

Tech Snacks: Committee Involvement

Service is an important part of the promotion and tenure process, but where do you even start? What committees exist, and what are their functions? How can you get involved, and what can committees accomplish?

Academic Senate Subcommittees

Faculty can participate in the Academic Senate itself and/or they can serve on one of the 7 active subcommittees. Subcommittee membership is typically rotated among the faculty of each College and determined at the first College meeting of the year.

Admissions and Standards – To evaluate student records and make decisions concerning admissions, advanced standing, probation, and non-retention, and to hear student appeals for exceptions to academic policy.

Cultural Development – To promote intellectual and cultural activities on the campus, e.g., lectures, forums, fine arts festivals, debates, cinematic programs, art museum exhibitions, faculty luncheon programs; to cooperate with the Montana Arts Council, the Montana Committee for the Humanities and similar agencies in utilizing available funds for these activities.

Curriculum – To facilitate the continuous review of existing program offerings and curriculum from program areas at the undergraduate level and to present recommendations to the Academic Senate for approval.

General Education – To conduct an ongoing review of the General Education requirements for the Associate and Bachelor degrees and make recommendations to the Academic Senate. The General Education Committee is also responsible for the development and implementation of an assessment plan for the General Education program courses, and to conduct the necessary review of these assessments.

Financial Aid – To advise the Financial Aid Officer on the administration of scholarships and other funding; to make decisions on eligibility of fee waivers for financial aid; to award scholarships (...); to make available a list of all student scholarships and grants and the requirements thereof to all students and faculty, at least one month prior to the awarding of grants and scholarships.

Graduate Council – To promote, review, and evaluate graduate programs including requests for new programs, deletions of programs and curricular changes in existing programs; to review and implements policies and procedures for graduate programs; to consider issues raised by graduate students in relation to policies of a specific graduate program or their welfare; to decide on other substantive matters relating to graduate programs and forward all decisions to the Academic Senate for consideration and approval.

Instruction, Research & Faculty Development – To promote individual faculty creativity in instruction, research, and faculty development, including, but not limited to, support/development/promotion in areas such as advising, mentoring, grant writing, professional development, distance delivery and campus service.

Select Campus Committees

A number of committees exist on campus that are not part of Academic Senate but still allow meaningful opportunities for service. This is just a partial list of the committees on campus.

Institutional Review Board – MSU-Northern policy requires all research projects that involve human subjects undergo review by the IRB. Any research project conducted by students, faculty, or staff must be approved by the IRB before conducting any surveys, focus groups, or any other tests or studies involving humans.

Institutional Assessment Committee – The IAC consists of both faculty and staff and is co-chaired by the three academic deans. The committee coordinates and oversees the institution-level and program-level assessment process.

Safe Zone Committee – The Safe Zone Committee serves as an advisory board to promote a campus climate that welcomes students, faculty, and staff with different gender identity and sexual orientation. Through educational programming, ally training, and community resources, its mission is to encourage understanding and support to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) students, faculty, and staff.

University Advisory Council – UAC facilitates intra-campus communication, with a particular focus on the review and approval of policies and general discussion of institutional issues, opportunities, and challenges.

Tutoring Central Committee – The Tutoring Committee coordinates and streamlines tutoring services at MSUN. Members include select faculty and the directors of Student Support Services and the Little River Institute.

Faculty Union – Faculty can participate in the Faculty Union as Officers, members of the Executive Board, the Grievance Committee, or the Negotiating Committee.

Search Committees – Faculty can serve on search committees, which are recommending bodies for the hiring of faculty and staff. A committee is formed for each open position as needed. The committee reviews candidates, selects them for interviews, and makes hiring recommendations.

Other Service Opportunities

- Serving as a student club advisor
- Collaborating with Industry advisory boards
- Helping with the organization of campus activities and fundraising events
- Recruiting and other student outreach activities (TekNoXpo/ShowCASE)
- Participating in community outreach that highlights MSUN or your professional competence