

Frequently Asked Questions About Academic Senate Committees

1) Q: Where can I find a description of Academic Senate committees?

A: A description of all the committees, their charges, a list of who is currently serving on each committee, the committee chair, and, in some cases, the time and dates that the committee meets can be found on the Academic Senate web site at:

http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/handbook08_09/comdescriptions.htm

You may also get this information from your college's Committee on Committee representative.

2) Q: How do I know if a committee I'm interested in has vacancies?

A: Your Committee on Committees representative will always have a list of committee vacancies. In addition in late March or early April of each spring, you will be notified in an email that a Committee Preference Form is available for downloading from the senate web site. The form lists all committees and vacancies for the next academic year for each college and unit.

3) Q: How can I figure out the relative workload of different committees when deciding how much service I can afford to undertake?

A: The workload of each committee varies depending on their charge, the issues that have been referred to them, the chair's leadership style, etc. In general, the policy committees tend to have a bigger workload and meet more frequently than the operating committees, but that's not always the case. The best way to find out about the expected workload is to consult the chair of the committee. The chairs are listed at the top of each committee membership list at:

http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/committees_08_09.html

4) Q: How do I get appointed to an Academic Senate Committee?

A: In late March or early April of each spring, you will be notified in an email that a Committee Preference Form is available for downloading from the senate web site. The form indicates open committee seats for the upcoming year. Note your preferences and return the form to the Academic Senate office, extended zip 0024, by the date indicated on the form.

Periodically throughout the year, openings may become available. Your Committee on Committee representative will send out periodic emails asking for your interest. Inform your representative which committees you're interested in, and your representative will forward nominations to the Chair of the Committee on Committees who will bring nominations to the Executive Committee and then on the Academic Senate.

5) Q: What is a Committee on Committees representative and how do I contact my representative?

A: The Committee on Committees consists of a representative from each of the 8 colleges plus the General Unit plus the Associated Students. The charge of this committee is to nominate members to the operating committees and sometimes to other University committees. Name and contact information for your college or unit representative is below:

College or Unit	Representative	Phone	Email
Applied Sciences and Arts	Jim Schmidt	42465	mschmidtc@sjsu.edu
Business	Joyce Osland	43583	Joyce.Osland@sjsu.edu
Education	Rocio Dresser	44076	Rocio.Dresser@sjsu.edu
Engineering	Richard Chung	43927	Richard.Chung@sjsu.edu
Humanities and the Arts	Leslie Speer	44376	Leslie.Speer@sjsu.edu
Social Sciences	Wendy Ng	45594	wendyng@email.sjsu.edu
Science	Susan McClory	45070	mccclory@math.sjsu.edu
General Unit	Susan McClory	45070	mccclory@math.sjsu.edu
Associated Students	William Cavu-Litman	46244	president@as.sjsu.edu

6) Q: After notifying my Committee on Committees representative of my interest, how will I know if I have actually been assigned to a committee?

A: You will receive an official appointment letter from the Academic Senate Office. However, once your Committee on Committees representative forwards your name to the Chair of the Committee on Committees and receives confirmation that the opening is available, your appointment to an operating committee is considered effective at once as a temporary appointment. It will become official after being approved at the next Academic Senate meeting, after which you will receive your appointment letter.

In the case of a policy committee, your Committee on Committees representative forwards your name to the Chair of the Committee on Committees who brings the nomination to the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate at their next meeting. The Executive Committee reviews and approves the nominations which then become temporary appointments. These nominations are then brought to the next Academic Senate meeting for final confirmation, after which you will receive your appointment letter.

Because of the time between nomination and final confirmation, it could be a few weeks before your appointment letter is sent.

7) Q: What if the committee I'm interested in has no openings for my college?

A: If the particular committees you're interested in have no open seats at the moment, there may be more openings following the fourth week of instruction in the fall semester. At that time any unfilled seats on operating and policy committees become "at large" seats, which means that anyone from

any college can be nominated. Keep your Committee on Committees representative informed of your interests.

8) Q: I thought all university-wide committees met on Monday afternoons. If that is incorrect, then how can I find out what times the different committees meet?

A: The four policy committees of the senate are
Professional Standards,
Organization and Government,
Curriculum and Research, and
Instruction and Student Affairs.

These four policy committees all meet two Monday afternoons per month from 2-4 p.m. The operating committees set their own meeting times based on current members' availability. The times for many of the operating committees are posted on the senate web site - here's the link:
http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/mtng_times.html

9) Q: I'd like to be on a policy committee, but the time (Mondays from 2-4) does not work for me. Can the committee rearrange its schedule?

A: No, the policy committees have an established meeting time. Perhaps you could find an operating committee that matches your schedule. Hopefully, you'll be able to participate on a policy committee another year.

10) Q: My term on an operating committee is expiring and I would like to be reappointed. What do I do?

A: Academic Senate By-laws state that after service for a full three-year term, members should be reappointed only in special circumstances. If you think there could be special circumstances, e.g. you are working on a project for the committee that is not yet completed or you were elected chair of the committee for the upcoming year, you should communicate with your Committee on Committee representative. The time to do this is when the call for committee preferences goes out in the Spring of each year (usually late-March to mid-April). Otherwise, you need to reapply for the seat – that is, complete the committee preference form.

11) Q: What if I am appointed to a committee and for some reason I am unable to meet the obligation, e.g. I'm going to be on sabbatical one semester or I get a teaching schedule that conflicts with meeting times?

A: If for some reason you cannot complete your assignment to the committee, please notify the chair of your committee and your Committee on Committees representative. They will let the Senate office know, and a replacement will be recruited.

12) Q: What happens if I miss several committee meetings or am unable to complete committee assignments given to me?

A: Please note that if you do not meet your obligations, the chair of your committee can invoke Academic Senate By-law 6.12 that states:

6.12 a) If a member of an Academic Senate committee cannot complete the term for any reason, or is absent from three regularly scheduled committee meetings, the chair of the committee may request the Committee on Committees (if an operating committee) or the Executive Committee (if a policy committee) to nominate a replacement.

b) If a member of an Academic Senate committee repeatedly does not perform assigned committee duties, the chair or any member of the committee may ask the committee to request, by vote, the Committee on Committees (if an operating committee) or the Executive Committee (if a policy committee) to nominate a replacement.

13) Q. I know a faculty member going on sabbatical who is serving on a committee that interests me. What is the policy for sabbatical replacements and what action should I take?

A: Inform your college's representative to the Committee on Committees about the opening in which you're interested, and your representative will forward nominations to the Chair of the Committee on Committees who will bring nominations to the Executive Committee and then on the Academic Senate. If you are appointed, the appointment will be for the remainder of the current academic year.

14) Q. How do I know in advance the duration of a committee assignment or if I get appointed to a committee how do I know how long the term of appointment is?

A. On the Committee Preference form that goes out to campus in March/April each Spring, the end date of each seat is indicated, e.g. "2008". That means that the term expires at the end of Spring 2008. Also, the list of who is currently serving on each committee that can be found on the Academic Senate web site at: http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/committees_08_09.html shows in the far right hand column for each appointment the term expiration. When the official appointment letter is received from the Academic Senate Office, the end of term is indicated there as well.

The appointment letters that the Academic Senate office sends out (and keeps a copy of) is the most accurate documentation. If you are a faculty member currently serving on a committee and you have questions about your appointment and can't find your appointment letter, please call the senate office (4-2440) to check.

15) Q: Can lecturers participate in the Academic Senate committees?

A: Yes. Any member of the University community may serve on Academic Senate committees according to the Constitution of the Academic Senate (Article III, Section 7). The University community is defined as "...all University staff holding the title of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Instructor or Lecturer," (Article II, Section 3).

16) Q. Can lecturers be elected senators?

A: Yes. According to the Constitution of the Academic Senate (Article II, Section 3. b), "Tenured and probationary regular faculty who have completed at least one year's service and temporary faculty who have completed at least one Academic year of service at the University are eligible as Senate faculty representatives."