

Common Procedural Terms of Reference For Committees of the General Faculties Council

Establishment and Application

Common procedural terms of reference are hereby established by the General Faculties Council (GFC) and shall apply to all standing committees of the GFC in addition to individual committee terms of reference which establish unique mandates, delegations of authority, responsibilities, and membership.

Where exceptions to the common terms of reference exist, they shall be included in approved committee-specific terms of reference for the committee in question. These common terms of reference apply to standing and ad hoc committees of the GFC, excluding Faculty and School Councils, and the Library Council.

Accountability

- Standing committees of Council are accountable to the GFC and may not contravene policies of Council

Quorum

- Quorum for Committee meetings is a simple majority of the current voting members on the Committee
- Non-voting/resource members shall not be counted towards quorum
- If there is no quorum at the beginning of the meeting, the co-chairs shall decide whether to proceed or cancel the meeting; and, if the meeting proceeds, no voting or decision-making shall take place other than approval of the agenda

Voting

- Motions shall be passed by a simple majority of voting members present at the meeting voting in the affirmative (i.e. if a committee has 13 members and 7 members are quorum, an affirmative vote of 4 of the 7 individuals present would pass the motion)

Electronic Voting

- The Committee may vote upon a resolution by email or e-ballot
- Normally, this is permitted by a co-chair in urgent circumstances, in the absence of a regularly scheduled meeting, or the inability to meet in-person

- In such instances, the resolution should be distributed to all members and should allow additional time for review, debate, and voting
- For email votes, resolutions are voted on “as presented” and not subject to amendment (though the co-chairs may provide flexibility for minor corrections)
- Record of the vote shall be included in the next occurring set of minutes

Operations of Committees

- Meetings shall be scheduled by the Office of University Governance (OUG) as part of GFC’s annual planning process
- Special meetings may be scheduled if determined necessary by the co-chairs or at the request of three (3) or more members
- The OUG is the office of record for standing committees of Council and shall provide administrative support
- Materials are normally provided seven (7) in advance

Responsibilities of Members

Members shall:

- Act in the best interests of MacEwan University and ensure as much as possible that all constituencies are fairly considered in the process of decision-making, notwithstanding that individual members may be informed by their home unit and constituencies
- Review and be familiar with each committee’s terms of reference, the Bylaws of Council, and other governing and guiding documents of Council
- Make best efforts to attend scheduled meetings and provide written regrets when they cannot attend
- Read meeting materials ahead of time and arrive prepared to engage in discussion, provide considered feedback, and ask questions to enable the committee to exercise its best judgment
- Declare conflicts of interest at the beginning of each meeting or when they arise
- Maintain confidentiality of closed meeting sessions
- Advise the co-chairs and OUG as soon as possible if the member must resign

Terms of Office

- Terms of *ex-officio* members shall continue for as long as the member holds the office which entitles them to membership
- Terms of elected members drawn from the academic staff membership of the GFC shall normally be two (2) years unless the member’s term on GFC expires or until the member’s successor is elected
- Terms of appointed academic staff members at-large drawn from outside the membership of Council shall normally be two (2) years or until the member’s successor is appointed

- The Executive Committee of the GFC may determine need for elected terms of one (1) year or three (3) years to provide continuity and overlap of knowledge and experience between terms of office
- Terms are renewable through re-election or re-appointment up to a maximum of two successive terms, after which a break of at least one normal term's length is required
- When an elected member ceases to hold office before the expiry of that member's normal term, normally through resignation, Executive Committee may provide for the election of a new member to hold office
- When an appointed member ceases to hold office before the expiry of that member's normal term, Executive Committee may ask the Committee to identify a new member to nominate for appointment, and may appoint that member to the Committee
- Alternates for academic staff members shall not be permitted
- Delegates are permitted for *ex-officio* members as specified in the unique committee terms of reference pertaining to membership
 - Where relevant, formal delegates of *ex-officio* members shall be identified at the outset of the annual GFC cycle and will possess the voting rights of their delegator
 - Where the *ex-officio* is identified as administrative co-chair, their official delegate shall assume the role of administrative co-chair in their place

Role of the Co-Chairs

- Each standing committee of the GFC has a senior academic administrator (administrative) Co-Chair and a faculty Co-Chair In addition to their role as members of the Committee, the Co-Chairs shall provide effective leadership to guide the committee in fulfilling its mandate as outlined in its terms of reference, and work together to ensure development of the agenda, and progress of items
- On an annual basis, standing committees shall elect a faculty co-chair from among the academic staff elected to the committee from the GFC membership
- The administrative co-chair shall be defined in the Committee terms of reference and shall serve as the key administrative expert and leader regarding subject matter addressed in the Committee's mandate
- Normally, the faculty co-chair shall undertake the responsibilities of presiding over meetings unless the Committee agrees by motion that the administrative co-chair undertake those responsibilities
- The co-chair who leads the meetings shall, among other responsibilities as needed for the effective conduct of meeting, prepare meeting agendas in consultation with the OUG, ensure supporting material is circulated to members before each meeting, and report to the GFC regularly on Committee activities and recommendations

Rules of Order

- Meeting protocols are generally guided by Robert's Rules of Order

Last Updated/Approved

August 24, 2020 by Motion of GFC Executive Committee