

Generic Multi-disciplinary School Governance Document

I. Governance and membership of the multi-disciplinary school

The faculty governance of the multi-disciplinary school shall be through the Assembly. The Assembly shall consist of all full-time faculty members with primary responsibility (50% or more duties) in the multi-disciplinary school holding academic rank of Distinguished Professor, University Professor, Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Advanced Instructor, Senior Instructor and Instructor. All members have voice and vote. Professors emeriti, persons with adjunct, visiting, research academic titles, lecturers, part-time faculty members, teaching assistants, and staff within the school have attendance and voice privileges but no vote in the Assembly. Questions concerning Assembly membership shall be resolved by the Assembly itself.

The faculty of each academic discipline within the school shall develop its own policies and procedures for issues prescribed in section IX below. Such policies and procedures shall be approved by a majority of the voting members of the academic unit and submitted through the campus governance document review process and for approval to the chancellor. Such policies shall not be in conflict with university approved provisions and policies of the University of Arkansas system and the Board of Trustees.

Any academic program that is administered by faculty members from multiple academic units, or multiple colleges, shall be governed by a separate program committee. The faculty involved in the program shall develop its own policies and procedures for conducting business. Such policies and procedures shall follow the same review and approval process as indicated above for academic units with the addition of a review by the appropriate college curriculum committee before going to the dean. Any curriculum recommendations shall be made to the appropriate college curriculum committee(s).

II. General Purposes of the multi-disciplinary school Assembly

The multi-disciplinary school Assembly shall be a mechanism for information flow to all members of the school community. It shall act within the framework of principles and procedures officially established under the authority of the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas and within the framework of approved policies of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

III. Officers of the school Assembly

The Assembly shall elect its officers from the members of the Multi-disciplinary School Assembly. The officers shall be elected for a one-year term. The Assembly shall have the following officers:

- A. president
- B. secretary / recorder

The officers of the Assembly plus the immediate past president shall constitute the executive committee of the Assembly. In the interim between Assembly meetings, this committee shall act as the representative of the Assembly and shall stand available for consultation on matters deemed important by the school director(s), dean or other academic administrator.

IV. Election of the Officers of the Assembly

- A. Elections shall be held during the first assembly meeting of the academic year no later than September 1, on a date set by the Executive Committee.
- B. The executive committee shall solicit nominations for officers and publish a slate of nominees with the meeting agenda.
- C. Nominations may also be made from the floor.
- D. All elections shall be held by secret ballot unless there is only one nominee standing for a position. The person receiving more than fifty percent of the votes of the members voting shall be declared elected. Runoff elections may be held.
- E. The officers of the previous academic year shall serve until new officers are elected. The newly elected officers shall assume their duties immediately following their election.

V. Duties of officers of the Assembly

- A. The president shall:
 - 1. preside at the school Assembly and executive committee meetings and shall be the chief executive officer for functions and responsibilities of the Assembly.
 - 2. collect items for the agenda.
 - 3. prepare the agenda.
 - 4. distribute the agenda and the minutes of the Assembly meeting
- B. The secretary shall:
 - 1. prepare the minutes of the meetings, submit them for review to the president and, following the review, distribute them to Assembly members
 - 2. obtain information from committee and academic units for

- dissemination to the Assembly members.
3. take care of correspondence work.
 4. serve as secretary of the executive committee.

VI. Meetings of the Assembly

- A. There shall be a minimum of one meeting of the Assembly each semester during the nine month academic year. The dates for meetings shall be set and communicated to Assembly members by the executive committee, normally using an official multi-disciplinary school listserv, at least ten business days (Monday through Friday except for University holidays) prior to the meeting. Special meetings may be convened on the initiative of the president of the school Assembly, at the request of the director(s), or by a formal written request by at least five members of the Assembly to a member of the executive committee. Such special meetings shall be held within twelve business days after a request is made. In an emergency, meetings may be scheduled with two business days written notice to all Assembly members.
- B. The executive committee shall solicit items for the agenda no later than ten business days prior to a regularly scheduled meeting, shall prepare an agenda for each meeting, and shall distribute it to all the members of the Assembly at least five business days prior to the date of the meeting with the exception of emergency meetings. For an emergency meeting, an agenda shall be distributed at the time of the call for the meeting, at least two business days prior to the date of the meeting.
- C. A request to the executive committee for the inclusion of any item of business made by at least five members of the Assembly or by the director(s) at least three business days before the deadline for distribution of the agenda shall be honored.
- D. A minimum of forty percent of the Assembly membership shall constitute a quorum. Except when otherwise specified, matters placed before the Assembly shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and voting, providing a quorum is present.
- E. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order except as may be otherwise specified by this Constitution.
- F. Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.
- G. Vote shall be by secret ballot if any member so requests.
- H. At each meeting of the Assembly, the executive committee shall make a report on all the actions taken and all the decisions and recommendations made by the committee in the interim between this and the previous meeting of the Assembly.
- I. An action approved by the Assembly shall become effective after ten business days

unless specifically vetoed by the director(s). On matters requiring their approval, the director(s) may veto an action of the Assembly by notifying in writing the executive committee within ten business days from the presentation of the action of the Assembly.

- I. The Assembly may override the director(s)' veto at its next meeting providing a quorum is present. An override requires a vote by at least two-thirds of the members present and voting. If the director(s) do(es) not elect to withdraw their veto within ten business days after the record of the overriding action of the Assembly has been presented in writing to the director(s), the Assembly may refer the matter to the dean. If a settlement is not reached at the dean's level, at intervals not to exceed twenty business days, the matter may be appealed for resolution to the provost and subsequently to the chancellor for a final decision.

VII. Committees of the Assembly

A. Advisory Committee

1. The school advisory committee shall advise the director(s) on academic and administrative activities of the school. Any formal recommendation made by the committee to the director(s) shall also be reported to the Assembly.
2. The committee shall have one voting representative from each academic unit of the school. The academic units shall select their representatives no later than August 27. Service on the committee shall be limited to those faculty who are (a) a member of the Assembly and (b) selected by the faculty of their academic unit. Representatives shall assume their duties at the first meeting of the academic year.
3. The first meeting shall be held prior to the end of the second week of classes for the fall semester at which time the committee shall establish a schedule of meetings agreeable to the director(s) and to the committee.
4. The committee shall elect its own chairperson and secretary. The term of office shall be one year. There is no restriction as to re-election.
5. The chairperson shall preside at the committee meetings and shall be spokesperson for all the functions and responsibilities of the Committee.
6. The secretary shall be responsible for collection of agenda items and preparation and distribution of the agenda and the minutes of meetings.
7. The committee shall report its decisions to the faculty and the director(s) within 10 business days.

B. General Ad-hoc Committees

The school Assembly and/or its president may create ad-hoc committees, which shall report to the Assembly and to the director(s).

C. Director(s) Ad-hoc Committees

The director(s) may appoint ad-hoc committees, which shall report to the

director(s) and to the Assembly.

VIII Office Vacancies

- A. In the event one of the elected officers is unable to serve, the position shall be declared vacant by the executive committee which shall appoint an Assembly member to serve in the vacant position.
- B. For a vacancy longer than one semester, the executive committee shall call a special election. A call for nominees shall be offered for not fewer than two business days. All Assembly members shall be eligible for election. The election shall be held no longer than five business days following the announcement of the called meeting.

IX. Academic Units

The faculty of each academic unit shall develop their own policies and procedures for conducting business and shall hold meetings at least once each semester of the nine-month academic year for the purpose of discussing and acting upon unit affairs. In addition to the methods of calling meetings specified in an approved governance document, faculty meetings may be convened by a written call of the academic unit coordinator or by a written call of one-fourth or more of the full-time faculty.

Each academic unit needs to ensure that its written policies and procedures for conducting business include, but are not limited to, the following areas of faculty decision making:

- A. Attendance, discussion, and voting rights
- B. Calling and holding meetings
- C. Curriculum
- D. Discipline-specific academic policies
- E. Faculty recruiting and appointments
- F. Promotion
- G. Tenure
- H. Annual review of faculty
- I. Recommended term and selection of the coordinator

In specifying the selection of the unit coordinator, the rules of governance for each academic unit shall specify the procedure by which the academic unit faculty makes its recommendation for coordinator to the director(s). The rules of governance for

each academic unit shall also specify a recommended term length for the coordinator.

The governance document shall follow the review and approval process as specified in the Constitution of the University Assembly and Faculty Senate bylaws.

- X. Amendments may be proposed by any member of the unit through motions submitted at a meeting of the unit. Amendments must receive a favorable vote from two-thirds of the members present and voting at two consecutive meetings to become effective. All amendments to this document are subject to review and approval in accordance with the Constitution of the University Assembly before they take effect.

Coda

As a generic school governance document, this document is to be used by a new multi disciplinary school until its own document is approved. The expectation is that each multi-disciplinary school will replace this document with a document of its own designed to meet the specific needs of the school. To approve a replacement for this document requires a favorable vote from a majority of the members present and voting at two consecutive meetings. The proposed document must then go through the normal review process of the university with approval being at the discretion of the Chancellor.

When the school engages in the process of writing its own constitution, it needs to add language to specify how to amend the constitution. for example, by a statement such as shown in X. above

Commentary: The UALR Constitution requires the Faculty Governance Committee to create and submit to the Faculty Senate a generic governance document for new colleges. Since that legislation was passed, campus administrative reorganization has resulted in the designation of “school” being used in two different ways, resulting in a need for differentiating responsibilities traditionally reserved for academic disciplines from those in reorganized administrative structures. Terminology is now modified in the university Faculty Senate bylaws to explain “department and mono disciplinary academic unit” school and “multi-disciplinary” school. The multi disciplinary school does not take on the discipline-specific responsibilities provided to departments and mono-disciplinary schools. This document serves as a model to clarify the distinctive roles. Multi-disciplinary schools and the academic units they house may tailor governance issues to their needs within the relevant campus and university system authorization.