



Introduction to the Faculty Senate: Jurisdiction, Procedure & Committees

Jurisdiction

The University of Maine operates under a system of shared governance ([please see the University of Maine Shared Governance Policy here](#)). According to the [Faculty Senate Constitution](#), which has been reviewed and approved by the Chancellor of the University of Maine System pursuant to Board of Trustees' Policies, the Senate, acting on behalf of the faculty, has the authority to:

1. Establish degree requirements for the Bachelor of Arts degree (but not college-specific degree requirements);
2. Establish University policy (except when disapproved by the President) in the areas of academic freedom, standards for actions on the academic standing of students, free speech and assembly policies, the definition of academic titles, student academic standards, and curriculum matters involving two or more colleges;
3. Make recommendations to the administration regarding all academic matters;
4. Review all matters affecting the academic environment, including the allocation of financial resources, the library, academic organization, institutional plans and priorities, the awarding of honorary degrees, assessment of academic outcomes, establishment and elimination of academic programs and admissions' policies and standards.
5. Participate in the appointment of academic and administrative officers, including the President and the Vice Presidents; and
6. Evaluate University of Maine administrators.

Procedure

The full senate convenes twice per month from September through May. One meeting is closed to members only, and the other is open to the public. Meetings are held on Wednesday afternoons from 3 - 4:30pm, with the location of each meeting being announced on the [Faculty Senate website](#) at the beginning of the academic year. The UMaine Administration is welcome to attend open meetings and is frequently called upon to offer information regarding the state of the University, as well as to comment on Senate business. While nothing in the Constitution & Bylaws prevents the Senate from transacting business at a members-only meeting, it has always been the custom of the Senate to pass all motions at open meetings when the Administration, student government representatives, and members of the community can be present.

Motions

As with any legislative assembly, the Senate acts by approving “motions,” the vast majority of which are pre-written and distributed to the Administration ahead of the meeting. In virtually all cases, the Administration will have worked with the Executive Committee (comprised of the Chairs of all the individual standing committees, the officers, and the Board of Trustees and Faculty Governance Council representatives) in committee meetings to review and comment on motions before they are brought before the Senate for a vote in their final form.

After a motion is approved, it is normally transmitted to the President of the University for action. Even if no action is required by the Administration, the Senate standardly forwards its motions to the President as a matter of courtesy and to allow the chance for comment. Motions that formally recommend a specific action require a formal response, which the President must make within 30 days after the motion was transmitted. If no response is given, the recommendation will be distributed to all academic units and posted on the Senate website. In some instances, recommendations that receive no response may automatically become University Policy (see [Article III, §2](#)).

Motions that receive an unfavorable response are returned to the Senate for further consideration. The Senate may clarify or amend its original motion, pass a new motion, or, upon serious and prolonged disagreement, file an appeal with first the Chancellor and then the Board of Trustees. Appeals are exceedingly rare in the history of the Faculty Senate, and in fact there are no known instances of the Senate making an appeal in the last 25 years.

Committees

The standing committees of the Faculty Senate are listed in the [Bylaws to the Constitution](#). The list of committees and their requirements are summarized below.

The President appoints the chair of the Committee on Committees, who makes recommendations for all members of each standing committee. The President then appoints the members and chairs for all committees, in consultation with the Committee on Committees chairperson. The Faculty Senate President is an ex-officio member of all standing committees.

Executive Committee

- The President should ensure that there is representation from every college on the Executive Committee. To secure said representation, the President may appoint “at large” members to serve on the Executive Committee.

Committee on Committees

- One senator from each college and cooperative extension (as much as possible)

- Senior Officer for Administration
- One Graduate Student Association Representative

Constitution and Bylaws Committee

- Parliamentarian
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Two senators (who must represent different colleges)

Academic Affairs Committee

- Provost
- One senator from each college and Cooperative Extension (as much as possible)
- One undergraduate student *senator*
- One graduate student *senator*

General Education Committee

- Chair of GEC must be a member of the Academic Affairs Committee. They are appointed by the chair of the Academic Affairs Committee in consultation with the Faculty Senate President.
- Faculty representative to UPCC
- Director of CITL
- Representative from OIRA
- AP for Student Success and Strategic Initiatives (Innovation?)
- One *senator* from each college and Cooperative Extension (as much as possible)

Environment Committee

- Provost
- One *senator* from each college and Cooperative Extension (as much as possible)
- Vice President for Student Life
- One undergraduate student *senator*
- One graduate student *senator*

Environment Subcommittee

- The chair must be a member of the Environment Committee.

Zero Carbon Subcommittee

- The chair must be a member of the Environment Committee.

Finance and Institutional Planning Committee

- Provost (or designated appointee)

- One *senator* from each college and Cooperative Extension (as much as possible)
- Chief Financial Officer
- One undergraduate student *senator*
- One graduate student *senator*

Research and Scholarship Committee

- Provost (or an appointee)
- One *senator* from each college and Cooperative Extension (as much as possible)
- Vice President for Research (or an appointee)
- One graduate student *senator*

Program Creation and Reorganization Review Committee

- One *faculty* from each college and Cooperative Extension (as much as possible, and preferably two *faculty* from each college). As with all other committees, at least half the committee members must be senators.

Service and Outreach Committee

- One *senator* from each college and Cooperative Extension (as much as possible)
- One student government representative (presumably undergraduate, but not specified)

Library Advisory Committee

- Dean of Libraries
- Ten faculty representatives from a variety of disciplines
- One undergraduate *student* (need not be a senator)
- One graduate *student* (need not be a senator)

Information and Technology Committee

- At least one *senator* from each college and Cooperative Extension (as much as possible)
- Director of CITL or appointee (non-voting)
- UM/UMM Campus IT Officer (non-voting)
- Chair of the IT Strategic Council (non-voting)
- ETAC faculty representative (non-voting)
- One undergraduate *student* (need not be a senator)
- One graduate *student* (need not be a senator)