

SENATE PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (SPGC)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Senate Planning and Governance Committee is to provide oversight of University-level academic planning and priorities, quality assurance of the University's academic units, organizational structure of academic units, and Senate and Committee governance.

Decisions of the Senate Planning and Governance Committee support the central role of the Senate in defining and pursuing the academic mission of the University to ensure that the University's academic staff plays a decisive role in making educational decisions and setting educational policy.

Supporting Senate's principles and values, the Senate Planning and Governance committee decisions must: (i) enhance the quality of the University's academic activities ; (ii) support diversity as is required both by considerations of justice and to sustain rich and rigorous debate; (iii) advance the idea that human diversity provides essential elements of strength, resilience and innovation; (iv) promote the idea that inclusiveness must inform decisions at all levels; and (v) reflect and respect the diversity of human experiences and backgrounds. As such, SPGC will rigorously adhere to these principles and values by applying equity (the practice of identifying and removing barriers) in all its deliberations and activities, to ensure an inclusive outcome.

Equity diversity and inclusion (EDI) measures strive to reduce systemic barriers and biases experienced by historically and currently underrepresented and equity-deserving groups¹. Differing views, ideas and approaches, and equitable and inclusive practices help promote academic program and research excellence. Engagement with that multiplicity of perspectives creates critical thinkers.

Definitions

1. Diversity is **the condition** of having a broad range of differences, represented in its people, perspectives, policies, programs and practice.
2. Inclusion is **an outcome** where community members experience equal access to opportunities for education, employment, promotion and success in the Faculty and a sense of belonging and engagement in the life and work of the institution.
3. Equity is **a process** that takes diversity and differences into account through fair and non-discriminatory approaches and practices, removing barriers² to ensure inclusion.

¹ Equity-deserving Groups: female-identified individuals, individuals of Indigenous ancestry (and particularly Mi'kmaq individuals), racialized individuals (and particularly African Nova Scotian), person with (dis)abilities, and individuals who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+.

² (Dis)ability is a central element of any discussions about oppression linked to race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion etc.

COMPOSITION

The Senate Planning and Governance Committee shall comprise the following number and category of members:

1. Ex Officio Voting Members

- (a) Chair of Senate (Committee Chair)
- (b) Senate Vice-Chair (Academic Programs)
- (c) Senate Vice-Chair (Student Affairs)
- (d) President
- (e) Provost and Vice-President Academic

2. Elected Voting Members

8 Elected Academic Unit Senators, each from a different Faculty.

3. Student Voting Members

2 Student Senators, appointed by the Dalhousie Student Union.

4. Non-Voting Members

- (a) Secretary of Senate;
- (b) Vice-Provost, Equity and Inclusion (or designate, Assistant Vice-Provost, Equity and Inclusion); and
- (c) Such additional members as determined by the voting members of the Senate Planning and Governance Committee from time to time, with particular attention to representation from equity-deserving groups not currently represented.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Senate Planning and Governance Committee is responsible for the following:

1. **University-level academic planning and priorities**

- a) Providing recommendations to Senate on university academic and strategic plans and priorities; and
- b) Providing recommendations to Senate, to the President's Budget Advisory Committee, and to the President and Provost on academic priorities guiding the deployment of resources.

2. **Oversight of academic and research units**

- a) Receiving and reviewing requests to establish or terminate a Faculty, School, College, Library, or academic Department and making recommendations to Senate concerning their approval;
- b) Recommending to Senate the adoption of inclusive policies, procedures and guidelines regarding the establishment and termination of academic and research Institutes and Centres;
- c) Reviewing and approving on behalf of Senate significant changes in the governance of Faculties, Schools, Colleges, and Libraries; and
- d) In the extraordinary event that a Faculty becomes incapable of appropriate governance, in consultation with the President or designate, overseeing the development and implementation of a substitute decision-making process, and the execution of appropriate remedial actions, and reporting to Senate on same.

3. **Quality assurance: University level**

- a) Recommending to Senate the adoption of inclusive policies, procedures, guidelines and regulations on academic or research matters that affect the whole University community or a substantial part thereof that do not fall within the exclusive mandate of the other Standing Committees;
- b) Reviewing the results of global internal and external measures of university performance, and providing recommendations to Senate as appropriate;
- c) Recommending to Senate the adoption of inclusive policies, procedures and guidelines concerning Senate reviews of Faculties and Libraries;
- d) Recommending to Senate the adoption of inclusive policies, procedures and guidelines concerning the Senate reviews of the University's relationship with Affiliated Institutions as defined in section 3.4(c) of the Senate Constitution;
- e) Overseeing the conduct of Senate reviews referred to in section 2(c) and (d), above;
- f) Receiving Senate reviews referred to in section 2(c) and (d), above, recommending appropriate action, and monitoring progress on such recommendations;
- g) Recommending to Senate the adoption of inclusive policies, procedures and guidelines concerning Senate reviews of academic Institutes and Centres; and
- h) Reporting annually to Senate on the status of Senate reviews within the mandate of this Committee.

4. **Committee Governance**

- a) Determining the non-voting membership of Senate Standing committees and advising Senate of same;
- b) Establishing Ad Hoc Committees and their terms of reference in accordance with section 6.2 of the Senate Constitution;
- c) Establishing Ad Hoc Appeal Committees to hear student appeals from Faculty decisions to suspend or dismiss a student for reasons of professional unsuitability in accordance with procedures established by Senate;
- d) Making nominations to Senate for membership on the Senate Nominating Committee;
- e) Making temporary replacements for members of the Senate Nominating Committee when a member of that Committee is absent for 6 months or less;

- f) Reviewing Standing Committee Terms of Reference from time to time, and making recommendations for changes to Senate; and
- g) Considering and approving the terms and membership of sub-committees proposed by Senate Standing Committees;
- h) Utilizing equitable practices to ensure Senate and its committees are diverse, reporting annually on representation by equity-deserving group.

5. **Oversight of Senate business**

- a) Monitoring whether Senate is fulfilling its role and mandate efficiently and effectively, and making recommendations to Senate in respect of potential improvements;
- b) Establishing an inclusive annual schedule of Senate meetings, and approving the cancellation of meetings where necessary;
- c) Considering and making decisions concerning urgent matters referred by the Chair of Senate under section 5.4(j) of the Senate Constitution;
- d) Considering and making a decision as to whether an electronic vote is appropriate, under section 5.4(k) of the Senate Constitution; and
- e) As required, allocate responsibilities and tasks to Senate Committees and Senate Officers in a manner consistent with the Senate Constitution and approved Terms of Reference for Standing Committees.

6. **Membership in other University Processes**

- a) Recommending to Senate representatives to serve on the Board of Governors, the Budget Advisory Committee, and the Search and Review Committees for the President and Vice-Presidents; and
- b) Appointing on behalf of Senate representatives on other University-related committees where Senate representation is required.
- c) Recommending or appointing representatives who will bring a diversity of perspectives and identities to bear on their roles in 6(a)-(b)

7. **Other tasks**

- a) Taking whatever action is required to fulfill the mandate of this Committee; and
- b) Executing other tasks as directed by Senate.

Approved by Senate March 9, 2011
Amended by Senate June 9, 2014
Amended by Senate February 8, 2021
Amended by Senate September 13, 2021