

CHAPTER 6

6. SHARED GOVERNANCE

The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama entrusts university administrators, faculty, staff, and students with responsibilities for sharing in the governance of the university. The responsibilities of The Board of Trustees and university administrators are delineated elsewhere in this Handbook.

6.1. Faculty Participation in Shared Governance

Academic excellence is essential to the successful performance of the university's educational mission. Such excellence is achieved in an environment of mutual confidence, collegial participation, effective leadership, and strong academic programs. To foster this environment, it is university policy that the faculty participate in the selection, appointment, and performance evaluation of deans and department chairs, and that the advice of the faculty be actively and systematically sought.

Final authority over the selection, appointment, and retention of deans rests with the Provost with the concurrence of the President, and final authority for the selection, appointment, and retention of associate deans, assistant deans, and departmental chairs rests with the academic deans, with the concurrence of the Provost.

Unit and program direction and quality are evaluated periodically and an important consideration in these evaluations is the views of the faculty.

6.2. Faculty Senate

The structure of the Faculty Senate of The University of Alabama in Huntsville, as well as its relationship to other university bodies, is currently set forth in Appendix L and was originally described by the governance system proposal of March 7, 1973, as adopted with amendments by the President of the university on April 3, 1973.

The authority of the Faculty Senate derives from the Office of the President of the university, represents a long tradition of shared governance in a university setting, and exists as a feature of the bond of mutual trust that serves as the basis for the general system of governance for the faculty, student body, and administration.

Senators are the voice of the faculty. The Faculty Senate is the permanent body representing the faculty for the formulation of university policy and procedures in matters pertaining to institutional purpose, general academic considerations, curricular matters, research, university resources, and faculty personnel (appointments, promotion, and tenure). All issues of university governance affecting the faculty at large should go before the full Faculty Senate before implementation. Bylaws of the Faculty Senate are included in the relevant appendix.

6.3. The Graduate Council

The Graduate Council is an elected body representing the graduate faculty. The Council consists of the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (non-voting, ex-officio chair), the Registrar (non-voting, ex-officio) and a number of full members of the graduate faculty, specified as follows: each college with master's programs has two representatives, and, in addition, each college with doctoral programs has one additional representative. The term of an elected member is two years.

The Council examines new policies, procedural requirements, new graduate courses and programs, graduate faculty appointments, student petitions, and other matters dealing with graduate studies. Matters dealing with academic policies and substantial changes in catalog are referred by the Graduate Council to the Council of Deans and Provost for approval before implementation.

Full members of the graduate faculty must demonstrate continuing interest in the graduate program, be actively engaged in research, and demonstrate scholarly achievement through contributions to their academic discipline. Nomination to the graduate faculty is made by the department chair and, when appropriate, program director. The nomination is forwarded through the appropriate college Dean to the Graduate Dean, who in turn forwards it to the Graduate Credentials Committee of the Graduate Council for recommendation. The Graduate Dean makes the appointment.

Details of the operation of the graduate program are contained in the Graduate School Handbook.

6.4. Staff Senate

The Staff Senate is a representative body of eligible staff. Its purpose and charge are to serve an auxiliary, advisory function to the administration in the area of staff personnel matters and to do so in a positive and constructive way. The Staff Senate provides a forum for the exchange of ideas, a resource for evaluating proposals, and a mechanism for expressing suggestions and concerns. In carrying out its role, it works to promote better understanding, cooperation, and communication within the campus community for the benefit and betterment of all.

The Staff Senate is composed of elected members from the staff employees of the university. Its officers are elected by the staff senate from its membership. Rules of procedure, membership, election of members, and committee structure are described in the Staff Senate Bylaws, which are available in the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

6.5. Student Government Association

The Student Government Association (SGA) is composed of all students enrolled at the university. The SGA promotes the welfare of students in all areas of university life. Its primary purpose is to help improve the educational environment, including promoting academic innovation and working closely with faculty and administrators to bring about desirable changes in institutional policies. It establishes budgets for funds allocated to it and establishes and governs clubs and other student organizations. The SGA is also responsible for developing and sponsoring programs to enhance the cultural, intellectual, and social life of students.

Rules of procedure, membership, elections, and committee structure are described in the Student Government Association Bylaws, copies of which are maintained in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

6.6. Boards, Councils and Committees

To fulfill responsibilities of shared governance, members of the university may establish collaborative bodies known as boards or committees that are charged with performing specific duties requiring student, faculty, staff, and administration involvement. In addition, the administration establishes its own collaborative bodies known as councils. When a council is established, the administration describes its purpose, membership, duties and responsibilities. Boards, councils, and committees are advisory. These bodies change from time to time and current information is maintained by the Office of the President.

University committees consist of members of the faculty, administration, staff and students. Unless otherwise stated, faculty members are selected by (but not necessarily from) the Faculty Senate and are at least equal in number to the administration and staff representation on each committee. All ex-officio members shall be clarified and designated. Ex-officio members shall not vote, except for those ex-officio members who are committee chairs who may vote only to break ties. In cases where this ex-officio member serves as chairperson, members of the committee shall select a faculty member to serve as co-chairperson. If the ex-officio member calls a meeting but cannot attend, then the co-chair will preside. Where Faculty Senate committees and university committees share common purposes, functions, or charges, members of the Faculty Senate committees are voting members of corresponding university committees. Where required by the nature of the committee's function, university committee structures must reflect unit representation, including the Library. University committees meet at least once a semester. Any member of the committee may call a meeting. Committees will issue a written report to their administrative liaison and to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee each semester, after meeting. Terms of membership are for two years unless otherwise noted, with arrangements made for staggered terms. The details of procedures are issues that each committee determines.

The administrator through whom a university committee reports, a nonvoting ex-officio member of that committee, may initiate calls for committee meetings. Unless otherwise specified, the chair of each university committee is elected from those members of the committee who are not ex-officio. The retiring chair is responsible for organizing and conducting the first meeting of the committee, including the election of the new chair.

6.6.1. Boards, Councils, and Committees Reporting Through An Administrative Liaison

The chart below identifies current boards, councils, and committees and their administrative reporting relationships.

Committee Name

Administrative Counsel Liaison

ADA Advisory Committee	Vice President for Diversity
Animal Care and Use Committee	Vice President for Research and Economic Development
Bookstore Advisory Committee	Provost
Campus Planning Committee	Vice President for Finance and Administration
Charger Green Recycling Committee	Vice President for Finance and Administration
Employee Benefits Committee	Vice President for Finance and Administration
Environmental Health and Safety Committee	Vice President for Finance and Administration
Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Committee	President
Faculty Appeals Committee	President
Faculty/Staff Traffic Appeals Committee	Vice President for Finance and Administration
Financial Aid Committee	Vice President for Student Affairs
Graduate Council	Provost
Honorary Degrees and Naming Committee	Provost
Honors Council	Provost
Intercollegiate Athletic Committee	President
Library Committee	Provost
Student Affairs Advisory Board	Vice President for Student Affairs
Student Conduct Board	Vice President for Student Affairs
Title VI Diversity Advisory Committee	Provost & President
University Commencement Committee	Provost
University Review Board	Provost
Use of Human Subjects Committee	Vice President for Research and Economic Development

6.6.2. Ad Hoc Groups

Task forces, study groups, special advisory committees, and other such ad hoc groups formed to address specific issues or receive assigned tasks are not official governance bodies of the university. All such bodies derive their authority from the boards, councils, committees, or individuals to whom they report. At the time of the formation of an ad hoc group, the appointing authority will put in writing the specific charge and purpose of the group. All ad hoc committees establish operating procedures by consensus of the membership, unless the appointing authority does so in advance of selecting membership. Ad hoc groups may not be appointed to perform the responsibilities of official boards, councils, or committees.