

Guidelines for Academic Senate Committees

adopted by the Academic Senate Executive Council
of the City College of San Francisco on November 28th, 2012

Introduction

Committees of the Academic Senate share with all participatory governance groups the opportunity and responsibility to foster student learning through the engagement of diverse stakeholders from the constituencies – students, faculty, classified, staff, and administrators. The responsibilities of committees include identifying, studying and reviewing issues and proposing recommendations. Members participate in planning for the future by developing activities to further institutional goals. Committees have the responsibility to foster a climate of mutual trust, mutual resolution, positive communication skills, and timely reporting mechanisms.

Establishment of committees

The Academic Senate establishes committees needed to assist in the development of policy recommendations or in the implementation of plans or policy that pertain to those areas defined by CCSF Board Policy 2.08 and Title 5 CCR § 53200:

- (1) curriculum, including establishing prerequisites and placing courses within disciplines;
- (2) degree and certificate requirements;
- (3) grading policies;
- (4) educational program development;
- (5) standards or policies regarding student preparation and success;
- (6) district and college governance structures, as related to faculty roles;
- (7) faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports;
- (8) policies for faculty professional development activities;
- (9) processes for program review;
- (10) processes for institutional planning and budget development; and
- (11) other academic and professional matters as are mutually agreed upon between the governing board and the Academic Senate

Membership and the appointment of members

The membership of each committee may be limited or unlimited in number as set by the Academic Senate. Each committee's description and purpose statement specifies the constituent group(s) from which members are drawn, the number from each group and additional qualifications as appropriate. Terms and/or term limits are specified for each committee as appropriate. Committees of limited membership may have resource positions for non-voting members who will be included in the information sharing of the committee.

Except for individuals who serve on a committee by virtue of their role at the college, both voting and resource members of committees are appointed as determined by the policies of the constituent group. Before making appointments, the leadership of each constituent group advertises openings to those eligible to serve, providing information to prospective members about how to express interest in being appointed. Appointing agents shall make every effort to appoint members who represent a broad and

diverse cross-section of the College, in regards to ethnicity, gender, discipline or department, work sites, and level of experience.

When appointments are made, notification is sent to the person appointed, to the chair(s) of the committee, and to the administration's designee for recording information about participatory governance. Appointed members of Academic Senate committees whose terms have expired may continue to serve until they are re-appointed or replaced. Resource appointments are made in the same way as other appointments, except that notifications will record that the person has been appointed in a resource, non-voting capacity.

Attendance at meetings

Members of committees are expected to attend all regular meetings. Members may request an excused leave of absence for a sabbatical leave, personal issue or health issue by writing to committee chairs, stating the expected beginning and ending dates of the leave and briefly explaining the need. Members on excused leave of absence are not counted for quorum and may not vote while on leave. If a member misses more than three meetings without an excused leave of absence, the chair(s) should contact the missing member and report to the appointing agent for possible replacement of that member.

Guests at meetings

Unless its purpose and goals require the examination of student records, Academic Senate committees may be attended by any member of the City College community. The committee chair should provide opportunity to attendees who are not members of the committee to speak to items on the agenda, while empowering committee members to make progress in conducting the business of the meeting.

Quorum

For committees of unlimited membership, a quorum definition will be established by consensus of those present at the first meeting of each academic year.

For committees of limited membership, quorum shall be a simple majority of the voting members, not including resource members and members currently on leave of absence. Any member who has missed more than three meetings within the previous twelve months (or newer members who have missed three meeting since being appointed) without an excused leave of absence shall also not be counted for quorum and may not vote. If a member returns to a committee after more than three absences without leave, he/she regains voting rights on the third consecutive meeting without an absence.

Election of chair(s) and endorsement of recommendations may be made only when a quorum is present, and shall be decided by majority vote of those present and eligible to vote.

Election of committee chair(s) and approval of record keeping format

Each committee may chose to elect one chair or two co-chairs. The term of a chair is one year. Chairs may be re-elected unless the committee's description and purpose specify otherwise. Voting members chose the number of chairs (one or two) and elect the chairpersons. Voting members may elect persons to serve in additional offices as appropriate to the purpose and goals of the committee.

The Committee shall choose the method of record keeping at the same meeting at which the chair is elected. If a committee does not support either informal notes or a specified alternative for record-keeping by a two-thirds majority, then the default record keeping format shall be approved minutes.

If a committee has neither an elected secretary, nor a volunteer to keep minutes or notes, then it is recommended that this responsibility be rotated among all members of the committee.

Responsibilities of committee chair(s)

- 1) When the annual election of the chair(s) takes place, inform the Academic Senate officers about the results of that election.
- 2) Receive orientation on past work of the committee, participatory governance, the role of the Academic Senate, the structure of Academic Senate committees, and guidelines for Academic Senate Committees.
- 3) Engage in activities for developing leadership skills.
- 4) Maintain records on the membership of the committee.
- 5) Contact newly appointed committee members and provide them with information about the committee.
- 6) Call meetings as required in the description and purpose and arrange for a meeting room.
- 7) Notify all committee members of meetings in a timely manner.
- 8) In advance of each meeting, set an agenda that advances the purpose and goals of the committee.
- 9) Ensure that time-sensitive matters are agendized as soon as feasible, that the committee comes to conclusions on such matters expeditiously, and that outcomes regarding time sensitive matter are reported to the Academic Senate and any other appropriate bodies without delay.
- 10) Arrange for the creation of minutes or another form of brief written record for each meeting and arrange for the submission of those records to the appropriate channel for posting online.
- 11) At each meeting, identify the person who will take minutes or notes as needed.
- 12) Facilitate meetings to focus on student learning, foster evidence based dialog, and encourage the participation of all members of the committee.
- 13) With the members of the committee, support a campus climate that fosters institutional excellence and continuous quality improvement.
- 14) Work to manage the flow of the meeting so that it maximizes productivity while beginning and ending on time. If necessary, impose time limits on speakers, applying them fairly and consistently.
- 15) Forward policy proposals and other college wide matters that have received an endorsement by the majority of the committee to the Academic Senate or other appropriate body.
- 16) Abide by all policies of the district.
- 17) Keep attendance records, granting and recording excused leaves of absence as appropriate.
- 18) Contact members who have missed two meetings or more.
- 19) Report to the appointing agent any member who has missed more than three meetings within the previous twelve months (or since their appointment for newer members) for possible replacement.
- 20) Lead the committee in an annual self-evaluation of its effectiveness.
- 21) Contact the officers of the Academic Senate to discuss any desired changes to the meeting times and frequency, the composition of the committee, or description of purpose and goals.

Responsibilities of all committee members

- i. Attend meetings.
- ii. Gain familiarity with the purpose and goals of the committee.
- iii. Receive orientation on the past work of the committee, participatory governance, the role of the Academic Senate, the structure of Academic Senate committees, and guidelines for Academic Senate Committees.
- iv. With the chair(s) of the committee, support a campus climate that fosters institutional excellence and continuous quality improvement.
- v. Share the floor both by being willing to speak up at meetings and by choosing silence to provide every participant with an opportunity to speak.
- vi. Empower participatory processes that assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation of college wide improvements and development of policies.
- vii. Assist in the advancement of time-sensitive matters so that the committee comes to conclusions on such matters expeditiously.
- viii. Contribute to the work of the committee – both at meetings and by sharing work that is needed between meeting times.
- ix. Take minutes or notes in rotation with other committee members.
- x. Participate with the committee in an annual self-evaluation of its effectiveness.
- xi. Request an excused leave of absence for a sabbatical leave, personal issue or health issue by writing to the committee chair(s), stating the expected beginning and ending dates of the leave and briefly explaining the need.
- xii. If no longer available at meeting times, or no longer interested in the committee, notify the committee chair and the appointing agent of your resignation.
- xiii. At the end of the term of appointment, communicate to the appointing agent whether or not you wish reappointment (if eligible).

Working groups

Committees may form working groups from within their membership to address special issues, complete specified tasks, or develop proposals for recommendations within the general charge of the committee. Working groups may include both members of the committee and other persons as appropriate. Working groups take direction from the parent committee, and may report findings to other persons or groups through their parent committee.

Record of actions: minutes, notes, or specified alternatives

All types of committees shall produce minutes, notes, or a specified alternative for keeping meeting records. These shall be posted on the appropriate web site:

Approved **Minutes** summarize briefly the actions taken for each agenda item. Minutes should be focused on actions or on major ideas raised during deliberation, not on the persons who spoke or opinions expressed. Minutes may be approved in one of two ways: 1) by a vote at a subsequent meeting; or 2) by being circulated electronically among those who were present, with a reasonable time period in which to offer clarifications or corrections. Electronically circulated meetings have been approved when clarifications and corrections have been accepted, or if no clarifications or corrections were offered.

Unapproved **notes** may be recorded instead of minutes if a two-thirds majority of the members have consented to a consistent use of notes. Like minutes, notes summarize briefly the actions taken for each agenda item, focused on actions or on major ideas raised during deliberation, not on the persons who spoke or opinions expressed. No approval process is required for notes, but they must be amended if corrections or clarifications are needed.

A **specified alternative** to minutes or notes may be used if appropriate for the work of the committee, approved by two-thirds majority of the voting members and used consistently for meetings. Examples of specified alternatives are a dated timeline of activities, lists of actions completed, dated announcements for events planned and executed, etc. Specified alternative recording of committee activity should provide a visitor to the governance website with a clear understanding of the activity and productivity of the committee.

Committee outcomes

Although different types of committees commonly produce different types of outcomes, it is important to note that ANY committee may produce multiple outcomes of ANY type.

Outcomes that may NOT be produced by Committees of the Academic Senate:

- Committees may not set policies for students or for the college. Committees **propose** policy. The Academic Senate **recommends** policy. Policy **decisions** are made by the Board of Trustees.
- Committees may not **direct the administration or to other college bodies to take particular actions**. Committees make decisions for the actions only of the committee itself, or the actions of its member in regards to the purpose and goals of the committee. Committees may **recommend** actions to others through appropriate channels.

Policy suggestions and proposals are most frequently produced by Policy Development Committees. If a committee does not have its own set format for these, each policy proposal should clearly identify:

- the goals of the proposal
- the intended benefit to students and/or target groups to receive benefit
- possible unintended consequences and provision for mitigation
- persons or groups of persons who were consulted in identifying probable benefits and possible drawbacks
- research supporting the proposal's probable success
- clear identification of current or past college policy and/or catalog language that the proposal implements, supplements, or changes
- clear identification of Title 5 regulation or Education code sections that the proposal implements, supplements, or relates to
- human resources, physical resources, technology resources and/or financial resources required to implement the policy or proposal
- suggested process for evaluation of the success of the proposal
- a draft resolution for the Academic Senate or other participatory body to consider to support the proposal

Any committee may receive the support of (or be directed to) the [Committee Formerly known as Academic Policy] for assistance in developing and assembling information needed for a policy or proposal.

Advisory activities are most frequently produced by Advisory Committees.

- If the person holding the position or representing the office being advised is present at the meeting, and the recommendations are unambiguous, then they may be recorded by a brief description in the minutes or notes of the meeting.
- If the recommendations or advice are directed to entities not present at the meeting, then they may be recorded in a written memo from the committee chair, or in any format that is mutually agreeable to the committee and to those who will receive the recommendations or advice.

Mutual information sharing activities are the most frequent outcome of Roundtables. It is recommended that Roundtable members be encouraged to create brief written reports, presentation points in an accessible format, occasional papers and other documents that can be posted along with minutes, notes, or other meeting records to extend informational benefits to the college community.

Actions that are most commonly the outputs of Action Committees vary widely depending on the purpose and goals of the particular committee. It is important that each committee have clarity and agreement about the form their action outcomes shall take, and maintain appropriate records of their actions.

The creation of **College-wide plans, reports, or other documents** may be engaged in by any Academic Senate committee. In their contribution to college documents, Academic Senate committees will adhere to City College policies, the standards of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), recommendations from the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, and professional standards for information competency, critical thinking and academic integrity. These include:

- Placing high value on student learning.
- The collection of verifiable data and evidence appropriate to the task at hand.
- Avoidance of overreliance on any particular type of data.
- Evaluation of information sources for relevance and reliability.
- Respect for diverse perspectives.
- Consideration of possible unintended consequences of actions or policies in addition to intended benefits.
- Provision of opportunity for stakeholders to learn about and provide input into documents.