

# GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF STANDING COMMITTEES

## **BACKGROUND**

[Handbook of Operating Procedures 6.01](#) provides for the establishment and appointment of faculty, staff, and student committees of the University. The purpose is to provide university leadership with assistance and advice on issues of institutional importance.

The HOP provides for the establishment of University Standing Committees and University Ad Hoc Committees. For Standing Committees, committees are to be classified as Faculty Affairs Committees, Student Services and Activities Committees, or Institutional Committees. This guide addresses the functioning of University Standing Committees.

The main purpose of University Standing Committees is to serve in an advisory role to the president and the executive leadership team. In this advisory capacity, standing committees are to provide guidance and recommendations on improving the operation and administration of the University, and to assist in the preparation of policies. In order to fulfill these expectations, UTSA members serving on these University Standing Committees should actively engage in developing innovative solutions, presenting recommendations to help overcome operational challenges, and explore opportunities for moving strategically to support and advance UTSA's vision to be a model for Student Success, be a Great Public Research University, and be an Exemplar for Strategic Growth and Innovation.

## **GUIDELINES**

These guidelines are a resource for managing the complexities associated with operationalizing and managing a wide range of committees established for varying purposes. They are also designed to ensure transparency and support our commitment to shared governance. All University Standing Committees must follow the guidelines and procedures outlined in this document and in HOP Policy 6.0.

### **A. Committee Charges**

Each standing committee is provided with a charge that outlines its responsibilities and role. The committee chair and members should then work together to establish a plan for the year through which its objectives can be fulfilled in support of the University's strategic direction.

### **B. Responsibilities of Committee Chairs**

A committee chair may be appointed by the president or their designee or elected depending on the nature and purpose of the committee. The chairperson shall be responsible for calling meetings, setting agendas, facilitating discussions, and submitting committee reports. A faculty or staff member should not serve as chair of more than one standing committee at any one time.

From time to time, the committee chair may review the committee's charge and make recommendations to the president regarding any changes that are advisable.

## **C. Responsibilities of Committee Members**

UTSA faculty, staff, student or alumni may be appointed by the president or their designee to serve on a standing committee. A committee member—whether faculty, staff, student or alumni—will be expected to attend committee meetings and participate in discussions, to assist in carrying out assignments identified by the chair, and to help prepare committee reports. A committee member is also responsible for helping disseminate information and activities associated with the committee to his/her home department, college, or unit, or in the case of a student member, to the SGA president. In the case where an individual is unable to fulfill his/her duties associated with serving on a standing committee, that individual should notify the chair immediately of their intention to step down and vacate the position.

## **D. Composition of Committees**

### Faculty Committee Members

Faculty members appointed to a committee shall be appointed by the president after consulting with the provost. During each spring semester, the president's office shall distribute an interest request form that lists each standing committee in need of representation to eligible faculty members and shared broadly to all faculty through the appropriate channels.<sup>1</sup> Eligible faculty members interested in committee service shall indicate their first, second, and third choice of committees on which they wish to serve. On the interest request form, faculty interested in serving a committee shall confirm their eligibility and availability to serve on the committees they list.

The Committee on Committees will review the interest sheets and submit the names of three nominees for each vacant position on a standing committee to the president's office. The Committee on Committees will verify continued interest in serving on a committee before any name is submitted to the president for consideration. The president or their designee will select one of the nominees for each position and provide written notice of the appointment to the selected faculty member, along with a copy to the provost, appropriate dean and department chair.

A faculty member may not serve on more than three standing committees at any one time.

### Staff Committee Members

During the summer term, the president's office will send each vice president a memo soliciting nominations of staff to serve on University Standing Committees. A nominating vice president will confirm the staff member's interest and availability to serve on a committee. Once the nominations are received, the president or their designee will select the individuals to serve on the standing committees. Written notification of the appointment will be sent to the selected

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<sup>1</sup> Eligible faculty members are voting members of the general faculty as defined in the [Handbook of Operating Procedures 2.01](#). Part-time and adjunct members may serve on standing committees only when documentation exists to demonstrate that such service is appropriate.

staff member with a copy to the sponsoring vice president, that staff member's direct supervisor, and to People Excellence.

All eligible staff members in good standing with the University are available for appointment to standing committees.<sup>2</sup> A staff member may not serve on more than three standing committees at any one time.

#### Student Committee Members

The student voice is vital in the development of recommendations for improving the operations of the University. Some of the standing committees provide opportunities for students to serve and take an active role. Students shall be recommended by the SGA president to serve on standing committees. These recommendations shall be forwarded through the Dean of Students to the office of Academic Affairs for review and approval. Student members in good standing with the University may be appointed for a one-year term and shall be eligible for reappointment for an additional year with the recommendation of the SGA president. All student committee appointments shall become effective at the date of their notification.

Continued student participation in the committee process is important. If a student representative is unable to attend a meeting, and their presence is deemed necessary, the student representative will request the SGA president to appoint a student replacement for that one meeting. The replacement student will not have voting rights, proxy or otherwise, at that one meeting.

#### Alumni Committee Members

Alumni input is important in developing recommendations for improving the operations of the University. Some of the standing committees provide opportunities for alumni to serve and take an active role. Alumni shall be recommended by the president of the UTSA Alumni Association, who will select a representative from among the Alumni Association membership to serve on standing committees. These recommendations shall be forwarded to the offices of Advancement and Alumni Engagement and Academic Affairs for review and approval. Alumni members shall be appointed for a two-year term and shall be eligible for reappointment for an additional term upon the recommendation of the provost. All alumni appointments shall become effective at the date of their notification.

### **E. Notification of Appointment and Term Length and Rotation**

Faculty, staff, and alumni members will be notified in writing of appointments to standing committees. A roster of names of members of all committees will be published by the office of the president on the UTSA standing committees website. The beginning date for faculty and staff appointments will be September 1, and the ending date will be August 31 of each year. Faculty and staff members' terms for the Committee on Committees shall be for four years. Faculty and staff members' term lengths for all other standing committees shall be for two years. One half of each committee's faculty and staff membership will rotate off each year (two years for members of the Committee on Committees). Committee faculty and staff members are eligible for re-

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<sup>2</sup> Eligible staff members are those that are benefits-eligible as defined in [Handbook of Operating Procedures 4.20](#).

appointment for another full term. After two consecutive terms, the faculty or staff member must remain off the committee for the equivalent of one full term before re-appointment may be considered. Term lengths do not apply to ex-officio members.

Students will be appointed for one-year terms, with the opportunity to be reappointed to a second consecutive term.

#### **F. The President and Standing Committees**

The president serves as an ex officio member of all standing committees and in the absence of the president, a designated representative serves as an ex officio member of a standing committee.

#### **G. Ex-officio Members and Experts**

Some committees, by virtue of their nature and function, may need the services of additional ex-officio members and/or experts. Ex-officio members and experts may be added to the committee at the discretion of the committee chair. Such ex-officio members and/or experts should not have voting privileges. When deemed necessary, ex-officio members and/or experts may send representatives in their place.

#### **H. Replacement and Removal of a Member**

A committee member may be removed from membership at the discretion of the chair and with the approval of the president. Written notice from the committee chair shall be given to the committee member. A committee member may voluntarily vacate their position with written notice to the chair and the president. To fill a vacated position, the committee chair, after consulting with Academic Affairs if a faculty vacancy, the dean of students if a student vacancy, or the nominating vice president of the previous holder of the seat vacated if a staff vacancy, shall make a recommendation to the president to fill the vacancy. The president shall provide written notice of the appointment to the newly appointed committee member and to the committee chair. The term for a member appointed to a vacated seat shall be for the remainder of the term of the seat to which the member is appointed. For an appointment to a vacated seat with less than one year remaining on the term, the appointment of the committee member will be for the remainder of the term plus a full term. For purposes of determining eligibility for reappointment, a member appointed to a vacant seat with a remaining period of greater than one year will be treated as if that member served a full term.

#### **I. Committee Meetings and Records**

Standing committees should meet at least once each long semester. All meetings, whether in person or via another method, should be documented with minutes. Minutes should be kept in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order. Chairpersons shall maintain a file of minutes, and shall provide the file of minutes to a succeeding chair. A copy of the minutes should be forwarded by the chair to the office of the president for record keeping purposes at the end of each long semester.

## **J. Committee Deliberation**

Members of faculty, staff, and students may request to make an appearance at a regularly scheduled meeting of a standing committee which is considering a matter of general interest.

## **K. Work of the Committee and Executive Summaries**

Each committee is assigned a vice president or senior administrative officer to serve as an executive champion and liaison. Throughout the course of the year, the chair will work with the executive champion and liaison to move the work of the standing committee forward. At the end of each academic year, the committee chair shall submit an executive summary that highlights the committee's key activities during the year along with a set of recommendations for improving the work of the committee and the University. A form will be provided to the standing committee chair for this purpose. This summary will be submitted to the executive champion and liaison, and to the office of the president for recordkeeping. Each executive summary shall be submitted no later than August 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. Executive summaries will be posted on each respective Standing Committee's webpage at the beginning of each new academic year. The executive champion and liaison shall provide a copy of the summary to the university administrator with decision-making responsibility over the subject matter of the report. Committee meeting minutes are available by request to the office of the president.

University administrator(s) who have decision-making responsibilities for committee recommendations or reports should respond in writing to the appropriate committee chair regarding such recommendations or reports. The chair of a standing committee shall be notified by the office of the president on any action taken on recommendations submitted by that committee. The chair shall communicate to the members of the committee the action taken on the recommendations submitted in a timely manner.

## **L. Annual Review of Standing Committees**

All standing committees shall be reviewed annually by the office of the president or their designee and the Committee on Committees. The purpose of the review is to determine whether a particular committee is fulfilling its charge, is still needed or should be dissolved. Recommendations for establishing, continuing, or abolishing a university standing committee should be received from vice presidents, the Faculty Senate, or the Student Government Association for review by the Committee on Committees. The Committee on Committees will review the structure and charge of the proposal and will forward a recommendation to the office of the president for approval. The office of the president will make a final decision.

## **M. Monitoring of the Guidelines**

Monitoring of adherence to the Guidelines for Operation of Committees is the task of the office of the president in consultation with the provost. The process should insure continued rotation of membership at specified intervals to promote breadth of faculty and staff participation and renewal of committee vitality.