

# LEE FACULTY ASSEMBLY CONSTITUTION

Updated 3/19/25

## Preamble

The Lee Faculty Assembly is organized to represent faculty interests, to protect faculty rights, to share responsibility for the institution through cooperation with the administration, the staff, and the student body, to promote an atmosphere conducive to learning and to teaching, to promote an atmosphere of mutual trust among faculty, student body, and administration, and to act in an advisory capacity to the administration and the student body.

## Article I – Name of Organization

This organization shall be called the Lee Faculty Assembly, hereinafter referred to as the “Assembly.”

## Article II – Membership

### Section 1: Membership in the Assembly

1. Membership of the Assembly shall include all full-time faculty members, division chairs, counselors, librarians, and the President of the College, and the Provost of the College.
2. For the purpose of this article, “faculty members” shall mean individuals whose duties include classroom teaching for at least 60% of their workload, not to exclude division chairs with less than a 60% teaching load, instructors with less than a 60% teaching load because of administrative special assignments with a specified duration, or counselors or librarians who do not carry an instructional load.

### Section 2: Contributions to the Legal Defense Fund

1. No dues or fees are required for membership in the Assembly, but expenses are supported by the voluntary contributions of members, hereinafter referred to as the Legal Defense Fund.
2. The Legal Defense Fund provides legal defense for individual faculty members whose rights, in the judgment of the Assembly and its attorney of record, have been legally abused or denied.
3. The Legal Defense Fund pays for legal briefs and advice on matters that could or do negatively affect faculty rights, privileges, and remunerations. By consent of the Assembly, contributions have also been used to establish a Lee College Foundation scholarship.
4. Members of the Assembly may contribute to the Legal Defense Fund in the following ways: complete a Faculty Assembly Payroll Deduction Authorization form (available in the Payroll Office), and send it to the Payroll Office to have an amount deducted from each paycheck; or give a personal check (made out to Faculty Assembly) directly to the Faculty Assembly Treasurer.

### Section 2A: Use of the Legal Defense Fund

1. All members of the Lee Faculty Assembly are eligible for assistance from the Lee Faculty Assembly Legal Defense Fund.
2. An assembly member desiring such assistance shall present a professional grievance to the Grievance Committee.
3. If the Grievance Committee determines that the member should be granted assistance, the chair of the committee will authorize up to two hours of legal consultation without approval of the Assembly or Executive Council. If additional consultation is requested, the chair of the committee will request such assistance at the

next regularly scheduled Assembly meeting or Executive Council meeting or at a called meeting of either the Assembly or the Executive Council.

4. If the Grievance Committee determines that the member should not be granted assistance, the member may present a request for assistance at the next regularly scheduled Assembly meeting or Executive Council meeting or at a called meeting of either the Assembly or the Executive Council, and the chair of the Grievance Committee will so inform the member of his or her right to do so. The Assembly or the Executive Council shall then decide whether to grant assistance and shall set the amount or range of any assistance.
5. Assistance shall be in the form of payment of bills submitted to the Treasurer by the faculty member's legal counsel.
6. Any recipient of assistance from the Legal Defense Fund shall agree to reimburse the Fund to the extent of any award of legal costs.

## **Section 2B: Management of Funds**

1. The Faculty Assembly will maintain accounts as the result of any contributions by faculty, donations, or gifts. These funds will be split into the Legal Defense Fund and the Auxiliary Fund.
  - a) The Legal Defense Fund will be administered as follows:
    - i) Contributions to the Legal Defense Fund may be made by payroll deduction or by payment directly to the Treasurer.
    - ii) The financial records of the Legal Defense Fund shall be audited every five years.
    - iii) The primary function of the Legal Defense Fund being the payment of legal fees, other expenses shall be met from the income of the Fund.
    - iv) Except as outlined under Section 2a, no funds shall be committed without approval of the full Assembly or the Executive Council.
  - b) The Auxiliary Fund will be administered as follows:
    - i) The fund will be maintained at a budgeted level of \$5000.00 per academic year.
      - (1) Necessary monies will deposited at the start of each academic year to keep the Auxiliary Fund at the specified level.
      - (2) If the fund is depleted during an academic year then the Executive Committee, by 2/3 vote, may contribute additional monies to the Auxiliary Fund as needed up to the maximum of \$5000.00 budget.
    - ii) These funds will be used by the Faculty Assembly to cover one-time or recurring costs for awards, scholarships, donations, honoraria (including Excellence in Education Award), or other ancillary expenses.
      - (1) The Officers of the Assembly, by majority vote, would review and vote on proposed expenditures to a maximum of \$500.00.
      - (2) The Executive Committee, by majority vote, would review and vote on all proposed expenditures in excess of \$500.00 up to a maximum of \$2500.00.
      - (3) The Assembly, by majority vote, would review and vote on all proposed expenditures in excess of \$2500.00.
      - (4) All expenditures from this fund will be reported by the Treasurer at the next scheduled Faculty Assembly meeting.

## **Article III – Organization**

### **Section 1: Campus Representation**

1. The Assembly shall be the official voice in all matters under consideration by members of the Assembly.

### **Section 1A: Officers of the Assembly**

1. The officers of the Assembly shall be:
  - a) A President
  - b) a First Vice-President
  - c) a Second Vice- President
  - d) a Secretary
  - e) a Treasurer
2. Officers shall be elected at the spring meeting of the full Assembly each year and shall assume their duties on the first day of the fall semester the following academic year.

### **Section 1B: Election of Officers of the Assembly**

1. Officers of the Assembly shall be elected by majority vote of the members present and voting.
2. Prior to each annual election, the Second Vice-President shall convene and direct a Faculty Assembly Nominating Committee to identify volunteers and/or recruit faculty for Faculty Assembly positions for the succeeding academic year.
3. The Second Vice-President shall convene the Nominating Committee following the February Meeting and present names for nomination in the April Faculty Assembly agenda.
4. However, the presiding officer at each election shall call for and accept nominations from the floor for any office or elective committee chair.

### **Section 1C: Terms of Service and Vacancies of the Officers of the Assembly**

1. With the exception of the First Vice-President and Second Vice-President, officers of the Assembly shall hold office for a term of two years or until a successor is elected. The terms of the officers shall end on a rotating basis to ensure continuity.
2. The Second Vice-President shall be elected each year, and the outgoing Second Vice-President shall become First Vice-President for the following year.
3. Vacancies in the offices of the Assembly shall not be filled until the next regular meeting of the Assembly.
4. With the exception of the Treasurer, no officer shall succeed himself or herself through election.

### **Section 1D: President of the Assembly**

1. The President of the Assembly shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Faculty Assembly and the Executive Council.
2. Except as directed otherwise by this Constitution, the President shall appoint all special committees of the Assembly.
3. The President shall sign all official communications sent out in the name of the Assembly.
4. The President shall be, ex officio, a member of all standing and special committees of the Assembly.
5. The President shall act as the representative to campus-wide committees or designated committees; or their delegate.

### **Section 1E: Removal of Officers of the Assembly**

1. Officers of the Assembly or chairs of standing committees of the Assembly may be removed from office upon presentation (to the Executive Council or to the Assembly in session) of a written petition containing the names of at least 50% of the members of the Assembly.
2. Any officer or chair of a standing committee who has been removed from office may appeal his or her removal to the full Assembly.

### **Section 1F: First Vice-President of the Assembly**

1. The First Vice-President of the Assembly shall perform the duties of the President in case of the absence, death, or resignation of the President.
2. The First Vice-President will serve as the liaison for student relations to such as government, ambassadors, and attend as needed to any matters relating specifically to student needs.

### **Section 1G: Second Vice-President of the Assembly**

1. The Second Vice-President of the Assembly shall perform the duties of the First Vice- President in case of the absence, death, or resignation of the First Vice-President.
2. The Second Vice-President will serve as the chair of the Nominating Committee as described in Article III, Section 1b, and serve as the liaison for faculty awards and special recognition.

### **Section 1H: Secretary of the Assembly**

1. The Secretary shall record proceedings, conduct correspondence of the Assembly and of the Executive Council, and maintain the Assembly Web page.

### **Section 1I: Treasurer of the Assembly**

1. The Treasurer and President shall sign all checks of the Assembly.
2. The Treasurer shall receive and receipt all monies handled by him or her by order of the Assembly or the Executive Council.
3. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all monies of the Assembly and shall prepare and present a written financial report at each regular meeting of the Assembly and the Executive Council.
4. The Treasurer shall make recommendations to the Assembly or the Executive Council concerning investment of monies and transference of funds between accounts.
5. The Treasurer shall maintain all records related to the Assembly's nonprofit status, and file all necessary paperwork towards this requirement as required.

### **Section 2: The Executive Council of the Assembly**

1. There shall be an Executive Council composed of the officers of the Assembly, chairs of the standing committees, and two voting representatives from each division of Lee College, including the Counseling Center and the Library.
2. The Executive Council shall be the governing body of the Assembly in the interim periods between meetings, regular or special, of the full Assembly.

### **Section 2A: Divisional Representatives to the Assembly**

1. Representatives from each division shall be elected for two-year terms by vote in the respective divisions at a time and in a manner to be set forth by the incumbent division representatives.
2. It is provided, however, that all division representatives shall be elected by the end of the spring semester to begin serving their terms on the first day of the ensuing fall semester.

### **Section 3: Standing Committees of the Assembly**

1. There shall be five standing committees of the Assembly:
  - a) Benefits Committee
  - b) Grievance Committee
  - c) Professional Development Committee
  - d) Professional Standards and Responsibility Committee

- e) Recognition & Honors Committee

### **Section 3A: Chairs of Standing Committees of the Assembly**

1. Chairs of the standing committees shall be elected by vote of the Assembly in its regular spring meeting.
2. No officer of the Assembly or division representative may serve as chair of any standing committee.
3. Chairs of the standing committees shall serve terms of two years.

### **Section 3B: Membership on Standing Committees of the Assembly**

1. The chair of each standing committee shall appoint the members of the committee he or she heads.
2. The membership of standing committees shall not exceed six in addition to the chair thereof.
3. Members of each standing committee shall elect a vice-chair to succeed the chair in the event of the absence, death, or resignation of the chair.
4. No member of the Assembly may serve on more than one standing committee.
5. Any committee, standing or special, may adopt bylaws consistent with this Constitution for the conduct of meetings of the committee.

### **Section 3C: Duties of Standing Committees of the Assembly**

1. The Benefits Committee shall consider and make recommendations on all matters dealing with the following:
  - a) Compensation for services rendered to the institution.
  - b) Conditions of professional employment.
  - c) Fringe benefits.
  - d) The budget process used by the Lee College administration.
2. The Grievance Committee shall do the following:
  - a) Hold preliminary hearings on all internal grievances.
  - b) Have the option of assuming the responsibility of acting on a grievance or of referring the grievance to another committee or to the Executive Council.
  - c) Act as an advisory committee (according to the Coordinating Board's policy) in cases of academic freedom.
  - d) Hear cases that fall under the following areas:
    - i. Maintenance of competence in one's field of specialization.
    - ii. Exercise of professional integrity.
    - iii. Judicious use of material in the classroom.
  - e) Act as an advisory committee in all cases of dismissal, non-reappointment, or non-renewal of contract.
  - f) Advise the Executive Council or the Assembly on the disbursement of funds from the Lee College Faculty Assembly Legal Defense Fund.
3. The Professional Development Committee shall do the following:
  - a. Accept, review, and recommend faculty, counselor, and librarian requests for professional development funds, which are provided by the Administration.
  - b. Maintain guidelines and procedures for professional development applications.
  - c. Consider and make recommendations on all matters related to the following:
    - i. Developmental leaves or grants.
    - ii. Instruction.
    - iii. Research.
    - iv. Curriculum.

4. The Professional Standards and Responsibility Committee shall do the following:
  - a) Send a representative to each regularly scheduled meeting of the Lee College Board of Regents and report to the Assembly and the Executive Council.
  - b) Monitor impending changes in Board of Regents' policy.
  - c) Monitor revisions in the *Employee Handbook* and seek faculty participation in such revisions.
  - d) Maintain guidelines and criteria for the Lee College Foundation scholarship endowed by the Assembly.
  - e) At the direction of the Faculty Assembly President, the Professional Standards and Responsibility Chair shall serve as a representative on campus committees, task forces, or groups.
  
5. The Recognitions & Honors Committee shall do the following:
  - a) Coordinate all awards, honoraria, recognitions, donations, and gestures of bereavement on behalf of the Faculty Assembly.
  - b) Coordinate the creation and management of Faculty Assembly-sponsored student scholarships via the Lee College Foundation.
  - c) Liaise with Public Affairs & Marketing for publicizing public awards, honoraria, or recognitions authorized by the Faculty Assembly.

### **Section 3D: Meetings of Standing Committees of the Assembly**

1. Standing committees shall meet upon call of the chair or upon petition, written or oral, of a simple majority of the committee members.

### **Section 3E: Business of the Assembly and its Committees**

1. Subject to the provisions of Article IV, Section 5, any member of the Assembly may bring before the Executive Council, or the Assembly, or any standing committee any matter that he or she deems appropriate.
2. However, the President of the Assembly may refer such matters to whatever standing committee he or she deems appropriate.
3. All standing or special committee recommendations shall be subject to approval or disapproval by the Executive Council or by the full Assembly.

### **Section 3F: Miscellaneous Duties of Committees**

1. In matters of "due process proceedings in dismissal cases and in cases where academic freedom infringement is alleged," the President of the Assembly shall appoint a special committee from members of the Executive Council who have not already been involved in the specific case or cases under review.
2. Except as directed elsewhere in this Constitution, the President of the Assembly shall appoint all other special committees from among the membership of the full Assembly.

## **Article IV – Meetings**

### **Section 1: Regular & Called Meetings of the Assembly**

1. The Assembly shall convene during the Fall Convocation Week, the second Wednesday in October, during Spring Convocation, and the second Wednesday in April unless postponed by campus closure.
2. The Assembly may be called in session at other times:
  - a) By call of the Assembly President;
  - b) By call of the Executive Council; or
  - c) By written petition of twenty members of the full Assembly.
2. Regular Meetings of the Assembly shall take place on campus whenever possible.

- a) In the event of campus closure or inaccessibility, Regular Meetings may be conducted synchronously as a virtual meeting and with 24-hour notice to all members of the Assembly.
3. Called Meetings of the Assembly shall take place on campus whenever possible.
  - a. In the event of campus closure or inaccessibility, Regular Meetings may be conducted synchronously as a virtual meeting.
  - b. In situations where scheduling difficulties or urgency require immediate attention, a Called Meeting may be conducted asynchronously with the unanimous consent of the Officers of the Assembly and with a minimum of 24-hours' notice to all members of the Assembly.
    - i. In an emergency Called Meeting, voting may be conducted through virtual means, including, but not limited to, email balloting or digital survey.

## **Section 2: Meetings of the Executive Council of the Assembly**

1. The Executive Council shall meet on the second week of the following months: September, November, January, February, and March unless postponed by campus closure. The Executive Council may be called into session at other times:
  - a) By call of the President; or
  - b) By written petition of ten members of the Executive Council.

## **Section 3: Quorum of the Assembly**

1. Members present at a meeting of the Assembly shall constitute a quorum.
2. At least one half of the members of the Executive Council, excluding vacancies, must be present to constitute a quorum of the Executive Council.

## **Section 4: Rules for Meetings of the Assembly**

1. Except as directed by this Constitution, or upon adoption of bylaws by the full Assembly, all meetings of the Assembly and the Executive Council shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order

## **Section 5: Agenda for Meetings of the Assembly**

1. The President, with the advice and approval of the two Vice-Presidents, shall prepare an agenda for each meeting of the Assembly and the Executive Council.
2. A proposed agenda shall be presented to the Assembly or Executive Council members at least one week before the meeting is to be held. Requests by Assembly members to include any item on the agenda of the Assembly of the Executive Council must be submitted to the President no later than two days prior to the meeting at which the proposed agenda item is to be discussed.
3. Under emergency conditions, an agenda item may be added to the published agenda by two-thirds vote of the members present at any meeting of the Assembly or the Executive Council.

## **Section 6: Open and Secret Balloting of the Assembly**

1. Voting and balloting in meetings of the Executive Council or of the Assembly shall be conducted in a manner deemed appropriate by the presiding officer.
2. It is provided, however, that a secret ballot shall be ordered upon request of any three members present at a meeting of the Assembly or the Executive Council.

## **Section 7: Attendance to Assembly Debates of the Assembly**

1. Only members of the Assembly and members of the Board of Regents may be present during debate or voting on any matter under consideration by the Assembly or the Executive Council.

## **Article V – Relations with the Board of Regents, the Administration, and the Student Body**

### **Section 1: Attendance to Assembly Meetings by Non-Members**

1. Members of the Board of Regents, the Administration, or the Student Body may address the Assembly, the Executive Council, or any committee and may remain before the body to answer questions of the membership.
2. Any non-member wishing to address the Faculty Assembly should submit notice of this intent to the Faculty Assembly President and Secretary no less than 24 hours in advance of the Full Meeting.

### **Section 2: Invitations to Assembly Meetings**

1. The Assembly, the Executive Council, or any committee may request members of the Board of Regents, the Administration, or the Student Body to address them or to answer questions.
2. No less than 48 hours' notice shall be given to the Assembly President and Secretary of any invitation to non-members of the Assembly to address the Assembly.

### **Section 3: External Involvement**

1. Delegates may be sent to present the recommendations of the Assembly to the administration by simple majority vote of the Executive Council or of the Assembly.
2. Upon approval of the Board of Regents, the President of the Faculty Assembly or his or her designated representative may attend all meetings of the Board of Regents as a regular representative of the Faculty Assembly.

### **Section 4: Assembly Representation in Administrator Searches and Hiring**

1. The Executive Council may, on invitation, consult with the Board of Regents regarding the selection of the President of the College and may, on invitation, consult with the President of the College regarding selection of other administrators.

### **Section 5: Ethics**

1. In matters relating to academic freedom, tenure, and faculty responsibility and ethics, the Assembly, the Executive Council, and all committees will be guided by the Texas Community College Teachers Association Code of Professional Ethics.
2. It is provided, however, that the precepts set forth by the TCCTA Code of Professional Ethics shall not be construed as to deprive a member of the Assembly of any tenure or other rights already acquired under prevailing policies of the College.

## **Article VI – Amendments to the Assembly Constitution**

### **Section 1: Proposing and Voting on Amendments**

1. Proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Council at least two weeks prior to the next regular meeting of the full Assembly at which the proposed amendments are to be considered for the first time.



2. A required second reading may take place at a called meeting or at the next regular meeting, with due notice as provided in Article IV, Section 5 above. Proposed amendments may be amended at either reading.
3. Approval of amendments to the Constitution must be by two-thirds majority of the Assembly present and voting at each of the two readings.

**Section 2: Current Version and Archived Copies**

1. The Lee Faculty Assembly Constitution with all deletions, corrections, additions, and amendments as approved by the full Assembly in meetings on April 5, 2006, and April 19, 2006, November 10, 2021, March 23, 2022, and March 19, 2025 shall supersede all previous versions of the Lee College Faculty Assembly Constitution.
2. A copy of the Lee Faculty Assembly Constitution with amendments as it appears in the Lee College *Employee Handbook*, dated January 2005, along with this amendment, shall be archived in the Lee College Library.