

**Infrastructure and Shared Governance:
Task force on shared governance**

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Committee Charge: Determine how best to balance the need to making some decisions quickly, but with appropriate input, with the need to get the appropriate level of input on other decisions. The following five statements and/or questions answer the committee's charge.

1. Study aspirational peers and how their shared governance is structured.

Questions for aspirational peers senate chairs:

- What's the Faculty Senate (FS) membership? (administrative faculty or academic faculty or both)
- How is the FS constructed? (Membership from units, Number of unit reps, how often do you meet?)
- What is your level of purview over curriculum, bylaws and policy?
- How do you describe the communicative interactions with the executive administration?
- Are there any particular strategies you find most effective with the executive administration? (what makes shared governance effective or work on your campus)
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Perspectives from the Interviews of Aspirational Institutions:

(The following information represents summary statements from eight senate chairs)

- Overall UNLV operates within the governance norms with other institutions
- Most institutions feel the communication is good at the executive level. At UNLV the communication can be improved at the staff level under the respective vice presidents.
- With few exceptions, the Faculty Senate, including at UNLV, has authority over academic policy, campus bylaws, and curriculum. As an exception, curriculum at Wyoming does not need approvals by the FS or FS committees. At UNLV academic policy is coordinated with UNLV administration.
- UNR does have Vice Chair on our equivalent ACC and the Chair is a member of the UNR president's cabinet. Although the FS is always open to more communication and transparency, we are not in favor of the UNLV FS Chair sitting on Cabinet or the VC membership of ACC. We believe that our current structure is just fine: Senate Chair a member of the ACC and invited to Deans Council when necessary.
- The sentiment gathered from the interviews is that an unsuccessful relationship exists between the senate and the executive administration is when there is a top down, authoritative and managerial approach perceived by the faculty.

- Another issue is with faculty and Regents/Trustees relationship among survey institutions; they hear Faculty views, but the faculty are concerned their views are rarely taken seriously.
- Still fresh in the minds of the faculty colleagues interviewed are program/department eliminations. At UNLV, FS/EC and bylaws committee will study a more professional, inclusive, and transparent response model/process, and improved faculty access to these decisions.

2. For the complicated and/or urgency issues, how can the administration and the Faculty Senate (FS) stay “on task” throughout the decision making (DM) process in order to make decisions in a timely but thoughtful way?

Requested or required urgency in the DM process most often comes from three sources: The Legislature, the Board of Regents (BoR), UNLV’s senior administration, and the Faculty Senate.

While the faculty senate does recognize that decisions may need urgency, a balance between urgency and consultation is needed with the appropriate university constituents. The Executive Committee (EC) should seek out and consult the full brainpower from a wide range of faculty members that allows time for thoughtful reflection and ultimately prevents unintended consequences of poor and rushed decisions. Moreover, how does the EC/FS develop a communication structure and process that transcends from one administration to another?

Possible Suggestions for Solutions:

- When the topic is appropriate, the EC requests the relevant administrators to consult with the EC to help clarify issues that may be percolating.
- Review senate bylaws for appropriate DM structures and processes. Are there existing policies and/or procedures to guide the executive committee?
- If a BoR vote is required, then time for the appropriate consultation in the DM process. However, urgency in the timing can also vary by issue, particularly when legislative or public pressures may try to influence the deliberative process on a given topic.
- While the senate already has numerous committees, is there a need to create a policy committee? If not, then add an additional faculty member (at-large) to the UPC for consultation and planning.
- If the EC/FS has time for DM, then refer the issue, as needed, to the appropriate committees for thorough consultation.
- Create and develop a FS dashboard and/or feedback portal. Therefore, the FS requests a modest budget to build, implement, and maintain this innovative tool for communication.

Development of a FS Dashboard/Feedback Portal:

- Develop a Senate dashboard/portal and comment box on FS website. Provides live poll results for immediate feedback on an issue. This will allow multiple opportunities for all FS members to respond, including writ-in comments.
- In addition to a web portal, the EC/FS may want to use the survey program Qualtrics <<https://oit.unlv.edu/qualtrics>> to seek immediate feedback on an item or issue. Allows the EC/FS to open up communication and post actionable items and receive more feedback and varied perspectives from a range of faculty.

Dashboard/Portal Challenges:

- How does the EC/FS post, monitor, keep track, and report out on the information/issues posted on the dashboard on a monthly basis?
 - A system that allows a “push” or “alert” should be considered.
 - This may reduce public debate and the deliberative senate process.
 - Procure the needed human resources to cull the information weekly to maintain the dashboard and manage the information.
3. How can the FS ensure that senators are communicating with their college or unit colleagues?
- Our Senate “Farm System” consists of membership on one of our numerous committees. Each committee has a Senate representative who could easily suggest to a faculty member to consider serving on the Senate.
 - FS Chair meets with senior senators (SS) monthly.
 - FS Chair will follow-up with SS to emphasize the importance to communicate to their college.
 - SS report out to their colleges regarding senate issues and matters of concern for discussion, particularly code changes.
 - SS should have access to send out information via their college List serves.
 - SS may want to meet with the dean or attend the leadership council monthly meeting.
 - SS must also seek out and solicit information from their college constituents.
 - GA work with senate chair
 - At EC and senior senator meetings, the FS Chair does request help from other faculty members across campus that may be able to help and/or contribute their expertise on projects.
4. How can the FS ensure good representation of faculty across various units?
- Remind the faculty that the agenda and supporting meeting documents go out to the senators before the monthly senate meeting.
 - Remind all faculty members that senate meetings are open to everyone if they want to provide direct input and comment.
 - Does the EC/FS want to start a Twitter account (limits to 140 characters)?
5. Are there other, additional ways for the administration to get good faculty input on proposed policies and decisions facing UNLV?
- Continue town hall and/or open and local forums from the president and provost.
 - Informational emails sent to the university community.