

Memo to: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders
From: Max Castillo, President
Subject: Academic Shared Governance Policy

UH-Downtown/PS 01.A.03
Issue No. 5
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1. PURPOSE

This PS describes the shared governance procedures through which representatives of the faculty and administration work together on policies directly affecting the academic environment.

2. POLICY/PROCEDURES

2.1 Policy

Academic personnel should have primary responsibility for developing those policies which directly affect the academic environment. In developing these policies, processes should be followed which encourage a free and open exchange of ideas, promote collegiality, and ensure understanding and consideration of all institutional perspectives. The processes followed should also provide mechanisms for deciding issues in a timely and accountable manner.

2.1.1 Provisions for University-Wide Shared Governance Councils and Committees.

The formal components of the university's shared governance system include:

2.1.1.1 A university academic affairs council which reviews and recommends to the president all policies directly affecting the academic environment.

2.1.1.2 Standing university policy committees which make policy recommendations to the university academic affairs council.

2.1.1.3 Special standing committees which make recommendations to the appropriate administrative personnel on procedural and administrative matters and to the standing university policy committees on policy matters.

2.1.2 Provisions for Shared Governance at the Department and College Levels.

2.1.2.1 The committee/governance process used at the college and department level should ensure the full participation of faculty members in the development of department and college policies directly affecting the academic environment.

2.1.2.2 Relevant portions of the basic policy stated above should also guide faculty participation on advisory committees and task forces established by any unit of the university to work on specific objectives.

2.2 Departmental Committees

Shared governance begins at the departmental level. Department faculty will establish such departmental committees as are necessary to provide for optimal faculty participation in the formulation and revision of policies and procedures relating to departmental matters, such as degree programs, curriculum offerings, departmental budget priorities, faculty evaluation, hiring of new faculty, and other appropriate matters.

2.3 College Committees

Structural mechanisms will also be created at the college level to ensure faculty members a salient role in policies and procedures affecting the college.

2.4 Advisory Committees and Task Forces

Special advisory committees or task forces may be established by any unit of the university for the purpose of accomplishing specifically identified unit objectives. The members of such groups may be administratively appointed to ensure that the group has the needed expertise to carry out its task. When appointed to such a group, a faculty member serves in an advisory rather than a representative role.

2.5 University Standing Policy Committees

University standing policy committees are responsible for developing and/or reviewing all university policies which directly affect the academic environment. All recommendations of these committees are sent to the university academic affairs council. Administrative representatives serving on these committees will be appointed by the president, faculty representatives will be selected through Faculty Senate procedures, and student representatives will be chosen through student government association procedures. The term of service for committee members is one academic year. The chair of the committee is elected by majority vote of the entire committee membership.

2.5.1 Faculty Affairs Committee

This committee is responsible for the review and recommendation of policies pertaining to faculty-related personnel and workload issues and any other matters affecting the professional lives of faculty members. The membership of the committee shall consist of three administrative representatives and two faculty representatives from each degree-granting college.

2.5.2 Academic Policy Committee

This committee is responsible for the review and recommendation of policies pertaining to academic standards and regulations. The membership of the committee shall consist of three administrative representatives, two faculty representatives from each degree-granting college, and two student representatives.

2.5.3 Curriculum Committee

This committee is responsible for the review and recommendation of policies pertaining to the development and approval of new courses and degree programs and other curriculum changes. It is also responsible for reviewing and approving curriculum changes made under those policies. The membership of the committee shall consist of all the department chairs, one faculty representative from each degree-granting college, and two students.

2.6 Special Standing Committees

Special university-wide standing committees exist to advise certain administrative units on matters directly affecting the academic environment and/or to provide such units assistance in the implementation/enforcement of selected policies. Because they are quasi-administrative bodies, special standing committees do not make policy

recommendations directly to the university academic affairs council but are free to notify the appropriate University Standing Policy Committee of any policy concerns or recommendations.

Special standing committees are established by the president in consultation with the Faculty Senate. An updated list of all special standing committees is maintained in the president's office along with a copy of each committee's charge and the composition of its membership. Administrative representatives on special standing committees are made by the president while faculty representatives are selected through Faculty Senate procedures.

2.7 University Academic Affairs Council

The university academic affairs council is responsible for advising the president on all university policies which directly affect the academic environment.

2.7.1 The voting membership of the university academic affairs council consists of the president and vice president of the Faculty Senate, the academic deans, one department chair and two faculty members elected from each degree-granting college. The provost/vice president for academic affairs serves as the council's chair and votes only to break a tie.

Non-voting *ex officio* members include the chairs of the university standing policy committees, two student representatives chosen through student government association procedures, a staff representative chosen through staff council procedures, the vice president for administration or his designee, and the chief student affairs officer or his designee. The chair will invite other administrative officials and staff to participate in council meetings as needed. It is the chair's responsibility to ensure that consideration is given to all relevant perspectives before final recommendations are made.

2.7.2 The university academic affairs council is a voting body which makes formal recommendations to the president on all policy matters having direct impact on the academic environment. Its primary responsibility is to review proposed policies and policy revisions which were developed by one of the university's standing policy committees. The council may modify committee proposals before recommending them to the president but the council must give the originating committee 30 days to respond to any substantive amendments before making a final recommendation to the president. If 75 percent of the members agree that council-made modifications in a committee's proposal are non-substantive in nature, the council may act on the amended proposal immediately. The president, as the chief executive officer of the university, has final authority for accepting or rejecting policy recommendations made by the university academic affairs council. The president will make his decision in a timely fashion, normally within thirty days. The approval of the president, as indicated by his signature on the approval line of the draft policy, must be given for it to become an official policy of the university. If the president rejects the recommendation of the council, he will inform it in writing of the reasons for his action.

2.7.3 The university academic affairs council is also responsible for a periodic review of the role and scope of the university and the mission statement which describes it.

2.7.4 Procedures for the University Academic Affairs Council

2.7.4.1 The university council shall meet at least once a month during the fall and spring semesters and as necessary during the summer. Council meetings are open to all members of the university community.

2.7.4.2 The provost shall set the council's agenda one week in advance of each scheduled meeting. Proposals from the university standing policy committees to create new policies or modify existing ones must be circulated to all (voting and non-voting) council members at least three weeks prior to the time they will first be considered by the council.

2.7.4.3 Items of regular business for the university academic affairs council shall include a report on the status of policy recommendations previously considered, as well as discussion of policy statements and their revision. Other matters of interest to the academic community may also be discussed. Any voting member of the council may introduce agenda items by submitting them in writing to the provost.

2.7.4.4 Minutes of all university academic affairs council meetings shall be distributed to all council members and to all university departments in a timely manner.

2.8 Faculty Members' Responsibility

Faculty members should be knowledgeable about the shared governance structure of the university. It is the responsibility of faculty members to ascertain the appropriateness of any assignment they are asked to undertake within the committee structure. The key distinction is whether the faculty member serves in a "representative" role or in an "advisory" role. A representative of the university faculty must be nominated by the faculty senate or directly elected by fellow faculty members.

The same role-test applies when a faculty member is asked to serve on a committee outside the university, e.g., a system committee or a community committee. If the intent is that the faculty member represent the faculty of the university, the nomination must be made through the faculty senate. Faculty members who are not sure about the nature of the assignment involved should seek clarification through the faculty senate.

2.9 Amending Procedure

Amendment of this shared governance policy shall be by consent of the University's faculty senate and the president.

3. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsible Party (Reviewer): President

Review: Biennial

Reprint of original policy statement. Signed original on file in the Office of Human Resources.