

*Section 6*

**The Governance Units**

**6.1 SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE SYSTEM**

Date Adopted: October 24, 1981  
Revision Adopted: November 15, 1986  
November 14, 1992  
December 6, 2002

Reference: Minute Book: 26 Page: 103  
Reference: Minute Book: 36 Page: 23

The Board of Regents of Murray State University endorses the concept of shared authority and responsibility in the governance of the institution. A university is comprised of many persons with knowledge and skills in diverse fields. Each member of the University community can make a special contribution to the vigor and progress of Murray State. Shared authority and shared responsibility tap these resources for the good of the university. Pursuant to the concept of shared authority and responsibility, the Board of Regents of Murray State University by this document recognizes and sets forth the role of the Faculty Senate, the Academic Council, the Staff Congress, the Student Government Association, and the University Standing Committees, in relationship to University governance.

All powers conferred by this document, whether characterized as the power to propose, formulate, review, determine, or as otherwise stated, shall be considered as advisory in nature to the President of the university. The component parts of the governance structure addressed herein (Faculty Senate, Academic Council, Staff Congress, Student Government Association, and University Standing Committees) may make recommendations to the President of the University on those matters wherein they are empowered to act unless otherwise directed by the president. In those cases where a component part of the governance structure is instructed herein to make recommendations to other individuals or groups, a copy of this recommendation shall be delivered to the President or to an appropriate Vice President as the President may direct.

**Purpose**

This policy establishes and/or clarifies the role of the Faculty Senate, the Academic Council, the Staff Congress, the Student Government Association and the University Standing Committees in relationship to the University governance system of Murray State University. This policy is designed to bring the special talents and expertise of the various elements of the University community to bear on policy matters of vital interest.

**Authority**

The legislature of the State of Kentucky has vested the primary responsibility for the governance of Murray State University in the Board of Regents. The Board of Regents has, in turn, delegated to the President of the University the responsibility of ensuring that the affairs of the University are handled in a manner which is consistent with the policies of the Board of Regents. This policy will serve the purpose of ensuring University wide participation in the decision-making process on those matters which involve faculty, staff, and student responsibility and interest.

**Amendment and Review**

Periodically, no less than every three years and no more than every year, the governance system, or any part thereof, shall be formally reviewed by the Faculty Senate, the Student Senate, the Staff Congress, and the University vice presidents. Following the review, amendments or corrections may be recommended to

the President of the University. This provision shall not preclude the Board of Regents from making changes in the governance system at any time; nor does it preclude ad hoc recommendations to the President by any individual or group.

**6.2 SUBJECT: THE FACULTY SENATE**

Date Adopted: October 24, 1981  
Revisions Adopted: November 15, 1986  
November 14, 1992  
May 3, 1995

Reference: N/A

The Faculty Senate is empowered by the Board of Regents to act for the University faculty, with delegated authority to advise the President as to the formulation and/or review of policies regarding the educational functions of the university. The Faculty Senate is not precluded from making recommendations to the University Academic Council.

The composition of the Faculty Senate shall be in accordance with its constitution.

The Faculty Senate may:

1. Initiate and/or review policies relating to University academic matters and make recommendations to the University Academic Council. A copy of this recommendation shall simultaneously be delivered to the President and the Provost;
2. Initiate and/or review policies relating to the rights and responsibilities of faculty members incident to their employment by the University. Any recommendation pursuant to this provision shall be made to the President and the Provost;
3. Initiate and/or review changes and additions to the Faculty Handbook. Any recommendation pursuant to this provision shall be made to the President and the Provost;
4. Receive, when deemed appropriate by the president, any alteration of a proposal acted upon by the Faculty Senate prior to its transmission to the Board of Regents; and
5. Act as the official channel of faculty opinion on all matters which have a bearing on academic excellence.

The Faculty Senate will formulate its own rules and procedures consistent with its constitution, the policies of the University and the laws of the Commonwealth. All meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be open and the Faculty Senate may request the opinion of any individual or group concerning any matter before the Senate provided that any individual or group may decline to give an opinion if to do so would constitute a conflict of interest, or preempt orderly administrative procedures. Members of standing committees shall be selected in accordance with the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate.

**6.3 SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

Date Approved: October 24, 1981  
Revisions Approved: November 15, 1986; November 14, 1991; June 30, 1999  
Reference: N/A

The University Academic Council is an agency created to assist the faculty and the administration in the discharge of their responsibility for academic programs. All matters relating to academic programs may be considered by the Academic Council, whether such matters are brought to that body by the President, other administrative officials, the Faculty Senate, and/or Student Senate. The University Academic Council may make recommendations to the President of the University on all programs, policies, and other academic matters formulated, reviewed, or considered unless otherwise directed by the President.

The University Academic Council may make recommendations to the Board of Regents through the President of the University in cases where the Board's approval is required. In cases where the Board of Regents' approval is not required, the University Academic Council's actions and/or recommendations shall be transmitted to the President.

The University Academic Council shall consist of:

1. Two faculty members elected by each college faculty and the library faculty (for staggered three-year terms);
2. The academic deans; the Dean of Admission, and the Dean of continuing education;
3. Six faculty members, not more than two of whom may be from any one college or the library, selected by the Faculty Senate in accordance with the Bylaws;
4. A student member from each college selected by the Student Senate in accordance with its Bylaws; two graduate students selected in accordance with the Bylaws of the Academic Council; and
5. The Provost who shall serve as chair.

Members of the standing committees shall be selected in accordance with the Bylaws of the Academic Council subject to the provision that the Graduate Studies Committee be selected from members of the graduate faculty and in addition shall include the same two graduate students selected in accordance with 4. above who shall be voting members of the Graduate Studies Committee.

The University Academic Council may:

1. Formulate and/or review all University academic policies;
2. Formulate and/or review all University policies concerning the University libraries, the computer center, and other segments of the University which serve to support academic programs;
3. Formulate and/or review University and program admission requirements;
4. Formulate and/or review new degree programs and all major changes in existing programs;
5. Review proposals for academic reorganization; and
6. Consider all other academic matters as requested by the Faculty Senate, the Student Senate, and the academic officers of the University. A copy of any report or recommendation shall be simultaneously delivered to the President of the University.

The Academic Council will formulate its own rules and procedures consistent with the policies of the University and the laws of the Commonwealth. All meetings of the Academic Council shall be open and the Academic Council may request the opinion of any individual or group concerning any matter before the Council provided that any individual or group may decline to give an opinion if to do so would constitute a conflict of interest, or preempt orderly administrative procedures.

**6.4 SUBJECT: STAFF CONGRESS**

The Staff Congress is authorized by the Board of Regents to act for the University staff, with delegated authority to advise the President in matters involving the formulation and/or review of policies regarding staff concerns.

The Staff Congress shall consist of a maximum of 30 representatives:

1. Each category has six representatives, with two being elected annually from each of the following employment categories, as defined by Human Resources;
  - a. Group A - Secretarial/Clerical
  - b. Group B - General
  - c. Group C - Facilities Management
  - d. Group D - Executive/Managerial/Professional;
  - e. Group E – At-Large
  - f. Two of the six at-large staff representatives will be elected, annually, except in a year when a Breathitt Veterinary Center representative is elected; at that time one at-large representative is elected; and
  - g. One staff representative from the Breathitt Veterinary Center is elected every third year.

All regular staff employees who have one or more years continuous employment, as of the date of the election, with Murray State University are eligible to run, in one constituency, for election to the Staff Congress.

Each Staff Congress representative will serve a three-year term. Terms of office are staggered so that one third are elected each year, as determined by the Credentials and Elections Committee. Terms of office begin with the regularly scheduled July meeting each year.

The Staff Congress may:

1. Study and determine responsibly those policies and objectives that the Staff Congress feels will best fulfill the needs, concerns, and interests of the staff;
2. Promote better cooperation among the administration, faculty, students and staff;
3. Make recommendations to the University administration and the Staff Regent, and to the Board of Regents on matters affecting staff;
4. Create a stronger bond within the staff by providing a means to solicit and express opinions; and
5. Act as the official channel of staff opinion on all matters of staff concern.

The Staff Congress will formulate its own rules and procedures consistent with its Constitution and Bylaws, the policies of the University and the laws of the Commonwealth. All meetings of the Staff Congress shall be open and the Staff Congress may request the opinion of any individual or group concerning any matter before the Congress provided that any individual or group may decline to give an opinion if to do so would constitute a conflict of interest, or preempt orderly administrative procedures. Members of standing committees shall be selected in accordance with the Bylaws of the Staff Congress.

**6.5 SUBJECT: STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**

The officially organized body governing all students and student organizations at Murray State University shall be the Student Government Association. The Student Government Association shall be composed of the Student Senate, the Judicial Board, the Campus Activities Board, Residential College Association and any other boards as agencies created in accordance with the Bylaws.

The Student Senate shall be the governing body of the Student Government Association and shall have the power to pass resolutions, bills, rules, and regulations necessary for the general welfare of the University and to implement and maintain any programs consistent with Student Government Association purposes. Provided, however, that nothing contained herein shall be construed as giving to the Student Senate the power to alter or supersede state law, University policies, or administrative rules and regulations.

The Student Senate shall consist of:

1. Three elected Senators from each academic college of the University and the School of Agriculture, two freshman Senators, eight Senators elected at large and two Senators from each Residential College who, with the members of the Executive Council shall have the right to vote;
2. Two faculty advisors; and
3. One administrative advisor.

Any full time student or part-time student (paying the part-time student activity fee and enrolled in seven to 11 hours for undergraduates or five to eight hours for graduate students) at Murray State University shall have the privilege of seeking office in any branch of the Student Government Association. Part-time students are not eligible to run for or hold any of the top four executive offices. In order to be a member of the Student Senate one must maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative point standing during the term of office. The freshman Senators shall at the time of election be in their first or second semester at Murray State.

The Student Senate may:

1. Promote the welfare, growth, and development of student life in an environment of academic excellence;
2. Represent the students in those phases of administrative effort in which student participation has been approved and which are not otherwise specifically addressed by law, Board policy, or administrative rules and regulations; and
3. Provide a means of promoting cooperative efforts for the general welfare of the University community.

The Student Senate will formulate its own rules and procedures consistent with the policies of the University and the laws of the Commonwealth. All meetings of the Student Senate shall be open and the Student Government Association may request the opinion of any individual or group concerning any matter before the Senate provided that any individual or group may decline to give an opinion if to do so would constitute a conflict of interest, or preempt orderly administrative procedures. Members of standing committees shall be selected in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Student Senate.

**6.6 SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY STANDING COMMITTEE SYSTEM**

Date Approved: October 24, 1981

Revisions Approved: November 15, 1986; November 14, 1992; December 10, 1999; March 11, 2003; December 10, 2010; August 26, 2011, March 2, 2012

The President's Office shall keep and maintain a current list of all standing committees and other university-wide committees. At a minimum, the list shall contain the name, special instructions, purpose and membership of each committee.

Elections to standing committees shall be held prior to May 1 of each year. Faculty and staff representatives to a committee, unless otherwise specified, shall be elected for three-year terms, beginning July 1, with the exception of the University Tenure Committee whose members begin their terms October 1. The terms of the elected faculty and staff representatives to each committee shall be staggered so that one third of each group is elected each year.

The election of faculty representatives shall be conducted by the Faculty Senate. Vacancies in elective positions shall be filled by appointment unless another provision has been made by the electorate for that position. The appointment shall be by the Dean for an academic college/school representative; the Dean of Libraries for a library representative; the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs for a representative normally selected by the whole faculty; and the President of the Faculty Senate, the Staff Congress, or the Student Government Association for representatives selected by those bodies.

When student membership is specified for a committee, those student members shall be elected by the Student Government Association for one year terms from May 1 to May 1 on the basis of submitted applications.

Ex officio members of the committees, unless otherwise specified, shall not have voting privileges.

The Vice President of the Faculty Senate and the Vice President of the Staff Congress shall ensure that these standing committees are convened for an organizational meeting not later than September 15 of each year unless otherwise specified. Each committee shall choose its own chair from its membership, exclusive of ex-officio members. The chair has full voting privileges.

Each committee shall have the authority to form sub-committees for the purposes contained in the charge to that committee and to invite other members of the University community to meet with the committee.

All committee meetings shall be open except for executive sessions.

Each committee shall keep minutes of each meeting and shall transcribe and maintain those minutes.

***University Standing Committees*****Academic Appeals Board**

Submits decisions, policies, and/or recommendations to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs as indicated below.

Purpose:

1. To adjudicate appeals from students or faculty members relating to decisions made by administrators and/or faculty members on admissions, grades, credits toward graduation and academic dishonesty

















































