

Revised 8-23-04
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

PREAMBLE

The School of the Arts of Virginia Commonwealth University has evolved a governance structure over the years that is singular and compatible with the nature of an educational entity focused upon the broad spectrum of visual and performing arts. The autonomy of each individual discipline-based department¹ is central to the School's governance structure.

Consistent with the concept of the individual as the key component, the responsibilities and duties of the office of the dean, the department chairs, other school-level administrators, and individual faculty members are defined by this governance structure. A formal system of standing committees provides representation to each departmental faculty body in the decision-making and policy-formulation processes of the school. Each department of the School of the Arts has the responsibility and privilege of developing internal governance mechanisms that allow all full-time faculty in the School of the Arts participation in governance and decision-making processes, and that are compatible with the specific nature of its discipline and needs.

Article I: PURPOSE

The purpose is to establish an orderly instrument that ensures members of the School of the Arts (1) that they have the right to express their concerns and participate in all matters vital to the welfare of the University, School and their respective departments, and (2) that there is an orderly democratic process for formulating philosophy, policy and procedures.

Article II: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: School Membership

Membership to the School of the Arts faculty consists of all personnel who hold faculty rank within the School. Membership includes the right to discuss all matters that come before meetings of the School of the Arts faculty. Voting membership is limited to permanent, full-time faculty and full-time collateral faculty. Individuals who hold joint appointments in other schools of the University who are also permanent, full-time faculty in the School of the Arts are considered voting members. Part-time and adjunct faculty members shall have the right to participate in School of the Arts Meetings without voting privileges.

¹ The term "department" is used in this document to refer to those administrative units designated as "areas" in addition to those designated as "departments". Similarly, the term "department chair" is understood to include the heads of areas as well as of departments, and the term "departmental" is understood to describe the attributes and activities of areas as well as departments.

Section 2: Departmental Membership

Membership to each department is limited to individuals holding faculty rank in and assigned to a particular department. Voting members of a department are those faculty who are permanent, full-time faculty and full-time collateral faculty.

Article III: STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1: Introduction

Standing committees within the School of the Arts meet on a regular basis and function at both the school and departmental levels. The committee structure ensures that the faculty and administration are involved in academic governance and decision-making. Through standing committees and ad hoc committees, faculty exercise their responsibility to make recommendations on matters relative to educational and administrative policy. In addition to the roles specified for the committee, each committee may initiate action on any matter of concern within its purview. Ad hoc committees are constituted to address specific issues.

Appropriate minutes and records are kept for all school level committee meetings. With the exception of the Promotion and Tenure Committee minutes, all minutes are made available to faculty in the School of the Arts Library. At the close of the academic year, each committee compiles a summary report of the year's proceedings for the dean. These reports are available to the faculty in the School of the Arts Library.

At a School faculty meeting at the beginning of the academic year, the dean summarizes the annual reports of School committees and reports on the disposition of any recommendations made by committees.

Section 2: School of the Arts Standing Committees

Principal Standing Committees

The principal standing committees within the School of the Arts are the Administrative Advisory Committee (AAC) and the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC). These committees review policies and procedures and provide recommendations to the dean who is responsible for implementation.

Administrative Advisory Committee

This Committee is responsible for meeting regularly to ensure communication among departments, programs and administration, conducting official business, advising on administrative policy matters, and enabling efficient operation of the school. Chaired by the dean, the committee represents all areas of the school and is composed of department chairs, program directors and the dean's administrative staff.

Faculty Advisory Committee

This Committee is responsible for meeting regularly and advising the dean on all matters related to faculty status, issues, and interdepartmental concerns. The committee develops and proposes a slate of candidates for election to designated school-wide and University-wide committees, boards or councils with elections held at School of the Arts faculty meetings. The committee is responsible for the process of recommending faculty to receive School of the Arts Faculty Awards. The committee is composed of one tenured, tenure track, or full-time collateral faculty member elected from each department who is selected in a departmental faculty meeting to represent the department. The Faculty Advisory Committee represents all full-time School of the Arts faculty. Committee members serve staggered two-year terms. The committee chair is elected by and from the committee.

Other Standing Committees

Art Foundation Program Committee

This committee is responsible for advising on curricular and program evaluation matters for the Art Foundation Program. One committee member is elected in departmental faculty meetings from each visual art department. In addition, the Art Foundation director appoints one Art Foundation faculty member. The director of the Art Foundation Program chairs the committee.

Anderson Gallery Committee

This Committee is responsible for advising on matters related to the mission and functions of the gallery. The committee is comprised of faculty representatives from each visual art department elected in a departmental faculty meeting. The gallery director is ex officio. The committee chair is elected by and from the committee.

Graduate Studies Committee

This committee is responsible for advising on all matters relating to graduate programs within the school. The committee reviews graduate degree programs, graduate course offerings, and the graduate bulletin. Each department with graduate programs elects one member in departmental faculty meetings to serve on this committee. The committee elects one School of the Arts graduate student to serve as a student representative. The director of graduate studies for the School of the Arts is the committee chair.

Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum

This committee is responsible for advising on all matters relating to undergraduate programs within the school. The committee reviews undergraduate course offerings, scholarships and the undergraduate bulletin. The committee is comprised of an elected member from each department, including the Art Foundation Program, and the two School of the Arts representatives of the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. An associate or assistant dean of the School of the Arts serves as the committee chair.

Library Committee

This Committee is responsible for advising on matters regarding University Library Services. The committee also makes recommendations concerning the School of the Arts Library. Each department elects a faculty representative in departmental faculty meetings to this committee; the director of the School of the Arts Library is a member, and the committee chair appoints other members as needed to fulfill its mission. The committee chair is elected by and from the committee. The chair of the Library Committee serves as the School of the Arts representative to the University Library Committee.

School of the Arts Promotion and Tenure Committee

This Committee reviews candidates for promotion and/or tenure who have been recommended by departmental peer review committees. The committee is responsible for evaluating and recommending candidates to the dean of the School of the Arts. The committee reviews and approves all school and departmental guidelines relative to promotion and tenure. The committee is composed of one tenured faculty member elected in departmental faculty meetings from each department. Committee members serve staggered three-year terms. The committee chair and secretary are elected by and from the membership.

Student Advisory Committee

This Committee considers matters of student interest and concern, and functions as liaison to departments, the dean's office, the student life office, and the office of student affairs. The committee is composed of a student elected from each department, one student appointed by the Art Foundation Program Committee, and one graduate student elected by the Committee on Graduate Studies. An associate or assistant dean of the School of the Arts serves as advisor to the committee and is responsible for scheduling the committee's meetings. The committee chair is elected by and from the committee.

Section 3: Departmental and Program Committees

The matter of departmental and program committee composition and structure rests with individual departments or programs, and there exists great variation in both number and types of committee among departments and programs. The variation of committees results from different departmental sizes, specific philosophies, and the needs of diverse disciplines. Committee chairs are responsible for reporting to their department or program faculty the disposition of recommendations made by their committees.

Article IV: FACULTY MEETINGS

Section 1: Introduction

Meetings of the faculty are held at both the school and departmental levels. At the school level, the dean calls and chairs meetings for the entire School of the Arts faculty at least once a semester during the academic year. At the departmental level, meetings are held at least on a monthly basis during the academic year and are called and chaired by the department chair.

Section 2: School Faculty Meetings

The purposes of School of the Arts faculty meetings are to:

1. facilitate communication and understanding and to allow for the expression of concerns and opinions about matters vital to the growth of the school and University,
2. review and recommend action on policies and procedures which relate to the entire school faculty and student body,
3. elect school representatives to University committees and councils, and
4. hear reports from School of the Arts standing committees.

Section 3: Departmental Faculty Meetings

Departmental faculty meetings provide opportunities for faculty participation and representation in various aspects of departmental governance. Some of the specific purposes of these meetings are to:

1. provide a forum for review of school and University policies, procedures and concerns which may have an impact upon the department,
2. develop and approve departmental philosophy,
3. make recommendations to the chair on matters concerning development of departmental policies and procedures,
4. review and recommend departmental curricula and course offerings,
5. confer with the chair on issues related to faculty scheduling, space utilization, facilities and resources, and
6. elect representatives to school and departmental committees,

In addition to the purposes of departmental faculty meetings, the established school and departmental committee structure ensures faculty representation as well as organizational and administrative continuity.

Article V: RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY

The specific responsibilities of individual faculty members vary according to departmental objectives and needs. However, the general responsibilities of all faculty members are to:

1. teach a full credit load of classes, unless assigned otherwise by the chair with the approval of the Dean,
2. contribute to the total instructional process, including innovations and curriculum development,
3. conduct research of a scholarly and/or creative nature,
4. remain current in one's field through continuing professional growth,
5. contribute to one's field through activities such as, but not limited to, exhibitions, performances, lectures, publications and consultantships,
6. serve students as an academic advisor,
7. participate, through appointment or election, to department, school or University committees,
8. assess the overall performance of peers as appropriate
9. assess the overall performance of appropriate chairs and directors as well as the dean and his or her administrative staff, and
10. apply knowledge and skill in one's academic discipline in service to the department, school, University, local community and regional, national and/or international professional organizations.

ARTICLE VI: RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

The school's department chairs are responsible to the dean and the departmental faculty for the organization and administration of their departments. The pattern of organization and administration varies among departments where organizational and administrative structure is designed to suit individual departmental needs. Within this framework, responsibilities of department chairs are to:

1. serve as an advocate to the dean and others on behalf of the department,
2. to articulate University policy to faculty, students and staff,
3. to serve with other chairs as an advisor to the dean and

university in the formulation and maintenance of school and university philosophy and policy,

4. serve as representative on the Administrative Advisory Committee for the departmental constituency,
5. chair faculty meetings to develop philosophy, policy and implementation of departmental programs,
6. make day-to-day administrative, academic and managerial decisions,
7. render long-term administrative, academic and managerial decisions in keeping with school and university policies in consultation with faculty,
8. appoint representatives to school and departmental committees as appropriate,
9. assign and manage space, budgets, records and other resources,
10. assign and assess faculty teaching and service, to encourage faculty research and development,
11. recruit adjunct, part-time and collateral faculty positions,
12. maintain communication with students, faculty and committees,
13. maintain, in concert with faculty, the departmental image and posture,
14. take reasonable measures to safeguard the department's facilities, equipment and resources,
15. fulfill teaching responsibilities subsequent to consultation with the Dean, and
16. conduct research of a scholarly and/or creative nature.

Article VII: RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIRECTORS

The school's directors are responsible to the dean for the organization and the administration of their respective areas. Structural organization differs among individual areas administered by directors. Currently, there are directors for the following areas: Anderson Gallery, Art Foundation Program, Arts Library, Graduate Studies, and Sponsored Research and Development. Responsibilities of directors are to:

1. serve as an advocate to the dean and others on behalf of the program or area of responsibility,
2. articulate University policy to faculty, students and staff,
3. serve with chairs and directors as an advisor to the dean and University in the formulation and maintenance of school and University philosophy and policy,

4. serve as the representative on the Administrative Advisory Committee for the program constituency or area of responsibility
5. consult with the School of the Arts faculty in the development of the philosophy, policy and implementation of programs,
6. make day-to-day administrative, academic and managerial decisions
7. render long-term administrative, academic and managerial decisions in keeping with school and university policies in consultation with faculty
8. appoint representatives to school and program committees as appropriate
9. assign and manage space, budgets, records and other resources
10. assign and assess faculty teaching and service, to encourage and assess faculty research and development, where appropriate
11. recruit adjunct, part-time and collateral faculty positions,
12. maintain communication with students, faculty and committees
13. maintain, in concert with school's faculty, the program's image and posture
14. take reasonable measures to safeguard the program's facilities, equipment and resources, and
15. fulfill partial teaching and/or research responsibilities in consultation with the Dean.

Article VIII: RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEAN

Primary responsibility for the school's administration and educational policies rests with the dean. The dean is assisted in this regard by assistant and associate deans, the school's directors, and department chairs. Among the responsibilities of the dean are the following:

1. to serve as an advocate for the school,
2. to provide overall leadership and direction to the school,
3. to be directly responsible to the provost and vice president of academic affairs,
4. to interpret University policy to the faculty and staff,
5. to ensure the provost and vice president of academic affairs that the school is operated within the framework of University policy,

6. to prepare special and technical reports on the school,
7. to be acquainted with all aspects of the school and to interpret the mission of the school to the University, public and private sectors,
8. appoint representatives to school and departmental, committees as appropriate,
9. to maintain adequate fiscal records,
10. to supervise faculty and staff at all levels of the school,
11. to maintain communication with students, faculty, committees, department chairs, and program directors,
12. to establish an atmosphere where new ideas and approaches can be undertaken in the arts, and
13. to develop new programmatic ideas and approaches in meeting the need for resources to maintain and further develop the school.

Article IX: Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern meetings.

Article X: Adoption and Amendments

Section 1: Adoption

A majority of votes cast by permanent, full-time and full-time collateral faculty is necessary to approve the adoption of this document.

Section 2: Amendments

Members of the faculty of the School of the Arts who wish to suggest possible changes to this document must submit their ideas in writing to their departmental representatives of the Faculty Advisory Committee, to the Administrative Advisory Committee and to the dean.

These committees and the dean shall review the suggested changes and present the proposed amendment(s) or additional(s) to the faculty at least two weeks prior to a School faculty meeting, called by the dean, where the amendment(s) or addition(s) will be acted upon.

Amendments or additions are approved by a majority of the voting faculty present at faculty meeting, provided that such an amendment or addition is first submitted in writing to the School of the Arts faculty two weeks prior to the meeting.

Appendix A

University Standing Committees

Faculty Senate – Two senators are elected by the faculty of each school and by the professional staff of the University Library Services. Larger schools are allotted additional members in proportion to their size. Senators serve three-year terms and may not immediately succeed themselves. One-third of the senators are elected each spring.

Promotion and Tenure Appeal Committee – Members are appointed by the President of the University. Members serve staggered three-year terms.

University Council – Composed of administrators, faculty members, and students. The faculty members comprise the Faculty Caucus, and they elect a chairman from their membership. Faculty members are elected for two-year terms, renewable once. Eligibility for reelection is allowed after a faculty member has remained off the council for two years.

University Grievance Panel—Composed of faculty members, each school elects at least one of its tenured professors or tenured associate professors. Other members of the panel shall be apportioned among the schools annually by the credentials committee of the Faculty Senate so that such members are elected proportionately to the number of full-time faculty in the respective school. Members serve staggered three-year terms.

University Graduate Council—Composed of one faculty member elected from each school for a two-year term. An alternate member is also elected from each school for a two-year term. Council members and alternates must be graduate faculty.

University Promotion and Tenure Policy Review Committee – Members are appointed by the President of the University. Members serve staggered three-year terms.

University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee—Composed of two faculty members. The school elects one member and the Dean appoints the other. Membership term is two years.