



**THOMAS MORE
UNIVERSITY**

CONSTITUTION OF THE FACULTY

**Approved by Faculty General Assembly
24 March 2023**

**Ratification by the Board of Trustees
December 5, 2024**

PREAMBLE TO THE FACULTY CONSTITUTION PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNANCE

Governance of the University

The Board of Trustees (BoT), led by the Chancellor, is the legally-recognized governing body of Thomas More University. The BoT identifies, appoints, and designates a President (who is also a trustee) to govern the University in their stead. The President delegates authority for various divisions to Vice Presidents who manage their divisions and report to the President.

The BoT, except for the Chancellor, Religious, and the President, is a self-governing and self-perpetuating body. The BoT is self-governing through its Committees, and self-perpetuating in its choice of individuals invited to join the Board.

Faculty Governance

While the BoT has the ultimate fiduciary responsibility and governance authority for the institution, the continuing Faculty of the University derive its authority to govern from the BoT and exercise such through their Committees and in concert with their Academic Leaders (Chairs, Deans, and the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer), and in their choice of academic peers, also in concert with their Academic Leaders.

In the spirit of an academic community working collaboratively toward safeguarding and enhancing the University, the Board of Trustees (BoT) recognize the role of Faculty through shared governance to speak to issues and decisions affecting mission, faculty, and the academic program. By virtue of this derived governance authority from the BoT, the Faculty have rights of shared governance of the University.

Shared-Governance

Shared governance is collaborative decision-making whereby the Faculty is recognized by the BoT and is given a voice and invited to speak to issues and decisions affecting the University, specifically those outlined in the *Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty Members*.

These decisions, if purely academic (i.e., affecting only the Colleges of the University and not the institution at large), have to be approved by Academic Leaders, who are selected and appointed because of their faculty experience and ranked faculty status attained either at Thomas More or at another regionally accredited institution.

Faculty contributions and perspectives shared on issues pertaining to the University, as defined in this *Faculty Constitution*, are to be recognized as having value in terms of collaborative decision-making by the President or their designee, and official votes by the faculty through the Faculty General Assembly (FGA) on these issues have to be approved by the President or their designee among institutional leaders.

Faculty Governance Authority at University and College Level

The authority of the Faculty to govern at both the University and College level is derived from the BoT who hold the ultimate governance and fiduciary responsibility for the University. At the University level, Faculty governance is activated by the Faculty through Faculty General Assembly (FGA) and Faculty Committees. At the College level, Faculty governance is activated by the College through its College Assembly and College-specific Committees. All College Committee decisions have to be approved by the Dean and may require further approval by the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer and/or the President. Faculty Committee decisions have to be approved by the Vice President

& Chief Academic Officer at the University level and may require further approval by the President. Some Faculty Committee recommendations may require further approval by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE I PURPOSE

The purpose of this Constitution of the Faculty of Thomas More University (hereinafter “Constitution”) is to affirm the rights and responsibilities of the Ranked Faculty members of the University. It establishes the membership and role of the Ranked Faculty in the University decision-making process, the Faculty governance structure and the principles of shared governance, and the rules by which the Faculty shall function.

Subject to approval by the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer, President, the Enrollment, Academic, and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees, and Board of Trustees, the Ranked Faculty in each of the Colleges of the University (hereinafter “Colleges”) shall have the right to adopt supplemental policies and procedures pertaining to its governance role within that College, provided such policies and procedures are not inconsistent with this Constitution or the *By-Laws of Thomas More University*.

As the Catholic university of the Diocese of Covington, Thomas More University observes the decisions and documents of the Second Vatican Council (*On the Church in the Modern World and the Declaration of Christian Education*) affecting Catholic higher education. The Chancellor of the University, the Bishop of Covington, guides the governance of the institution in accordance with the pastoral and apostolic constitutions, the *Declaration on Christian Education, Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, and the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*. The Faculty Constitution shall be applied in a manner consistent with these principles and those of the University accreditation.

ARTICLE II THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY: MEMBERSHIP, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Membership

The Faculty of Thomas More University who participate in governance (hereinafter “Faculty”) shall consist of all regular Full-time Ranked Faculty (i.e., Instructors, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, and Professors) whose primary responsibility is teaching (at least 50% of their duties are teaching).

The Vice President & Chief Academic Officer, any Assistant, Associate, or Vice Provosts, and the Deans of the academic Colleges maintain both membership in the Faculty and access to their earned Rank and Tenure. The voting rights of these positions are clarified in Article III Section 2.

Section 2. Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty Members

Each Faculty member shall have rights and responsibilities that include, but are not limited to the following:

1. the right to academic freedom;
2. the right to teach;
3. the right to invite guest speakers to lecture in class in accordance with University policy and procedures;
4. the right to maintain order in the classroom, laboratory, or clinical setting as applicable;

5. the right to refuse to offer a course for appropriate reasons in consultation with the Chair and Dean (appropriate reasons include such factors as evidence that a class cannot be taught in a format that does not afford sufficiently frequent student-faculty interaction, inadequate facilities at a site, *e.g.* lack of laboratory equipment needed to support a course, lack of suitable background on the part of the faculty member to provide a high quality learning experience for the students, or a work load that is already full and cannot absorb additional teaching responsibilities without damaging the quality of instruction. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but simply to provide some specification to an otherwise vague phrase.) in such contexts, the responsibility to determine if arrangements need to be made to meet student needs rests with the Chair or Dean, in consultation with the Vice President & Chief Academic Office;
6. the right to seek redress for arbitrary or unreasonable enforcement of faculty responsibilities or for actions which the faculty member considers to be contrary to the individual's rights as a Thomas More University Faculty member via the Faculty Grievance Policy (see the *Faculty Policy Manual*);
7. the right to work in a collegial and professional work environment;
8. the right to not be removed from one's position except in accordance with established policies and procedures;
9. the right to intellectual property in accordance with University Intellectual Property Policy and unless otherwise contracted;
10. the right to membership in professional societies in accordance with University policy and procedures;
11. the right to participate in appropriate levels of the decision-making process regarding matters of direct *primary* concern to the Faculty as defined in Article II, Section 3 of the Constitution and in alignment with the Principles of Governance outlined in Preamble of the Constitution;
12. the right to have professional performance evaluated on the basis of clearly defined and properly promulgated criteria;
13. the right to develop oneself in response to formative evaluations in accordance with University policy and procedures;
14. the right of eligible faculty to apply for tenure in keeping with University and programmatic criteria as approved by the Board of Trustees;
15. the right to seek the academic rank for which one meets the established qualifications and criteria;
16. the right to be compensated and receive eligible benefits, comparable to institutional benchmarks, in accordance with the faculty member's annual appointment contract (This statement in no way prejudices agreements with the Diocese of Covington, religious orders or communities, or any members thereof.);
17. the right to be remunerated for any required services that clearly exceed the obligations of an individual faculty member's appointment contract;
18. the responsibility to adhere to the prevailing ethical standards of the faculty member's discipline(s) or professional organization(s);

19. the responsibility to offer courses within the area of professional competence unless there is an (are) appropriate reason(s) not to offer such courses (see Section 2, item 5);
20. the responsibility to be fair and impartial in evaluating and grading students;
21. the responsibility to maintain and assess student learning in accordance with current policies and procedures;
22. the responsibility to make reasonable accommodations for students relating to religious observances and disabilities disclosed in accordance with the University's policies;
23. the responsibility to foster the aims and objectives of the mission of Thomas More University;
24. the responsibility to work in a collegial and professional manner, which includes mutual respect, common courtesies, personal accountability, and a willingness to contribute to the effective functioning of the University, as well the faculty member's College and department;
25. the responsibility to be cognizant of developments and pedagogy in one's field of expertise;
26. the responsibility to participate in committee work and to accept or to support others in formal positions of leadership where necessary and appropriate unless there is some pertinent reason for refusing;
27. the responsibility to attend and participate in scheduled meetings of the Faculty General Assembly and of the Faculty Committees of which one is a member;
28. the responsibility to be present at official University functions that one is contractually obligated to attend unless there is a compelling reason for not participating; and
29. the responsibility to engage in performance evaluations of academic and professional duties in accordance with the established policies and procedures of the University.

All of the above rights and responsibilities are subject to the relevant and applicable University policies and procedures as well as any applicable state and federal law and are further expanded upon in such applicable University policies and the *Faculty Policy Manual*.

Section 3. The Role of the Faculty in the Decision-Making Process

1. The Faculty shall have a voice in all decisions concerned with the major academic and faculty status policies of the University that concern more than one College of the University. Faculty decisions at the University level usually take place through formal recommendations of the Faculty General Assembly or the standing or *ad hoc* Faculty or University committee structure.
2. The Faculty in a College through the College Assembly have the right to determine policies and procedures within the College subject to approval by their Dean and the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer.
3. The areas of *primary* Faculty involvement shall include the following:
 - a. Curriculum planning and assessment, including core curriculum requirements;
 - b. Graduation requirements;
 - c. Academic admissions standards;
 - d. Methods of instruction;
 - e. Academic research policies;

- f. Recommendations by the members of the Ranked Faculty regarding the appointment of the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer and by the Ranked Faculty in each College regarding the appointment of the Dean of their respective College;
- g. Faculty evaluation;
- h. Reappointment, rank, and promotion policies;
- i. The process by which one applies for the receipt of tenure;
- j. Library resources pertaining to teaching, learning, and research; and
- k. Technology-related resources and policies pertaining to teaching, learning, and research.

Primary faculty involvement is to be understood as requiring either a recommendation by the Faculty as expressed by a majority vote of the Faculty General Assembly or majority voting membership by Faculty on the appropriate committees, as applicable. Because the governance authority of the Faculty is derived from the BoT, nothing shall serve to inhibit the BoT from taking any action to fulfill its fiduciary obligations and ultimate governance responsibility.

The Faculty of the University shall have a voice in all University-level decisions concerned with areas of *primary* involvement as enumerated above. This usually takes place through either a formal recommendation of the Faculty General Assembly or the committee structure. The Faculty in each College have a voice in all College-level decisions concerned with areas of their *primary* involvement. This typically occurs through the Faculty College Assembly or through representative College committees.

- 4. In addition to recommending policy in areas of *primary* faculty involvement, the Faculty shall also participate in the governance of the University via voting membership by Faculty on University Standing Committees and appropriate *ad hoc* committees.

Section 4. Faculty Organization in the Decision-Making Process

- 1. The Faculty carries out its role in the University decision-making process through the following structures at the University level:
 - a. Faculty Committees of the Colleges;
 - b. The Faculty College Assemblies;
 - c. Faculty representatives on committees;
 - d. The Faculty Coordinating Committee; and
 - e. The Faculty General Assembly.
- 2. The Faculty in each College shall decide upon the structures and procedures for carrying out its role in that College's decision-making process.

Section 5. The Nature and Extent of the Faculty's Authority in the Decision-Making Process

Any important change or modification of major decisions in areas of *primary* faculty involvement that concerns all Colleges of the University requires a prior recommendation by the Faculty General Assembly to the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer and, if appropriate, the President of the University.

Any important change or modification of major decisions in areas of *primary* faculty involvement that concerns two of the three Colleges of the University requires a prior recommendation by both Faculty

College Assemblies, supplemented with comments from the Deans, to the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer and, if appropriate, the President of the University. Given that the President has been delegated the general responsibility for University policy from the BoT, the President shall be notified of all recommendations and make the ultimate determination as to all appropriate next steps.

Any important change or modification of major decisions in areas of *primary* faculty involvement that concerns one College of the University, as verified by the Faculty Coordinating Committee, requires a prior recommendation by the Faculty College Assembly, supplemented with comments from the Dean of that College, to the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer and the President of the University, where appropriate (as determined by the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer). If any individual or group beyond the College being affected desires to initiate such a change or modification, then it should be treated as though it affects more than one College of the University.

To the extent that there is any conflict between this Constitution and the *By-Laws of Thomas More University*, the latter shall govern as the BoT has ultimate authority for the governance of the University. To the extent there is a conflict between the Constitution and an individual College's policies and procedures, this Constitution shall govern.

A. Changes or Modifications Originating with the Faculty:

1. Any Faculty member or group of Faculty members, including Faculty Standing or *Ad Hoc* Committees, may recommend changes or modifications of major decisions in areas of *primary* faculty involvement. Individuals or non-Committee groups should submit suggestions either to the appropriate Standing or *Ad Hoc* Committee or to the Faculty Coordinating Committee, who will refer the recommendation to the appropriate Standing or *Ad Hoc* University or Faculty Committee for review and recommendation (if applicable).
2. Any such recommendation by an individual College that only affects that College will be presented by that College Dean to the Faculty Coordinating Committee to determine if broader approval is necessary or if the decision of the College stands. If the Faculty Coordinating Committee determines that the decision does not need approval by a second College or by the Faculty General Assembly, the decision of the College will be sent as an informational item to the Faculty General Assembly and the Office of Academic Affairs.
3. Any such recommendations by a Standing or *Ad Hoc* Faculty Committee (whether originating with or referred to the Committee) that need broader approval will be referred through the Faculty Coordinating Committee to the Faculty General Assembly. If the Faculty General Assembly does not support the recommendation(s), the recommendation(s) will be dropped.
4. Any changes or modifications of major decisions in areas of *primary* Faculty involvement recommended via majority vote by the Faculty General Assembly will be submitted to the Provost.
 - i. If such change or modification is within the authority of the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer, then either the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer will implement it and inform the President or, if the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer does not support such action, the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer will report the decision and rationale to both the Faculty General Assembly and the President.

- ii. If such change or modification is beyond the authority of the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer, then the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer will add their recommendation to the vote of the Faculty General Assembly and present these to the President.
 1. If such change or modification is within the authority of the President, then either the President will implement it and, if applicable, inform the Board of Trustees, or their designated committee, or, if the President does not support such action, the President will report the decision and rationale to the Faculty General Assembly, the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer, and if applicable the Enrollment, Academic, and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.
 2. If such change or modification is beyond the authority of the President, then the President will add their recommendation to the vote of the Faculty General Assembly and the recommendation of the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer and present these to the Enrollment, Academic, and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees, who may consult the Board of Trustees for a final decision.

B. Changes or Modifications Recommended by a Standing or *Ad Hoc* University Committee:

1. Recommendations for changes or modifications of major decisions in areas of *primary* Faculty involvement originating with a University Committee will be forwarded to the Faculty Coordinating Committee who may forward the recommendation to an appropriate Standing or *Ad Hoc* Faculty Committee for further review and recommendation (if applicable).
2. All subsequent recommendations by Standing or *Ad Hoc* University or Faculty Committees will be referred through the Faculty Coordinating Committee to the Faculty General Assembly.
3. Any changes or modifications of major decisions in areas of *primary* Faculty involvement recommended via majority vote by the Faculty General Assembly will be submitted to the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer who will add their recommendation to the vote of the Faculty General Assembly and present these to the President.
 - i. If such change or modification is within the authority of the President, then either the President will implement it and, if applicable, inform the Board of Trustees, or their designated committee, or, if the President does not support such action, the President will report the decision and rationale to the Faculty General Assembly, the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer, and if applicable the Enrollment, Academic, and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.
 - ii. If such change or modification is beyond the authority of the President, then the President will add their recommendation to the vote of the Faculty General Assembly and the recommendation of the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer and present these to the Enrollment, Academic, and Student Affairs Committees of the Board of Trustees, who may consult the Board of Trustees for a final decision.
4. Any proposed changes or modifications of major decisions in areas of *primary* Faculty involvement originating with a University Committee that is not recommended for adoption via a majority vote by the Faculty General Assembly will be submitted to the

Vice President & Chief Academic Officer who will add their recommendation to the vote of the Faculty General Assembly and present these to the President.

- i. If such change or modification is within the authority of the President, then either the President will support the Faculty vote by not implementing the change or modification and, if applicable, inform the Board of Trustees, or their designated committee, or, if the President does not support the Faculty vote, the President may implement the change but must report the decision and rationale to the Faculty General Assembly, the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer, and the Enrollment, Academic, and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.
- ii. If such change or modification is beyond the authority of the President, then the President will add their recommendation to the vote of the Faculty General Assembly and the recommendation of the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer and present these to the Enrollment, Academic, and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees, who may consult the Board of Trustees for a final decision.

C. Changes or Modifications Introduced by the President or Board of Trustees

1. The President and Board of Trustees (or their designee), recognizing the Faculty right to have voice in all major decisions impacting areas of *primary* Faculty involvement, should, where feasible and not impeding the fiduciary and governance authority of the BoT, submit in writing through the Faculty Coordinating Committee to the Faculty General Assembly the specific wording of any and all substantive changes impacting areas of *primary* Faculty involvement that the President or Board of Trustees (or their designees) may propose. The Faculty General Assembly will be invited to respond to the proposal by its second regularly scheduled meeting or another time period agreeable to both the President (or the President's designee) and the Faculty General Assembly Chairperson as expressed in writing.
2. A proposed change or modification initially referred by the President or Board of Trustees (or their designees) that is not responded to by the Faculty General Assembly within the time prescribed in Section II.5.C.1 may, at the discretion of the President, after consultation with the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer move forward to the Board of Trustees without a formal Faculty General Assembly recommendation. In such a case, both the Faculty General Assembly and the President shall have the right to provide the Board of Trustees with a written report setting forth their respective positions regarding the proposed change or modification.
3. The Board of Trustees (or the President as delegated by the Board of Trustees) may modify the procedures or timeline set forth above in extraordinary circumstances and for good cause shown. This may include situations where modification is required to comply with federal, state, or local law, accreditation standards or other extraordinary circumstances. Any such modifications to the procedures or timeline above decided by the Board of Trustees shall be communicated to the Chairperson of the Faculty General Assembly in writing by the Chair of the Board of Trustees (or the President as delegated by the Board of Trustees). In such a case, both the Faculty General Assembly and the President shall have the right to provide the Board of Trustees with a written report setting forth their respective positions regarding the proposed change or modification.

ARTICLE III THE FACULTY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Section 1. Functions

The Faculty General Assembly serves as the voting body of the University Faculty. The functions of the Faculty General Assembly shall be:

1. To participate in the formulation, implementation, and review of institutional policy in areas of *primary* faculty involvement (see Article II, Section 3);
2. To render on the appropriate level decisions representing the Faculty viewpoint on matters referred to it by the Faculty Coordinating Committee, members of the Administration, or the Board of Trustees; and
3. To provide the means for the Faculty, individually and collectively, to initiate action on matters within the areas of *primary* Faculty responsibility (see Article II, Section 3).

Section 2. Membership

1. The Faculty General Assembly shall be composed of those Full-time, Ranked Faculty of the University whose primary responsibilities are instruction and academic advising, enriched by scholarship and service activities in support of the mission of the University. The Faculty Coordinating Committee maintains an official Faculty General Assembly membership list for each academic year in consultation with the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer.
2. Contractual Full-time Ranked Faculty who receive course reassign time to serve Thomas More University in another capacity are considered voting members of the Faculty General Assembly as long as they maintain a minimum course-load of 12-credit-hours in the academic year, constituting 50% of the standard teaching load.
3. Full-time Ranked Faculty who accept Phased Retirement will be given a choice of continuing membership in the Faculty General Assembly with full vote privileges. Those members of the Ranked Faculty participating in Phase Retirement who elect to retain Faculty General Assembly membership are expected to attend all Faculty General Assembly meetings. Those Ranked Faculty members who opt not to retain Faculty General Assembly membership are invited to attend the meetings of the Faculty General Assembly with the right to enter into debate, answer questions, and address the Assembly, but without the right to make motions or to vote.
4. Ranked Faculty who serve in full-time administrative positions in an acting capacity even without teaching responsibilities are regarded as members of the Faculty General Assembly for the first year of appointment. After one academic year, if the faculty member continues full-time in the administrative capacity without teaching responsibilities or takes up a new full-time administrative appointment, the person is no longer a Faculty General Assembly member.
5. Each College Dean who teaches a course-load equivalent to at least four 3-credit-hour courses (at least 50% of their duties are teaching) per academic year, which may include summer sessions, is a full voting member of the Faculty General Assembly with the right to make motions, enter into debate, answer questions, address the Assembly, and to vote. Any College Dean who teaches a course-load equivalent to fewer than four 3-credit-hour courses is an *ex officio* member of Faculty General Assembly with the right enter into debate, answer questions,

and address the Assembly, but without the right to make motions or to vote. The attendance or absence at Faculty General Assembly meetings of any Dean who retains the right to vote shall be counted in determining a quorum.

6. The Vice President & Chief Academic Officer and any Assistant, Associate, or Vice President/President are *ex officio* members of the Faculty General Assembly, with the right to enter into debate, answer questions, and address the Assembly, but without the right to make motions or to vote, given that decisions of the body are forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs for review. The attendance or absence of these individuals at Faculty General Assembly meetings shall not be counted in determining a quorum.
7. The President of Thomas More University may attend Faculty General Assembly meetings with the right to enter debate, answer questions, and address the Assembly, but without the right to make motions or to vote, given that decisions of the body may be forwarded to the President for review. The attendance or absence of the President at Faculty General Assembly meetings will not be counted in determining a quorum at meetings of the Faculty General Assembly.
8. Other individuals afforded faculty status at Thomas More University (i.e., Part-time Ranked, Adjunct, Visiting, Emeritus, etc.) are invited to attend the meetings of the Faculty General Assembly with the right to enter into debate, answer questions, and address the Assembly, but without the right to vote.
9. If an employee of Thomas More University is serving as an adjunct or in another role affording faculty status in addition to their primary role, the regulations outlined in this section on the primary role take precedent.
10. Disputes regarding membership to the Faculty General Assembly shall be resolved by a majority vote of the Faculty Coordinating Committee at a meeting in which the Faculty Coordinating Committee has a quorum present.

Section 3. Officers

1. The officers of the Faculty General Assembly shall consist of a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson-Secretary, who are elected for two-year terms from among the voting membership of the Faculty General Assembly.
2. Method of Election: All members of the Faculty General Assembly shall be invited to submit written or electronic nominations for these offices. Ballots shall be sent to all members of the Faculty General Assembly. Election requires at least 40% of the votes cast. Where no nominee receives 40% of the vote, there shall be a runoff election between the two nominees receiving the highest number of votes.
3. Duties of Officers:
 - a. Chairperson: The chairperson shall preside at meetings of the Faculty General Assembly, coordinate the agenda for the meeting, and serve as a voting member of the Faculty Coordinating Committee. In the event that the Chairperson of the Faculty General Assembly cannot serve the full term of office, the Vice-Chairperson will succeed the Chairperson in office.
 - b. Vice-Chairperson-Secretary: The Vice-Chairperson-Secretary shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in their absence and serve as an assistant to the Chairperson. They shall

also serve as a voting member of the Faculty Coordinating Committee. This person shall publicize all meetings of the Faculty General Assembly and keep and distribute minutes of the meetings. In the event that the Chairperson of the General Assembly cannot serve the full term of office, the Vice-Chairperson Secretary will succeed the Chairperson in office. Nominations for the re-placement of the Vice-Chairperson-Secretary should be taken at the next scheduled General Assembly and an election be conducted during the following week. In the event that the Vice-Chairperson-Secretary of the General Assembly cannot serve the full term of office, the Faculty Coordinating Committee shall appoint a replacement from among its membership.

- c. The term of these offices begins the day after graduation.
4. Resignation of Officers: Any officer of the General Assembly may resign at any time from such office by submitting a written notice to the Faculty Coordinating Committee. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein.
5. Removal of Officers: Any officer of the Faculty General Assembly may be removed from such office by a two-thirds majority vote of the Faculty General Assembly at any regular or special meeting of the Faculty General Assembly called expressly for that purpose (Article III, Section 4, paragraph 2).

Section 4. Frequency of Meetings

1. Regular meetings of the Faculty General Assembly shall be held at least once a month during the Fall and Spring terms.
2. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or by a petition of ten percent of the members of the Faculty General Assembly, or upon request of the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer.
3. Detailed minutes of Faculty General Assembly meetings shall be taken by the Vice-Chairperson-Secretary. Copies of the approved minutes shall be made available to all members of the Faculty General Assembly and filed in the Office of Academic Affairs by the Vice-Chairperson-Secretary.

Section 5. Nature of Sessions

1. The meeting agenda of the Faculty General Assembly is determined by the Faculty Coordinating Committee.
2. Attendance Expectation: Attendance at Faculty General Assembly meetings is a service expectation of all members of the Faculty.
3. The Chairperson of the Faculty General Assembly may invite members of the University community to attend as advisors when information concerning the matter under consideration is required.
4. A quorum for making motions, as well as discussing and amending them, shall consist of one third of the total membership of the Faculty General Assembly according to the current official membership list for the academic year. A quorum for voting on motions shall consist of one half of the total membership of the Faculty General Assembly according to the current official membership list for the academic year. In the absence of a quorum for voting, voting shall take place by mail or electronic ballot.

- a. "Total membership" of the General Assembly is to be construed as meaning all Ranked Faculty members not on official leave (or sabbatical) from the University. In counting attendance at a General Assembly meeting, for purposes of establishing a quorum, all Ranked Faculty present (whether on leave or not) are to be counted.
 - b. The presence or absence of a non-voting, *ex officio* members of the Faculty shall not be counted in determining a quorum at meetings of the Faculty General Assembly.
 - c. If a quorum is present at any point during the meeting, a quorum shall be assumed to be present throughout the rest of the meeting, unless a point of order is made concerning the quorum.
 - d. In the absence of a quorum, those members present may receive reports, may discuss matters without voting on them, and may set the date and time for an adjourned meeting, but shall transact no other business.
5. Parliamentary procedure as expressed in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the conduct of Faculty General Assembly meetings.
 6. Decisions shall be by majority vote of the members in attendance and voting at a meeting in which a quorum has been established. After all discussions and free debate, the Faculty General Assembly may either proceed to a vote by voice, raise of hand, electronic voting, or opt for a written ballot upon request of 10% of the members in attendance and voting at the meeting.
 7. A decision reached by the Faculty General Assembly is referred to the Provost as detailed in Article II Section 5.
 8. The Chairperson of the Faculty General Assembly or a majority of the members present at a Faculty General Assembly meeting may decide that a meeting shall be held in executive session with only the voting members of the Faculty General Assembly present.

ARTICLE IV

THE FACULTY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Section 1. Functions

The functions of the Faculty Coordinating Committee shall be:

1. To serve as a liaison group between the Faculty General Assembly and Faculty representatives on University Standing, Special, and *Ad Hoc* Committees;
2. To study and develop information on matters to be considered by the Faculty General Assembly;
3. To nominate Faculty for Faculty Standing committees while ensuring balance between Colleges and equity of workload according to Article V, Section 3, item 1;
4. To appoint Faculty representatives (excluding *ex officio* members) to Faculty *Ad Hoc* Committees according to the guidelines in Article V, Section 2 and to University Standing and Special Committees according to the guidelines in Article VI, Section 2;

5. To maintain the list of Faculty Committee Charges and Memberships, including the Faculty Standing Committees listed in Article VI as well as any other Faculty Committees and Task Forces or non-Faculty committees and Task Forces that maintain faculty representation.
6. To provide, for approval by the Faculty General Assembly, the names of two Ranked Faculty members per available position on the various committees of the Board of Trustees, from which the Board Chairperson (after consulting both the University President and the Board Bylaws) will select and assign the final committee member(s);
 - a. After such assignment, the Board Chair, possibly through the President, will inform the Chair of the Faculty General Assembly;
7. To serve as a grievance hearing committee on alleged violation of faculty rights;
8. To represent the Faculty to the Administration on matters on which the Faculty General Assembly has rendered a decision and to represent the Faculty when the Faculty General Assembly cannot meet; and
9. To ensure periodic review of the *Faculty Policy Manual* and this Constitution, as well as to receive proposals, formulate, and present suggested amendments of the *Faculty Policy Manual* and this Constitution to the Faculty General Assembly.

In addition to the above, the Faculty Coordinating Committee will review and comment on items coming to the Faculty Coordinating Committee before referring them to the Faculty General Assembly on behalf of various Faculty or University Standing, *Ad Hoc*, or Special Committees.

In cases where the President or other University officials request(s) opinions, endorsements, or decisions from a representative Faculty view, the Faculty Coordinating Committee will provide this view and inform the Faculty General Assembly. When the Faculty Coordinating Committee has provided a faculty view that is unacceptable to a member of the Faculty General Assembly, the member may request a Faculty General Assembly review of the action upon the presentation of a written request signed by 10% of the Faculty General Assembly and forward it to the Chairperson of the Faculty General Assembly.

Section 2. Membership

1. The Faculty Coordinating Committee shall consist of the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer and the College Deans, who are *ex officio* non-voting members, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson-Secretary of the Faculty General Assembly, two Ranked Faculty representatives from each of the Robert W. Plaster College of Business and the St. Elizabeth College of Natural and Health Sciences, and three Ranked Faculty representatives from the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.
 - a. Representatives from the respective Colleges shall be elected by the members of the respective Faculty College Assembly.
 - b. Representatives of each College shall be elected for staggered two-year terms to assist institutional memory from year to year.
 - c. The term of office for each newly elected Faculty Coordinating Committee representative shall begin the day after graduation.
2. Removal

The Faculty of each College may remove from Faculty Coordinating Committee membership their College representative who regularly fails to attend meetings of the committee or otherwise seriously neglects the responsibilities of the office. A two-thirds majority vote by the Faculty College Assembly is required at any regular or special meeting of the respective College Assembly called expressly for that purpose and the result will be reported to the Faculty General Assembly.

3. Vacancies: In the event that the Faculty Coordinating Committee representative cannot serve the full term of office or is removed from office, nominations for a replacement should be taken at the next scheduled Faculty College Assembly meeting and an election shall be conducted during the following week.

Section 3. Officers

The Officers of the Faculty Coordinating Committee shall consist of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson-Secretary of the Faculty General Assembly.

Section 4. Frequency and Conduct of Meetings

1. Frequency: The Faculty Coordinating Committee shall meet as frequently as its business requires. Meetings shall be conducted either according to parliamentary procedure or informally, depending on the importance of the matter under discussion.
2. Agenda: The meeting agenda of the Faculty Coordinating Committee is determined by the Chairperson of the Faculty General Assembly.
3. Quorum: A quorum of the meeting of the Faculty Coordinating Committee shall be a majority (more than 50%) of the committee's voting members.
 - a. If a quorum is present at any point during the meeting, a quorum shall be assumed to be present throughout the rest of the meeting, unless a point of order is made concerning the quorum.
 - b. In the absence of a quorum, those members present may receive reports, may discuss matters without voting on them, and may set the date and time for an adjourned meeting, but shall transact no other business.
4. Method of Acting: Decisions shall be by majority vote of the committee members in attendance and voting at a meeting in which a quorum has been established.
5. Minutes: Detailed minutes of Faculty Coordinating Committee meetings shall be taken by the Vice-Chairperson-Secretary. Copies of the approved minutes shall be made available to all members of the Faculty Coordinating Committee and Faculty General Assembly and filed in the Office of Academic Affairs by the Vice-Chairperson-Secretary.

ARTICLE V FACULTY STANDING COMMITTEES

Faculty Standing Committees are a vital part of the shared governance structure at Thomas More University. Faculty Standing Committees exercise charges that address and affect the needs of all colleges across the University. The creation, function, and composition of these committees should ensure equal representation from the Colleges.

Section 1. Faculty Standing Committees

In addition to Faculty Coordinating Committee, the Faculty Standing Committees include:

Academic Affairs Committee	Faculty Salary Committee
Academic Assessment Committee	Graduate Admissions Committee
Benefits Committee	Institutional Advancement Committee
Core Curriculum Committee	Library Committee
Educational Technology Committee	Undergraduate Admissions Committee
Faculty Relations Committee	

The Faculty General Assembly shall establish and dissolve Faculty Standing Committees as it deems appropriate to discharge its responsibilities.

1. **New Faculty Standing Committees:** A Faculty Standing Committee may be established upon the affirmative vote of the Faculty General Assembly to address matters within the areas of Faculty responsibility that are likely to be of an ongoing nature and not susceptible of being addressed and solved in a short period of time. Faculty *Ad Hoc* Committees are appropriate when the issue to be addressed is not ongoing, and the duration of the work is likely to be limited (see Section 2 below).
2. **Dissolution of Faculty Standing Committee:** A Faculty Standing Committee may be dissolved at the discretion of the Faculty General Assembly.
3. **Review Cycle:** The Faculty Coordinating Committee reviews each Faculty Standing Committees on a two-year cycle or as needed. As part of the review process, the Faculty Coordinating Committee offers recommendations to the Faculty General Assembly regarding the charge and goals of the committee, evaluates current membership, summarizes the accomplishments of the committee, and, if applicable, offers suggestions regarding future goals or continuance of the committee.

Each Faculty Standing Committee shall have a written charge and primary responsibilities approved by the Faculty General Assembly, and such rules of procedure or policy guidelines as it or the Faculty Coordinating Committee, as appropriate, may approve. The charge and composition of current Faculty Standing Committees are described in the *Official Faculty Committee List*.

Similarly, the Faculty of the respective Colleges of the University shall establish and dissolve College-specific Faculty Standing Committees deemed appropriate to discharge the respective Colleges' Faculty responsibilities. The establishment and dissolution of such College-specific committees shall be consistent with the procedures set forth in the paragraphs above.

In addition to serving on Faculty Standing Committees, Faculty members may be named to the standing committees of the Board of Trustees (see Article IV, Section 2, item 4) as well as to other University Standing, Special, or *Ad Hoc* committees (see Article VI, Section 2).

Section 2. Faculty *Ad Hoc* Committees

From time to time, the need may arise to appoint a Faculty *Ad Hoc* Committee to assist the Faculty General Assembly in carrying out its responsibilities. Faculty *Ad Hoc* Committees may be established at the discretion of the Faculty Coordinating Committee or the Provost. The appointment of members to such committees both initially and as replacements for unexpected vacancies is the responsibility of the Faculty Coordinating Committee. These appointments should account for

Faculty expertise, balanced Faculty workloads, and – to the extent possible – College representation. Removal from a Faculty *Ad Hoc* Committee will follow the procedures in Section V.3.d.

Faculty *Ad Hoc* Committees shall be concerned only with temporary or emergency matters when the issue to be addressed is not ongoing and the duration of the work is likely to be limited. Upon formation, an expected dissolution date for the committee's existence must be specified by either the Faculty Coordinating Committee or the Provost as applicable. Each Faculty *Ad Hoc* Committee shall have a written charge and primary responsibilities approved by the Faculty Coordinating Committee or Provost as appropriate, and such rules of procedure or policy guidelines as it, the Faculty Coordinating Committee or Provost, as appropriate, may approve.

In addition, the Faculty or Deans of the respective Colleges of the University may establish College-specific Faculty *Ad Hoc* Committees as deemed appropriate to discharge College Faculty responsibilities. The establishment and dissolution of College Faculty *Ad Hoc* Committees shall be consistent with the procedures set forth in the paragraph above.

Section 3. Appointment to Faculty Standing Committees

For all committees other than the Faculty Coordinating Committee (“FCC”), which is described in Article IV, the following guidelines apply.

1. The FCC nominates Faculty members to Faculty Standing Committees after giving Faculty a chance to express their preferences either individually or through their College. The nominations will then be brought to the Faculty General Assembly for a vote, after allowing additional nominations from the floor. Faculty will be given the opportunity to decline either nomination before the vote is taken.
 - a. Term of Appointment: Terms of appointments to Faculty Standing Committees vary by committee.
 - b. Balancing Representation: Consistent with the preamble of this Article, when the committee membership list specifies College representation or when three or more Faculty members are appointed to the same committee, the FCC will group the nominations by College for separate votes, ensuring that each College has multiple nominees for each position available. When there are fewer than three positions available or when the committee membership list does not specify College representation, these will be considered at-large positions and FCC will identify the College of the individuals, but the vote will not be separated by College. The FCC will ensure equal representation among the Colleges in committee membership at the individual committee level and across Faculty Standing Committees.
 - c. Committee Load: The FCC will ensure that all Faculty members participate in the governance model through committee assignments with due care to ensure that no Faculty member is overburdened with numerous committee assignments. Unless required for balanced representation, all Faculty members shall be appointed to a minimum of one committee, whether it be a Faculty Standing Committee, University Standing Committee, or Board of Trustees Committee. In no case (for balanced representation or otherwise) should a faculty member be asked to serve on more than three committees.
 - d. Removal: The FCC may remove a selected Faculty member who regularly fails to attend meetings of that committee or otherwise seriously neglects the responsibilities of committee membership. With the exception of the FCC, a two-thirds majority vote of the

FCC is required to remove a Faculty member from a Standing or *Ad Hoc* Faculty Committee. The process for removal from the FCC is described in Section IV.2.2.

- e. Filling Vacancies: When an unexpected vacancy occurs on a Faculty Standing Committee during the academic year, the FCC may appoint a faculty member without conducting an election to serve out the term of the vacated representative.
2. The FCC may designate the chairperson and vice chairperson/secretary of Faculty Standing and *Ad Hoc* Committees when a majority of the voting membership is Full-time Ranked Faculty and the chairperson and vice chairperson/secretary are not otherwise designated by title in the committee's written charge and primary responsibilities.
3. When students are invited to serve on a Faculty Standing or *Ad Hoc* Committee, their appointments are to be made by the Student Government Association. Student appointments are effective as of the beginning of the academic year.
4. When staff are invited to serve on a Faculty Standing or *Ad Hoc* Committee, their appointments are to be made by the appropriate vice president unless otherwise specific in the committee's written charge and primary responsibilities.

Section 4. Attendance at Faculty Committee Meetings

1. In general, Faculty Standing and *Ad Hoc* Committee meetings are not considered open. Non-members may be invited by the committee to participate at meetings as either auditors or contributors. Those who believe they have reason to attend a committee meeting may request permission to attend through the chairperson of that committee.
2. Non-members may be present for a single meeting only or for an extended period of time (subject to periodic review). In any case, it is recognized that such individuals are present because of a particular expertise or for the sharing and exchange of pertinent information. These individuals may then become permanent non-voting members and may be appointed to be present at committee meetings, may serve on subcommittees and exercise a vote at the subcommittee level, and may present matters for consideration to the full committee but may not vote on the final full committee decision.

Section 5. Meeting Times, Charge, Minutes

1. Each Faculty Standing and *Ad Hoc* Committee shall meet at least once a semester or as needed to accomplish its charge. Meeting dates and times shall be determined by the committee membership and announced by each chairperson.
2. Minutes of committee meetings shall be kept with copies sent to committee members, posted electronically on the secure area of the University network, and the University Archives. By exception, Faculty Relations Committee minutes are kept only in the Office of Academic Affairs.
3. Minutes of meetings shall include the following:
 - a. The date of the meeting;
 - b. Names of those in attendance;
 - c. Wording of all motions proposed;
 - d. The result of the vote, with a count of for and against, if taken;

4. Minutes of meetings may include the following:
 - a. Summary of arguments made both for and against any motion. (Names of persons commenting need not be included);

ARTICLE VI FACULTY REPRESENTATIVES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

The Faculty is entitled to representation on all University Committees which are defined in the University Committee Policy¹, whether Standing, Special, or *Ad Hoc*. If the item to be voted on falls within the areas of *primary* Faculty involvement as described in Article II, Section 3, paragraph 2 above, then the University committee will submit the item to the Faculty according to Article II, Section 5B.

Section 1. Functions of Faculty Representatives Appointed to University Committees

The functions of Faculty representatives on Standing, Special, or *Ad Hoc* University Committees shall be to represent Faculty viewpoints on matters under discussion and bring to the attention of the Faculty Coordinating Committee, for guidance and possible referral to the Faculty General Assembly, any questions arising in committee, which Faculty representatives deem sufficiently weighty or controversial to warrant formal consideration by the Faculty Coordinating Committee or the Faculty General Assembly.

Section 2. Method of Selection

1. University Standing Committees:
 - a. Faculty representatives on University Standing committees (excluding *ex officio* members) shall be selected by the Faculty Coordinating Committee for announcement by the first week of the full term. As far as possible, appointments shall accord with preferences expressed by the President and by Faculty members.
 - b. Appointments to standing committees shall be for one year. Normally, no faculty member shall be appointed to more than one University Standing Committee.
 - c. The Charge and Composition of current University Standing Committees on which Faculty members serve are described in the University Committee Policy.
2. Special or *Ad Hoc* University Committees:
 - a. Special or *Ad hoc* University committees are appointed as needed by the Academic and Institutional leaders in consultation with the Faculty Coordinating Committee where faculty representation is required. These committees are designed to disband once their particular assignments are accomplished. In most cases, Special or *Ad Hoc* University committees are composed of members from the Academic or Institutional Leadership, Faculty, and student body; and the committees serve in an advisory capacity to the respective chairperson, when appropriate, and ultimately to the President of the University. Where faculty viewpoints and issues are concerned, matters deemed sufficiently weighty may be referred by faculty representatives on the *ad hoc* task force to the Faculty General Assembly for formal consideration by this body.

¹ <https://itwin.thomasmore.edu/Policy/Home/Policy?policyID=13>

- b. Appointments of Faculty members to Special or *Ad Hoc* University Committees shall be made by the Faculty Coordinating Committee as occasion requires. To the extent practicable, the Faculty Coordinating Committee shall take into consideration the preference expressed by the President and the existing standing committee load of Faculty members in making such appointments. The determination regarding how many faculty representatives may serve on these committees will be made by the Academic or Institutional Leaders who convene the group.
 - c. The Faculty Coordinating Committee may designate the chairperson of a Special or *Ad Hoc* University Committee when a majority of the voting membership is Full-time Ranked Faculty.
 3. Removal: The Faculty Coordinating Committee may remove from faculty representation on Standing, Special, or *Ad Hoc* University Committees any selected Faculty member who regularly fails to attend meetings of that committee or otherwise seriously neglects the responsibilities of committee membership. A two-thirds majority vote of the Faculty Coordinating Committee is required.

ARTICLE VII RATIFICATION

This Constitution shall become effective upon ratification by the Board of Trustees. Upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Faculty General Assembly, this Constitution shall be presented to the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer for review and approval. Upon the review and approval of the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer, this Constitution shall be presented to the University President for review and approval. Upon review and approval of the University President, this Constitution shall be presented to the Enrollment, Academic, and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. Upon the review and approval of the Enrollment, Academic, and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees, this Constitution shall be presented to the Board of Trustees for final ratification.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

After final adoption of this Constitution, amendments may be proposed by any member of the Faculty General Assembly or a Faculty Standing or *Ad Hoc* Committee. Such amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Faculty Coordinating Committee and shall specify the precise passage to be amended and the exact wording to be substituted. The Faculty Coordinating Committee shall distribute the proposed amendments to all members of the Faculty General Assembly at least two weeks prior to the date on which the vote is taken.

Amendments shall be approved by the following process: (i) on the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Faculty General Assembly voting "Yes" or "No" at a meeting of the Faculty General Assembly called by the Chairperson for that purpose or by mail or electronic ballot; (ii) review and approval of the Vice President & Chief Academic Officer; (iii) review and approval of the University President; and (iv) upon review and approval of the Board of Trustees, but only after the Enrollment, Academic, and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees has reviewed and provided an affirmative recommendation.