

Organizations and Operations Committee

Annual report, 2025-2026

May 5, 2026

Organizations and Operations Committee Charge (as amended, April 29, 2026)

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.~~

Note: On April 29, 2026, the Faculty Senate approved the committee's proposal to delete sections E and F from its charge, as they did not reflect actual Faculty Senate practice in recent memory.

Committee functions

Membership

Catherine Sausville (COS - 2026), Co-Chair

Zachary Schrag (CHSS - 2026), Co-Chair

Lisa Billingham (CVPA – 2027)

Doug Eyman (CHSS – 2026)

Tamara Maddox (CEC - 2026)

Meetings

The committee met monthly by Zoom.

Annual functions

Allocation of Faculty Senators

The Senate allocation for 2026-27 was calculated and announced at the January 28, 2026 meeting. There was no change in representation. There are currently 52 senators

to be elected. 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. ”

Committee and task force list

As noted below, the Committee worked with the Faculty Senate clerk and the Provost’s Office to a complete list of committees and task forces with faculty representation. We suggest that the committee request an updated list every January.

Matters brought to the Faculty Senate

October 2025. The Committee introduced a revision of the **Admissions Committee** charge to improve efficiency and ensure faculty engagement. The Faculty Senate approved this by voice vote.

November 2025. The Organization and Operations Committee proposed a package of revisions to Articles IV and V the **Faculty Senate Bylaws**. As required by the Bylaws, these revisions were read and debated at two regular successive meetings: November and December 2025, and approved in December 2025.

January 2026. Following the adoption of the new bylaws at the previous meeting, the Committee proposed that language that is now incorporated into the bylaws be removed from the **Standing Rules**. The Faculty Senate approved this by voice vote.

January 2026. The Committee introduced a revision of the **Academic Standards Committee** charge, providing for staggered terms. The Faculty Senate approved this by voice vote.

March 2026. The Committee devised a recommended form for annual **committee reports** such as this one. The Faculty Senate Clerk distributed this to committee chairs.

April 2026. The committee proposed the dissolution of the **University Academic Appeals Committee**, modifications of its own charge, and revision of Standing Rule 1 on **video recordings**. The Faculty Senate approved all of these motions by voice vote.

Other business

Writing Across the Curriculum Committee. O&O discussed the possibility of removing the requirement for all colleges to have a representative on the WAC committee, since some smaller units struggle to find someone. It was decided that since writing is different across disciplines, it is important to keep the requirement in the hopes those units will be able to fill the seat at some point.

As noted below, the Committee worked with the Faculty Senate clerk and the Provost’s Office to a complete list of committees and task forces with faculty representation.

The Committee prepared documents (“How to Be a Faculty Senator” and “A Few Robert’s Rules”) that were shared with new and returning faculty senators. On April 22, the Committee helped run an orientation session for senators.

Unfinished business

Committee charges

In Fall 2026, the committee will review all committee annual reports from Spring 2026 and recommend needed changes. In particular, it should attend to the following:

Committee on External Academic Relations. In April 2026, the External Academic Relations Committee reported that the “committee has not been convening while we await a determination about its future purpose and niche.” In 2026-2027, O&O should explore instructing the committee on its duties, revising the committee charge, or dissolving the committee.

Faculty Handbook Revision Committee. The current committee charge, last updated in March 2025, specifies procedures for revising the Faculty Handbook that would be better placed in the Handbook itself or in Faculty Senate Standing Rules or Bylaws. Any such changes would be made collaboratively with the Faculty Handbook Revision Committee.

Multilingual Students Academic Support Committee. The committee charge, last updated in 2021, requires representation from some units that no longer exist or that are being phased out. If the committee is to continue, it needs an updated charge.

Other unfinished business

In 2026-2027, the Committee may propose a new standing rule prohibiting secondary amendments and specifying alternative procedures.

We continue to work with the Faculty Senate clerk to determine the formats for agendas, minutes, reports, and other documents. As of Spring 2026, for example, members of the Faculty Senate discussed whether the clerk should distribute materials for upcoming meetings as a single, long document or “board book” (as was done for the March 25 meeting), and we expect that conversation to continue in Fall 2026.

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) has discussed adding faculty representatives to the Board of Visitors to FSEC. Since this would require a Bylaws change, it would go through O&O.

Interactions with administration

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?

No.

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?

In December 2025, the Committee contacted Sarah Parnell, Director, Provost Administration and Operations, seeking a complete list of committees and task forces with faculty representation. She confirmed that no such list existed, but she got to work assembling one, completing the task in January 2026.

This is an extremely valuable document that will serve Organization and Operations, Nominations, and the Faculty Senate more generally. We have asked that the Office of the Provost update it every January so that Nominations can use the information to determine which committees need elections.

The provost's office supplied the FTE data needed for Faculty Senate seat allocations.

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.

N/A.

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

In November 2025, the Office of the Provost established the position of the Faculty Senate Clerk and Administrative Coordinator and hired the very able Anan Shahriar as its first occupant. Ms. Shahriar has worked closely with O&O to improve Faculty Senate operations and record-keeping, and we are grateful both for her assistance and for the establishment of that position. The committee looks forward to working with the clerk.