



St. Jerome's University Senate Council (SJUSC)

Terms of Reference

1. Membership

There shall be a St. Jerome's University Senate Council, composed of all full-time members of the faculty holding academic rank and the following:

- a. Ex-officio members
 - i. President and Vice Chancellor
 - ii. Vice President Academic and Dean
 - iii. Associate Dean
 - iv. Librarians
 - v. One UW Faculty Member (non-voting)
 - vi. One Executive Officer of the SJU Students' Union appointed by the SJU Students' Union Executive
 - vii. Any non-voting ex-officio members representing Finance, Student Affairs, Registrar's Office, and Advancement appointed at the discretion of the Governance Committee
- b. Elected members
 - i. One member of contract academic staff elected by contract academic staff (one-year term, renewable once) [A person is considered contract academic staff if they have taught a course on contract at St. Jerome's University in the past 365 days]
 - ii. One student elected from and by the students registered at St. Jerome's University (one-year term, renewable once)

2. Chair

- a. Chair (President and Vice Chancellor, ex-officio)
- b. Vice Chair (Vice President Academic and Dean, ex-officio)

The Chair shall preside over all meetings. In the case of absence or illness of the Chair, or if there is a vacancy in that office, the Vice Chair shall act as Chair and shall have all the powers of that position.

3. Duties and Responsibilities of Senate Council

None of the duties and responsibilities should be construed to subtract from the powers and duties conferred to the Board of Governors in the *SJU Act of Incorporation* or the University of Waterloo in the UW/SJU Federation Agreement. Specifically, duties and responsibilities that require the expenditure of funds and/or have implications for the mission of the University are subject to approval by the Board of Governors. Those regarding academic matters under the purview of the UW Senate are subject to approval by the University of Waterloo.

Senate Council will consider and make recommendations to the Board of Governors with respect to academic matters within the University and will serve as a forum for discussion on the translation of the Mission into an educational vision and framework.

Without intending to restrict the generality of the foregoing, Senate Council shall:

- a. Develop and approve recommendations on the rules and regulations for SJU-based undergraduate and graduate programs for submission to UW and approval by UW Senate.
- b. Develop and approve recommendations on SJU-based new programs and plans, modifications to existing programs and plans, and deletion of existing programs and plans, for submission to UW and approval by UW Senate.
- c. Develop and approve recommendations for SJU-based new courses, modifications to existing courses, and deletion of existing courses, for submission to UW and approval by UW Senate.
- d. Conduct examinations and appoint examiners in accord with UW policies.
- e. Consider and make recommendations to the Board of Governors about decisions regarding the creation, establishment, maintenance, modification or removal of academic structures such as departments/schools/institutes or chairs.
- f. Consider and approve academic guidelines for the administration of academic scholarships and bursaries awarded by St. Jerome's University.
- g. Consider and make recommendations to the Board of Governors regarding the list of candidates for SJU theology degrees.
- ~~h.~~ Consider and approve criteria for SJU honorary theology degrees and make recommendations to the Board of Governors regarding nominations for these degrees.
- i. Consider and make recommendations to UW on nominations for UW honorary degrees and UW Distinguished Professor Emeritus.
- j. Approve policies concerning appointments, promotions, and tenure.
- k. Approve policies concerning sabbaticals.
- l. Establish and maintain such standing and ad hoc committees as it considers necessary.
- m. Determine regulations for the conduct of its affairs and those of its committees.
- n. Consider and approve criteria for SJU-funded research support, evaluate applications for SJU-funded research support, and promote opportunities for research.
- o. Consider and approve recommendations to the President regarding the appointment of the Vice President Academic and Dean.

and, Senate Council may consider and make recommendations to the Board of Governors with respect to:

- p. The annual SJU Operating Budget.
- q. University strategic visioning and plans.
- r. Decisions regarding the SJU Act of Incorporation, the UW/SJU Federation Agreement and the UW/AFIW Equity Agreement.
- s. The appointment of the President and Vice Chancellor.

4. Regulations for the Conduct of its Affairs

General Meetings

The Senate Council shall normally hold meetings once a month from September to June, and meetings will be scheduled prior to September 1st of the current academic year.

Notification

The date and time of Senate Council meetings will be made available to all members. Normally, notice of each meeting and the agenda and available background material shall be made available to all members at least seven (7) days prior to the date of each meeting. The accidental failure to give notice to any member or any accidental irregularity in connection with the giving of notice shall not invalidate the proceedings at a meeting.

The Agenda

The Governance Committee will set the agenda, with time allocations estimated for each item. Agendas will contain a land acknowledgement statement. Members may submit items for consideration by the Governance Committee to the recording secretary. Submissions will normally be forwarded to the Governance Committee no later than 14 days prior to the scheduled Senate Council meeting to review in time for the proper distribution of the agenda prior to a meeting. The criteria for deciding whether an item should be placed on the agenda are its relevance to the mandate of Senate Council and whether enough information has been provided to enable a fruitful discussion of the matter. Only in exceptional circumstances may a decision by the Governance Committee not to include a proposed agenda item be overruled by Senate Council and would require a request at Senate Council to include the item, supported by a majority of voting members in attendance.

To ensure that sufficient time is allocated to essential business, agenda items deemed by the Governance Committee to be routine approval items and/or information items may be listed on the agenda under the heading “Consent Agenda,” and shall be voted on by Senate Council as a single omnibus motion without discussion. Prior to calling the vote on such a motion, after it has been duly moved and seconded, the Chair shall inquire as to whether any member wishes to have an item removed from the consent portion of the agenda and moved to the ordinary agenda. Any member may, by simple request and without motion or obstruction, move items in the consent portion of the agenda, including the minutes of the prior meeting, to the ordinary portion of the agenda for discussion and separate vote.

Items raised at the meeting under “Agenda Review” will be considered or tabled for consideration by the Chair. The Chair’s decision will be based on the criteria noted above (for approving an item on the agenda) and whether there is adequate time remaining in the meeting for its discussion. If the decision is to consider the item, it will be done under “New Business.” If the decision is not to consider the item, the item will be referred to the Governance Committee for the next agenda. The same procedure will be followed for items raised during the course of the meeting.

Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Senate Council shall be called in one of three ways: by the Chair of Senate Council, by the Governance Committee, or by written notification to the Chair, signed by at least half the voting members of Senate Council. The written notification will state the reason for calling the special meeting. Special meetings shall be called promptly and notice and agenda materials will be made available in the same manner and timeframe as identified above for general meetings. The Governance Committee shall have the power and authority to abridge the seven-day period. The accidental failure to give notice to any member or any accidental irregularity in connection with the giving of notice shall not invalidate the proceedings at a meeting.

Open and In Camera Sessions

Senate Council meetings shall normally be held in open session. Where confidential matters of the University are being considered, or personal matters of any person may be disclosed, unless such person requests that such part of the meeting be open to the public, Senate Council shall have the right to hold any meeting or part thereof in an *in camera* session and to exclude all persons save for Senate Council members and such resource persons as Senate Council may agree should be in attendance. When preparing the agenda, the Governance Committee of the Senate Council shall determine whether any matter is of a confidential nature, and such matter shall be so designated on the agenda and described in a manner consistent with maintaining confidentiality. Senate Council shall initially deal with any such confidential matter *in camera*, but, after receiving the pertinent information, relative to the confidential matter, may direct that the matter be considered in open session.

Quorum

At all meetings of Senate Council, 40% of the total faculty complement of Senate Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of its business and affairs.

Persons Entitled to be Present

All meetings of Senate Council, subject to the provisions above dealing with *in camera* meetings, shall be open to members of the University community, the public-at-large, and representatives of the news media. Non-Senate Council members in attendance at meetings may participate at the discretion of the Chair and shall observe the rules of decorum.

Decorum

The general conduct of meetings shall follow the rules and procedures as set forth in *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest revised edition.

General Conduct of Meetings

All questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the votes of Senate Council members present. Each voting member present at a meeting, including the Chair, shall be entitled to one vote and any motion on which there is equality of votes shall be deemed to have been defeated. A resolution approved by electronic mail ballot shall have the same force and effect as if passed at a regularly constituted meeting.

The recording secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of every meeting and the minutes of every such meeting shall be submitted at the next meeting of Senate Council for adoption.

Unless explicitly released to the public by Senate Council or by Senate Council as a report or in another form, minutes, agenda materials, and related documents which are discussed *in camera* shall remain confidential to Senate Council. The recording secretary shall be responsible for the safe custody of confidential minutes, agenda materials, and related documents.

5. Nominations and Elections to Committees

At the last regularly scheduled Senate Council meeting of the winter term, the Governance Committee will issue a call for nominations to fill vacant positions on Senate Council committees for the next academic year. Those eligible to be nominated for committee positions will be those eligible to vote in the elections for committee positions. Nominations will be open for two weeks and all nominations will be submitted to the Chair of the Governance Committee and copied to the recording secretary. An electronic election will be held within one week after the close of nominations to allow for all eligible voting members of Senate Council to submit their votes. The voting period will be established during the working week and open for 72 hours after which time the elections will be closed. In the absence of secure online voting, the ballots will be counted in the presence of two elected members of the Governance Committee. Where any member has technical difficulties with the online voting system, their vote may be delivered by email to the returning officers who will maintain confidentiality. The Governance Committee will report the results as soon as they are available. Terms of office for most committees and the Research Officer position will begin on September 1st of the next academic year and terminate on August 31st of the final year.

Normally, should a position on a Senate Council committee become vacant between annual elections, the Senate Council will elect an Acting or Interim member. The Governance Committee will issue a call for nominations and conduct the election according to the process outlined above. The Interim person will serve the remainder of the original term.

6. Committees

Senate Council may from time to time, by resolution, establish, and appoint standing or *ad hoc* committees as it sees fit and determine the composition, duties, and responsibilities of any committees so established. Standing committees may recommend the establishment of subcommittees as necessary.

Committees of Senate Council are established primarily to make recommendations to Senate Council and they may not commit Senate Council in any matter unless authority to do so has been explicitly delegated by resolution. The work of committees is not a substitute for full discussion and deliberation at Senate Council; committees are charged by Senate Council, either through their terms of reference or by special request, to assist in research and preparatory work to enable Senate Council to make informed decisions. Unless otherwise authorized by Senate Council, committees of Senate Council shall report only to Senate Council.

Senate Council shall establish the following standing committees: Governance Committee, Academic Committee, Committee on Research and Scholarship, Library Advisory Committee, and Experiential Learning Advisory Committee.

Normally committees will strive to have a diversity of representation.

Governance Committee

Membership and Chair

Chair of Senate Council (President and Vice Chancellor, ex-officio)

Vice Chair of Senate Council (Vice President Academic and Dean, ex-officio)

three faculty members elected by and from Senate Council (normally three-year terms, staggered)

Chair is elected by and from the members of the Governance Committee and is normally one of the faculty members (one-year term)

Duties

1. set the agenda for Senate Council meetings;
2. make recommendations to Senate Council on the establishment and maintenance of Senate Council standing and *ad hoc* committees as necessary;
3. make recommendations to Senate Council on regulations for the conduct of Senate Council affairs and those of its committees;
4. oversee elections to Senate Council standing and *ad hoc* committees, and to other committees as required;*
5. review the annual SJU Operating Budget and present it to Senate Council before it is submitted to the Board of Governors for approval;
6. meet annually with the Director, Finance and Accounting to review the audited financial statements and present them to Senate Council before they are submitted to the Board of Governors for approval;
 - a. If after reviewing the audited financial statements with the Director as outlined in item 6, the Governance Committee (or the Senate Council) has questions that could only or best be addressed by the university's contracted auditors, they may make a request to the Board of Governors that the Board ask the auditors if they are willing to speak to the Governance Committee.
7. make recommendations to Senate Council on University strategic visioning and plans;
8. make recommendations to Senate Council on decisions regarding the *SJU Act of Incorporation*, the UWaterloo/SJU Federation Agreement and the UWaterloo/AFIW Equity Agreement.

- * The Senate Council is responsible for electing members to the following: Renewal, Tenure, and Promotions Committee (three tenured faculty members plus a fourth tenured faculty member as an alternate); Research Officer; Nominating Committee for SJU Honorary Degrees (three faculty members); Vice President Academic and Dean Appointment Committee (three faculty members); other committees as applicable.

Academic Committee

Membership and Chair

Vice President Academic and Dean (ex-officio)

Associate Dean (ex-officio)

Student Affairs Representative (ex-officio) (non-voting)

Registrar (ex-officio) (non-voting)

Librarian (ex-officio)

Department Chairs (ex-officio)

Academic Program Directors (ex-officio)

two students elected from and by the students registered at St. Jerome's University (non-voting) (one-year terms)

Chair is the Vice President Academic and Dean or designate

Duties

Make recommendations to Senate Council on:

1. development and approval of rules and regulations for SJU-based undergraduate and graduate programs;
2. development and approval of SJU-based new programs and plans, modifications to existing programs and plans, and deletion of existing programs and plans;
3. development and approval of SJU-based new courses, modifications to existing courses, and deletion of existing courses;
4. conduct of examinations and the appointment of examiners;
5. creation, establishment, maintenance, modification or removal of academic structures such as departments/schools/institutes or chairs;
6. academic guidelines for the administration of academic scholarships and bursaries awarded by St. Jerome's University;
7. candidates for the SJU/UW conjoint degree in theology;
8. nominations for UW honorary degrees and UW distinguished professors emeriti;
9. establishment, modification, or cancellation of policies, procedures, or guidelines in the Academic Operations Manual (AOM), except for those AOM policies, procedures, or guidelines brought forward directly to Senate Council by other Senate Council standing committees;

On behalf of Senate Council:

10. serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practices for experiential learning, including service learning, activities at the University based on the Partnership Principles: Experiential Learning established by Senate Council;
11. provide feedback to the Vice President Academic and Dean with regard to the assessment of experiential learning activities;
12. advise the Vice President Academic and Dean with regard to the establishment and renewal of partnerships that support academic programming;
13. serve as a resource for those wishing to pursue experiential learning activities;
14. recommend to the Vice President Academic and Dean budget and/or resource allocations to support experiential learning initiatives across the University.

Committee on Research and Scholarship

Membership and Chair

Vice President Academic and Dean or their delegate (ex-officio)

Research Officer (ex-officio)

three faculty members elected by and from Senate Council (normally two-year terms, staggered), at least two being tenured and at least one normally holding the rank of Professor

Chair is the Research Officer

Duties

Make recommendations to Senate Council on:

1. the criteria for SJU-funded research support and forward relevant policies to Senate Council for approval;

On behalf of Senate Council:

2. receive, adjudicate, and vet all applications for funding from the internal Research Fund;
3. disburse funding from the Research Fund;
4. promote opportunities for research;
5. mentor with regards to internal Research Fund applications and be a resource with regards to external applications, as needed.

Library Advisory Committee

Membership and Chair

All Librarian Members of any rank

Two faculty members elected by and from Senate Council, one holding the rank of Professor and one normally holding tenure or permanency (normally two-year terms, staggered)

Where possible, a Librarian appointed from an AFIW Library (normally a two-year term, renewable)

Where possible, one representative of the University of Waterloo Library (normally a two-year term, renewable)

The Chair is an SJU Librarian of any rank appointed by the Vice President Academic and Dean.

Duties

As per Article 25.8.3 of the Collective Agreement (full-time unit), the Committee shall work through consensus in developing its recommendations, or, in the absence of consensus shall submit a majority and minority opinion.

Specifically, the Committee's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

1. advise the Library on policy matters relating to the collections, services, and user needs;
2. provide a channel for communication and collaboration between the Library and the faculty;
3. assist in the assessment and promotion of Library programming as it aligns with the needs of the University community;
4. provide feedback on reports from the Library;
5. provide information and make recommendations to Senate Council on:
 - a. Library and information service developments which are of academic significance to the University;
 - b. the development of operational policies and guidelines;
 - c. the development of Library strategic plans and priorities;
6. advise on the strategic direction of the Library's annual budgets;
7. provide recommendations regarding library staffing;

8. serve on search committees for Librarian appointments in accordance with Article 18 in the Collective Agreement (full-time unit);
9. meet at least once per academic term and submit an annual report to Senate Council.

7. Authority to Amend the Terms of Reference

Senate Council's terms of reference dealing with *Membership, Chair, and Duties and Responsibilities* may only be amended by a decision of the Board of Governors, upon the recommendation of Senate Council. Those terms of reference dealing with Senate Council's regulations for the conduct of its affairs and with its committee structure may be amended by Senate Council.

Last amended by SJU Senate Council: May 23, 2025

Approved by SJU Board of Governors: June 19, 2025