

ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE

- I. **Central Role of Planning.** Planning is a critical element in successful academic governance. Without agreed-upon goals, it is impossible to make progress or measure performance.
 - A. The president ensures that a university-wide planning process is operative. The planning process should be supportive of a collegial decision-making tradition within the academic area.
 - B. Each school of the university should have specific goals for each academic year that are congruent with university-wide goals. Within the academic area, school goals should be developed by the school faculty and the school dean in conjunction with the vice president for academic affairs. Where possible, there should be agreed-upon measures of achievement. The president has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that this process takes place throughout the university. The vice president for academic affairs has the specific responsibility to ensure that this goal-setting takes place in the academic area.

- II. **The Academic Council.** The Academic Council is the primary vehicle for collegial decision-making concerning the undergraduate curriculum. In order to increase communication and support the central role of the Academic Council, the following recommendations should be observed:
 - A. The Academic Council recommends major changes in the undergraduate requirements and the addition or deletion of undergraduate majors to the administration and through the president to the Board of Trustees.

Members of the Curriculum Committee will review and offer recommendations on all curriculum proposals; they may review and offer recommendations on policy proposals as requested. The recommendations of the Curriculum Committee will be forwarded to the Academic Council, and—along with the vote of the Academic Council—will be matters of record forwarded to the administration and—on those proposals requiring Board of Trustees’ approval—to the Board.

Recommendations of the Academic Council, which are subject to the Board of Trustees approval, should be forwarded to the Board of Trustees together with the recommendations from the vice president for academic affairs and the president. The vice president for academic affairs should ensure that the president is informed of impending proposals. It is anticipated that the great majority of proposals reaching the Board of Trustees will carry the endorsement of all parties. Should there be a lack

of unanimity between the Curriculum Committee, Academic Council, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and president about a particular recommendation, each viewpoint will be forwarded to the Institutional Oversight and Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. In matters not requiring the approval of the Board of Trustees, the decision of the Academic Council will be final.

- B. The Academic Council is chaired by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The voting membership consists of the associate vp for academic affairs; the associate vp for faculty development and academic programs; the deans of the schools having undergraduate programs; the director of General Education; the following faculty who are the members of the Curriculum Committee—one tenured or tenure-track faculty representative elected by the tenured and tenure-track faculty in each school having undergraduate programs, two full-time faculty members elected at large; and four student representatives chosen the executive committee of the Student Government Association. *Ex officio* non-voting members include the Registrar (or her or his designee, who is the Secretary of the Academic Council), the library director (or her or his designee), and the associate VP of Undergraduate Admissions. The faculty representatives elected by each school must have served at least five years at SEU. The at-large representatives have no length of service requirements.
- C. Minutes of the meeting will be made available to the academic community.

- III. **The Graduate Council.** A Graduate Council, an academic entity analogous to the Academic Council, provides specific oversight of the graduate programs. After appropriate consultation with the faculty and institutional planning bodies, the Graduate Council is the appropriate vehicle through which graduate programs would be formally reviewed and recommended to the administration and, through the president, to the Board of Trustees.

The following recommendations are offered regarding the structure and functions of a standing Graduate Council:

- A. Purpose

The Graduate Council is responsible for insuring the quality of graduate programs and developing policies and procedures associated with those programs.

- B. Duties

1. To approve or disapprove proposed non-substantive curriculum changes for existing graduate programs (such as course titles and descriptions), or the addition or deletion of a particular course from an already approved program.
2. To approve or disapprove of proposed procedures or the minor adaptation of current requirements associated with the graduate programs (such as deadlines for submitting material), or adaptations that change process and are not anticipated to affect enrollment or finances.
3. To formally recommend to the administration and, through the president, to the Board of Trustees for approval or disapproval of new graduate programs and substantive curriculum changes in current graduate programs after appropriate consultation with faculty and institutional planning bodies.
4. To formally recommend to the Board of Trustees major revisions of current graduate program policies and requirements, and adoption of major new policies and requirements. This includes all changes that could affect enrollment or the financial stability of the program.

C. Composition Of The Graduate Council

The council will be composed of the following: the vice president for academic affairs, the associate vice president for academic affairs, the deans of the schools offering graduate programs, the director of each graduate program, one at-large graduate faculty member elected by graduate faculty, and one student representative from each school offering graduate programs. The registrar and the library director are *ex officio* non-voting members. Elected council members will serve on an annual basis. The vice president for academic affairs will chair the Graduate Council; the registrar will arrange for minutes of the meetings. A majority of the voting membership will constitute a quorum.

Both the graduate faculty and their representative must a) come from a department or program that offers a graduate degree, and b) have taught a minimum of 2 graduate courses per year for the past two years in that department or program.

D. Council Meetings

Graduate Council meetings will be scheduled two to four times a semester. Additional meetings may be called as necessary. Council members will submit agenda items to the council chair prior to a meeting. Minutes of all

meetings will be made available to the council members and the graduate faculty.

E. Decision Making

Decisions of the graduate council will be determined by a majority vote of the quorum. For changes not requiring Board of Trustees approval the decision rests with the Graduate Council. For decisions subject to Board of Trustees approval, the recommendations from the vice president for academic affairs and president regarding the proposal are to be communicated to all members of the Graduate Council before that body reaches a conclusion. Should there be a lack of unanimity between the Graduate Council, vice president for academic affairs, and president about a particular recommendation, each viewpoint will be forwarded to the Institutional Oversight and Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. The vice president for academic affairs should ensure that the president is informed of proposals. It is anticipated that the great majority of proposals reaching the Board of Trustees will carry the endorsement of all parties – Graduate Council, vice president for academic affairs, and president.

IV. **The Department Chair.** Within this document, the term ‘Department Chair’ is the head of an organizational unit as defined in 2.1.2.4.1. Multiple disciplines choosing to form a single department may be required to identify a coordinator with disciplinary expertise to oversee academic requirements, as stated by SACSCOC, and service by such disciplinary experts is determined by the school dean.

The department chair should ideally be a post-probationary faculty member and shall report to the school dean.

A. Position Description

1. The responsibilities of a department chair include the following.
 - a. Core duties and responsibilities:
 - 1) Assembling the teaching schedule for department for all faculty
 - 2) Faculty evaluation in conjunction with the school committee and/or the dean as specified in this document
 - 3) Department budget development and management

- 4) Contingent faculty hiring and oversight
- 5) Oversee curriculum development and implementation
- 6) Oversee faculty recruiting and mentoring
- 7) Oversee departmental learning objectives and assessment
- 8) Oversee periodic observation of post-probationary faculty
- 9) Responsibilities, with the exception of evaluation, and budget, may be delegated to other department members as needed, with the chair remaining in an oversight position.

b. Other duties and areas of responsibility, which may be delegated, may include

- 1) Marketing
- 2) Advancement
- 3) Alumni relations
- 4) Student recruitment and admissions
- 5) Other duties as assigned by the school dean

2. The qualifications of a department chair include the following.

a. Ideally, only post-probationary faculty will serve as a department chair.

b. If there are no willing or qualified faculty in a department to serve as the chair within the department, the following options are available:

- 1) Department is re-organized to join a department where there is a qualified department chair
- 2) School dean assumes the duties of the department chair for that department.
- 3) School dean seeks out a qualified person from outside of the department to serve as department chair.
- 4) In special circumstances, with the approval of the VPAA and in consultation with the department faculty, a probationary faculty member may be appointed as department chair by the school dean.

B. Selection

Members of the department will formally nominate up to two post-probationary faculty members who are willing to serve as department chair and will forward these recommendations to the school dean for the dean's decision. If necessary, the school dean may consult with and seek additional nominations from department faculty members.

C. Term of Appointment

Chairs are initially appointed for a three year term.

D. Evaluation

1. Each year the department faculty will provide input to the dean regarding the chair's administrative effectiveness. Faculty members will base their evaluation of the chair of their department on criteria to be established in the Faculty Manual and the specific responsibilities included in the position description of the department chair (IV.A.1.a).
2. The dean will share pertinent comments from the evaluations with the department chair in a manner that preserves the anonymity of the evaluators.
3. The school dean will complete the annual chair's evaluation form for each chair in the school, noting details of the chair's performance as a faculty member in the three evaluation categories and noting her or his administrative effectiveness.

E. Reappointment and Termination Procedures

1. Chairs are initially appointed for a three year term, with reappointment possible for additional three year terms.
2. Deans have discretion in determining the continued service of the chair.
3. Deans will draw on the annual evaluations of chairs by the department faculty members to make the determination for continued service.

4. If a chair is not reappointed department faculty may submit new nominations for department chairs to the dean, following the process outlined in IV.B.

F. Appointment of Interim

In the event a department chair fails for any reason to complete the term of service, the school dean, in consultation with the faculty members of the department, will appoint an interim department chair as soon as possible for a period that will not exceed the end of the academic year in which the vacancy occurs. The standard process for selection of a department chair (described above in section IV.B) will be followed to select a new department chair before the end of the academic year in which the vacancy occurs.

- V. **The School Dean.** The school dean must be both a faculty member and an administrator with strong leadership capabilities. The school dean reports directly to the vice president for academic affairs.

A. Position Description

1. The responsibilities of a school dean include the following.
 - a. Implementing the mission statement, the vision and strategic priorities of the university at the school level,
 - b. Exercising creative academic leadership,
 - c. Reviewing and revising curricula in collaboration with the school faculty,
 - d. Proposing and monitoring the school budget,
 - e. Implementing the Faculty Manual requirements for faculty evaluation,
 - f. Fulfilling all responsibilities required for the effective administration of the school,
 - g. Representing the needs of the school faculty within the broader university community,
 - h. Representing the needs of the school faculty to the vice president for academic affairs for the completion of goals within the academic area,
 - i. Representing broader university needs to the school faculty,
 - j. Working closely with the vice president for academic affairs who is ultimately responsible for ensuring the achievement of goals in the academic area,

- k. Working effectively in a collaborative relationship with other deans and other administrative offices,
- l. Retaining fundamental expectations of a faculty member, such as teaching, professional development, and/or service that go beyond the normal responsibilities of the dean's position,
- m. Representing the university externally in relation to the larger academic community, fund-raising efforts, and community involvement efforts,
- n. Maintaining a strong relationship with students in the school
- o. Taking an appropriate role in the student recruitment/enrollment process, and
- p. Providing support for faculty's professional development, grant writing, and other needs.

2. The qualifications of a school dean include the following.

- a. Commitment to St. Edward's Mission,
- b. Ordinarily, academic credentials necessary for an appointment at the associate professor rank or above in the school, or demonstrated competence in the academic field,
- c. Demonstrated skill as a teaching faculty member and active involvement in related professional organizations,
- d. Strong communication and interpersonal skills,
- e. Demonstrated potential for administrative effectiveness,
- f. Respect for, trust in, and trusted of colleagues,
- g. Adaptability, enthusiasm, resourcefulness and realism in planning,
- h. Ability and willingness to represent the university to external constituencies, and
- i. Leadership vision relative to the future of education and the role of education in society.

B. Search and Selection

1. The Search Committee is composed of the following.

- a. Three (3) members of the fulltime faculty of the school searching for a dean.

These representatives will be elected by the faculty of the school searching for the dean. The election process will be directed by the school's Administrative Committee in accord with procedures determined by that school. The Administrative

Committee is composed of the School Committee, but without the dean.

Faculty who declare themselves interested in being considered for the position of dean and the incumbent dean are not eligible for election to the Search Committee. The incumbent dean may serve as a consultant without a vote if so requested by the committee members.

- b. Three persons appointed by the vice president for academic affairs, two of whom are members of the internal St. Edward's University community and one of whom is not employed by St. Edward's.
2. The initial meeting of the Search Committee is convened by the vice president for academic affairs.
 - a. At this meeting the vice president for academic affairs will issue the charge to the committee, provide information on university and/or legal requirements regarding the search, and discuss the administration's perspective on the dean's role and potential criteria for evaluating candidates.
 - b. The faculty members of the Search Committee will present concerns, needs, and wishes expressed by the school faculty.
 - c. At this meeting the members will elect one person from among themselves to serve as chair.
 3. The responsibilities of the Search Committee include the following.
 - a. The preparation of a position announcement which
 - (1) has been developed in consultation with the school faculty and the school's Administrative Committee;
 - (2) has been mutually approved by the Search Committee and vice president for academic affairs.
 - b. Adherence to the following guidelines
 - (1) Opening the search to both internal and external candidates;

(2) Specifically encouraging potentially qualified internal candidates to apply, and giving their candidacy due consideration;

(3) Actively pursuing the university's commitment to diversity in hiring and appointment.

c. The review of candidates/selection of finalists by

(1) developing and prioritizing selection criteria in consultation with the vice president for academic affairs and the school faculty;

(2) screening candidates;

(3) checking references, and verifying degrees;

(4) identifying finalists to be interviewed after consultation with the vice president for academic affairs.

4. The Search Committee will devise an interview schedule which will include meetings with the Search Committee, the faculty of the school, the vice president for academic affairs, the president, and other interested parties in the university.

The Search Committee will work proactively to engage all of the faculty members in the school. Faculty members interviewing the finalists will be urged to provide feedback on the candidates' strengths and weaknesses and an overall judgment on the suitability of the candidates as dean of the school.

Efforts also will be made to secure similar feedback from others who interact with the final candidates during the interview process.

Based on all of this feedback and other information obtained from outside references, the committee will develop its recommendation to the vice president for academic affairs. The recommendation will include the names of all of the candidates that the committee finds acceptable as dean of the school, along with some detailed information on the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates (without ranking), the responses from specific groups interviewing the candidates, and the committee's priorities.

The vice president for academic affairs will ordinarily appoint a candidate from among those recommended by the Search Committee. If the Search Committee does not recommend any candidate or the

vice president for academic affairs chooses not to make an appointment from among the candidates recommended, the vice president for academic affairs will direct the Search Committee to interview additional candidates from the pool, reopen the search, or the vice president for academic affairs will appoint an interim dean using the process described in section V. E. below.

C. Term of Appointment

1. The school dean is initially appointed for a three-year term.
2. The school dean may be appointed to a total of three successive three-year terms (9 years). In extraordinary circumstances, and after soliciting feedback from the school faculty, the vice president for academic affairs may offer a terminal appointment not to exceed an additional three years.
3. At the conclusion of the term of service, the school dean returns to the previous faculty position at St. Edward's. If the individual appointed as school dean does not have a prior faculty appointment, an agreement as to the status of the dean at the conclusion of service in office shall be part of the initial employment contract. This agreement must have the approval of the vice president for academic affairs and be in accord with Section 2.1.6.2. of the *Faculty Manual*. At the time of hire the vice president for academic affairs will notify faculty in the department to which the dean may join as a faculty member upon completion of service to the dean.

D. Evaluation, Reappointment, and Termination Procedures

1. Evaluation

- a. Each year the school faculty and the vice president for academic affairs will evaluate the dean's performance. The vice president for academic affairs, who is responsible for the coordinated evaluation, will also include in the process those who work with the dean in other capacities.

Faculty members will base their evaluation of the dean of their school on criteria established in the *Faculty Manual* and the specific responsibilities included in the position description of the school dean (V.A.). The vice president for academic affairs will use appropriate and anonymous evaluation tools in consulting the various other constituencies. Ordinarily these evaluations will be completed late in the spring semester.

- b. The vice president for academic affairs will share pertinent comments from the evaluations with the school dean in a manner that preserves the anonymity of the evaluators.

2. Reappointment

- a. To gather information bearing on reappointment, the vice president for academic affairs will ask for evaluations from the faculty in the fall term of the dean's third year of service.
- b. In the fall semester the vice president for academic affairs will meet with the school faculty to explain the reappointment process and the method by which faculty input will be gathered. The school dean will not attend this meeting. An anonymous survey will be used to assess the faculty's support of the dean, their expectations for the dean's future performance, and their goals for future directions for the school. The VPAA will encourage faculty to schedule individual meeting if the faculty so desire.
- c. The vice president for academic affairs will consider all available information on the performance of the school dean. Ordinarily, a dean who does not have the majority approval of the school faculty will not be reappointed. The vice president for academic affairs will either reappoint the school dean for another term or initiate the search process for a new dean. This decision will be announced to the school dean and school faculty as early as possible in the fall semester.

3. Termination

In unusual circumstances due to inability or failure of the school dean to carry out the responsibilities of the position, the vice president for academic affairs may terminate the school dean before the conclusion of a three-year term of office. The termination may be appealed as outlined below.

E. Appointment of an Interim Dean

If for any reason the position of dean becomes vacant prior to the end of a three-year term, arrangements for the administration of the school will be made by the vice president for academic affairs. An interim dean will be appointed by the vice president for academic affairs in consultation with the school faculty and the elected members of the School Administrative Committee. The interim dean will serve until such time as a search can be completed and a

new dean appointed. Generally, an interim dean will serve a maximum of one year.

F. Appeal process

1. Deans who have been terminated or not reappointed may appeal the decision of the vice president for academic affairs to the president. The school dean must state the grounds for the appeal in writing to the president within ten working days of being notified of the decision of the vice president for academic affairs. The grounds for the appeal are limited to allegations of unlawful bias, arbitrary or capricious decision-making, or a violation of the procedures required by the *Faculty Manual*.

2. Upon receipt of the appeal, the president will appoint an *ad hoc* Faculty Review Committee. The Committee will be composed of one member appointed by the president and two members appointed by the executive committee of the Senate. The members appointed will hold the rank of associate or full professor, will not be member of the school involved, and typically will be post-probationary faculty.

The Review Committee will consider evidence presented by the school dean and the vice president for academic affairs, and other information that they deem appropriate. This is an internal review committee and participation in its proceedings is limited to employees of the university. The Faculty Review Committee will submit its findings and recommendations to the president within thirty days of being convened. The president will communicate a decision within the following ten working days. The school dean may, within ten days, request a review of the president's decision by the Institutional Oversight and Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees whose decision will be final.

G. Faculty Replacement

Whenever a dean is selected from within the ranks of a school's faculty, adequate staffing of course must be assured.

VI. **Role of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.** The vice president for academic affairs is the chief academic officer of the university with primary responsibility for developing and achieving academic goals. He or she works with the president and the faculty to set the academic agenda and works closely with the schools, the Academic Council, and the Graduate Council to achieve that agenda. The vice president for academic affairs is responsible for effective academic leadership and general administration of the academic area. He or she is responsible to the faculty-at-large to represent their views throughout the university and to the president for the overall administration of the academic area and the fulfillment of the university's goals in the academic area.

The following recommendations are relative to the vice president for academic affairs:

- A. That any person assuming the position of vice president for academic affairs should receive a thorough orientation to all policies and procedures of the university and to the specific duties and responsibilities inherent in the position. A thorough understanding of the university's history, mission, and culture should be provided to the new vice president for academic affairs before he or she begins the performance of the duties of the office.

The president is responsible for ensuring that this orientation takes place with substantial participation by the faculty, school deans, and the members of the academic administrative support staff.

- B. That the Council of School Deans should continue as a staff advisory group to the vice president for academic affairs. This should be a consultative body which meets regularly to ensure good communication within the academic area.

The functioning of the Council of School Deans is the responsibility of the vice president for academic affairs.

- C. That the vice president for academic affairs be evaluated annually by the president. This evaluation should be based on the job description of the vice president for academic affairs and the goals agreed upon at the beginning of the academic year.

The president is primarily responsible for ensuring that the vice president for academic affairs is evaluated annually.

- VII. **Role of the President in Academic Governance.** The By-Laws of the Board of Trustees define the ultimate responsibility of the president to provide institutional leadership. (See University By-laws, pp. 10-11).

BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVAL:

Sections I, II, V, VI – October 1987

Section IV – October 1993

Section III – February 1995

Section IV (The Department Chair) – February 2014

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