

Welcome to the Faculty Senate Council/Committee Leadership Training



September 2026

www.wmich.edu/facultysenate

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

WMU FACULTY SENATE COUNCIL/COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP TRAINING

September 2026

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Duties and Responsibilities of Officers and Members
3. Development and Revision of Charges
4. Meeting Procedures and Parliamentary Practices
5. Technology Notes
6. Faculty Senate Office Procedures
7. Questions and Answers

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Council/committee organization includes:

- a. Permanent and/or advisory members.
- b. Ex Officio members (Executive Board Liaison, i.e., Faculty Senate president or his/her designee; other administrative office designees).
- c. Senate-elected faculty members (specific distribution required for some council/committees).
- d. Student members, undergraduate students appointed by the Western Student Association and graduate students appointed by the Graduate Student Association early in the fall semester.

Chairs must distinguish between voting and non-voting members.

Guests must be coordinated with the Faculty Senate Office at direction of the chair.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Council/committee structure:

- a. **Elected Officers** – Each council/committee shall elect from its membership *annually* at least:
 - i. Chair – Provides organization of work, prepares agenda in coordination with the agenda setting committee, and presides at council/committee meetings.
 - ii. Vice Chair – Serves in the absence of chair and as assigned.
 - iii. Secretary – Records and prepares minutes.

NOTE: Council/committee chairperson may be elected for a maximum of three consecutive one-year terms. After serving three consecutive terms, chair must have a two-year break as chair.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

b. Members – (member represents their constituents)

- Attend meetings, participate in deliberations, propose and vote on motions.
- Serve on standing committees of the council/committee, (non-members may also serve).
- The chairperson must orient new members to the committee.

c. Standing committees –

- Each council/committee may establish standing committees as necessary to carry out its role statement and charges.
- Composition of standing committees is not restricted to council/committee members.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

d. Agenda Setting Committee –

- Council/committee should establish an agenda setting committee comprised of the officers, Ex Officio, and pertinent administrator.

e. Ad Hoc Committees –

- A council/committee or the Executive Board may appoint special committees to perform specific tasks.
- *An ad hoc committee automatically ceases to exist when its final report is issued.*
- If a council/committee votes to delegate additional work to an ad hoc committee, it continues until the new assignment is completed and another report is submitted.
- The composition of an ad hoc committee is not restricted to council/committee members.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3. Membership includes** – the composition of the council can be found in the Faculty Senate bylaws, Article VI: Councils, Sec. 1
- a. At least 10-20 members.
 - b. Administrative representatives which align with the council's role.
 - c. 11 faculty members elected by the Senate
 - I. Three from Arts and Sciences – with representation from each division recommended (Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences and Mathematics).
 - II. One from each of the other colleges
 - III. One from a unaffiliated unit
 - IV. One representative at large

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- d. The Faculty Senate President or Executive Board designee as an Ex Officio member.
- e. One undergraduate student selected by the Western Student Association.
- f. One graduate student selected by the Graduate Student Association

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4 . Council/committee duties:

- a. Receive and carry out charges of the Faculty Senate Executive Board.
- b. Determine and carry out own agendas in context of the council/committee role statement.
- c. Periodically reconsider, review, and rewrite, if necessary, role statement (submit to Executive Board for consideration).
- d. Periodically review structure and activities of standing committees and ad hoc committees and receive reports from them.
- e. Submit council/committee charge-based reports and policy recommendations to Executive Board for consideration.

NOTE: Council/committees do not make policy. Council/committees make **recommendations** to the Faculty Senate Executive Board, which then makes recommendations to the administration.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4. Council/committee action –

- Council/committee recommendations are submitted to the Executive Board in the form of a report or a Memorandum of Action.
- The Executive Board may invite the council/committee chairperson to present the report or MOA.
- Recommendations should be succinct and convey the specific action(s) a council/committee has endorsed.
- Draft MOAs must be submitted using the MOA template and should be sent via email to the Faculty Senate Office.

NOTE: Once an MOA is numbered it can be found on the Memorandum of Action website according to the year it was created. MOAs prior to 2000 are archived through the University Libraries WMU Archives department.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5. Council/committee minutes –

- The actions and proceedings of each council/committee meeting shall be recorded in minutes.
- Once the secretary has prepared the minutes submit them via e-mail attachment to the Faculty Senate Office.
- Ensuring the accuracy of the minutes is a duty of the secretary and cannot be delegated.
- A staff member may prepare the minutes under the secretary's direction but cannot sign them.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- If the secretary is absent:
 - The council/committee chair should solicit a volunteer from the members present to fill in.
 - For virtual meetings, if a volunteer cannot be confirmed, the chair may use the record function in Webex in order to compile minutes following the meeting. The meeting recording will be used only to produce minutes.
- Minutes will be submitted via e-mail attachment to the Faculty Senate Office for distribution.

As the leader of the council/committee, the Chair is overall responsible for the minutes

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6. **Council/committee additional materials**— A copy of additional materials that are distributed to council/committee members must also be forwarded to the Faculty Senate Office for its files (e.g., slides, reports, charts, etc.).
7. **Council/committee annual report** —
 - Each council/committee chairperson should assess progress in Feb./March to determine if action which requires follow-up has been completed.
 - This review must be provided using the year-end report template to the Executive Board by **May 30** as well as to the new council/committee chairperson at his/her first meeting.

As the leader of the council/committee, the chair is responsible for the annual report

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE CHARGES

- Charges are developed through the Executive Board review of council/committee year-end reports.
- Charges are disseminated by the Faculty Senate President at the first fall council/committee meeting.
- Standard charges for all councils/committees include:
 - Review the scope and description of the council's/committee's role statement to assess the effectiveness of the council's/committee's practices.
 - Annually review the draft year-end report.
 - Address continuing or outstanding issues or initiatives as directed.
- The council/committee has the opportunity to add/revise/change charges by:
 1. Discussion with the council/committee of recommended change(s),
 2. The council/committee directs the liaison to confer suggested change(s) to the Executive Board,
 3. Recommended change(s) are approved/denied by the Executive Board.

MEETING PROCEDURES AND PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICES

Quorum:

- Before proceeding with the acceptance of the agenda, quorum must be observed and recorded.
- Presiding officer must explicitly take a roll call to establish quorum of **voting** members.
- 51% of current voting members of a council/committee membership must be in attendance to establish quorum.
- Any vacant seats should be removed from the voting member total so that one more than half of the total is needed for quorum.
- On the council/committee membership website an **asterisk (*)** in front of a name indicates a non-voting member and should not be counted.

TIP: Prepare an alphabetized list of all **voting** members and use it for the roll call and when polling members to vote on all motions.

MEETING PROCEDURES AND PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICES

- At any time if quorum is broken, (i.e. there are no longer enough members participating in the meeting), **action cannot** be taken; however, discussion may continue.
- If there are technical difficulties and members are dropped from the meeting due to connection, they are considered absent from the meeting and no longer count toward quorum.
- The late arrival or early exit of members must be recorded in the minutes.

MEETING PROCEDURES AND PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICES

Conduct:

- If it is not clear who is speaking, members should state their name before speaking.
- The presiding officer will monitor this and ensure the participants know who is speaking.
- Discussion should take place on a rotating basis.
- Members are encouraged to raise their hand both electronically and physically so the presiding officer knows that they would like to be recognized in order to address the council/committee.
- The presiding officer will facilitate the order of speaking.
- Motions must be clearly made and seconded and the identity of those making motions and seconding, must be recorded in the minutes. Only **voting members** may make motions and second motions.

MEETING PROCEDURES AND PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICES

- The presiding officer must call for a vote by asking for all voting members in favor to state “aye” , then ask for any voting members that are opposed to say “nay” and finally ask for any voting members that wish abstention to state “abstain”.
- If a member was not present at the prior meeting they would abstain from approval of the minutes of that meeting.
- Alternatively, voting may be conducted in a transparent fashion by roll call, or by secret ballot in writing.
- Following a vote, the presiding officer must clearly articulate the results.
- Voting may be conducted in a transparent fashion through a roll call or by secret ballot in writing.
 - For in-person meetings a secret ballot should be distributed, collected, and counted by the liaison/Ex Officio.
 - For virtual meetings a secret ballot is cast through a private chat message to the liaison/Ex Officio.

MEETING PROCEDURES AND PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICES

- A conflict of interest occurs when an individual has a personal, financial, or professional interest that may interfere with their ability to act impartially and in the best interest of the group, then adhere to the following:
 - It is the responsibility of the individual to disclose it promptly to the council/committee.
 - Individuals should recuse themselves from that agenda item, if discussion or voting may be impartially compromised.
 - If it is uncertain whether a conflict exists, contact the Faculty Senate Parliamentarian [Decker Hains](#).

TECHNOLOGY NOTES

Meeting Medium:

- Virtual meetings have been scheduled in Webex by the Faculty Senate Office.
- In-person meeting locations have been scheduled by the council/committee chair.
- Do not use Webex personal rooms.

Process:

- Meeting notices distributed via email approximately one week prior to the meeting date including the Webex link.
- Executive Board liaison or the presiding officer will open the Webex meeting room at least 5 to 15 minutes prior to the meeting start time.
- The presiding officer will call the meeting to order at the meeting start time. **[Start on time!]**

For specifics on councils/committees view
Constitution Article VIII and Bylaws Article VI

The Faculty Senate and its councils/committees
use the **American Institute of Parliamentarians:
Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure.**

FACULTY SENATE OFFICE PROCEDURES

FACULTY SENATE OFFICE STAFF

Administrator: Sue Brodasky (7-3312)

email: sue.brodasky@wmich.edu

Administrative Assistant: Melisa Cloud (7-3309)

email: melisa.cloud@wmich.edu

Faculty Senate Office 5332

4060 Moore Hall

(269) 387-3310

faculty-senate@wmich.edu

www.wmich.edu/facultysenate

All communication directed to the Faculty Senate leadership, must be copied to the Faculty Senate Office as well.

FACULTY SENATE OFFICE PROCEDURES

The Faculty Senate Office is available to assist with clerical support if given adequate lead time. Plan ahead! Commonly asked questions can be found at the Faculty Senate website.

Agendas and Minutes

- All agendas and minutes should be sent via e-mail to faculty-senate@wmich.edu.
- Meeting materials will be disseminated to council/committee members **one week prior** to the scheduled meeting date.
- With lead time, requests for the Faculty Senate Office to prepare and distribute materials for council/committee meetings must be received **10 business days before the date of the meeting.**
- the Faculty Senate Office staff reviews all meeting minutes for clarity prior to being sent to members with the agenda.
- In compliance with digital accessibility, agenda, minutes, MOA, and report templates have been updated.

FACULTY SENATE OFFICE PROCEDURES

The Faculty Senate Office sends all official council/committee correspondence.

Notices

- Please notify the Faculty Senate Office of any change in location, date, time, or cancellation of council/committee meetings so that notification can be provided to the council/committee members as soon as possible and room arrangements confirmed.
- If the University closes on the day of any Faculty Senate meeting, that meeting is considered canceled.
- The Faculty Senate Office needs adequate lead time to process agendas, minutes, notifications, etc.

FACULTY SENATE OFFICE PROCEDURES

Memorandum of Action (MOA)

- If a council/committee determine a Memorandum of Action (MOA) is necessary to carry out its work, please notify the Faculty Senate Office in order to have a number assigned to the draft MOA.
- Draft MOAs must be submitted using the MOA template and sent via email to the Faculty Senate Office for review.
- The Faculty Senate Office will ensure Faculty Senate sanctioned language is applied, and return the MOA to the council/committee to accept suggested edits.
- Once the council/committee has voted to approve the MOA it must once again be submitted via email to the Faculty Senate Office for consideration by the Executive Board.
- When an Executive Board meeting date to receive the MOA has been determined, the council/committee chair will be invited to present the MOA to the Executive Board.

FACULTY SENATE OFFICE PROCEDURES

Memorandum of Action (MOA), cont.

Following presentation of an MOA to the Executive Board, it will either:

1. Return the MOA to the council/committee with suggested revision(s) to improve clarity of the recommended action;
2. Postpone consideration of the MOA for further discussion at an upcoming Executive Board meeting;
3. Approve the MOA to move forward for consideration by the full Faculty Senate; or
4. Table the MOA for no further consideration.

Following Executive Board approval the MOA will be scheduled to go before the full Faculty Senate at its next meeting date.

FACULTY SENATE OFFICE PROCEDURES

Memorandum of Action (MOA), cont.

The council/committee chair will be invited to present the MOA to the Faculty Senate, which will either:

1. Return the MOA to the council/committee with suggested revision(s) to improve clarity of the recommended action;
2. Postpone consideration of the MOA for further discussion at an upcoming Faculty Senate meeting;
3. Approve the MOA to move forward for consideration by the University administration; or
4. Table the MOA for no further consideration.

FACULTY SENATE OFFICE PROCEDURES

Memorandum of Action (MOA), cont.

- Following approval by the Faculty Senate the MOA will be held for 30 days in accordance with Article III, Sec. 8 of the Faculty Senate Constitution.
- Once the 30-day hold has expired, the Faculty Senate Office electronically routes the MOA for signature of all approving bodies, including the Provost and WMU President.
- When the WMU President signs approval of the MOA it is considered active policy.
- The Faculty Senate Office posts the signed MOA to the website and the searchable database for reference.
- If the MOA is a revision of student catalog language the Registrar's office will implement the MOA for the upcoming fall semester.

Q&A