**REPORT TO THE SENATE**

FROM: Bylaws committee

TO: Senate

RE: Senate committee restructuring plan

DATE: October 19, 2023

The Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee has spent nearly two years gathering data and recommendations on how best to reorganize the Senate’s 17 standing committees and numerous ad hoc committees into a more efficient, effective, manageable constellation. We have spoken with representatives from every standing committee, some more than once, and have looked at how some of our peer institutions organize Senate committees.

Our plan consolidates the 17 committees into 7 committees. Each committee will meet once at the start of the semester and will organize itself into smaller teams that take on specific aspects of the committee’s charge. These teams will then meet throughout the semester, reporting back to the committee chair. We believe this new arrangement will make workloads more equitable and will make it easier to populate committees with Senators. We also believe it will facilitate intersectionality and effectiveness in the work done by committees.

Below is the list of proposed new committees along with the proposed charges for each committee.

**STEERING**. *Consolidates current Agenda and Academic Affairs committees*

Charge: This Committee will promote and coordinate the work of all Senate committees, set an agenda for each Senate meeting, and lead the Senate. It will assign relevant work to all committees and to receive reports from each committee. It will use its influence to promote resolutions and recommendations of the Senate. It will concern itself with the academic planning process of the University and the Senate, and with academic strategy, priorities, and organization. It will address the applicability and appropriateness of University-wide academic policies. It will concern itself with units and procedures critical to the academic mission of the University. It will oversee a regular faculty census and the election of a faculty member to the Board of Trustees. It will convene the Provost’s Advisory Committee for Promotion and Tenure. It will also concern itself with fulfilling the Senate’s responsibility to approve candidates for Honorary Degrees, except for the commencement speaker. In doing its work, the Committee will consult regularly with administrators and staff whose role is connected with this work. These individuals have the option to serve on the Committee ex officio if they are not already a Senator. Members of this Committee are elected by the full Senate and can serve on it for a maximum of three consecutive years. Every effort is made to recruit current Senators who represent the full spectrum of schools/colleges at the University.

**ACADEMIC FREEDOM, TENURE, & PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**, **APPOINTMENTS,  PROMOTIONS** *Consolidates current AFTPE and Appointments and Promotions committees*

Charge: This Committee will concern itself with the academic privileges and responsibilities of all members of the University community. It will consider issues and entertain cases relating to academic freedom and professional ethics arising throughout the University. It will investigate all cases that have to do with sexual harassment complaints concerning the faculty.

This Committee will study standards for original appointment to the faculty of the University, for promotion, and for granting tenure. It will foster in the colleges, schools and departments appropriate procedures for handling appointments, and for decisions of tenure and promotion. It will audit all decisions of appointment, promotion and granting of tenure, and may request testimony from deans, department chairs and other officials. College decisions on promotions and granting of tenure may be appealed to this committee by either the candidate or the department, provided the grievance pertains to procedural matters. The Committee will have jurisdiction in all appeals where violations of academic freedom or professional ethics are alleged.

In doing its work, the Committee will consult regularly with administrators and staff whose roles are connected to this work. These individuals have the option to serve on the Committee ex officio if they are not already a Senator provided they do not participate in reviewing cases. This Committee will be composed primarily of full-time faculty of varying ranks.

**CO-CURRICULAR**: *Consolidates current Athletics and Student Experience committees*

Charge: This Committee will concern itself with the University’s ability to collaboratively work across divisional boundaries to deliver an inclusive, individualized experience that develops the whole student. It will make data-driven recommendations to help create an excellent student experience through graduation and beyond, considering admissions, advising, graduation rates, placement after graduation, campus activities and organizations, health and recreation, advising and counseling, university environment and living conditions, and other related topics. It will concern itself with the well-being of students who are athletes, recommending policy changes when appropriate. It will liaise between students and the Senate and other administrative offices of the University. In doing its work, the Committee will consult regularly with administrators and staff whose roles are connected to this work. These individuals have the option to serve on the Committee ex officio if they are not already a Senator.

**CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**. *Combines current Curriculum and Instruction committees*

Charge: This Committee will study the curricula of the various schools and colleges, consider all requests for curriculum and course changes, and recommend action on such changes to the Senate, concerning itself primarily with curricular matters affecting the University as a whole. It may initiate suggestions to departments to improve their curricula and courses. It will study issues of instruction at both undergraduate and graduate levels, including teaching load, educational technologies, class size, use of graduate assistants, testing, and other pedagogical matters. It will adjudicate course grade appeals based on procedural irregularities, in accordance with the University’s official policy. It will recommend to the Senate changes in University policy to increase emphasis on quality and the importance of teaching, and strive to maintain balance between teaching and research. In doing its work, the Committee will consult regularly with administrators and staff whose roles are connected to this work. These individuals have the option to serve on the Committee ex officio if they are not already a Senator.  
  
**DEIA Committee: Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, and Accessibility**. *Combines current Women’s;* [*Race, Ethnicity, Equity, and Inclusion*](https://senate.syracuse.edu/committees/race-ethnicity-equity-inclusion/)*; and* [*Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Asexual (LGBTQA) Justice and Advocacy*](https://senate.syracuse.edu/committees/lgbt/) *committees, with a new Pay Equity focus*

Charge*:* This Committee shall concern itself with the University’s culture and initiatives, ensuring that the University promotes academic, living, and workplace excellence in an environment welcoming to all. It will work toward improving the campus climate for students, staff, and faculty who hold historically marginalized identities, including race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexuality, and disability. It will concern itself with issues of both physical accessibility (e.g., buildings, transportation) and digital accessibility (e.g., access to documents), and support faculty, staff, and students dealing with both temporary and permanent disabilities. It will concern itself with issues of pay equity across gender, race, ethnicity, and other historically marginalized identities. It will develop recommendations to the Senate on issues of curriculum,  affirmative action, and sexual harassment related to equity and inclusion. In doing its work, the Committee will consult regularly with administrators and staff whose roles are connected to this work. These individuals have the option to serve on the Committee ex officio if they are not already a Senator.

**FISCAL AFFAIRS & OPERATIONS**: *Consolidates current Budget and Fiscal Affairs, Administrative Operations, Services to Faculty & Staff, and Enterprise Computing*

Charge: This Committee will focus on the University’s general financial position, budget priorities, fiscal planning, long-range financial plans, and general operations. It will concern itself with all aspects of the University’s business and finance, including accounting, purchasing, payroll, design and construction; parking; physical plant; auxiliary enterprises; food service; and the bookstore. It will work with officers of the Central Administration to develop University-wide budgets. It will address concerns that affect the ability of faculty and staff to carry out the essential functions of their jobs, and will provide a mechanism for grievances around those concerns. It will strive to secure for faculty and staff services that contribute to their welfare and convenience. It will also concern itself with enterprise computing services across campus, including security and privacy awareness and training (cyberhygiene); the development of long-range plans for acquisition, distribution, and use of staff and equipment; and the creation and maintenance of effective structures for communicating with clients. In doing its work, the Committee will consult regularly with administrators and staff whose roles are connected with this work. These individuals have the option to serve on the Committee if they are not already a Senator.

**RESEARCH & CREATIVE SCHOLARSHIP**. *Integrates current Research, Libraries, and Honorary Degrees committees*

Charge: This Committee will stimulate, assist, and advance the various University groups interested in research and scholarly excellence. It will observe and report on research activities with an eye toward maintaining principles of academic freedom and open disclosure of research findings. It will recommend practices and policies on research computing and research leaves. It will promote a balance between research and teaching. It will study the resources and long-range plans of the University libraries and consult with library administrators on policy and procedures. It will invite the University community to recommend candidates for honorary degrees, assess those candidates, and recommend candidates to the Senate. If the list of candidates is gathered after the last regular Senate meeting of the academic year, the Committee will make its recommendations to the Steering Committee instead. The ultimate selection of Honorary Degree recipients will be made by the Board of Trustees from the Senate-approved active list in consultation with the Chancellor. In doing its work, this Committee will consult with the Vice President for Research and with administrators and staff whose roles are connected with this work. These individuals have the option to serve on the Committee ex officio if they are not already a Senator.