

New Faculty and Senator

Introduction to Faculty Senate Service



The role of the Senate

- **Represent the faculty** as the designated partner in shared governance with the Board of Trustees, Western Student Association, and Graduate Student Association
- **Engage directly** with the University president, provost, and other administrators
- **Provide final recommendation of** memoranda of action on curriculum and academic **policy**
- **Distribute information** to and receive direction from the broader faculty

The purview of the Senate

- **Make recommendations** to administrators regarding academic policy and curriculum
- **Raise and discuss issues** in other areas (excluding wages, hours, and working conditions) with the greater University community
- **Report on activities** within and beyond the institution relevant to WMU faculty

MOAs: The faculty's path to affecting University policy

A Memorandum of Action is a recommendation made by the Faculty Senate to the WMU administration. The general process is:

- 1) A faculty member or administrator raises a concern with the Faculty Senate Executive Board
- 2) The Executive Board charges a council or committee with the responsibility to research and consider the issue and, if appropriate, create an Memoranda of Action (MOA) to address the issue via a policy change or actionable item
- 3) MOA-related deliberation typically occurs at the council/committee level
- 4) After an MOA is created and approved by the relevant council or committee, it is presented to the Executive Board, which can recommend it for approval and send it to the full Senate, return it to the council or committee that developed the MOA with recommendations for further development, or discharge the recommended action
- 5) Once the Senate approves an MOA, it moves to the provost and president for their action

Organizational structure

- The Senate includes the full Faculty Senate, the Executive Board, standing councils and committees, and various work groups and ad hoc committees
- The full Senate oversees the activity of the Executive Board and directs the action of the Executive Board
- The Executive Board 1) creates agendas for the Senate meetings; 2) presides over the Senate meetings; 3) identifies and appoints council, committee, work group and special appointments to University groups; 4) provides charges for, and accepts annual reports for all councils and committees and; 5) evaluates MOAs from councils and committees.

Basic duties of Senators

- 1) Attend Faculty Senate meetings or arrange for a department faculty substitute if they are unable to attend the meeting
- 2) Disseminate information, including the content of upcoming MOAs, and a summary of meetings, to their unit in a timely manner
- 3) Represent their unit by voting and by voicing concerns to the relevant parties via the appropriate mechanisms



Other ways to contribute

- Join a council or committee and/or encourage other members of your unit to do likewise
- Donate faculty fees annually and encourage other members of your unit to do likewise
- Stay informed by reading prior meeting minutes and Executive Board minutes in advance of the monthly Senate meeting
- Participate actively in the meetings by asking questions to the president and provost after their presentations and by presenting professional concerns relevant to your unit or the broader WMU community

Meeting rules

- The Senate and related bodies use the American Institute of Parliamentarians: Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure
- Arrive on time and sign-in
- Avoid issues of direct relevance to the WMU-AAUP Agreement



You should know

- The Senate operates under a constitution and bylaws that are available on the Senate website.
- The Senate is the faculty's mechanism for shared governance in accordance with the University's Board of Trustees, whose authority is delegated to them by the State of Michigan

