

# BRIERCREST COLLEGE AND SEMINARY SENATE BYLAWS

## PART ONE

### Introduction

Briercrest College and Seminary (BCS) operates with a bicameral system of governance; the Board of Directors (Board) and the Faculty Senate (Senate) serve as the two governing bodies. The President serves as the link between the two bodies. Appointed by the Board of Directors, the President serves as an *ex officio* member of the Board and as BCS's Chief Administrative and Executive Officer; she or he is thus responsible to the Board of Directors for carrying out its policies in the affairs of the College and Seminary. As its most senior faculty member, the President (or her or his designate) chairs the Faculty Senate.

Although the Board holds final responsibility for the institution, the Board and the Senate share decision-making responsibility and authority within the institution. In general terms, the Senate has responsibility for academic matters and the Board has responsibility for financial matters. Where there are overlapping responsibilities (e.g., in the approval of new programs), the Board aims to carry out its work sensitively and without interfering with the academic work of the Senate.

The Senate is committed to working collaboratively with the Board and with other stakeholders in endeavoring to carry out the institutional mission. Because it is also committed to working efficiently, it delegates some of its decision-making authority to other persons or committees. The Academic Planning Committee, for example, determines the dates for the beginning and ending of lectures and the Registrar determines the timetable for examinations.

The Senate both approves the academic priorities of the College and Seminary and offers advice to other decision-makers on issues touching on the academic work of the institution.

### I. Powers and Duties of the Briercrest College and Seminary Faculty Senate

#### *The Faculty Senate has power:*

1. To enact by-laws for the conduct of its affairs including the establishment of committees;
2. To make recommendation to the Board with respect to the establishment or termination of programs, schools and divisions and with respect to affiliations with other institutions;
3. To make recommendation to the Board with respect to admission requirements and standards;
4. To make recommendation to the Board with respect to the appointment and removal of the members of the teaching faculty;
5. To determine the curricula of all programs and courses of study;
6. To determine the qualifications for degrees, diplomas and certificates;
7. To determine the dates for the beginning and ending of lectures and the timetable for examinations;

8. To conduct the examinations, appoint examiners and determine the results of the examinations;
9. To award fellowships, scholarships, bursaries, medals, prizes and other marks of academic achievement; and
10. To award degrees, diplomas and certificates.

## II. Procedural By-Laws of the Briercrest College and Seminary Faculty Senate

1. **Quorum for Meetings:** The quorum for regular and special meetings will be 65 per cent.
2. **The Duties of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson**
  - (a) The duties of the Chairperson will be carried out by the Vice-Chairperson when, for any reason, the Chairperson is unable to discharge these duties. When neither the Chairperson nor the Vice-Chairperson is able to discharge the duties of the Chairperson, the Vice-President Academic will designate a member of the Senate to act as Chairperson.
  - (b) The Chairperson will preside over all meetings of the Senate. The Chairperson's duties are to preserve order and decorum and, subject to appeal, to decide all questions of order and other questions as provided in these by-laws.
  - (c) The Chairperson will prepare a draft agenda for each meeting of the Senate and will present it for approval at the meeting.
  - (d) The Chairperson will not vote on a motion before the Senate except when there is an equal number of voting members supporting and opposing the motion.
  - (e) The Chairperson will be the spokesperson for the Senate in communications with the Board and the public. In this respect, the role of the Chairperson is to explain the activities and to communicate the policies of the Senate.
3. **Senate Membership:** The Senate shall consist of the President as Chairperson of the Senate; the Vice-President Academic as the Vice-Chairperson of the Senate; any faculty member who holds the rank of dean in an area of administration which deals with academic matters; the Librarian; the Registrar; any faculty member holding the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor; one student elected from among and by the students of Briercrest College; and one student elected from among and by the students of Briercrest Seminary.
4. **Senate Meetings**
  - (a) Senate meetings will be open except when the Senate decides to have them closed.
  - (b) The Senate will meet monthly from September through May. The Chairperson can call a

meeting during the June to August period.

- (c) Special meetings of the Senate can be called by the Chairperson or by petition of 20 per cent of the members of the Senate.
- (d) A motion to amend the by-laws will be preceded by a notice of motion presented in writing to the members not less than 30 days prior to the date of the meeting at which the motion is considered.
- (e) Except as provided in by-laws (d) and (g), a motion will be preceded by a notice of motion presented in writing to the members of the Senate not less than seven days prior to the date of the meeting at which the motion is to be considered. This by-law applies only to a motion dealing with a substantive matter that requires consideration by members of the Senate prior to the meeting at which the motion is presented. Whether or not a motion falls within this by-law will be determined by the Chairperson.
- (f) The requirement of by-law (e) may be suspended upon vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting at a meeting.
- (g) A recommendation to Senate contained in a committee report is deemed to be a notice of motion if the report containing the recommendation is included with the agenda of the meeting at which the report is considered.
- (h) In the event of an emergency situation as declared by the Chairperson of the Senate or her or his delegate, if Senate is unable to meet or attain quorum, Senate may decide urgent matters by alternative means. Procedures governing such decisions must be approved by the Chairperson of the Faculty Affairs Committee.
- (i) The meetings of the Senate and of committees of Senate will be conducted in accordance with the rules of order contained in *Procedures for Meetings and Organizations, Third Edition by Kerr and King*.

### III. The Committees of Senate

#### 1. Creation and Composition of Senate Committees

- (a) Senate has the power to establish committees to facilitate its work. There is no requirement that these committees be composed entirely of Senate members.
- (b) The committees specified in Part Two of these by-laws are created as standing committees.
- (c) The Deans Council will serve as the Nominations Committee. The Senate will revisit the decision about the composition of the Nominations Committee on or before May 31, 2016.

- (d) The Nominations Committee will nominate members, including the Chairpersons, of Senate committees.
- (e) The Nominations Committee will present its nominations to the Senate at the Senate's May meeting and otherwise as required when vacancies occur. It is the responsibility of the Nominations Committee to present a slate of candidates for all committee positions. The Nominations Committee will take into consideration the abilities and experience of the proposed nominees and the balance of representation from the various sectors of the campus. The Nominations Committee will present the slate to the Senate with sufficient names to fill the available positions. The Chairperson of the Senate will call for any further nominations from the floor. If there are none, the slate will be elected. If there are nominations from the floor there will be an election held within two weeks. The election will be held only for those committees that have received nominations exceeding the available positions. The ballot will be prepared and distributed by the Office of the Vice-President Academic. The ballots will include the names of the slate presented by the Nominations Committee and the nominations from the floor. It will indicate the positions to be filled and the eligibility requirements for the positions. Voters will indicate choices up to the number of positions available. Eligible candidates with the greatest number of votes will be declared elected.
- (f) The President and the Vice-President Academic are *ex officio*, non-voting members of all Senate committees. They are not counted when determining the quorum of a committee meeting.
- (g) An *ex officio* member may designate an individual to serve in her or his place on a committee of the Senate with the same powers as the designator. Such designations shall last for a twelve-month period of time subject to renewal. In the event that the individual is unable to complete the full term, another individual can be designated in her or his place. To initiate the designation, the *ex officio* member will inform the Chairperson of the Senate and the Chairperson of the committee involved. During the period of designation, the *ex officio* member who initiated the designation may still attend the Committee meeting from time to time with a voice but no vote.
- (h) The Student Government will name their appointees to Senate committees for the entire academic year.
- (i) Resource personnel and offices providing administrative support are non-voting members of the committees and are not counted when determining the quorum of a committee meeting.
- (j) Terms of office for Senate committee members will begin August 1 unless otherwise provided by the Nominations Committee.
- (k) The term of office of a faculty member of a standing committee is normally three years. The terms of student members will be one year. The term of office the Chairperson will

be one year, and may be renewed annually for up to two additional years.

## 2. Committee Responsibilities

- (a) The responsibilities of the standing committees are set out in Part Two of this document.
- (b) All standing committees will meet and report to the Senate at least once each academic year.
- (c) Standing committees may create subcommittees, including subcommittees composed of persons who are not members of the Senate.
- (d) The quorum for standing committee meetings is a majority of the voting members. The quorum for the Nominations Committee is two-thirds of the voting members.
- (e) Unless a motion of the Senate specifically provides otherwise, all recommendations of committees will be brought to the Senate for approval or change. Generally, committee recommendations are presented to the Senate in the form of reports.

## IV. Conflict of Interest

### 1. Senate Proceedings

- (a) Members of the Senate and members of committees of the Senate will have as their principal concern the welfare of the College and Seminary community. They will exercise independent judgement and may not act as agents of any person or organization.
- (b) There are no restrictions on the rights of a Senate member to participate in debate and to vote on any matter that comes before the Senate. However, a Senate member who has a conflict of interest with respect to a matter that comes before the Senate will disclose the conflict when speaking on the matter in Senate proceedings.

### 2. Committees of Senate

- (a) A member of a committee of the Senate will conduct herself or himself so as to avoid conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest.
- (b) A member of a committee will disclose and identify a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest affecting that member.
- (c) A member of a committee will abstain from voting in committee proceedings on matters

on which she or he has a conflict of interest. When appropriate, the member will withdraw from all committee deliberations with respect to the matter.

- (d) The Chairperson or a member of a committee will be entitled to raise the question whether another member has a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest on a matter before the committee.
- (e) The Chairperson or a member of a committee is entitled to ask another member who has or is perceived to have a conflict of interest to withdraw from the deliberations of the committee or to refrain from voting on a matter before the committee.
- (f) If a request referred to in paragraph (e) to withdraw from the deliberations of the committee or to refrain from voting on a matter before the committee is denied by the member to whom the request is directed, the fact that the request was made and was denied will be recorded in that portion of the committee's report relating to the matter.

### 3. Conflict of Interest Defined

A conflict of interest exists for a member of the Senate or a member of a Senate committee when, with respect to a matter being considered by the Senate or the committee: The decision being made is such that the member could not reasonably be expected to exercise independent judgement because of the effect the decision would or would be likely to have on the member or a person closely related or closely associated with the member; or as a result of occupying a position or holding an office in an organization, the person is legally obligated to subordinate the interests of BCS to the interests of the organization when dealing with the matter.

## PART TWO: SENATE COMMITTEES

### I. Academic Planning Committee

#### *Membership*

- One elected representative from each faculty
- One undergraduate student, appointed by the Student Government
- One graduate student, appointed by the Student Government

#### *Ex Officio (Voting)*

- Vice-President Academic
- Associate Vice-President (Academic)
- Dean of each faculty
- Registrar
- Director of Continuing and Distance Education

***The Academic Planning Committee is responsible for:***

- 1) Working with the Office of the Vice-President Academic to keep a current Master Academic Plan for Briercrest College and Seminary.
- 2) Making recommendations to the Senate on policies and procedures related to academic programs and sustaining program quality.
- 3) Making recommendations to the Senate on new programs, major program revisions and program deletions, including their budgetary implications.
- 4) Approving minor program changes, including additions of new courses and revisions to or deletions of existing courses and reporting them to the Senate.
- 5) Considering outreach and engagement aspects of programs.
- 6) Making recommendations to the Senate each May with respect to the schedule for program reviews for the following academic year.
- 7) Reporting to the Senate processes and outcomes of academic program review, following consultation.
- 8) Undertaking the academic and budgetary review of proposals for the establishment, disestablishment or amalgamation of any college, school, department or any unit responsible for the administration of an academic program and forwarding recommendations to the Senate.
- 9) Reporting to the Senate on the academic implications of quotas and admission standards.
- 10) Approving the annual academic schedule and reporting the schedule to the Senate for information and recommending to the Senate substantive changes in policy governing dates for the academic sessions.
- 11) Approving minor changes (such as wording and renumbering) to rules governing examinations and reviewing and recommending to the Senate substantive changes.

**II. Academic Support Committee*****Membership***

Three members of the Senate

One student, undergraduate or graduate, appointed by the student government.

***Ex Officio (Voting)***

Vice-President Academic or designate

Chief Information Officer

Director of Continuing and Distance Education

Librarian

***Administrative Support***

Office of the Vice-President Academic

***The Academic Support Committee is responsible for:***

- 1) Making recommendations to the Senate with respect to policies and priorities relating to library, media technology and information technology

- 2) Advising the Directors of the Library Director and Information Services on allocation of resources.
- 3) Advising the Office of the Vice-President Academic on budgetary matters concerning the library, media technology and information technology.

### III. Research Ethics Board (REB)

#### *Membership*

The REB shall consist of at least four members, of whom:

- 1) At least two members have expertise in relevant research disciplines, fields and methodologies covered by the REB;
- 2) One member should be knowledgeable in ethics;
- 3) The inclusion of at least one member who is knowledgeable in the law is considered advisable but not necessary. When applicable to the research project (based on the evaluation of the Chairperson), legal advice will be sought;
- 4) One member should be a community member who has no affiliation with Briercrest College and Seminary.

#### *The Research Ethics Board is responsible for:*

- 1) Developing policies regarding ethical issues relating to the use of human participants in research and experimental protocols.
- 2) Reviewing all protocols requiring the participation of human participants for ethical approval.
- 3) Reviewing biannually all policies regarding ethical issues relating to the use of human participants in research projects to ensure that the policies remain current.
- 4) Preparing an annual report. See III-2-b)

### IV. Scholarships and Awards Committee

#### *Membership*

Three members of the Senate

#### *Ex Officio (Voting)*

Vice-President Academic or designate  
Director of Recruitment

#### *Resource Personnel (non-voting members)*

Student Finance Officer  
Registrar

One representative from Development, appointed by the Vice-President External Relations



*Administrative Support*  
Academic Services Office

***The Scholarships and Awards committee is responsible for:***

- 1) Making recommendations to the Senate on matters relating to the financial awards under the control of the College and Seminary.
- 2) Making recommendations to the Senate on the establishment of financial awards.
- 3) Granting financial awards on behalf of the Senate.
- 4) Making recommendations to the Senate with respect to rules and procedures to deal with appeals by students with respect to financial awards

## V. Teaching and Learning Committee

***Membership***

Three members of the Senate, one of whom will normally serve as Chairperson.  
One student, graduate or undergraduate, appointed by the Student Government

*Ex Officio (Voting)*

Associate Vice-President (Academic)  
Librarian

*Administrative Support*

Office of the Vice-President Academic

***The Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for:***

- 1) Making recommendations to the Senate with respect to policies, programs and activities related to the enhancement, effectiveness and evaluation of teaching and learning at BCS.
- 2) Encouraging the adoption of new learning modes, strategies and technologies.
- 3) Encouraging the development of community-based learning opportunities including service learning and work experience.
- 4) Promoting the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- 5) Receiving and reviewing reports on matters related to teaching and learning.
- 6) Organizing and facilitating an annual in-service pedagogy workshop for all faculty.
- 7) Working with the Office of the Vice-President Academic in the development of policies and instruments related to the formative assessment of faculty teaching.

## VI. Faculty Senate Evaluation Committee

***Membership***

Three members of the Senate with continuing appointments  
One alternate faculty member to serve when a regular committee member is under review, to be nominated and approved by the Senate

*Ex Officio (Voting)*

Vice-President Academic (Convener and Chairperson)  
Associate Vice-President (Academic)

*Administrative Support*

Office of the Vice-President Academic

***The Faculty Senate Evaluation Committee is responsible for:***

- 1) Evaluating faculty applications to move from probationary to continuing status.
- 2) Evaluating faculty applications for promotion, in accordance with the criteria described in the Rank and Promotion Policy.
- 3) Serving as the primary evaluation committee of faculty performance in accordance with the procedures described in the Faculty Dismissal Policy.

## VII. Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC)

***Membership***

Three members of the Senate with continuing appointments, with no more than two members coming from one faculty.

*Ex Officio (Voting)*

Vice-President Academic

In matters concerning Seminary personnel, the Seminary Dean will also be invited to sit as an *ex officio* member of this committee.

*Administrative Support*

Office of the Vice-President Academic

***The Faculty Affairs Committee*** is dedicated to the mutually supportive and affirming relationships that administration and faculty have traditionally maintained at BCS. Although the FAC is weighted toward faculty representation (and hence, by nature, concerns), it should take seriously its mandate to maintain and to promote healthy and responsible dialogue. The FAC should not be defined either in its nomenclature or mission as an inherently adversarial body. That is, it is not an advocacy group that independently seeks out personnel issues. Likewise, it is not to be regarded solely as a disciplinary body. Rather, the FAC is modeled after the instructions of Jesus in Matthew 18:15-20 for dealing with grievances and accountability. Depending upon the circumstances, the FAC may well operate as an advocate for faculty concerns or as a source of accountability and discipleship for an individual faculty member. Thus, the FAC should be viewed as an independent, confidential voice that is characterized by discernment rather than intentional bias. The FAC is responsible for representing faculty concerns in situations where normal avenues of communication and/or accountability have been found wanting.

***In particular, the Faculty Affairs Committee is responsible for:***

- 1) Representing faculty concerns in situations where normal avenues of

- communication and/or accountability have been found wanting.
- 2) Recommending and review policies concerning faculty well-being.
  - 3) Facilitating accountability in dealings between administration and faculty, between individual faculty members, or between students and faculty.
  - 4) Facilitating reconciliation in faculty relationships with other faculty or with administration.
  - 5) Facilitating restoration for faculty who require discipline.
  - 6) Offering recommendations to the appropriate body: the Faculty Senate, the Deans Council, the Office of the Vice-President Academic, the President, the Board of Directors or an external body that has been mutually agreed upon by the FAC and administration.

## VIII. Academic Appeals Committee

### *Membership*

Two members of the Senate  
One Student Development Representative

*Ex Officio* (Voting)  
Registrar (Chairperson)

*The Academic Appeals Committee* is responsible to provide students with timely, respectful, and thorough reviews of academic decisions they perceive to be unfair.

*Administrative Support*  
Academic Services Office

## IX. Writing Centre Advisory Committee

### *Membership*

One member of the Senate

*Ex Officio* (Voting)  
Associate Vice-President (Academic)

*The Writing Centre Advisory Committee* is responsible for developing and implementing policies and practices relating to the Writing Centre.

## X. Aboriginal Affairs Committee

### *Membership*

Two members of the Senate  
One or two student representatives, graduate or undergraduate, appointed by the Student Government  
One external Aboriginal member (if possible)

*Ex Officio* (Voting)

Associate Vice-President (Academic)

Aboriginal Coordinator

***The Aboriginal Affairs Committee is responsible for:***

- 1) Planning and implementing Aboriginal Awareness Week.
- 2) Making recommendations regarding Aboriginal issues to any level of Briercrest College and Seminary, including the Board of Directors.
- 3) Acting as a liaison between Briercrest College and Seminary and external stakeholders.