

The University of Texas at Austin
Faculty Governance Committee Structure and Voting Policy Checklist

This checklist is intended to offer some required and recommended decision points for the structure of a Faculty Governance Committee and Voting Policy (“Policy.”) The checklist includes some decisions that must be resolved in the Policy. However, this is not an exhaustive list of decision points and rules. Additional faculty governance rules for the unit may be applicable and therefore should be included even if not prompted for by this checklist. For additional information, see Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) 2-1310, [Faculty Governance Committees](#).

- 1. The Policy must specify the name of the unit to which it is being applied and whether that unit is a**
 - Department,
 - [Organized research unit \(ORU\)](#),
 - [Academic center](#),
 - College / school, or
 - Other provost-approved program, institute, etc. or unit employing professional-track faculty not appointed in another primary academic unit.
- 2. The Policy must specify the type of Faculty Governance Committee**
 - Budget Council, or
 - Executive Committee
- 3. The Policy must specify information about who will chair the Committee**
 - By default, the unit supervisor serves as the Committee Chair (“Chair”). If another individual will serve as Chair, then the Policy must specify the
 - Eligibility criteria (e.g., faculty title series, rank, unit role, etc.) to serve as Chair,
 - Term of the Chair’s appointment (how many academic years), and
 - Whether the Chair is an elected or appointed position
 - If the Chair is an elected position then the Policy must specify requirements for the election (e.g., who is eligible to vote, majority needed, etc.)
- 4. The Policy should clarify the voting eligibility of the Committee Chair**

If the Chair of a Faculty Governance Committee is the unit’s supervisor or is in a unit in which the Chair also offers an independent recommendation about faculty review or faculty hiring, then the Chair is not eligible to vote on recommendations made by the Faculty Governance Committee.
- 5. If the Committee is an Executive Committee, then the Policy must specify how membership on the Committee is constituted and lay out the membership terms**

- Which faculty title series, ranks and affiliations can be members of the Committee?
 - If professional-track faculty can be members, is there an additional eligibility criterion? (e.g., benefits-eligible professional-track faculty at the rank of associate (senior lecturer) or higher who have worked at UT Austin for a minimum number of recent academic years are eligible, etc.)
 - Will the Committee include any faculty whose primary academic home is outside the unit? And if so, how identified (elected, appointed and if appointed by whom, etc.) and how many, etc. (e.g., an ORU with affiliated tenured faculty might include some tenured faculty who are external to the unit on the ORU's Executive Committee)
- Is the count of members based on title series and rank (e.g., all tenured full professors and all tenured associate professors) or does the Committee have a fixed number of members? (e.g., four tenured full professors, three tenured associate professors, two professional-track faculty of a certain rank, etc.)
- Are members elected or appointed or a mixture of some elected and some appointed?
 - If appointed, who does the appointing? (e.g., department chair)
- What are the terms of Executive Committee members? (e.g., two-year terms unless the rank of a member changes as a result of promotion, etc.)
- Is there a minimum or fixed number of members on the Executive Committee?
 - All Faculty Governance Committees must have a minimum of five eligible voting members.

6. The Policy should specify a Voting Policy for each of the Faculty Governance Committee's responsibilities that complies with the University's policies about voter eligibility for each responsibility. For each responsibility, the Policy should identify the voting eligibility for faculty by title series, rank, affiliation, and percent appointment.

For example, are professional-track faculty eligible to vote and on which items?, are faculty whose primary academic appointment is outside of the unit eligible?, etc.

Required responsibilities (in terms of making recommendations) of the Committee for which a Voting Policy is needed:

- Tenured / tenure-track faculty hiring
- Tenured / tenure-track faculty compensation (e.g., new-hire salary, merit increase)
- Tenured / tenure-track faculty review overseen by the Faculty Governance Committee (e.g., annual, promotion and tenure, mid-probationary, and comprehensive periodic review)
- Recommending the list of candidates for promotion review (i.e., professional-track faculty and tenured associate promotions who are not invoking their right for consideration)
- Recommending nominations for emeritus appointments

- Continuation of and future changes (every three academic years) to the Policy

Additional recommendation responsibilities that may be designated by the unit supervisor and for which a Voting Policy might be needed include:

- Professional-track faculty hiring
 - For which title series, ranks, FTE, types of searches, etc.
- Professional-track faculty compensation (e.g., new-hire salary, merit increase)
 - For which title series, ranks, FTE, types of searches etc.
- Professional-track faculty contract terms for new-hires and contract renewal
- Review of phased retirement contracts
- Other responsibilities as assigned.

- 7. The Policy must specify and allow for synchronous, remote engagement and voting by faculty who have been approved to work remotely (either for professional or personal reasons).**
- 8. The Policy must clarify that**
 - The role of the Faculty Governance Committee is to vote on recommendations
 - Final decisions related to responsibilities for which the Faculty Governance Committee provides recommendations are made by either the dean, provost, president, executive vice chancellor, chancellor, or Board of Regents depending on the action being taken.
- 9. The Policy should list any appointed ex-officio members for the Committee and clarify their role(s), terms, voting eligibility, etc.**
- 10. The Policy should include an effective date.**
- 11. The Policy should include its expiration date by which a proposal for continuation or renewal must have been reviewed and approved.**
- 12. The proposal for creation, continuation, or modification ("Proposal") of the unit's Faculty Governance Committee's structure and Voting Policy should:**
 - Address each of the points (1 through 11) listed in this checklist about membership, voting policy, etc.
 - Be circulated to the unit faculty allowing at least one week for the faculty to review the Proposal
 - Include delineation of which unit faculty are eligible to vote on the next continuation or revision of the Proposal
 - Include an in-person meeting for the unit faculty (including those on professional leave) who are eligible to vote and also allow synchronous, remote

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engagement by faculty approved to work remotely or who have a personal accommodation requiring remote participation

- Include that a recommendation for a modification to or continuation of the unit's Faculty Governance Committee can be made if a majority voted in favor of the Proposal consistent with all requirements in the voting policy
- Provide for review by the supervisor and dean for their recommendations to the Provost's Office for final approval.

13. The Policy must be submitted to the provost's Faculty Affairs team for approval by the senior vice provost for faculty affairs.