



DATE: August 3, 2023  
FROM: Kris. Bezdecny, Chair, Academic Senate Executive Committee  
TO: Academic Senate  
CC: R. Roquemoire

SUBJECT: Proposed Policy Modification: Committee Structure of the Academic Senate –

The Academic Senate approved this proposed policy modification at their meeting on May 9, 2023. On July 29, 2023, then-President Covino returned this proposed policy modification unsigned, and with no comment other than “Not approved.”

The Senate Executive committee discussed this at our meeting on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, and agreed that this lack of feedback reinforced our very reason for requesting this policy modification:

- The policy was not returned to us for over 2 months after submitted by the Senate, and
- There was nothing to allow us to revise the policy or find a space of consensus about next steps.

The Senate Executive committee continues to stand behind the proposed modification to the Channels of Communication and Responsibility section of the policy on Committee Structure of the Academic Senate, based on a request from the ASCSU to review campus policies on [timely responses to campus Senate resolutions and policies](#). We feel that setting a deadline of 60 days for the president to respond to a policy recommendation is generous and allows the president, regardless of the person within the role, both time to consult on the proposed policies while also allowing Senate the time to take further action pending the outcome of the president’s review, particularly when policy is time sensitive – and realizing that many on the Senate voiced concerns that this might be too much time to allow. We also felt this highlighted in stark relief the request for rationale to be provided, allowing us again to take further action pending the outcome of the president’s review.

The Executive Committee recommends the following policy changes, unchanged from the 2022-2023 cycle:

- Lines 35-43: Including a new step in the process that stipulates that the President shall have 60 calendar days, following the receipt of policy recommendations from the Senate, to make a decision on that recommendation. This allows time for the President to consult on the policy recommendations from the Senate and perform any additional research as necessary, while still requiring a time-boxed response. Inaction would lead to the policy being considered approved by the President, as no objections or recommendations by the President will have been raised toward the policy in a timely manner.
- Lines 38-40: Formalizes that policies returned unsigned should also include an explicit rationale, so that the Senate and its committees are aware of where the areas of disagreement between the Senate and the President exist, and what potential solutions may exist to achieve a meeting of the minds.



DATE: March 23, 2023

FROM: Kris. Bezdecny, Chair, Academic Senate Executive Committee

TO: Academic Senate

CC: R. Roquemore

SUBJECT: Proposed Policy Modification: Committee Structure of the Academic Senate – Chapter II of the Faculty Handbook

The Senate Executive committee discussed and approved a modification to the Channels of Communication and Responsibility section of the policy on Committee Structure of the Academic Senate, based on a request from the ASCSU to review campus policies on [timely responses to campus Senate resolutions and policies](#). In conducting such a review, we realized we did not have a policy that stipulated how much time may pass between the passing of a policy by the Academic Senate and the President's decision to sign or not sign that policy. Agreeing with the ASCSU that ignoring a duly approved and communicated policy recommendation ought not be a legitimate manner of responding. Setting a deadline of 60 days for the president to respond to a policy recommendation in one of the three ways delineated, means that the Senate's recommendations will be acted on in a timely manner.

The Executive Committee recommends the following policy changes:

- Lines 35-43: Including a new step in the process that stipulates that the President shall have 60 calendar days, following the receipt of policy recommendations from the Senate, to make a decision on that recommendation. This allows time for the President to consult on the policy recommendations from the Senate and perform any additional research as necessary, while still requiring a time-boxed response. Inaction would lead to the policy being considered approved by the President, as no objections or recommendations by the President will have been raised toward the policy in a timely manner.
- Lines 38-40: Formalizes that policies returned unsigned should also include an explicit rationale, so that the Senate and its committees are aware of where the areas of disagreement between the Senate and the President exist, and what potential solutions may exist to achieve a meeting of the minds.

## Committee Structure of the Academic Senate

(Senate: 2/6/64, 5/25/65, 10/13/66, 5/25/67, 1/14/75, 3/28/79, 2/10/81, 11/11/81, 1/5/82;  
President: 3/2/64, 6/14/65, 12/1/66, 6/12/67, 1/28/75, 4/24/79, 2/10/81, 11/18/82; Editorial  
Amendment: 9/00, 9/03)

**Philosophy.** The concept underlying the committee organization of the Academic Senate can be found in the following principles:

1. University-wide standing committees are agents of the Academic Senate.
2. University-wide standing committees are policy-recommending and advisory. They will have administrative support and personnel to ensure that ministerial functions growing out of policies are properly administered.
3. The standing committees will be supplemented by such ad hoc subcommittees as they find necessary.
4. College committees will be given a high degree of local autonomy and responsibility.
5. The term of office for faculty members of standing committees and subcommittees is three years, with the exception of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Professional Ethics, for which the term is five years, and committees which select recipients of awards, for which the term is one year maximum. The term of office for student members of the committee is one year. No person may serve concurrently on more than one of the following committees: Educational Policy Committee, Faculty Policy Committee, Fiscal Policy Committee, Student Policy Committee, and the Nominations Committee.
6. Administrators who serve by virtue of their positions within the University or who are appointed by the President to serve as Executive Secretary do so in an ex officio non-voting capacity on all standing committees and subcommittees of the Academic Senate, i.e. they do not make motions, vote, nor serve as chair.

**Channels of Communication and Responsibility.** The operational procedures established by the Senate for university-wide standing committees are as follows:

1. University-wide committees submit recommendations for the initiation of new university policy or changes in present policy to the Academic Senate and at the same time provide the President with a copy of these recommendations.
2. The President withholds action on such committee recommendations until the Academic Senate has reacted to these recommendations and presented in writing a specific recommendation to the President to accept the recommendations of a committee, to accept them with modifications, or to reject them. Copies of the minutes do not suffice to inform the President of Academic Senate recommendations.
3. UPON RECEIPT OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ACADEMIC SENATE, BOTH NEW POLICIES AND CHANGES TO EXISTING POLICY, THE PRESIDENT SHALL HAVE 60 CALENDAR DAYS TO ACCEPT, REJECT OR RETURN UNSIGNED, BUT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS THAT WOULD MAKE

39 THE SENATE'S RECOMMENDATION ACCEPTABLE, INCLUDING A  
40 RATIONALE FOR THE REQUESTED CHANGES. IF THE PRESIDENT DOES NOT  
41 ACCEPT, REJECT OR RETURN THE POLICY RECOMMENDATION WITHIN THE  
42 60 CALENDAR DAY TIME-LINE, THE RECOMMENDED POLICY WILL GO INTO  
43 AFFECT.

- 44 4. In all of their actions the Academic Senate, the university committees, the administration,  
45 and faculty organizations must act within the limits of state law, the rules of the Board of  
46 Trustees, ordinary concepts of academic freedom, and the statement "Academic Freedom,  
47 Professional Ethics, and Faculty Freedom" adopted by the Faculty Council on April 20,  
48 1961 and approved thereafter by the President, and any subsequent revisions of or  
49 amendments added thereto.