
Academic Council Standing Committees

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES POSITION ON ACADEMIC COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS (CoCD#3407)

In the collective experience of numerous Committees on Committees, the most productive Academic Council committees have had the 'leanest' operations, i.e., have conducted their meetings with the barest essential standing attendance above the base level of the voting membership. Whatever information is needed for their work must be provided to that membership, of course, and information should be exchanged with other related groups as appropriate, but efforts to accomplish these purposes by enlarging the committee itself should be resisted.

On September 25, 1969, the Senate of the Academic Council approved a recommendation from the First Committee on Committees that Academic Council committees be limited to nine voting members, including the student members. The Senate allowed for an occasional slight increase in size under special circumstances, "but in general we urge that committees be held to a relatively small membership and that major effort be made to develop the tradition that committee members actively participate in committee affairs."

"An administrative officer whose operations are importantly affected by the policies of, and whose operations are reviewed by, a given Committee . . . shall normally be an *ex officio*, non-voting member of the Committee." By Senate action on April 29, 1971, any Council committee is permitted to add "non-voting co-opted members... not to exceed in number one-third of the authorized membership." The CoC advises Council committees to use that option sparingly, however, and to avoid co-opting members on a long-term basis. It is rarely the case that an individual not appointed or designated in the charge is essential to the entire agenda of the committee. Should such a case arise, it should be brought to the attention of the Committee on Committees for resolution.

Guests should be invited to particular meetings as necessary for specific purposes, and should ordinarily leave the meeting when that specific business has been completed. This practice has a significantly different effect upon a working group than the practice of vesting individuals with the continuing right to observe the work of the policy-making committee or to interact with its voting membership on a continuing basis as if a part of the committee. In the latter case, persons not empowered to formulate policy acquire seniority in committee "membership" and may be assumed to have (or may assume) proprietary rights with respect to the committee.

The Senate's effectiveness depends in large part on the work of its Academic Council committees, all of which should exercise activist, involved roles in formulating academic policy. Committee meetings must be dominated by the voting membership, which is expected to exercise its independence. Any other participation in the meeting should be subsidiary and should contribute to expediting, not inhibiting, the work of the voting members.

THE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL COMMITTEES (CoCD#3408)

1. Each Academic Council committee is responsible for formulating policy within its terms of reference (defined in the charge to the committee), and for bringing all recommended policies to the Senate of the Academic Council, which alone has the authority to make academic policy.
2. Each Academic Council Committee has the additional responsibility of reviewing the work of an appropriate University administrative officer (or officers) whose duty it is to implement the policies adopted by the Senate. It is very much the business of the Academic Council committee to ensure that the operations of relevant administrators are fully consistent with policies adopted by the Senate. Council committees should exercise tact and courtesy in such reviews, but should err, if at all, on the side of vigilance rather than complacency in this matter.
3. Council committees are, and ought to be, receptive to suggestions from administrative officers. Even so, members ought to be alert to the fact that they are appointed to exercise their independent judgment on matters brought before them, and the Senate expects them to exercise that independence. That is not to say that Council committees should not seek or accept advice from administrators in these matters; it is to emphasize where the authority and responsibility properly rest.

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4. Members of Council committees are earnestly encouraged to raise with the Committee on Committees any questions which they may have concerning the work of their committee. This may be done through the CoC liaison with that particular Council committee or through the Academic Secretary.
5. When participating on a committee, faculty and student members should generally function as representatives, free to use their own judgment on specific issues, rather than as instructed delegates. Those persons who accept a seat on a Council committee are expected to make a serious commitment to the work of the committee.
6. "Records of committee actions and deliberations shall be open to inspection by properly qualified members of the University, within appropriate standards of confidentiality." [*Rules of the Senate of the Academic Council*, Section VI.4]

The committee Chair, in consultation with the members, should note any portion of the committee's Minutes that is judged to be confidential, and to what degree. This judgment should ordinarily be rendered as a routine matter at the time of approval of the Minutes. It is expected that the confidential designation will depend entirely on the nature of the business discussed, and will be used sparingly by most committees; the business of certain committees may, however, necessitate more frequent use. Minutes, or portions thereof not marked confidential, will be provided by the Academic Secretary to the ASSU, and to other members of the University community upon request.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR OF AN ACADEMIC COUNCIL COMMITTEE

(CoCD#3410)

1. The Chair of each Academic Council committee is responsible, as specified in the *Rules of the Senate*, for setting the committee's agenda and order of business, and for appointing the members and Chairs of any standing or *ad hoc* subcommittees.
2. The Chair of each Council committee is responsible to the Senate for fulfilling the reporting responsibilities of that committee as specified in the committee charge.
3. When matters of policy are formulated by a Council committee, the Chair of that committee will normally be invited to discuss such matters with the Senate Steering Committee. Once a policy matter has been placed on the Senate agenda, the committee Chair is expected to be present at the Senate or to be represented there in order to present the merits of the policy and to answer questions from the floor.
4. The committee Chair is encouraged to consult as appropriate with colleagues, students, administrative officers, the CoC member assigned as liaison to that committee, and the Academic Secretary to the University but, as Chair, is expected to exercise initiative, resourcefulness and independence in setting the committee's agenda and in the conduct of its business.

EXCERPT FROM THE "REPORT ON THE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE OF THE UNIVERSITY"

(SenD#252, adopted September 25, 1969)

Appointing and Reporting Responsibilities

1. Appointments to all Academic Council committees (except the Advisory Board) should be made by the faculty Senate Committee on Committees. Students should be made voting members of all Academic Council committees unless there is some clear reason why student membership would be inappropriate (for example, on the Advisory Board). Nominations for student members should be made to the faculty Senate Committee on Committees through the student nominating procedures specified in the constitution, and these nominations would be accepted unless, in very exceptional cases, there was an important reason for refusing to do so. Appointments of administrative personnel should be made on the nomination of the President, or after consultation with him or his representatives. All Academic Council committees except the Advisory Board should report to the Academic Council or the Senate in a manner to be specified in the charge to each committee. They should, however, advise other parts of the University community as might be appropriate on their activities and recommendations. Where appropriate (for example, the Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aids),

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they would be expected to work closely with administrative personnel, since the operating responsibilities in these fields clearly lie with the President and his representatives.

2. Faculty members of University committees should be appointed by the faculty Senate Committee on Committees in consultation with the President; student members of such committees should be appointed by the student Senate Committee on Nominations in consultation with the President, and the President should appoint members who are representatives of the Administration and other non-student, non-faculty, constituencies. The size, chair, and distribution of places on each committee is specified in the charge to that committee. The charge to a University committee is the responsibility of the President in consultation with the Committee on Committees of the faculty Senate and the appropriate committee of the student Senate. Both the faculty Senate and the student Senate should have the right to request reports from a University committee. Normally a faculty member or administrator should be chair of such committees. In special cases, such as Services to Students, however, consideration might be given to the appointment of a student as chair. In general, the number of places allocated to each constituency should depend on the responsibilities of the committee in question.

University committees should report primarily to the President, so far as action by the President or Trustees is called for. But they would also be responsible for reporting directly to the various constituencies of the University on their activities and recommendations.

3. Presidential committees should be appointed by the President, normally using nominations from the faculty Senate Committee on Committees for faculty members and from the student Senate Committee on Nominations for student members. In such cases, however, the faculty Senate or student nominating groups should consult with the President or his representatives concerning the duties of the committee and the types of faculty or student input that would be most valuable for the committee. Presidential committees would report to the President, but, as above, might, after consultation with the President, call to the attention of other constituencies in the community matters of particular concern to them.
4. ASSU committees should be appointed by the student Senate Committee on Nominations. If faculty members or other non-student members are included, they should be nominated by the faculty Senate Committee on Committees (for faculty members) or the President (for others), parallel to the process followed in selecting Academic Council committees.
5. The Chair of each committee should be appointed by the authority that chooses the members of the committee (faculty Senate Committee on Committees for Academic Council committees, student Senate Committee on Nominations for ASSU committees, and the President for other committees).
6. Where non-academic issues are involved, it is expected that University staff members will be adequately represented either on committees or subcommittees thereof.
7. In the matter of the availability of records of committee actions and deliberations, it is important to achieve an acceptable balance between the need for maximum feasible openness and the need, under certain circumstances, for a degree of confidentiality. In order to achieve this balance the following guidelines should be observed:
 - a. Minutes of Academic Council Committees and of University Committees should be filed regularly with the Office of the Academic Secretary.
 - b. The Academic Secretary should make such minutes available on request to any member of the University community, unless in the judgment of the committee in question there are valid reasons for limiting the accessibility of its minutes or portions thereof.
 - c. Whether an ad hoc committee should file its minutes or records with the Academic Secretary may depend on the nature of its charge, and ordinarily should be specified in the charge. Otherwise the filing of minutes or records of its actions is at the discretion of the committee.
 - d. If, in the judgment of a committee, the availability of its minutes should be restricted, the committee may specify such limitations on the accessibility of its minutes, or portions thereof, as it deems appropriate to its particular situation.
 - e. In case a committee has determined that accessibility of its minutes should be limited, the Academic Secretary, in responding to requests for the minutes, shall be guided by the committee chair or the chief officer or chair of the body to which the committee primarily reports.

**COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES
AND OPERATIONS**

1. Committees should generally operate as policy making and review bodies, leaving the administration of these policies generally in the hands of the appropriate administrative officers. In many instances, the administrative officer charged with the responsibility or his delegate should be an ex officio non-voting member of the committee.
2. When participating on these committees, faculty and student members should generally function as representatives, free to use their own judgment on specific issues, rather than as instructed delegates.
3. No administrative officer should be chair of the committee which directs or reviews his operations. Normally, he should be an ex officio non-voting member and participate in the deliberations of the committee.
4. Agenda and minutes of standing committees should be circulated to relevant members of the administration, who should be entitled to attend and participate in meetings in which they have an interest.
5. Normally, no faculty member should serve on more than one Academic Council or University committee, though exceptions may be made where they are clearly appropriate.
6. Consecutive faculty membership on a standing committee should normally be limited to two three-year terms. The faculty member should be eligible for further appointment after an absence from the committee of three years.
7. Normally, no person should serve as Chair of an Academic Council or University committee for more than three consecutive years.
8. Standing committees should appoint and use subcommittees as appropriate. Normally each subcommittee should contain at least one member of the parent committee, who might serve as subcommittee chair.
9. Ordinarily, Academic Council and University committees should include nine voting members, of whom two or three might properly be students. Exceptions to increase the size slightly may be appropriate in special circumstances, but in general we urge that committees be held to a relatively small membership and that a major effort be made to develop the tradition that committee members actively participate in committee affairs. This need to participate actively extends to students as well as to faculty and administration members. In some cases, of course, variations in the balance of membership may be appropriate. In general, the more directly concerned committees are with student affairs, the larger might appropriately be the number of students involved.

As we indicated in our recommendations to the Senate at the beginning of the 1968-69 academic year, we believe that the best place for effective student participation in the governance of the University is through active, voting membership on important committees, where the basic work will necessarily be done in most cases. Working student members on all Academic Council and University standing committees, except those where students would clearly be inappropriate, provide the most promising mechanism for responsible and effective student participation.