

ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS ANNUAL REPORT
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE 2023-2024

April 2024

Organizations and Operations Committee Charge:

This Committee shall be responsible for expediting Senate business and furthering the service of the Senate to the University. Its functions shall include but not be limited to:

- A. Recommending the establishment, terms, and charges of new committees or other modifications of committee structure;
- B. Making recommendations concerning any operating rules of the Senate that may be necessary;
- C. Annually reviewing the bylaws so that it can recommend appropriate changes as needed; receiving proposed amendments to the bylaws and, after consideration, making recommendations to the Faculty Senate concerning such proposed amendments.
- D. Establishing in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, the number of Senators to which each participating College of the University is entitled.
- E. All business to come before the Senate should be first submitted to this committee which shall refer items requiring study and action to the appropriate standing committee or appropriate collegial faculty.
- F. The Committee shall report its referrals to the next regular meeting of the Senate. This does not prohibit the introduction of items of new business from the floor.

Committee Members:

Lisa Billingham (CVPA – 2024) Co-Chair, Charlotte Gill (CHSS – 2024 Co-Chair) Doug Eyman (CHSS- 2024), Greg Robinson (CVPA – 2024) and Catherine Sausville (COS-2024).

The committee focused this academic year on 1) preparing edits and clarification to the Faculty Senate Standing Rules, 2) considering changes to committee charges, and 3) the annual calculation of Faculty Senate representation. Our committee continues to review the overall processes of the Faculty Senate related to its charge.

Faculty Senate Bylaws Revisions and Committee Charges

Standing Rules Revisions

The Organizations and Operations Committee focused this year on updating and streamlining the Standing Rules of the Faculty Senate, some of which have not been updated since the 1970s. This follows our revisions to the Bylaws approved in the 2022-23 academic year. The Standing Rules are the operational guidelines of the Senate and are process-oriented and relatively more flexible to update, whereas the Bylaws are policy-oriented and require two readings on the Senate floor before changes can be approved. The proposed revisions to the Standing Rules were submitted for discussion at the December 6, 2023, Faculty Senate meeting, and approved on the Senate Floor on February 7, 2024. The final document has been posted on the Senate website. The co-chairs wish to acknowledge the committee for their work and dedication to completing this process.

Committee Charges

Each year Faculty Senate Standing Committees and University Standing Committees that have proposed charge changes submit them with tracked changes and a rationale. A sample [form](#) was used as a trial to collect data from committees who wished to modify or create new committees. This year the O&O Committee received change requests from the Writing Across the Curriculum committee, the Faculty Matters Committee, the Academic Appeals Committee and the Mason Core Committee.

The committee considered a request to create a university or faculty senate committee related to sustainability and environmental health and safety. The committee determined after discussions with numerous parties that the main charges proposed were already under the purview of other units, and it would not have been appropriate to design a separate committee for these issues.

The committee determined that the Salary Equity Committee should not be disbanded.

The committee has been asked to support the creation and charge of a committee on Academic Standards; this action item will be addressed at the next senate meeting, April 24, 2024.

The Allocation of Faculty Senators

The Senate Allocation for 2024-25 was calculated and announced at the March 20, 2024, meeting. There was a single change in representation by college to remove one member from the School of Policy and Government. 51 senators have been assigned for election. An additional member of the Senate may be added due to calculations per the Senate Charter as cited below: "3. Should the number of allocated seats exceed the number of elected seats by 1 because of rounding in the calculations, then the number of elected Senate seats shall increase by one for that year's allocation. "

The Deans are notified via email from the Senate clerk and Organization and Operations Committee chair(s) regarding the returning members and any positions that must be filled by election in each college.

Proposed Committee Topics to Address in 2024-25

The charge of the Organizations and Operations Committee calls for annual review and continued revisions as necessary to align the responsibilities, tasks and procedures related to Standing and University Committee Charges. At the time of the annual report a new University Standing Committee has been proposed for consideration as cited in the April 24, 2024, meeting agenda. The committee requests that if there are carryover issues related to this approval that those be addressed in the first committee meeting of the fall 2024 semester.

Other topics for continued discussion include increasing the Faculty Senate size to more appropriately mirror the general faculty's size and a help guide to send to committees who are contemplating charge changes to inform committee chairs of the process for requesting changes.

The Committee recommends an assessment of Faculty Senate body size and suggests a possible increase in the number of senators.

The Committee recommends staggered terms for O&O committee members to ensure continuity of committee and Senate procedures.

Due to the detailed nature of the work required by this committee, it is the recommendation of the current O&O committee that future Organization and Operations Committees operate with co-chairs.

The Co-Chairs would like to thank the Organizations and Operations Committee for their input and work with the continued service related to the scope of work related to the processes that are continual related to committee charge changes and changes to the Faculty Senate Bylaws.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Billingham, Co-Chair

Charlotte Gill, Co-Chair

Addendum:

1. During the past calendar year has the President, Provost, or Senior Vice President (or their respective offices) announced initiatives or goals or acted upon issues that fall under the charge of your Committee? If so, was your Committee consulted by the President, Provost, or Senior Vice President in a timely manner before the announcement or action? If not, do you believe your Committee should have been consulted? Would it have been helpful to have had the input of your Committee from the outset?

The Committee worked with the Provost's Office to provide feedback related to the creation of the April 24, 2024 proposed University Standing Committee for Academic Standards. The committee had access to many levels within the Provost's office and communication was timely and supportive.

2. Did your Committee seek information or input from the President, Provost, or Senior Vice President or members of their staffs? If so, did they respond adequately and in a timely manner?

Not applicable.

3. Please suggest how you believe the President, Provost, Senior Vice President and/or their staffs might more effectively interact with your Committee in the future, if necessary.

The O&O committee acknowledges that the current leadership is responsive to requests for data and information.

4. Please relate any additional information you may have regarding interactions between your Committee and the President, Provost, Senior Vice President, or their staff.

The committee does not have any recommendations at this time.