

# **Constitution and Bylaws of the Virginia Tech Academy of Teaching Excellence (ATE)**

*Proposed revision presented at the Fall ATE Meeting on November 14, 2024*

*Revision approved after a majority vote in an online poll, which concluded on November 24, 2024, with all votes in favor.*

## **Article One**

### *Section A - Name*

This organization will be known as The Academy of Teaching Excellence.

### *Section B - Purpose*

Founded originally in 1974 to honor and reward excellence in instruction, the Academy of Teaching Excellence membership voted in 1987 to expand its role significantly beyond honorary status. The membership defined the Academy as an organization of faculty committed to the enhancement of the educational environment, the highest standards of instruction, the vigilant pursuit of new forms and technologies of teaching, the continual evaluation of practices and standards of teaching effectiveness, and personal and organizational commitment to the importance of teaching in the research university.

### *Section C - Activities and Projects*

To fulfill its purpose, the Academy membership seeks opportunities for direct involvement in various projects of instructional importance. While continuing to seek new projects, the Academy has agreed

1. To help develop a faculty member's teaching if a department or faculty member requests assistance, and
2. To participate in the teacher-training program for graduate teaching assistants. Members of the Academy, working with the Dean of the Graduate School and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), will participate in the efforts of CIRTLL, the Center for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning

## **Article Two - Membership**

The membership of the Academy consists of all of faculty members of Virginia Tech who are past winners of the Wine Award, the Sporn Award for the teaching of introductory subjects, the Alumni Teaching Award (disbanded in 2024), the University Teaching Award (created in 2024), and all those who were elected to the Academy before 1982. Emeriti faculty retain their status as members. Any member may resign by sending an email to the Chair.

## **Article Three - Governance**

### *Section A - Officers and Duties*

*Chair of the Academy:* The Chair is not elected directly. Rather, the Chair Elect becomes the Chair at the end of one year's service and serves for one year. The duties of the Chair are as follows:

- Preside over meetings of the Academy.
- Work with CETL to schedule, plan, coordinate, and deliver the Fall and Spring meetings
- Serve as chair of the Executive Committee.
- Work with CETL to coordinate, receive, and deliver Certificates of Teaching Excellence (CTE); identify chairs of college committees and make sure that they are aware of expectations and deadlines; supply CETL with the names of winners and sign the award certificates.
- Work with CETL to provide necessary updates to the online dossier workshop
- Work with CETL to coordinate the major teaching awards; invite Wine, Sporn, and University Teaching Award winners to join the Academy; notify the University Development office and appropriate Deans of winners of teaching awards.
- Work with the Directors of CETL and CIRTl to facilitate GTA training including recruiting ATE members to this effort.

*Chair Elect:* The Chair Elect is elected at the Spring meeting of the Academy and serves for one year. The Chair Elect becomes the Chair at the end of one year's service. The duties of the Chair Elect are as follows:

- Support the efforts of the chair.
- Help to plan the Fall and Spring meetings.
- Chair the nominations committee.
- Organize a panel of speakers from among the ATE membership for the annual Virginia Tech Conference on Higher Education Pedagogy (CHEP)

*Past Chair:* The Chair becomes the Past Chair at the conclusion of the one-year term and serves for one year. The Past Chair cannot be elected Chair Elect for seven years. The duties are as follows:

- Mentor the Chair and provide historical perspective on previous practices.

### *Social Chair:*

- Convene occasional meetings for the express purpose of social and professional interaction among members of the society. No formal business will be conducted at these gatherings.

### *Section B - Elections*

All elections are held at a Spring general meeting. Any member of the Academy is eligible to hold any of the offices and to vote. The Nominations Committee will present its list of candidates at the meeting. Academy members will be given an opportunity to make further nominations. Nominators must receive prior permission from the individual they wish to nominate. Alternatively, the process of filling the positions on the Executive Committee will be by appointment by the Chair from a list of those willing to serve, if no one is willing to stand for election.

### *Section C - Filling Vacant Positions*

If the position of Past Chair is vacant, the Chair will appoint a member of the Academy to serve the remainder of the term. A vacancy in the position of Chair will be filled by the Chair Elect. A vacancy in either the position of Chair Elect or Executive Secretary will be filled by a member of the Academy appointed by the Chair until the Academy's next general meeting at which the Academy will elect a replacement.

### *Section D - Terms*

The term of a newly elected (or appointed) Officer begins on the second Saturday in May and ends on the subsequent second Saturday in May.

## **Article Four - Committees**

### *Section A - Executive Committee*

The Executive Committee consists of the Chair, Chair Elect, Past Chair, Executive Secretary/Treasurer, Historian and Social Chair. The Chair of the Academy will serve as chair of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may act on behalf of the Academy in all matters subject to review at any general meeting.

### *Section B - University Teaching Award Selection Committee.*

The University Teaching Award (UTA) Selection Committee selects the winners of the UTA. The committee consists of those who have won the Wine Award, the Sporn Award for the Teaching of Introductory Subjects, the UTA, and the Alumni Teaching Award (disbanded in 2024, relevant to winners in 2022 and 2023 only) during the previous two years. The Chair and Vice Chair of the UTA Selection Committee will be elected from members of the UTA selection committee at the Spring selection meeting. The Chair of the UTA selection committee is expected to have served at least one year on the UTA selection committee. The Chair of the UTA selection committee will convene the UTA selection committee, and report the selection of the UTA winners to the Chair of the Academy.

### *Section C – Sporn Award Selection Committee*

The Sporn Award Selection Committee is chaired by the previous year's awardee. Guidance and support are provided by the awardee who chaired the previous year's committee, and the chair may also seek out the support of other Sporn Award awardees as needed. The Chair will report the selection of the Sporn Award winner to the Chair of the Academy.

### *Section D – Wine Award Selection Committee*

The Wine Award Committee selects the winners of the Wine Awards. The Vice Chair is elected by the Wine Award Committee in its Spring meeting. The Vice Chair shadows the Chair for a year to learn the duties of the Chair, and automatically becomes Chair the following year. The Chair will report the selection of the Wine Award winners to the Chair of the Academy.

## **Article Five - Meetings**

### *Section A - Meetings*

There will be at least two general meetings of the Academy each academic year, one in the Fall and one in the Spring. A general meeting may be called by the Chair or by 10% of the membership with two-weeks notice. This can be done by sending each member an e-mail.

### *Section B - Motions*

A motion may be acted upon at a meeting of the Academy only if it has been distributed to the Academy members prior to the meeting or proposed at an earlier meeting. The Academy can choose to suspend this requirement of prior notice by two-thirds vote of the members present at the meeting.

### *Section C - Quorum*

A quorum at general meetings of the Academy will be 10% of the membership.

## **Article Six - Finances**

CETL provides funding for the Academy and its activities.

## **Article Seven - Amendments**

A proposed amendment to the bylaws must be presented at a general meeting for reading and consideration but cannot be voted on at that meeting. The proposed amendment becomes an amendment by a majority vote after an online poll. The poll shall be administered using an electronic platform approved by Virginia Tech. All ATE members in good standing are eligible to participate in the online poll. The voting period will be specified in the notice of the poll. A

decision or action proposed in the online poll shall be deemed approved if it receives a simple majority of votes cast. A simple majority means that the proposal is approved if more than half of the votes cast are in favor, excluding abstentions and non-responses.

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