

DATE:

February 4, 2026

TO:

Academic Senate Executive Committee

FROM:

Kris Bezdecny

COPIES:

Rhonda Roquemore, Jessica DeShazo

SUBJECT:

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

In March 2023, 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, Senate Exec realized our campus 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. They agreed 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 recommended the policy changes below. This policy modification was approved by the Academic Senate (AS 22-16) May 9, 2023 under then-Academic Senate Chair Bezdecny. It was returned 60 days after receiving the memo by then-President Covino, stating "Not Approved" and with no written feedback or rationale to his decision.

The policy modification was taken back up by the Academic Senate and approved (AS 22-16.1) September 12, 2023 under then-Chair Avramchuk. It was returned 62 days after receiving the memo by then-Interim President Morishita as not approved, with a recommendation that the then-Chair informally discuss this with incoming President Eanes before bringing it to her formally.

Based on a query from a current Academic Senator about the status of this policy modification, we realized it has not been formally returned to the Senate body to consider adopting a timely response policy, as was suggested by the systemwide Academic Senate 3 years ago and as exists on several CSU campuses.

This modification includes the following changes to the original policy:

- Lines 35-43: Including a new step in the process that stipulates that the President shall have 45 business 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.

1 Committee Structure of the Academic Senate

2 (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;
3 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
4 Amendment: 9/00, 9/03)

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

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

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

- 27 1. University-wide committees submit recommendations for the initiation of new university
28 policy or changes in present policy to the Academic Senate and at the same time provide
29 the President with a copy of these recommendations.
- 30 2. The President withholds action on such committee recommendations until the Academic
31 Senate has reacted to these recommendations and presented in writing a specific
32 recommendation to the President to accept the recommendations of a committee, to
33 accept them with modifications, or to reject them. Copies of the minutes do not suffice to
34 inform the President of Academic Senate recommendations.
- 35 3. UPON RECEIPT OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ACADEMIC
36 SENATE, BOTH NEW POLICIES AND CHANGES TO EXISTING POLICY, THE
37 PRESIDENT SHALL HAVE 45 BUSINESS DAYS TO ACCEPT, REJECT OR
38 RETURN UNSIGNED. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS REJECTED OR

39 RETURNED UNSIGNED SHOULD INCLUDE AN EXPLANATION OF THE
40 CONCERNS WITH THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS. IF THE PRESIDENT
41 DOES NOT ACCEPT, REJECT OR RETURN THE POLICY RECOMMENDATION
42 WITHIN THE 45 BUSINESS DAY TIME-LINE, THE RECOMMENDED POLICY
43 WILL GO INTO EFFECT.

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.

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