Committees: General Considerations

Policy/Procedure

A. Guiding Principles

1. Dickinson College is a community. A decision affecting some members affects, to varying degrees, all members.

2. Those affected by decisions should have a say in formulating and implementing them. It is important that diverse perspectives be adequately represented in the various decision-making bodies. But adequacy does not necessarily imply parity.

3. Those with competence in particular areas should have a say in formulating and implementing decisions relating to those areas. The members of the college community have differing needs, differing talents, and differing responsibilities. These differences should be respected and used for the common good. The members of the community are interdependent, but their roles are not interchangeable.

4. Government in the college community should be representative. For the process of decision-making to be effective, some must act on behalf of all. But those who make decisions should be responsive to the interests of the rest through procedures of accountability and distributed responsibility.

B. System of Committees

1. There are two kinds of elected committees: All-College committees and Faculty committees. All-College committees draw their membership from faculty, administrators, and students; the other committees are composed of faculty only. In addition, commissions or committees appointed by the President of the College, and ad hoc committees created by vote of the Faculty Meeting or by the President, are formed from time to time for specific purposes. The membership of these special groups usually includes faculty, administrators, and students; it may also involve service support persons, parents, alumni, or trustees.

2. The chair of each committee is elected annually by the committee.

3. Committees have the power to create subcommittees as they deem necessary. Subcommittees are normally chaired and staffed by members of the parent committee. Members who agree to serve on a subcommittee do so voluntarily and apart from their normal obligations for committee service.

4. The President of the College is a member ex officio without vote on each of the All-College committees.
5. At the first Faculty Meeting of the academic year, the Provost and Dean of the College will provide an overview of the work of the committees during the prior year and the major agenda items for the upcoming year. The individual committees should thereafter report regularly about decisions or recommendations they have made that do not require Faculty Meeting action.

6. All-College committees shall regularly report to the Faculty Meeting regarding their agendas, and shall give timely reports or hold open hearings concerning their deliberations on specific issues.

C. For purposes of representation on committees, the following division into groups shall be made:

1. **Group 1.** Faculty from: Art & Art History, Classical Studies, English, French and Italian, German, Music, Philosophy, Religion, Russian, Spanish and Portuguese, and Theatre and Dance¹.


D. **Eligibility for Committee Service**

1. Normally no faculty will serve on a committee, commission or judicial pool during the first year at Dickinson. If a faculty member has not completed the highest degree upon coming to the College, up to two additional years may be excluded from one’s eligibility.

2. From the second year at Dickinson, faculty members are eligible for election or appointment to committees and commissions. An untenured faculty member may not serve as chair. A faculty member on a sabbatical, whether for a semester or a year, is exempt from committee service for that year.

3. Normally after completing three years of service, all faculty members are excused from serving on a committee or commission until the second year following their next sabbatical.

4. All faculty members are eligible for election or appointment to serve for three years during a five-year sabbatical cycle on a committee or commission or in some equivalent appointed role. Exemption from eligibility during this period may be granted by the Faculty Personnel Committee, which will consider each petition on an

¹ The Department of Dramatic Arts was renamed the Department of Theatre and Dance at the 6 October 1997 Faculty Meeting.
individual basis. Significant non-teaching responsibilities at the College would serve as the reason for such a petition.

5. Any faculty member who has been at Dickinson at least five years may in any given year waive the eligibility exemption. This decision to serve more than three years out of six is voluntary and in no way an expectation or duty.

6. No member of the College community shall be required to sit simultaneously on more than one committee or to occupy the position of Secretary of the Faculty while serving simultaneously on a committee. This does not apply to: those who serve on committees *ex officio*, the Parliamentarian, the Appeals Committee, the Judicial Pool, or committees and commissions appointed by the President of the College.

7. Normally all vacancies on committees and commissions will be for three year periods, even where the vacancy is created by an early resignation. The Nominating Committee may exchange an at-large and a group position in order to take optimal advantage of the roster of eligible persons in a given year. It may also set the term of an election at less than three years if this is needed in order to limit the turnover of positions in any given year.

8. By these procedures all faculty may expect to be elected or appointed to a governance body and to serve in that capacity for at least three years out of any seven. This pattern will need to be modified in specific cases where flexibility in the sabbatical and leave programs does not adhere to the normal six-year cycle, or where special College needs intervene. Exceptions from normal practice will require Nominating Committee approval in the case of elected and appointed positions under its authority. In cases where the appointment is by the President, consultation with the Committee is required.

E. Nominations

1. The Nominating Committee is composed of three persons:

   a) A faculty representative from the Faculty Personnel Committee.

   b) Two former members of the Faculty Personnel Committee, chosen by FPC, who have recently finished their terms of service and are not on sabbatical or leave. Selection must produce representation of all three divisions of the faculty.

2. The Nominating Committee shall:

   a) Prepare a slate of two nominees for each elective vacancy on the committees, having determined what vacancies exist and who is eligible for election.

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Approved at 5 February 2007 Faculty Meeting.
b) Report its nominations to the Faculty Meeting two weeks in advance of the meeting at which the election is to take place.

c) Provide voting members of the Faculty Meeting with a list indicating those eligible for election to the respective vacancies and those who have received an exemption.

d) Ensure that nominations are provided to the President for appointments to non-elected commissions and committees.

3. At the time of the election, further nominations will be entertained from the floor.

4. The order of election shall be as follows:

a) Election to standing committees, posts, and boards shall occur at the April and May Faculty Meetings. The Nominating Committee, at its discretion, shall determine which elections occur in April and which in May, and whether in either month there will be one round of balloting or more than one. In every case, nominations from the floor are possible prior to each round.

b) Election to the Appeals Committee shall occur at the May Faculty Meeting after all other elections have been completed.

c) Appointments to non-elected committees and commissions shall take place by the first week of classes in the subsequent fall semester.

5. No two faculty members from the same department may be elected to the same committee.

6. Elections to fill vacancies occurring during the course of an academic year shall be to fill the unexpired term and shall be a part of the order of business at any regular Faculty Meeting provided that the nominations are circulated at least a full week in advance.

7. Elections shall proceed by written ballot as required in the Faculty Meeting By-Laws.

a) Faculty positions are elected by vote of all full-time faculty members.

b) The Student Senate shall elect the student members of the All-College committees. It is also solely responsible for determining the length of their terms of office.

c) Administrative members of the All-College committees are appointed by virtue of office.
d) Hourly staff members serving on the All-College Committee on Planning and Budget will be nominated from among the President’s Staff Forum and will serve staggered two-year terms. ³

³ Approved at 7 April 2008 Faculty Meeting.