

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Resolution to Revise the Description of the Faculty Senate Standing
Committees in the Faculty Senate Constitution
CFA 2023-24A

Draft Notice Sent to University Council Cabinet	October 5, 2023
First Reading by Commission on Faculty Affairs	October 13, 2023
Approval by Commission on Faculty Affairs	October 27, 2023
First Reading by Faculty Senate	October 20, 2023
Approval by Faculty Senate	November 3, 2023
Staff Senate Comment	October 18, 2023
Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Comment	October 31, 2023
Graduate and Professional Student Senate Waived Right to Comment	December 4, 2023
Undergraduate Student Senate Waived Right to Comment	October 14, 2023
First Reading, University Council	December 4, 2023
Approved, University Council	February 5, 2024
Approved, President	February 5, 2024
Effective Date	Upon Approval

WHEREAS, Article VIII, Section 1 of the Faculty Senate Constitution describes the Faculty Senate Standing Committees and their purposes; and

WHEREAS, faculty need clarity on the scope and responsibilities of these committees to provide equitable treatment and expedient resolution of complaints involving faculty; and

WHEREAS, the purposes and responsibilities of these committees require clarification and amendment to better serve faculty; and

WHEREAS, the proposed revisions clarify and emphasize the specific scope and authority of the Faculty Senate in the context of complaints involving faculty;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Article VIII, Section 1 of the Faculty Senate Constitution be revised per the following changes **noted below in red**.

Current and *Proposed* Article VIII, Section 1 of the Faculty Senate Constitution

Current Article VIII, Section 1 of the Faculty Senate Constitution

Standing committees and work groups are established to carry out the functions and operation of the Faculty Senate. The actions of all standing committees are subject to review by the Faculty Senate.

There are two types of Faculty Senate standing committees: external and internal. External Faculty Senate standing committees serve the needs of the faculty as a whole, report to the vice president of the Senate, are prescribed in The Faculty Handbook, and are summarized in the Faculty Senate Constitution (see below). Internal Faculty Senate standing committees serve the internal operations of the Faculty Senate, report to the operations officer, and are prescribed in Article XIII of the Faculty Senate Bylaws.

Faculty Senate standing committees and work groups may be established or revised upon recommendation of the Faculty Senate president, the cabinet, or a senator, and approval by the Faculty Senate. In addition to Senate approval, the establishment or revision of external Faculty Senate standing committees requires approval through the resolution process.

The Committee on Faculty Ethics receives and considers charges of violations of faculty ethics that involve the abuse of professional responsibilities as outlined in the principles of ethical behavior prescribed in The Faculty Handbook. It is the venue for the examination of possible violations of the standards for research, teaching, and appropriate behavior with colleagues and students that do not cross legal thresholds, such as behavior that is offensive but does not meet the standard for discrimination/harassment. The committee has an investigatory and reporting role.

The Committee on Reconciliation offers advice and counsel to faculty members who seek it, particularly in relation to disputes with immediate supervisors or university administrators. The committee has a designated role within the grievance process to assist in resolving disputes that are eligible for consideration as a grievance if so requested by the faculty member, and can help facilitate conversations between faculty members and their supervisors with the goal of reaching mutually agreeable solutions. Faculty members may also consult the committee regarding serious disagreements with immediate supervisors or other university administrators over issues that are not eligible for consideration within the grievance process. In contrast to the Faculty Review Committee, the Committee on Reconciliation operates informally as a facilitator, similar to the University Ombuds Office. It meets with the respective parties to determine if there is common ground for resolution of the matter, facilitating a solution that is agreeable to the principal parties and consistent with university policy and practice.

The Faculty Review Committee oversees the movement of grievances through the grievance process as prescribed in The Faculty Handbook, provides faculty review of faculty grievances that are not resolved at the college level, and considers appeals in the

promotion and tenure or continued appointment process when the provost does not concur with a positive recommendation from the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure or the University Committee on Promotion and Continued Appointment. The committee has an investigatory and reporting role.

Proposed Article VIII, Section 1 of the Faculty Senate Constitution

Standing committees and work groups are established to carry out the functions and operation of the Faculty Senate. The actions of all standing committees are subject to review by the Faculty Senate.

There are two types of Faculty Senate standing committees: external and internal. External Faculty Senate standing committees serve ~~the needs of the faculty as a whole, in the preservation of academic freedom and the procedural integrity by which scholarly activities are evaluated, and in maintaining standards of professionalism. These committees~~ report to the vice president of the Faculty Senate, are prescribed in The Faculty Handbook, and are summarized in the Faculty Senate Constitution (see below). Internal Faculty Senate standing committees serve the internal operations of the Faculty Senate, report to the operations officer, and are prescribed in Article XIII of the Faculty Senate Bylaws.

Internal Faculty Senate standing committees and work groups may be established, dissolved, or revised modified upon recommendation of the Faculty Senate president, the cabinet, or a senator, and approval by the Faculty Senate. In addition to Senate approval, the establishment, dissolution, or revision modification of external Faculty Senate standing committees requires approval through the resolution process.

The Committee on Faculty Ethics receives and considers charges of violations of faculty ethics that involve the abuse of professional responsibilities as outlined in the principles of ethical behavior prescribed in The Faculty Handbook. It is the venue for the examination of possible violations of the standards for research, teaching, and appropriate behavior with colleagues, and students, and other supervisees that do not cross legal thresholds, such as behavior that is offensive but does not meet the standard for discrimination/harassment. The committee has an investigatory and reporting role.

The Committee on Reconciliation offers advice and counsel to faculty members who seek it, particularly in relation to disputes with immediate supervisors or university administrators. The committee has a designated role within the grievance process to assist in resolving disputes that are eligible for consideration as a grievance if so requested by the faculty member, and can Its purpose is to help facilitate conversations between faculty members and their supervisors with the goal of reaching mutually agreeable solutions. ~~Faculty members may also consult the committee regarding serious disagreements with immediate supervisors or other university administrators over issues that are not eligible for consideration within the grievance process. In contrast to the Faculty Review Committee, the~~ Committee on Reconciliation operates informally as a facilitator, similar to the University Ombuds Office. It meets with the respective parties to

determine if there is common ground for resolution of the matter, facilitating a solution that is agreeable to the principal parties and consistent with university policy and practice.

The Faculty Review Committee oversees the movement of grievances through the grievance process as prescribed in The Faculty Handbook, provides faculty review of faculty grievances that are not resolved at the college level, and considers appeals in the promotion and tenure or continued appointment process when the provost does not concur with a positive recommendation from the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure or the University Committee on Promotion and Continued Appointment. The committee has an investigatory and reporting role.



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<https://governance.vt.edu/ap-faculty-senate.php>

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October 31, 2023

To: Vice President of Policy and Governance

From: A/P Faculty Senate Polices and Issues Committee

The A/P Faculty Senate Polices and Issues Committee has reviewed and approves/endorsees the Commission on Faculty Affairs Resolution 2023-24A to Revise the Faculty Handbook Regarding Faculty Senate Standing Committees.

We have no further comment.



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ADHOC COMMITTEES

Staff Senate

<http://www.staffsenate.vt.edu/>

October 18, 2023

To: Vice President of Policy and Governance

The Staff Senate Committee on Policy and Issues has reviewed and approves CFA Resolution 2023-24A. We have no further comment.

**Thank you,
Amber Robinson, Chair Staff Senate Policies and
Issues Committee**