



# **Franklin Cummings Tech College Senate Charter and Bylaws**

First Drafted October 3, 2019,  
Second Draft, October 14, 2020  
Final Draft, October 22, 2020  
Ratified on the 26th day of October, 2020

© 2020 FC Tech College Senate  
*This document may be reproduced with or  
without permission or attribution under the  
U.S. Fair Use Copyright Laws*

The Benjamin Franklin Cummings  
Institute of Technology  
41 Berkeley St.  
Boston, MA 02141



## **I. Membership and Duties of the FC Tech College Senate**

## **A. Purpose of the BFIT College Senate**

The purpose of the BFIT College Senate is to provide a forum for faculty and staff participation in the decision-making process of the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT) and a Senate through which staff and faculty can function in an advisory role in the formation of educational policy at the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology.

According to the current (2020) FC Tech Employee Handbook, “the Faculty Senate fosters cooperation and communication among faculty and administration and makes recommendations to the President or the appropriate administrator for consideration.”

In light of the recent changes at the college and in the general field of higher education, we have highlighted below the rationale for reformulating the charter of the FC Tech Faculty Senate as a College Senate with an additional set of bylaws. This reformulation includes a renewed commitment to inclusiveness and thus further and wider participation among all workers, including members of the staff and faculty who are not part of the Presidential Administrative Council<sup>1</sup> (PAC) in the governance of the institution and in the development of educational policy at the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology. Hereafter, for the sake of clarity and simplicity, the FC Tech College Senate Charter and Bylaws shall refer to non-PAC staff as simply “staff”.

## **B. Rationale for the formulation of the FC Tech College Senate**

The following issues have recently arisen in higher education, some of which are particularly relevant to FC Tech’s circumstances in the academic year 2020-2021.

1. The emerging trend of technology colleges as the wave of the future thus necessitating a participative model for curriculum-making, instructional design, institutional partnerships and onsite governance
2. The importance of ongoing cross-departmental collaboration to maintain accreditation by the New England Commission for Higher Education (NECHE)

---

<sup>1</sup> Members of the Presidential Advisory Council (PAC) who teach at the college will be actively sought out for advice around teaching issues and any professional concerns they have that relate to the college’s mission—specifically teaching and learning issues at the college. Due to the importance of protecting workers’ rights and staff and faculty sovereignty in the development of staff and faculty positions on educational policy at the college, the FC Tech College Senate cannot grant voting rights in the development of these policy positions to members of the Presidential Advisory Council (PAC) who teach at the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology.

3. The change in sustainability of higher ed institutions in the era of Covid-19
4. Industry-wide recognition that participative governance and democratic processes in higher education offer the best mission and operational supports in successful and sustainable educational institutions.
5. The need for faculty and staff participation in the development of education and workplace policies related to the pandemic and other issues that impact student, staff and faculty well-being and safety
6. The establishment of a strong faculty and staff voice as a professional identity to assist in the operational sustainability of the college in any potential plan for merging with another institution

### **C. The Functions of the FC Tech College Senate**

The FC Tech College Senate shall:

1. Actively work to establish a culture in which faculty and staff leadership is encouraged and expected;
2. Actively help to establish (and re-establish) with the Administration and all other stakeholders the differentiated roles for faculty and staff leadership in college governance, curriculum development, research, and teaching standards;
3. Plan and run in-service meetings and professional development in cooperation with the administration and appropriate committees (e.g. Faculty Development Committee) in accordance with the faculty contracts, labor laws, and education industry standards;
4. Represent the staff and faculty in matters concerning college policy, workplace issues, professional norms and processes, and educational issues;
5. Present the Administration, Board of Trustees, Industry Partners, faculty-led committees, the teams and departments under Student Services, staff members who work on student activities, student-run organizations and other onsite and offsite partner organizations with staff and faculty positions on building procedures, college climate initiatives and educational policy;
6. Collaborate with Administration (and Union Officials when applicable) in all general contract matters and staff and faculty hiring policies to ensure that these policies are operating in accordance with agreed upon system-wide standards and the educational mission of the college.

7. Help improve communication among staff and faculty across departments, with the goal of allowing employees to better understand key initiatives and be able to identify possible areas of collaboration, synergy, improved operations, or cost savings.

#### **D. Membership and Eligibility for Voting in the FC Tech College Senate**

1. Only those eligible to vote shall be eligible for membership (see below);
2. All full-time and adjunct faculty members, full-time and part-time staff, including Student Services staff members that are not on the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC) are automatically members of the FC Tech College Senate and are, therefore, eligible to vote in all elections, polls, policy positions and other matters related to the senate.
3. Each department/program may elect or appoint a representative (Officer) to the Senate. Smaller departments/programs may choose to combine with other departments/programs for the purposes of representation (e.g. the Development Office may choose to combine with the Business Office to elect/appoint a single representative/Officer).
4. The name of each representative/Officer nominee (for a single department/program or combination of small departments/programs at the discretion of the electors) must be submitted to [FCTechsenate@franklincummings.edu](mailto:FCTechsenate@franklincummings.edu) so that each representative is eligible for the college senate's general election.
5. All Senate staff and faculty are eligible to vote in the FC Tech College Senate election of officers to the FC Tech College Senate.
6. Voting on the general election for representatives/officers to the FC Tech College Senate shall be open to all eligible members of the staff and faculty of the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology.

#### **E. Elections for the FC Tech College Senate**

1. Elections for the FC Tech College Senate must be held by the first week in October of each academic year (with the exception of the first year of the newly ratified charter and bylaws (October 25, 2020)).
2. Outgoing College Senate Officers and non-Officer volunteers collaborate to form or appoint an election committee.

3. Each department/program may choose any method to nominate or appoint a representative (Officer) to the FC Tech College Senate. After the nomination/appointment period (no longer than a week), the names of the nominee(s) shall be submitted to the current senate chair(s) in person or through email ([FC\\_Techsenate@FC\\_Tech.edu](mailto:FC_Techsenate@FC_Tech.edu)). The staff and faculty will vote to confirm each candidate. Each candidate of a department/program (or combination of departments/programs) must receive a majority of submitted votes to be confirmed.
4. There shall be one representative (Officer) for each department/program (or combination) regardless of the number of faculty/staff members in any individual department/program.
5. All faculty and staff members are eligible to vote for FC Tech College Senate members and to run for a seat on the FC Tech College Senate.
6. After the election of Officers of the FC Tech College Senate, the Officers shall vote on two Co-chairs; a staff Co-chair and a faculty Co-chair.
7. The term limit for all elected Officers of the FC Tech College Senate, including Co-chairs shall be two academic years, until the third academic year's elections are held.

#### **F. Procedural Guidelines for FC Tech College Senate Meetings**

1. After the election, the confirmed Officers of the FC Tech College Senate create their own process for nominating/electing/appointing/confirming the Co-chairs (one staff chair, one faculty chair) of the senate for the current academic year.
  - The Co-chairs of the FC Tech College Senate shall determine the agenda for all FC Tech College Senate meetings.
  - The Co-chairs shall actively check in with—and seek input from—Administration, members of both full-time and part-time (adjunct) faculty and staff, faculty-led committees, the teams and departments under Student Services, staff members who work on student activities, student-run organizations and other onsite and offsite stakeholders on a regular basis. This will help to ensure that the agenda of the meetings reflects the professional concerns, ideas and expertise of the entire staff and faculty, the current conditions of larger society, the educational mission of the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology and the interests, ideas and concerns of the student population.
  - To be successful in this endeavor, the Co-chairs must intentionally seek to establish relationships with all stakeholders and to check in with various

stakeholder groups when possible. This may include formal meetings and informal check-ins with individuals and stakeholder groups.

2. The Officers of the FC Tech College Senate shall meet at least once a month.
3. The Officers of the FC Tech College Senate shall meet with the Administration of the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology at least once or twice per semester, and additionally when matters warrant.
  - At this meeting, the FC Tech College Senate shall speak informally with the Administration or, if needed, present written positions of the faculty with a request for a written response from the Administration providing the reasoning behind the administration's positions and decisions around the issue(s) and/or policies discussed at the meeting.
  - The Co-chairs of the FC Tech College Senate and the President/CEO shall jointly decide the agenda and on who chairs the meeting, depending on the issues and policies being discussed.
4. The Officers of the FC Tech College Senate shall meet with one or more members of the Board of Trustees to share student stories and academic department accomplishments.
5. The Officers of the FC Tech College Senate shall hold two meetings a semester with all members of the staff and faculty (including full and part time) and additional meetings when matters warrant.
  - The Officers of the FC Tech College Senate shall report any updates from meetings with the President/CEO, the Presidential Advisory Council, the Board of Trustees, or other joint meetings with councils/committees to the staff and faculty at the open meetings and/or through written communication (i.e. email or letter).
  - After soliciting feedback from the general staff and faculty at the open meetings, the Officers of the FC Tech College Senate members will determine the next steps in regards to follow-through.
  - If after soliciting feedback from general faculty and staff, the Officers of the FC Tech College Senate are unsatisfied with a plan of action or response from the above decision-making bodies (or other stakeholder groups) or determine that additional actionable steps are necessary, they may choose to communicate with—or appeal to— additional stakeholder groups or appropriate parties inside or outside the college.
  - All members of the college's stakeholder groups can submit agenda items for consideration to any elected Officer of the FC Tech College Senate.

Items can be submitted in person or by email to any Officers of the FC Tech College Senate.

6. The FC Tech College Senate shall appoint a liaison to present proposals and positions on college-related issues, educational policy and professional concerns as the need arises to college departments, committees, teams and councils and to the President/CEO, Presidential Advisory Council, Board of Trustees or other stakeholder groups.

#### **G. Procedural Guidelines for Duties of the FC Tech College Senate**

1. The newly elected Officers of the FC Tech College Senate will collaborate with outgoing Officers and other interested staff and faculty members on a Welcome Letter to the FC Tech community by the second or third week of October after the election (keeping in mind that elections are held every other year, though an Officer may choose to step down from the senate, warranting a special election to replace the seat).
  - The Welcome Letter may refer to upcoming events, and college-related issues.
  - The Welcome Letter shall re-affirm the professional norms that have been established in the FC Tech College Senate Charter and Bylaws.
  - The Welcome Letter shall be positive and forward-looking and written in a cordial, professional tone.
2. The FC Tech College Senate shall create and maintain an updated digital platform of the FC Tech College Senate's activities and positions on college policy. If approved, the most appropriate platform would be a web page on the official website of the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology (<https://franklincummings.edu/about-us/college-senate/>).

#### **H. Procedural Guidelines for Revising the Charter and Bylaws**

1. Due to continuous change in the educational landscape and at FC Tech in particular, it is necessary to institutionalize and re-affirm every three years both the norms and procedures that can best ensure staff and faculty participation in college policy decisions, the college's professional culture, and the governing procedures for our college's decision making process.

Hence, we have created a section in the FC Tech College Senate Charter and Bylaws for the revision of the bylaws to ensure that the charter and bylaws represent the current realities faced by the college, its students, its staff and faculty, its current leadership, its surrounding communities, and society at large.

2. The FC Tech College Senate Charter and Bylaws shall be reviewed and/or revised every three years, beginning in September, of 2023.
3. The FC Tech College Senate shall revise its bylaws through an open, democratic process.
4. All eligible members of the FC Tech College Senate are eligible to participate in the revision of the FC Tech College Senate Charter and Bylaws and in the voting process on the finalized revision (if applicable).
5. If after a 7-day period of public comment available to staff and faculty (preferably in electronic form), no revisions/edits are proposed by any eligible members of the staff and faculty of the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology, then the most current charter and bylaws of the FC Tech College Senate shall be reinstated and ratified as the most up-to-date version.





## **II. Norms and Procedures for Professional Communication and Proposals**

### **A. Norms for Professional Communication**

The FC Tech College Senate is committed to the principle of *mutual accountability*, in which all stakeholders in a democratic college are accountable to one another.

Therefore, the FC Tech College Senate will strive for transparency and inclusion through all forms of communication, both written and verbal. We will also strive for full disclosure of the reasoning behind our beliefs, choices, ideas and decisions. We encourage the administration, staff and faculty members, the FC Tech Board of Trustees, and all other stakeholders in the mission of the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology to do the same.

All communications representing the FC Tech College Senate will aim to be written in a non-adversarial, professional tone and in the most inclusive language possible. While written communications of the FC Tech College Senate will likely include reference to professional roles and functions in most cases to (e.g. Administration, Department of Electrical Engineering, the Board of Trustees, these communications may at times refer to specific individuals operating in these roles and functions when warranted.

In all communications, the FC Tech College Senate will strive to operate from the principles of charity and mercy. This means that these communications will strive to refrain from statements that unfairly compromise professional reputations or that promote perspectives and interpretations that are unsubstantiated, unfair and unproductive.

The rule of thumb that will guide all communications by the FC Tech College Senate is simple: we will work to build and strengthen, not tear down and destroy.

### **B. Formal Proposals Presented through the FC Tech College Senate**

1. The FC Tech College Senate encourages all staff and faculty to bring issues, concerns, contractual grievances (in the absence of a union), complaints, innovations, ideas and proposals for reforms related to professional culture and other issues to the FC Tech College Senate.

2. The FC Tech College Senate may address and/or propose action on—but not limited to—the following issues:
  - Ideas for college reforms (e.g. curricular changes, college discipline policies, learning culture initiatives, etc.)
  - Proposals or suggestions for procedural improvements (e.g. scheduling, student assignments, placements, etc.)
  - Proposals for in-service professional development (e.g. whole-college literacy approaches, behavioral intervention workshops, restorative justice presentations, etc.)
  - Proposals for structural improvements or aesthetic changes to the college building(s)
  - Initiatives for establishing or changing norms for collaboration, interdisciplinary learning and collegiality
  - Professional concerns regarding workplace related issues and issues related to decision-making processes at the college

### **C. How to bring your proposals to the FC Tech College Senate**

1. Email one or more of the elected officers of the FC Tech College Senate. If possible, and depending on the issue or circumstances, carbon copy at least one other colleague and/or administrator to keep communications open and transparent.
2. Send an email to [FC\\_Techsenate@FC\\_Tech.edu](mailto:FC_Techsenate@FC_Tech.edu) or [FC\\_TechcollegeSenate@gmail.com](mailto:FC_TechcollegeSenate@gmail.com) if you wish to direct your concern(s) to the staff as a whole. At the FC Tech College Senate Officers' discretion and with your permission—and perhaps with minor revisions that are mutually agreed upon—the FC Tech College Senate can send the email directly to the FC Tech list-serve from the FC Tech College Senate email account to represent the faculty and staff and to respect any requests for anonymity.
3. Visit with the Co-chairs or any other elected member of the FC Tech College Senate to request item(s) to be placed on the agenda.

### **D. Norms and procedures for formal proposals and all other professional writing generated and/or published through the FC Tech College Senate**

1. Proposals, letters, emails and memos presented through the FC Tech College Senate to the FC Tech community can be written by any Senate Officer.
2. The Officers of the FC Tech College Senate reserve the right to revise/edit all proposals, letters, emails and memos representing the FC Tech College Senate for clarity, grammar and to modify potentially offensive and/or slanderous content. Writer(s) will be consulted before the final version is sent out to the college community and/or published on the FC Tech College Senate web page.
3. The FC Tech College Senate discourages “flaming/trolling” (writing that is intentionally offensive or instigative) in all communications.
4. Formal proposals should be written in a clear, structured, professional style with reasoning and evidence, and, if possible, with relevant research that supports the proposed ideas(s).
5. Formal proposal(s) may include content that:
  - connects the mission and/or vision statement of the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology; and/or
  - refers to relevant education law(s) on the City, State or Federal level; and/or
  - seeks to promote reasonable standards of ethics, human rights, consideration, dignity, equity, physical/mental health of students, instructors, all other faculty members, staff members and administrators; and/or
  - points to research or current data that supports the proposed reforms (e.g. recent findings in behavioral psychology, workplace ethics research, cognitive theory, etc.); and/or
  - proposes policies around organizational governance that refer to professional roles and duties rather than the specific names of individuals (when possible), to emphasize the functional aspects of the role(s) in place of specific personalities—unless *severe ethical and/or legal violations* are in consideration; and/or
  - uses rhetorical techniques that are suitable to the occasion and to the audience the proposal seeks to reach. Sometimes a proposal will be written in the first-person plural (we) if after a period of open comment, it aims to represent the entire staff and faculty. Other times, a proposal will represent an individual voice or a small collective, which will require an alternative approach; and/or
  - utilizes flow charts, diagrams or other visuals that can facilitate the understanding of the target audience, however, this is not required.



### **III. CONCLUSION**

The FC Tech College Senate is dedicated to building partnerships with all other stakeholders in our college community, including the President/CEO, other members of the Administration, the Board of Trustees, industry partners, students, and parents of students who are participating in Early Access to College programs.

By collaboratively working to establish and promote a healthy workplace culture at the college, a democratic approach to institutional governance, and a successful teaching and learning environment at the Benjamin Institute of Technology, we believe that the FC Tech College Senate can contribute greatly to the overall advancement of technology education and to the multiple fields of technology in which our educational institution plays a vital role.

We believe that the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology can make a life difference for its students and their communities and a societal difference in the multiple fields of technology for which we train our students. With the participation and collaborative partnerships between all members of the community—including, students, faculty and staff, administration, the Board of Directors, community partners, partner educational institutions, school districts and parents whose children are participating in Early Access to College (EAC) programs—the FC Tech College Senate plays a significant role towards that mission.

And, in the current era of anxiety and great and vast change, collaboration is a key component for achieving technological breakthroughs, a sustainable societal vision, and vital communities.



## **IV. APPENDIX**

### **Original Franklin Faculty Senate Charter & Copyright Law and Fair Use**

#### **A. Original Franklin Faculty (FFS) Senate Charter (Approved in 2013-2014)**

##### ***Mission:***

The FFS represents all full time faculty members in efforts to ensure a quality learning environment at FC Tech.

##### ***Membership:***

The FFS shall consist of 4 or 5 full time faculty members with voting privileges. Two faculty members from the same department cannot serve on the senate at the same time unless the department consists of 5 or more full time faculty members. Candidates will be nominated or self-nominated and all full time faculty members will vote on the membership. Appointments are two year terms. A senate member may apply for additional terms which must be voted on by the faculty.

##### ***Duties:***

The FFS shall hold meetings every 2 to 3 weeks or as needed, maintain minutes of all meetings, and keep the FC Tech community informed of its actions and recommendations.

The FFS shall discuss matters of academic importance as they pertain to students and faculty including academic facilities, academic support services, working conditions, personnel issues, financial decisions and governance.

The FFS shall meet once a month with all academic department chairs.

Up to two members of the Senate can sit in on PAC meetings to represent faculty interests.

Once a month, the FFS will meet with one or more members of the Board of Trustees to share student stories and academic department accomplishments.

Every year, the FFS will evaluate its charter and make appropriate changes which must be approved by the faculty and the President.

### *Senate Chair:*

A Chair of the FFS will be elected from its members by the entire faculty. The Chair of the FFS will be responsible for adhering to the guidelines for FC Tech faculty committees. This person will be granted 3 hours of release time from his/her teaching load.

## **B. Further Considerations for FC Tech College Senate Communication Norms**

1. The FC Tech College Senate page will have a professional aesthetic and a simple, accessible design.
2. All contents will be professional and cordial.
3. Roles and functions will be referred to instead of individual names, in keeping with the principles of professionalism and personal neutrality
4. All proposals in the final draft, letters, FC Tech College Senate emails, newsletters and other writings generated by the FC Tech College Senate are to be published and archived on a FC Tech College Senate web page. Any other writing may be published only with the written consent of the author(s). This page may be either public or privately available within the staff and faculty and made available to all faculty and staff.
5. The web page's contents will contain only political content that is directly related to the political process of the Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology.

We define political process as the process by which individuals and groups negotiate the ways and means through which the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders (i.e. individuals and groups) work towards the success of an organization's goals.

When larger political movements come to bear on the current situation, this will be communicated plainly with the continued focus on how this impacts the college's mission, the delivery of the curricula and programs, student and worker's rights, and other operational imperatives of the college.

6. The FC Tech College and staff will be consulted throughout the process of building the web page.
7. The FC Tech College Senate reserves the right to have the final decision regarding the FC Tech College Senate web page's contents in matters of faculty and staff positions on education and workplace policies —whether public or private—while striving to comply with the highest values of professional discourse.
8. No person(s) or groups will be slandered or “flamed” (offensive or inflammatory writing) in any way.
9. All facts, figures, proposals and claims will be accompanied by research and/or substantiated evidence.
10. The FC Tech College Senate Charter and Bylaws will be made available publicly within the FC Tech college community (and publicly, should the elected Officers decide) through our web page.

### **C. FC Tech College Senate's Copyright Policy**

Under the Fair Use Copyright Law, any and all words, phrases, parts and sections of the FC Tech College Senate Charter and Bylaws can be copied and distributed by College Senates and all other teacher organizations in the United States with or without permission or attribution. We encourage other college senates and all other teacher organizations to adopt the FC Tech College Senate Charter and Bylaws, all, or in part, with or without permission or attribution.

### **D. Fair Use Copyright Law in the United States**

**Source:** U.S. Copyright Office,  
Revised, September 2010

“One of the rights accorded to the owner of copyright is the right to reproduce or to authorize others to reproduce the work in copies or phonorecords. This right is subject to certain limitations found in sections 107 through 118 of the copyright law (title 17, U. S. Code). One of the more important limitations is the doctrine of “fair use.” The doctrine of fair use has developed through a substantial number of court decisions over the years and has been codified in section 107 of the copyright law.

Section 107 contains a list of the various purposes for which the reproduction of a particular work may be considered fair, such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research. Section 107 also sets out four factors to be considered in determining whether or not a particular use is fair:

1. The purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes
2. The nature of the copyrighted work
3. The amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole
4. The effect of the use upon the potential market for, or value of, the copyrighted work

The distinction between fair use and infringement may be unclear and not easily defined. There is no specific number of words, lines, or notes that may safely be taken without permission. Acknowledging the source of the copyrighted material does not substitute for obtaining permission.

The 1961 Report of the Register of Copyrights on the General Revision of the U.S. Copyright Law cites examples of activities that courts have regarded as fair use: “quotation of excerpts in a review or criticism for purposes of illustration or comment; quotation of short passages in a scholarly or technical work, for illustration or clarification of the author’s observations; use in a parody of some of the content of the work parodied; summary of an address or article, with brief quotations, in a news report; reproduction by a library of a portion of a work to replace part of a damaged copy; reproduction by a teacher or student of a small part of a work to illustrate a lesson; reproduction of a work in legislative or judicial proceedings or reports; incidental and fortuitous reproduction, in a newsreel or broadcast, of a work located in the scene of an event being reported.”

Copyright protects the particular way an author has expressed himself. It does not extend to any ideas, systems, or factual information conveyed in the work.

The safest course is always to get permission from the copyright owner before using copyrighted material. The Copyright Office cannot give this permission.

When it is impracticable to obtain permission, use of copyrighted material should be avoided unless the doctrine of fair use would clearly apply to the situation. The Copyright Office can neither determine if a certain use may be considered fair nor advise on possible copyright violations. If there is any doubt, it is advisable to consult an attorney” (U.S. Copyright Office, 2010).