

Handbook of Operating Procedures

ACADEMIC COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS

A. Purpose

In the spirit of shared governance, the purpose of this policy is to provide guidance governing the formation, operation, and responsibilities of academic committees and councils (committees) at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV).

There are three types of committees in the Division of Academic Affairs: *standing committees* (which have a continuing existence), *special or ad hoc committees* (which go out of existence upon completion of a specific task), and *technical committees* (which are administratively established and appointed to provide technical advice rather than serving a representational function).

B. Persons Affected

This policy applies to the Provost, deputy and vice provosts, academic vice presidents, deans, faculty, librarians, staff, and students appointed to serve on committees at UTRGV.

C. Policy and Procedures

1. *Committee Membership:*

Other than librarians, academic standing committee membership shall have equal representation (one representative) from each academic college on all committees. The School of Medicine shall have one representative unless otherwise specified. The Library and University College shall have one member on each academic standing committee unless otherwise specified. The Provost or designee shall be an *ex officio* member of all academic committees. The Student Government shall also be entitled to nominate to student-related committees an *ex officio* member who shall serve a term of one year.

2. *Term of Service:*

Members of academic standing committees shall serve a term of three years, although they may serve a shorter term initially, and thereafter when necessary, to create staggered representation from each college.

3. *Non-Concurrent or Non-Consecutive Service:*

A faculty member may not serve concurrently on more than one of the academic standing committees as set forth in Section C.1. Faculty members may not serve two consecutive terms on the same committee.

4. *Eligibility to Serve:*

To serve on an academic standing committee, a faculty member must have been employed

as full-time faculty at UTRGV (or any of its legacy institutions) for at least two consecutive academic years by the time the committee appointment begins.

5. *Vacancies:*

A vacancy on an academic standing committee shall be declared when a member's term expires, the member resigns from the committee or UTRGV, the member dies or is incapacitated to the extent service on the committee is no longer feasible, or the member has three unexcused absences within one academic year. In the event of a vacancy, the committee chair or designee shall notify the President of the Faculty Senate so the Committee on Committees and Councils can recommend a new appointee to the Provost.

6. *Committee Minutes:*

As appropriate and permissible under other UTRGV policies, committee minutes shall be made available to the UTRGV community on the UTRGV website.

7. *Purpose, Membership, and Responsibilities of the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees & Councils:*

- a. Purpose: The purpose of the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees and Councils is to recommend appointments to standing committees, *ad hoc* and technical committees at UTRGV.
- b. Membership: The Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) comprises the membership of the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees & Councils. Except where otherwise delineated, the FSEC in consultation with the Faculty Senators from the respective colleges recommends faculty members to the Provost for standing, *ad hoc*, and technical committees from the entire body of faculty at large. In the Spring semester of each year, the FSEC shall nominate faculty representatives for all standing committee vacancies for the following academic year. All FSEC recommendations for Standing University Committees shall be subject to confirmation by the Senate. The FSEC's recommendations of members for *ad hoc* committees shall be made directly to the Provost and the Senate shall be informed of the appointments.
- c. Responsibilities: It is the responsibility of the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees and Councils to recommend from the faculty at-large appointments to standing committees, *ad hoc* and technical committees. In addition, it is responsible for providing guidelines governing the formulation and operation of academic committees and councils and responsibilities of UTRGV academic committees and councils at UTRGV.

8. *Purpose, Membership, and Responsibilities of Academic Standing Committees:*

a. Academic Information Technology Council

- i. Purpose: The purpose of the Academic Information Technology Council is to provide faculty input and guidance on issues of academic computer and information technology in general.

- ii. Membership: Faculty membership shall be determined in compliance with Section C.1. The Chief Information Officer or designee also serves as an *ex officio* member of the committee.
 - iii. Responsibilities: The Academic Information and Technology Council will develop, review and recommend guidance on issues of academic computer and information technology. The council will:
 - iii.i. perform a liaison function between faculty and the various providers and administrators of Information Technology services;
 - iii.ii. advise and make policy recommendations in such areas as, but not limited to: the use of information technology to support research and instruction; information security; access, retrieval and content stewardship; library access; information technology training; open access, scholarly communication issues; and resource allocation.
- b. External Awards Committee
- i. Purpose: The purpose of the External Awards Committee is to oversee the selection of nominees for external awards.
 - ii. Membership: Faculty membership shall be determined in compliance with Section C.1. The Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs or designee also serves as an *ex officio* member of the committee.
 - iii. Responsibilities: The External Awards Committee has the responsibility to:
 - iii.i. establish criteria and procedures for the selection processes of external awards; and
 - iii.ii. conduct the selection processes in a timely manner. To avoid the potential appearance of conflicts of interest, faculty who serve on this Council and are nominated or apply for any award under this committee shall inform the Committee Chair and recuse himself or herself from all committee activities or meetings related to that particular award.
- c. Faculty Development Council
- i. Purpose: The purpose of the Faculty Development Council is to recommend policies, programs and grant awards related to faculty development.
 - ii. Membership: Faculty membership shall be determined in compliance with Section C.1. The Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs or designee also serves as an *ex officio* member of the committee.
 - iii. Responsibilities: The Faculty Development Council has the responsibility to:
 - iii.i. recommend policies and guidelines in the area of faculty development;
 - iii.ii. review the applications for faculty development leave and make recommendations to that;

iii.iii. review and recommend grants awards for faculty development in teaching, professional achievement and service. To avoid the potential appearance of conflicts of interest, faculty who serve on this Council and intend to apply for funding through this program shall inform the Council Chair and recuse himself or herself from all Council activities or meetings during that particular award cycle.

d. Faculty Research Council

- i. Purpose: The purpose of the Faculty Research Council is to recommend faculty research policies and the award of internal research monies.
- ii. Membership: Faculty membership shall be determined in compliance with Section C.1. The Senior Vice President for Research or designee also serves as an *ex officio* member of the committee.
- iii. Responsibilities: The Faculty Research Council has the responsibility to:
 - iii.i. recommend faculty research policies;
 - iii.ii. establish criteria and protocols for awarding internal research monies; and
 - iii.iii. review applications and make recommendations concerning awards of such internal funds. To avoid the potential appearance of conflicts of interest, faculty who serve on this Council and intend to apply for funding through this program shall inform the Council Chair and recuse himself or herself from all Council activities or meetings during that particular award cycle.

e. General Education Committee

- i. Purpose: The purpose of the General Education Committee shall be to review and make recommendations on matters of importance to the general education requirements for undergraduate students.
- ii. Membership: Faculty membership shall be determined in compliance with Section C.1. The Dean of the University College also serves as an *ex officio* member of the committee.
- iii. Responsibilities: The General Education Committee shall review and make recommendations on the curriculum, assessment, and other matters of importance to the general education requirements. Committee recommendations will be forwarded through the Dean of the University College to the Office of the Provost for appropriate administrative review and action.

f. Graduate Committee

- i. Purpose: The purpose of the Graduate Committee shall be to review and make recommendations on matters of importance to graduate education.

- ii. Membership: Faculty membership shall be determined in compliance with Section C.1. The Dean of the Graduate College also serves as an *ex officio* member of the committee.
- iii. Responsibilities: The Graduate Committee shall review and make recommendations on graduate academic policies and standards related to curriculum, admissions, fellowships and assistantships and other matters of importance to graduate education. Committee recommendations will be forwarded through the Dean of the Graduate College to the Office of the Provost for appropriate administrative review and action.

g. Library Committee

- i. Purpose: The primary purpose of the Library Committee is to advise the University Librarian on matters of general library policy and development of library resources.
- ii. Membership: Faculty membership shall be determined in compliance with Section C.1. Other members shall include two non-voting students (one graduate and one undergraduate). The University Librarian also serves as an *ex officio* member of the committee.
- iii. Responsibilities: The Library Committee has the responsibility to:
 - a. advise the University Librarian on policies of the University Library;
 - b. provide input on allocation of resources for the departmental requests for new resources; and
 - c. advise on services to support students, faculty, staff, and other Library patrons.

h. Undergraduate Committee

- i. Purpose: The purpose of the Undergraduate Committee shall be to review and make recommendations on matters of importance to undergraduate education.
- ii. Membership: Faculty membership shall be determined in compliance with Section C.1. The Senior Vice Provost or designee also serves as an *ex officio* member of the committee.
- iii. Responsibilities: The Undergraduate Committee shall review and make recommendations on undergraduate academic policies and standards related to curriculum, admissions, retention, graduation and other matters of importance to undergraduate education. Committee recommendations will be forwarded through the Senior Vice Provost to the Office of the Provost for appropriate administrative review and action.

- i. University Tenure and Promotion Committee
 - i. Purpose: The purpose of the University Tenure and Promotion Committee shall be to review all applications for tenure and promotion and provide an independent review or assessment of the candidate's professional record and achievements.
 - ii. Membership: One representative at the full professor level from each academic college and the School of Medicine.
 - iii. Responsibilities: The University Tenure and Promotion Committee shall
 - iii.i. evaluate the candidates' dossiers,
 - iii.ii. assess the candidates' performance including the strengths and weaknesses in the areas of teaching, research and service;
 - iii.iii. use the department's discipline-specific criteria for tenure or promotion as the basis upon which to evaluate a faculty member;
 - iii.iv. provide a recommendation on whether or not to promote or tenure.

D. Definitions

1. Academic Committee - A group of individuals nominated by the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees & Councils, confirmed by the Faculty Senate and appointed by the Provost to consider, review and make recommendations concerning certain matters or subjects under the committee's assigned responsibilities
2. Ex officio Members - Non-voting members who serve as resource persons with rights of participation that include activities such as discussion, debate, and advising related to their respective areas of expertise, but do not include the ability to make a motion or vote.
3. Faculty Member - For purposes of this policy, a faculty member may be a full-time tenured or tenure track faculty member, a lecturer, professor of practice or a clinical faculty member.
4. Special or Ad Hoc Committees (Ad Hoc Committees) - Composed of faculty, administrators, alumni, community leaders, staff or students, *ad hoc* committees address issues of concern to multiple constituencies and are expected to reflect the individuality of members of the committee and their perceptions of the constituencies they represent. The responsibility and the composition of the *ad hoc* committee shall be outlined by the Provost in

consultation with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The *ad hoc* committee ceases to exist once the specific task it is designated to address is completed.

5. Standing Committees - Composed of faculty and *ex officio* members, standing committees
 - a. address issues inherently in the jurisdiction of the faculty;
 - b. are expected to reflect the voice of the faculty;
 - c. receive input from the Faculty Senate and faculty at large;
 - d. make recommendations regarding faculty issues to appropriate officials;
 - e. serve as a channel of communication among the faculty, the Faculty Senate, the Provost, and other stakeholders; and
 - f. report the outcomes of their recommendations to the Faculty Senate.
6. Technical Committees - Composed of faculty, administrators, or staff, technical committees provide technical expertise on an issue rather than serve representational functions.

E. Related Statutes or Regulations, Rules, Policies, or Standards

[University of Texas System Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations Rule 20201, Presidents](#)

F. Dates Reviewed or Amended

Reviewed and amended (non-substantive) – January 28, 2025