoc* meetings with the Council or committee Chairpersons.

3.5 The Steering Committee shall recommend and forward to the Senate for confirmation the names of SDM faculty members who will serve as Senate representatives on UCHC and University Institutional committees as required.

3.6 To provide continuity when the Senate Chairperson is replaced, the previous Senate Chairperson shall serve on the Steering Committee, without a vote, for one year.

Article Four – General Rules

4.1 Any member of the faculty or student bodies who wishes to submit an item of new business for the Senate's consideration shall submit it either to a Senator or to the Steering Committee for presentation at the next meeting of the Senate. New business shall be presented to the Senate for discussion, then shall be referred to the appropriate Council of Senate for review if

necessary, and finally shall be presented at the next meeting of the Senate for a vote. Alternatively, with the approval of two-thirds of the Senators present, new business may be voted on at the time of its presentation to the Senate.

4.2 Attendance by fifty percent of the duly elected Senators shall constitute a quorum for conducting Senate business.

4.3 A simple majority vote of the quorum of the Senators present and voting shall suffice for Senate business, except when stated otherwise in these Bylaws or when dictated, for procedural reasons, by Robert's Rules. In the absence of a quorum, votes on pressing business shall be conducted by a mail ballot.

4.4 Regular meetings of the Senate shall be convened monthly, with the exception of May, when no regular meeting is scheduled. Special meetings of the Senate may be called by the Steering Committee, by the Chairperson with the support of a majority vote of the Steering Committee, or by the President of the University, the Executive Vice-President for Health Affairs, the Dean of the SDM, or by a request to the Dean from one-third of the SDM faculty or one-third of either student constituency.

4.5 Senate meetings shall be open to faculty, predoctoral students, dental residents and graduate students, and to members of the Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees, as observers. The privilege of addressing the Senate may be extended to observers by a majority vote of the Senators present.

4.6 Any proposals approved by the Senate, which require administrative or departmental implementation, shall be sent to the Dean of the School of Dental Medicine and to other appropriate administrators or Department Heads for their action. The Dean, other administrator or Department Head shall inform the Senate of progress toward the implementation of its proposals at the next meeting of the Senate, or within a time frame designated by the Senate.

4.7 In the event of a conflict between the administration and the Senate, or Department Heads and the Senate, e.g. in the administrative or departmental implementation of a Senate-approved proposal, an *ad hoc* committee consisting of three Senators, appointed by the Steering Committee, and three representatives of the administration, appointed by the Dean, shall endeavor to reach a mutually agreeable resolution of differences. Such resolution of differences will be reported in a timely fashion by the *ad hoc* committee to the Senate. If no satisfactory resolution can be reached, the following grievance procedure shall be followed: If a two-thirds majority or more of the Senate supports the grievance, it shall be presented to the Board of Directors of the Health Center, or its designee, who may choose either to hear the grievance, decline to hear the grievance, mediate the grievance or to refer it (e.g. to their Academic Affairs subcommittee or other appropriate body).

4.8 There shall be a Senate website. The minutes of the Senate, Steering Committee and standing committee meetings shall be posted on the Senate website and available to all members of the constituencies represented.

4.9 The Senate can be dissolved only with the approval of two-thirds of its total membership. If dissolved, an election shall be held within 30 days to form a new Senate for the remainder of that year. One-, two- or three-year terms of office shall be assigned by the Dean, by lot.

Article Five – Amendments

5.1 Amendments to the structure or operation of the Senate, as defined in this document, may be proposed if supported by the votes of two-thirds of the Senators present or one-third of the SDM faculty as defined in Article 1.1 of the Bylaws.

5.2 A meeting of the faculty shall be convened by the Dean to consider such amendments. The Dean shall preside, and the only business of the meeting shall be the discussion of the proposed amendment(s). If revisions to the proposed amendments or revisions of other sections of the Constitution and Bylaws are suggested, any changes must be approved as described in Article 5.1 of the Bylaws, and discussed by the faculty at a meeting convened by the Dean.

5.3 The proposed amendment(s) shall be voted on within seven calendar days following the faculty meeting. Adoption of amendments shall require the affirmative votes of two-thirds of the Senators and the affirmative votes of a majority of the SDM faculty as defined in Article 1.1 of the Bylaws.

5.4 This document and subsequent amendments shall require approval by the Board of Directors and/or the Board of Trustees as specified in the Bylaws of the University of Connecticut before they become effective.

Approved by BOD: June 11, 2007