

Undergraduate Faculty Shared Governance Guidelines

Eastern Mennonite University

Preamble

The governance of Eastern Mennonite University is the responsibility of EMU's Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, and the Mennonite Education Agency. Governance policy and procedure create a framework for the various entities of the university community to participate in pursuing the mission and goals of the university. The Guidelines of the Undergraduate Faculty define the mission and responsibilities of the undergraduate faculty regarding Undergraduate Faculty Meeting and the Undergraduate Council as participants in the governance of the university, and establishes policies and procedures of their operation in this capacity. These policies and procedures are intended to foster broad participation in undergraduate curricular decision-making and undergraduate academic policies and accountability among administration, faculty, and stakeholders in a spirit of mutual trust and respect. The undergraduate faculty acknowledges that the Board of Trustees has the ultimate decision-making responsibility and authority¹.

These guidelines are subject to review by the undergraduate faculty every three years.

Article I: Vision, Mission, Values, and Purpose

The Faculty serves a university whose mission has been defined in the EMU Handbook as follows:

EMU Mission Statement

Identity

As a leader among faith-based universities, EMU emphasizes peacebuilding, creation care, experiential learning, and cross-cultural engagement. Eastern Mennonite University, founded in 1917 in Harrisonburg, Virginia, is an educational institution of Mennonite Church USA. EMU serves students of diverse religious and cultural backgrounds and confers undergraduate, graduate, and seminary degrees.

Mission

EMU educates students to serve and lead in a global context. Our Christian community challenges students to pursue their life calling through scholarly inquiry, artistic creation, guided practice, and life-changing cross-cultural encounter. We invite each person to follow Christ's call to

bear witness to faith,
serve with compassion, and
walk boldly in the way of nonviolence and peace.

Vision

EMU envisions a learning community marked by academic excellence, creative process, professional competence, and passionate Christian faith, offering healing and hope in our diverse world. To this end, we commit ourselves to

do justice,
love mercy, and
walk humbly with God.

Shared Values

EMU embodies the enduring values of the Anabaptist tradition:

Christian discipleship,
community,
service, and
peacebuilding.

Together we worship God, seek truth, and care for God's creation.

Approved by EMU Board of Trustees, June 28, 2008.

¹ Section 1.7.1 Philosophy of Decision Making and 1.7.6 The Academic Division of the Faculty/Staff Handbook clearly state the expectation for reporting decisions (with rationale) at all levels of decision making. Therefore, with these undergraduate decision making guidelines, it is understood that decisions made at the level of Academic Cabinet, President's Cabinet and Board of Trustees are to be communicated back to undergraduate faculty via Undergraduate Council. The model is to be one that fosters open communication at all levels.

Section 1. Undergraduate Faculty Meeting. The purpose of the Undergraduate Faculty Meeting is to create a forum for undergraduate faculty to give voice to and to process undergraduate curricular matters and undergraduate academic policies, provide for faculty input to the decision-making process of the undergraduate unit, and give faculty opportunities to offer expertise and wisdom in the educational and spiritual development of undergraduate students. The Undergraduate Faculty Meeting is comprised of all tenure track, annual contract, special faculty title contract, and dual contract faculty members at EMU. The Undergraduate Faculty Meeting will meet at least twice each semester, and the Co-Chairs of Undergraduate Council or a designee will prepare agenda and preside. The Undergraduate Faculty Meeting is empowered to:

- A. Meet and discuss any issue pertaining to the well-being of the undergraduate unit. A simple majority of eligible undergraduate faculty may amend the Guidelines of the undergraduate faculty at a duly called meeting or by electronic ballot within three business days of the meeting.²
- B. Override a decision of Undergraduate Council in the following way:
 - a. Within two weeks of the decision, deliver a petition to the faculty co-chair of Undergraduate Council calling for a meeting, signed by seven eligible Undergraduate faculty members who are not members of Undergraduate Council.
 - b. Within one week of the delivery of that petition, hold the meeting of the undergraduate faculty, with a quorum of 50% of faculty present. At that meeting, discuss and distribute (including electronically to all undergraduate faculty) their proposal to override the Undergraduate Council decision.
 - c. Within three business days of the called undergraduate faculty meeting, circulate an electronic ballot, with rationale, calling to rescind the Undergraduate Council decision.
 - d. A two-thirds majority vote of all eligible undergraduate faculty is required to override the decision. The vote should be completed within 3 business days of the meeting. [e.g. if a referendum meeting occurs on a Monday, then electronic voting would be available until 5:00 pm on Thursday.]
- B. If an override does not succeed, then the issue shall not be accepted for discussion for two years.

Article II: Jurisdiction and Responsibility of the Undergraduate Council

Section 1. The faculty are an integral component of the university structure and, along with the Board of Trustees and executive administration, are responsible for the well-being of the university community. The faculty are directly responsible for providing the quality of education provided at EMU, for supporting holistic personal development in students, and for conducting academic inquiry.

Section 2 . The Undergraduate Council exercises the delegated authority of the undergraduate faculty. In representing the undergraduate faculty and seeking the well-being of the undergraduate unit, the Undergraduate Council is authorized to:

- A. Approve recommendations for undergraduate academic policies.
- B. Approve recommendations for undergraduate curriculum proposals.
- C. Convene the Undergraduate Faculty Meeting on a regular basis to present issues, invite broader discussion, or secure broad-based support.

Article III: Undergraduate Council Membership and Duties

Section 1. Membership. All Undergraduate Academic Department Chairs, SGA President (*ex officio*), Associate Dean for Curriculum or designees (*ex officio*), and Vice President & Undergraduate

² The exact number of faculty included in this group varies by year. . The number to be used in determining a simple majority will be the number established by the administrative assistant in consultation with the undergraduate dean at the beginning of the school year. For 2012-2013, this number is 88. Adjunct faculty are welcome to regularly attend faculty meetings and participate in discussions; however, they do not have a vote.

Academic Dean (*ex officio*); Faculty Senate representative (*ex officio*)—may be a member of Undergraduate Council who is also a senator.

Section 2. Appointment & Support of Undergraduate Department Chairs. The Undergraduate Academic Dean, in consultation with departmental faculty and the provost, ensures that a department chair is named for each academic department. This individual serves both to build a department strong in teaching and scholarship capacity, and to represent the department to the dean and the Undergraduate Council. Appointments may depend upon rank, additional skills or background required, teaching load, availability, and/or the size of the department. Specific selection processes will vary, but elements that should be present in each appointment include:

- A. Consultation with the provost.
- B. Collaboration on the process and affirmation of the appointment by the department faculty.
- C. 3-year term/s of service.
- D. A clear and systematic appraisal³ of the individual's effectiveness in the role (apart from routine contract review), and an evaluation of the direction and need of the department. An informal formative review is conducted by the dean at the end of each academic year during the first term of service as chair. A more formal review to determine reappointment is carried out near the beginning of the third year of the term, and is initiated/directed by the dean.

Support for department chairs takes various forms; the particular mix of support for each should be clarified at the time of appointment. Various elements may include:

- Training (conferences, workshops, coaching)
- Loading commensurate with responsibilities
- Accommodation (for the decrease in scholarly productivity)
- Access to support staff
- Compensation for summer work when necessary
- Regular meetings with the dean (access)

Section 3. Duties.

- A. Department Chair Duties – Each department chair is responsible to see that the following duties are accomplished for his/her respective department.

Overall Management of the Department or Program

1. Hold regular departmental meetings and ensure that minutes are recorded with distribution to dean, provost, president, and archives.
2. Ensure a well-prepared and effective faculty in collaboration with the dean. Includes assisting in faculty recruitment and orientation, encouraging professional development, and conducting regular faculty evaluations.
3. Maintain a vital and appropriate curriculum within budget.
4. Be responsible for program quality, monitoring grading patterns and student outcomes.
5. Be aware of student retention issues.
6. Collaborate with admissions on enrollment.
7. Enhance faculty morale by a spirit of encouragement and sensitivity.
8. Maintain responsive and adequate academic advising services to students.
9. Communicate departmental or program activities to students.
10. Keep departmental or program members informed of administrative decisions.
11. Organize teaching assignments in consultation with the dean.
12. Participate in developing the departmental or program budget.
13. Prepare annual institutional effectiveness report (AIER).

Ongoing Responsibilities

³ Recommend that department chair evaluations be staggered so that Year 1 chairs in the Professions are evaluated, Year 2 chairs in the Natural/Social Sciences are reviewed, and in Year 3 chairs in the Humanities/Fine Arts are reviewed.

14. Manage the departmental or program budget in collaboration with the dean.
15. Handle student grievances within the department or program.
16. Manage space and facility needs in consultation with the dean.
17. Maintain equipment or other departmental properties.
18. Oversee the acquisition of library and instructional resources for the department or program.
19. Refer to the *Information Systems: Technology Resource Allocation Policy* found in the appendices.
20. Coordinate the requisitioning of supplies.

Representation of the Department or Program in Broader Institutional Contexts

21. Convey departmental or program goals and objectives to the administration.
22. Represent the department or program in long-range planning processes.
23. Communicate departmental programs and activities to the marketing services and admissions offices.
24. Serve on Undergraduate Council to represent the interests of the department and to participate in policy making for the undergraduate unit.
25. Other duties as may be specific to the department (e.g. external relations, agency contracts, etc.)

The Department Chair may delegate responsibilities depending on the size of the program and relative workloads, etc.

B. Undergraduate Council Duties

1. The Undergraduate Council will be the legislative body of the undergraduate faculty and will act on behalf of the undergraduate faculty and/or Undergraduate Faculty Meeting in making decisions or approving recommendations that pertain to the undergraduate curriculum or undergraduate academic policies. Undergraduate Department Chairs will represent the interests of their respective departments by regularly attending Undergraduate Council meetings and communicating the opinions and perspectives of the faculty in their departments. Undergraduate Department Chairs will report to the members of their respective departments on the work and actions of the Undergraduate Council.
2. Department Chairs may also serve as liaison to designated university committees (e.g. Faculty Senate), university departments, or groups of EMU stakeholders.
3. The Undergraduate Council will regularly schedule meetings with undergraduate faculty to process proposed changes in undergraduate curriculum or undergraduate academic policy. The Undergraduate Council will facilitate undergraduate faculty participation in response to such proposals, make changes to such proposals that reflect undergraduate faculty voice, and take action when established voting requirements have been achieved. The Undergraduate Council will facilitate the meeting of the Undergraduate Faculty Meeting and the voting process in the case of a referendum.

Section 4. Meetings. The Undergraduate Council will meet at least once a month during each semester of the regular academic year. All Undergraduate Council meetings will be open unless an executive session is designated. However, only appointed Department Chairs will have voting privileges unless otherwise indicated. Passage of motions and recommendations requires an affirmation of at least 60% of those Department Chairs in attendance. All decisions are to be posted electronically within 24 hours of the action.

A. Special Meetings. The Undergraduate Council must schedule a special meeting at the written request of the University President, at the request of any five Undergraduate Council members, or at the request of seven undergraduate faculty members.

Article IV: Undergraduate Council Executive Committee and Duties⁴

Section 1. Officers. The Executive Committee of the Undergraduate Council will consist of a faculty co-chair elected by council members, three Department Chairs representing the Humanities, Sciences, and Professions who are also elected by the council, and the vice-president and undergraduate academic dean. The vice president and undergraduate academic dean prepares the ballot, and elections are conducted at the final Undergraduate Council meeting of each year. All Department Chairs are listed on the ballot unless an individual requests otherwise based on unusual circumstances. Department Chairs elected to the Executive Committee shall serve two year terms.

A. Undergraduate Council Faculty Co-Chair

Serves as co-chair of the Undergraduate Council.

B. Vice President & Undergraduate Academic Dean

Serves as co-chair along with the elected faculty co-chair.

C. Elected Department Chairs (representing Humanities, Sciences, & Professions)

Council elected Department Chairs will serve together with the faculty co-chair and vice president and undergraduate academic dean as an executive committee of Undergraduate Council. This group functions to prepare curricular proposals and undergraduate academic policy proposals for review by the Undergraduate Council. A further function of this group is to give counsel to the vice president and undergraduate academic dean as requested.

D. Staff Secretary

The secretary will take minutes of decisions of the Undergraduate Council.

Article V: Undergraduate Faculty By-Laws and Amendments

Section 1. Amending the Guidelines may occur by the following process:

- A. An initial review for congruence of the proposed amendment by the executive committee.
- B. Recommendation of the Undergraduate Council to the Undergraduate Faculty Meeting.
- C. Approval by a simple majority of eligible undergraduate faculty at a duly called meeting or by electronic ballot within three business days of the meeting
- D. Subsequent approval by the university Academic Cabinet, President's Cabinet, and the EMU Board of Trustees.

Approved by the Undergraduate Faculty April 30, 2009

Guidelines approved by Undergraduate Faculty April 20, 2012; amendments approved by Undergraduate Faculty September 27, 2012.

⁴ See proposed Interim Structure of Executive Committee of UGC/Global Village Committee