

Academic Governance Overview for Faculty and Academic Administrators

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FACULTY: WHY PARTICIPATE IN ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE

Michigan State University's system of academic governance is complex, multi-tiered, and includes university, college and department committees and councils. See Refer to web site: www.msu.edu/unit/gov/bylaws .

There are many opportunities for faculty to participate in academic governance, provide advice and commentary, and to make decisions. Academic governance at all levels addresses important matters, both for the University and for faculty members. Some selected topics within the purview of academic governance are:

- Approvals and recommendations regarding course and program development and discontinuation and academic policies
- Rules of tenure and other academic personnel policies and procedures
- Salary recommendations
- Medical insurance and other benefit program issues and changes
- Advice on reappointment, promotion and tenure policy and procedure
- Disciplinary procedures and, as appropriate, involvement in hearings regarding faculty or students
- Review of academic administrators
- Review and possible revision of the Bylaws for Academic Governance

Why then should faculty at Michigan State University participate in academic governance?

- MSU has a shared government system. Faculty members accordingly are expected to participate in governance activities in tandem with teaching and research responsibilities.
- In view of this commitment to shared governance, the University expects its administrators to be supportive of academic governance and the faculty's role within it (see section 2.1.5 of the Bylaws for Academic Governance). Service in governance

is to be recognized in the awarding of annual merit salary increases. Support of the role of faculty in academic governance is one of the criteria in regular administrator performance reviews.

- The important content of governance activities provides opportunities for faculty to influence university issues, programs and values.
- Department and college governance participation can help you learn more about your academic unit, your faculty colleagues, and what issues are important in your department or college. This enables you to be more of an effective representative on behalf of your colleagues and demonstrates not only your important role in governance but the fact that governance in general is important to the life of the faculty.
- University governance participation by you, especially if you are a new faculty member, enables you to get to know the broad scope of MSU's programs, the diversity of its people and its institutional values.
- As most faculty expect to stay at Michigan State University for a significant portion of their careers, academic governance involvement is a great way to leave the "silo" mentality.

RECOGNITION FOR ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE SERVICE

Faculty often suggest that academic governance service is not appropriately recognized or, in fact, is ignored. Perhaps one major reason is that often the department/college administrator and your faculty colleagues are not aware of the significant impact of college/university level academic governance decisions/recommendations and the part you have played in these deliberations.

The following suggestions may be useful to consider as you inform your chair, director, or dean and your colleagues about your contributions to academic governance:

1. All University Academic Governance standing committee's annual reports, which include its achievements and activities, are available on the Governance web site. These reports are annual governance requirements and provide a good thumbnail sketch of the work and achievements of the various standing committees.
2. Identify several key issues and achievements of your committee that are of significance to your unit and faculty and include a brief review of them as part of your annual activities report shared with your chair/director; include the standing committee annual report. Note in your report your attendance record and the extent of your commitment. In your department/school, comment on these issues orally and/or in writing. Ask senior colleagues for advice on how to use these information sharing opportunities wisely.
3. Share these materials with the chair/director of your department or school advisory committee and/or dean. Emphasize key issues of process and substance but also show a willingness to answer questions if the advisory group wishes to place you on its agenda.

At least, your colleagues will know of your academic governance involvement and its significance to them and your unit.¹

MANAGING ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic governance, to be successful, involves time, preparation and attention by faculty and which may at times compete with critical assignments in teaching, research and outreach. Learning to balance time is very important and, particularly as a probationary tenure-system faculty member, do not let academic governance overwhelm the regular faculty responsibilities. It is important to include academic governance at some level i.e. Department, College or University, as one of your many faculty roles.

Some suggestions for the achievement of balance:

1. Ask your chair/director for an opinion about what governance assignments would be useful both to you and your department. Probationary tenure system faculty probably should begin with department/school governance assignments and then university level advisory-consultative committees. Resist multiple academic governance assignments or requests to be a candidate for such. Consult with your colleagues on the best way to address repeated/multiple requests for governance committee involvement. Learn to say no in a positive but direct way. Do remember your chair or director is often under pressure to staff committees, but a positive and firm reminder about other commitments is a good idea, especially backed up by information which shows that you are not ducking responsibilities.
2. Pick and choose among assignments so that you can make the best possible use of your time in academic governance as well as your interests and skills. For college and departmental committees, ask your chair or departmental representatives on these committees, what issues are addressed and how much time is involved. For standing committees of academic governance, annual reports are prepared and are provided on the Secretary for Academic Governance website. As noted, these reports are short and focused, and can give you quickly a sense of the kinds of issues and topics the various standing committees address.
3. Academic governance committees have variable demands and their subject matter has variable interest to you.
4. While opinions differ about the time commitment and challenges of various university academic governance assignments, a common view is that the University Committee on Faculty Affairs and University Committee on Curriculum are the most time consuming, as they deal with a wide range of issues. University Committee on

¹ Such suggestions also apply to college level governance involvement.

Academic Policy, the University Graduate Council and the University Committee on Faculty Tenure involve a somewhat smaller time commitment and the University Committee on Academic Governance and the University Committee on Student Affairs have the least time commitment. Committee demands do vary over time. There are also a variety of Advisory/Consultative Committees whose roles are described in the Bylaws for Academic Governance which tend to meet less frequently and thus have more limited time demands. They also tend to focus on a narrower range of topics so you can pick areas in which you have significant interest and/or competence. Membership on the Faculty Council and on the Academic Council (if you are elected to the Faculty Council you are automatically a member of the Academic Council) is reasonably manageable in terms of issues addressed as most agendas are driven by standing committee reports and recommendations. But in total their bodies meet about three times a semester for about 2 hours per meeting.

Deliberations of all academic governance committees, at whatever level, are conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, i.e., the Academic Council and the Faculty Council and in a common-sense way in other committees. The Secretary for Academic Governance website has a Robert's Rules of Order summary. It also includes a brief summary of procedures and actions frequently used to manage Faculty Council and Academic Council deliberations

ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATORS AND ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE

Why should academic administrators be supportive of Michigan State University's system of academic governance and faculty participation in academic governance?

1. There are clear expectations that administrators should be supportive. MSU's Bylaws for Academic Governance is a system of shared governance, www.msu.edu/unit/acadgov/bylaws. In particular, section 2.1.5 requires academic administrators to be supportive of an effective academic governance system.
2. Annual merit salary adjustment guidelines also require academic administrators to recognize governance service by faculty in individual salary decisions.
3. The periodic reviews required for academic administrators (deans, chairs and directors) include the extent of commitment to and support for academic governance as one of the criteria for administrator evaluation.

4. A pragmatic and substantive reason for administrative support concerns the variety of fiscal, curricular and organizational matters academic governance addresses, which involve academic units in general and the faculty in particular. Faculty participation provides opportunities for the views, interests and perspectives of the unit to be shared at all levels of the academic governance structure. In addition, the outcomes and reasoning underlying certain recommendations and decisions resulting from academic governance involvement help inform the department, school or college about university direction and focus.

SUPPORT FOR ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE BY ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATORS

Assuming the need, formally and pragmatically, to support academic governance, what can academic administrators do to enhance the effectiveness of academic governance and to encourage effective faculty participation?

1. Support faculty participation in academic governance in meaningful ways while recognizing important time constraints. Academic administrators are a source of critical advice to faculty about when and how much to participate.
2. Encourage academic governance representatives to speak out and share their views both within their university deliberative roles but also in sharing information with colleagues in their department, school or college.
3. Emphasize to faculty colleagues the importance of understanding academic governance and how their colleagues who serve in academic governance are shapers and sources of influence on university and college policies, practices, procedures and activities.
4. Recognize involvement by faculty in academic governance and provide relevant information in a transparent mode in the department or school. General support for academic governance and a commitment to transparency in information sharing will encourage participation and reduce faculty cynicism about academic governance.
5. Urge academic governance representatives to report on their activities both in their annual faculty report to their chairperson or director and within internal academic unit governance, including a submission to the chair of the department advisory committee.
6. Chairpersons/directors can play important roles in encouraging departmental governance bodies to place discussion of broader governance issues on their agendas from time to time. Encourage academic governance representatives to focus on key issues of local importance to the unit and of general significance to the university with particular emphasis on important outcome changes, whether they are policy or other substantive decisions.

7. Encourage faculty academic governance representatives to emphasize their important impact on a range of particular issues that are important to the department, school or college. Items include salary guidelines, the content of medical insurance programs, curriculum and academic program changes etc. In short, these topics show that the life of the faculty in the department is influenced by academic governance.
8. Encourage academic governance representatives, involved in college committees or university councils, to find out what the issues and concerns of their faculty colleagues are and be willing to speak up on these matters as these topics are discussed within the college.
9. Academic administrators should encourage ways to advance diversity and breadth in the pattern of faculty participation in academic governance. Encourage the involvement of new faculty, even if only for limited periods of time or perhaps only after they become well established in their quest for tenure. Experience is important in providing background on academic governance issues but the issues and people of the University of the 21st Century are different from those in the past. New ideas and perspectives are important. Encourage unit faculty to think about nominating both long serving faculty and those who have not served as potential academic unit representatives. **Faculty** elects academic governance representatives, as opposed to Administrators selecting the faculty. There is a need for a diversity of views and opinions among academic governance participants.
10. Note that some important committees, for example the University Committee on Faculty Affairs and the University Committee on Faculty Tenure, require that some percentage of its members be non-tenured faculty. Such participation is important to provide a mechanism for new views and perspectives but is equally problematic as such individuals already have a full plate of teaching, research and outreach activities in which they are expected to engage. Academic administrators have a responsibility to protect individuals who serve in these academic governance capacities from being overwhelmed and/or being unduly drawn away from other faculty responsibilities. Academic administrators should protect faculty from being weighed down with too many other departmental assignments and should provide opportunities for academic governance representatives to share their contributions to academic governance with their colleagues. Academic administrators should provide frequent opportunities for junior faculty members to explore issues, challenges and concerns in balancing their governance roles with other academic responsibilities.
11. It is important to provide recognition of the contribution of individual academic governance representatives within the academic unit. This can occur as part of the annual merit salary adjustment process but candidly this will only be one factor as units will emphasize research productivity, teaching effectiveness and outreach activities strongly. It is unrealistic to expect that a strong academic governance contribution can trump these other responsibilities.

12. There are a variety of other ways in which the contributions of individual faculty can be recognized in academic governance. These include recognition, either in internal department/school publicity or in direct communication from the chair to the individual thanking them for their service in academic governance. There may be a way of providing additional substantive support in a variety of non-recurring ways such as support for professional travel etc. Praise and recognition by a chair or director may, in fact, be even more important than financial reward.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE

Questions about academic governance have been raised from time to time for which it may be useful to provide answers:

1. **How does one get involved in academic governance?**

This at first is a simple question that has a rather complicated answer. Seats on the Faculty Council, (then automatically on the Academic Council) and the University Standing Committees, are provided based on collegiate representation. Faculty Council has a pattern of representation which gives larger colleges more representatives than smaller ones, but each college is guaranteed a minimum of 2 representatives. On the Standing Committees, in general, each college has one representative, selected by ballot of the relevant college constituencies. Therefore to get access to access these positions one has to be nominated and stand for election.

At the University level there also are a number of opportunities for participation that do not occur through the standard election process. For example, there are a number of advisory/consultative committees which deal with a variety of topics for example the honors program, the libraries, international studies and programs, the Military Science Advisory Committee etc. These committees have a somewhat narrower focus than the Standing Committees and thus they may address issues that may have more congruence with a faculty member's particular interests and expertise. Appointment to these committees is done by action of University Committee on Academic Governance (UCAG) based on volunteer requests. There also are a number of other committees like the Athletic Council and various committees that decide on faculty awards, the Highway Traffic Safety Committee etc., for which the UCAG requests nominations, including self nominations from the faculty, and then provide the University President or the other relevant administrators a list of UCAG recommended nominees, from which the President or other administrators make selections.

At the department or school level and at the college level representation is determined by election and the range of the subject matters addressed by committees varies by department, school and college. A review of academic unit bylaws would be important here. All colleges have a college advisory council or the equivalent which again is usually filled by election. In departments or schools beyond the advisory council which in almost all cases, is selected by internal unit elections, there are a number of other committees which in many instances are staffed by appointments of the unit administrator. There is no shortage of interest of seeking people to serve in academic governance, so if one is keen and follows the advice provided in terms of how much time you can expend and what your areas of interest and competencies are and how they match up with various committee roles and responsibilities, there are a wide variety of academic governance opportunities.

2. What kind of impact can I expect to have on my department, school or college by getting involved in academic governance at that level, do you think it is likely to be greater or less than if I get involved in university level governance?

The simple answer to this question is that it depends. The dependence is linked to the kinds of issues that are addressed at different levels. As a generalization, departmental matters tend to be more focused such as unit specific advice on personnel recommendations, roles in evaluating candidates for faculty positions, working on departmental curriculum committees proposing course and program changes, etc. These are all important areas of activity and if one works assiduously and wisely one can have a fairly large impact. Similar comments apply to college governance experience. At the university level the issues tend to be broader e.g., what sort of salary program should be recommended for the faculty, what about changes in the medical insurance program in terms of increased co-pays or other program modifications, the assessment of curricular or programmatic changes in college majors, what about issues that deal with the character and quality of graduate education etc. In both arenas, one can have a significant impact, although in general, issues embedded in the unit are probably more familiar and understandable as they are in respect shaped by local disciplinary values and traditions but with a modicum of work, one can be advised and become knowledgeable about broad university issues and make a significant contribution there. (Earlier experience in department/school governance is good training for university governance.)

3. How does academic governance influence such topics as health care, faculty reviews, retirements etc.?

The major venue for such recommendations rests with the University Committee on Faculty Affairs which has a representative from each college on campus. As a matter of efficiency members of this committee divide themselves in two subcommittees and make recommendations to the full committee. One subcommittee addresses issues of finance which include salary recommendations and medical insurance matters while the second sub-committee address issues of academic personnel practice and policy. This committee is probably one of the most hard working university standing committees and its members spend a good deal of time reviewing data and engaged in commentary on framing a salary recommendation that goes to the Provost, and they also work very closely with representatives from the Office of Planning and Budgets and also University Human Resources on issues of medical insurance and related matters. Each general academic personnel policy plan or procedure requires consultation with UCFA and this covers a variety of matters including the Faculty Grievance Procedure, the procedure for annual faculty reviews etc. Matters having to do with the tenure system in terms of its general rules and on some particular actions, particularly requests for the extension of the tenure clock for individual members of the faculty reside in another important personnel committee - the University Committee on Faculty Tenure. Both these committees are active and engaged and their recommendations have an important impact on both substantive issues as well as on policy and procedure.

4. What is the role and character in general of the faculty's involvement in academic governance? Is it purely a passive role or does faculty have important decision making authority?

There are a number of modes of participation identified in section 1.3 of the Bylaws for Academic Governance.² There are several areas that are identified as a delegated responsibility of the faculty such as the curriculum decisions and the interpretation of the rules of tenure. On most other matters the role is an advisory or consultative one. In general the faculty's involvement in governance is more of an advisory and/or legislative role. This involves formulation of program and/or ideas providing recommendations about rules or procedures under which decisions are made, on an aspect of policy or program including revisions of the Bylaws of Academic Governance. Policy and financial allocation decisions are the responsibility of the university administration and/or the Board of Trustees. In general the popularly elected MSU Board of Trustees has the responsibility for the university's mission and its general direction. In most cases final decision making authority does not rest with the faculty. However, a judgment of no

² In addition article 7 of the Bylaws of the MSU Board of Trustees has a strong statement of faculty rights and responsibilities.

influence is misleading as opportunities for debate and discussion results in the provision of advice and recommendations, which does have a significant impact on university mission, policies and programs on a continuing basis.

5. Why do the University Bylaws require non-tenured faculty to serve as members of the University Committee on Faculty Tenure and the University Committee on Faculty Affairs?

Since both these standing committees deal with important matters which impact faculty in a number of direct ways: salaries, medical insurance, reappointment promotion and tenure, tenure and academic personnel policies, academic governance believed it was necessary to such opportunities for participation by non-tenured faculty whose views in important respects reflect the future of the University. However, to make academic governance roles of non-tenured faculty effective and productive places a major responsibility not only on the individual faculty member to balance the university standing committee roles with other regular faculty duties but also places a major responsibility on the college dean and especially the relevant department chair and school director to ensure that there is an attentive concern to helping the individual work through the balance between his or her governance role and other faculty responsibilities.

6. How does fixed term faculty participate in academic governance?

Traditionally, academic governance at the institutional level was completely the purview of tenure system faculty. However, recent changes in the Bylaws for Academic Governance permit participation of fixed term faculty if they have been on a full time fixed term faculty appointment with at least 3 consecutive years service in the University. They can be elected to any academic governance body which is defined as including any university council and committee with the exception of the University Committee on Faculty Tenure. The latter body addresses tenure policy and it would be inappropriate to have an individual who is not appointed in the tenure system to serve in this standing committee. Relevant provisions of the Bylaws of Academic Governance on the involvement of fixed term faculty include sections 1.1.2.2.1 and 1.1.2.5. At the level of the department, school and college, section 1.1.2.2 of the Bylaws for Academic Governance permits academic units to extend voting rights to fixed term faculty and implicitly to permit their participation in the governance structure of the college, department or school. The opportunity to be involved at the university level for fixed term faculty is guaranteed by meeting the service eligibility criteria while at the level of individual colleges, departments or schools the opportunity to participate is at

the discretion of regular (tenure system) unit faculty. Opportunities to vote and to run for office within a university college, department, school, council or committee obviously does not ensure election as majority support must be gained in the relevant electoral unit.

7. Can department chairs and school directors be elected to academic governance and chair standing committees?

In principle the answer is yes since participants in academic governance are members of the regular faculty e.g., those individuals appointed in the tenure system and department chairs and school directors are members of the regular faculty. There have been instances in which chairs of departments and directors of schools have been members of the Faculty Council and there may well have been cases in which such individuals have served as chairs of standing committees. However, the selection of department chairs or school directors as academic governance representatives, while permitted in terms of formal dimensions of eligibility, as a matter of fact occurs on a limited and very infrequent basis. (Academic Deans are not eligible as a result of their administrative role they are automatic members of the Academic Council.)

8. What role do students play in academic governance?

Within the Bylaws for Academic Governance there is a significant representation of students in the Academic Council. Students are elected to a body called the Student Council and as a result of that election are members of the Academic Council with the ability to participate, including voting as is true for other representatives. The Bylaws for Academic Governance also specifies that students in general should play a role both in collegiate and department and school governance, this occurs under variable arrangements college by college and unit by unit. In addition, each university standing committee with the exception of University Committee on Faculty Affairs has student representatives which make up part of their membership with voice and vote. Like the Faculty Council, the students meet separately as members of the Student Council and provide advice and recommendations usually in the form of action on legislative bills which are shared once framed and adopted with relevant university administrators and the Executive Committee of the Academic Council.

9. Does the faculty have a voice in academic governance or is it just a rubber stamp for administrative decisions?

Putting this matter another way, many commentators observe that academic governance is slow and occasionally unwieldy and is more focused on process than substantive outcomes which diminish its role and impact. Two cases which come up from time to time in the historical lore of the history of academic governance at Michigan State is the consideration some 15 or 20 years ago of the change from a quarter to a semester system, and the faculty's role in that change. A more recent example was the significant university concern, especially within the faculty of the College of Human Medicine regarding the decision to expand administrative and programmatic presence in Grand Rapids of the MSU College of Human Medicine.

With respect to the semester system, this was debated actively within the academic governance system and as usually occurs with very controversial matters, ended up in a debate on the pros and cons of the semester system in the Academic Senate which includes the entire tenure system faculty. Some 800 people showed up for the senate meeting, a good 40% of the tenure system faculty. There was almost equal discussion between those in favor and in support of changing from a quarter to a semester system. This debate not only was enlightened by individual faculty points of view and perspectives but the assessment of a faculty study group which looked in depth at the pros and cons of the issue. Clearly those on the plus side of the discussion were pleased with the change while the almost equal number who opposed were not particularly happy with the decision. (The senate meeting concluded with a majority of one vote in favor of the change of almost 800 votes cast.) Whatever one's view it would be hard to argue that this was an example of a situation in which the faculty had no voice in the final decisions of the University Provost regarding the semester system conversion.

On the issue of the expansion of the College of Human Medicine to Grand Rapids, this is a very complicated matter, but there was substantial concern about the perception of a lack of consultation and faculty involvement in this major university initiative. (This applied especially to fixed term faculty, many appointed in CHM, who had no role in the University Academic Governance at that time). The record is mixed about whether and to what degree the views regarding the absence of a faculty consultation were correct or not. However, the result of considering this matter in Academic Governance resulted in two important changes for the system of academic governance. One, it encouraged a substantial general review of policies, practices and procedures within academic governance which have been debated recurrently and in depth for the past several years bringing about some important changes in the structure and scope of the

Academic Governance system. A second important change had to do with the participation of fixed term faculty in academic governance. One of the important changes addressed in the review of academic governance was to provide them voice, by providing voting rights, in University Governance and the related opportunity to run and to potentially be elected to serve on important university councils and committees.

So, even the discussion of these contentious matters within academic governance brought about change, which included faculty participation in the deliberation.

However, much of what academic governance does is addressed serially and systematically through the work of the university standing committees. As noted elsewhere, the role of academic governance on issues of faculty salary policy, medical insurance programs, on curriculum and academic programs plus a number of other areas are significant and ongoing. Annually each standing committee produces an annual report regarding its activities and accomplishments for the year. These are available on the Secretary for Academic Governance website. It is worth reviewing these reports which are focused and not lengthy and do give a good indication both of the range of academic governance activities and whether and to what degree the university administration is engaged in considering and acting upon academic governance advice and recommendations.

10. Why are there so many steps to go through in academic governance and groups to meet with to get any sort of programmatic curricular or policy change to happen at the university?

The answer in general is that the university is structured hierarchically beginning with departments and schools, then colleges and then university level structures. Multiple layers of review are common in university settings for example, the case of reappointment, promotion and tenure decisions with reviews occurring at the department and school level at the college level and at the Office of the Provost in conjunction with its consideration of recommendations by the deans of the various colleges. Slowness on occasion can be a negative dimension but on other the other side it does assure that issues are carefully reviewed and considered and are firmly grounded. Frequently, the complaints about length of decision making time are often leveled at the university process of curricular change. In most cases delay is not a university committee defect but the department and colleges are slow in formulating and submitting curricular re-accommodations at the university level. The office of the Associate Provost for Academic Services has the responsibility for managing the consideration of various curricular changes and academic program proposals and has worked very hard to make this process

transparent including the provision of a curriculum workshop outline available to faculty and unit administrators and faculty including the necessary steps for course and/or academic program changes including what background information is necessary. (See www.reg.msu.edu/read/ucc/ucc.asp) In most instances, changes can be addressed within an academic year; however the major challenge is for the academic department which is the beginning point of almost all curricular changes or programmatic modifications to quickly formulate their proposals and recommendations early in the academic year so it can get through the process on a timely fashion. Recommendations that can get to and through the University Committee on Curriculum by approximately mid-March of the academic year normally are able to pass by Academic Council to be implemented in time for offering in the following fall semester. If the advice provided on the curriculum workshop is implicated on a timely basis, changes go smoothly.

11. Is a member of a university level governance body e.g., the Faculty Council of the University Committee on Faculty Tenure expected to serve in a delegated capacity or as a trustee (i.e., how much discretion should one exercise when representing ones college?)

In general there is an expectation, often not fulfilled as best as it could be, for the collegiate representative on the university council or committee to communicate with their college or department and school colleagues about issues being addressed and to obtain commentary and perspectives regarding faculty opinion on these matters. Exercising this role not only demonstrates to faculty colleagues that academic governance has an important role but does provides information to the governance representative of what academic unit interests are on particular issues. Typically, however, academic governance representatives at the university only usually consider colleague perspectives and interests informally along with their own points of view on particular issues as they engage in academic governance deliberations. Occasionally, on significant matters, for example advice on the various options of how to address the ever increasing cost of health insurance, a set of options are formulated which University of Faculty Affairs representatives share with their colleagues to get opinions. But in most instances this does not occur and the major responsibility really rests with the individual representative to make the best judgment based on their sense of colleague interests and their judgments on the issue under review.

In summary, there is no formal MSU Academic Governance philosophy that describes the appropriate representational role, but the assumption is that the representative should have considerable discretion and should not in any way be considered as a delegated or tied representative charged only to represent the

views of his or her faculty colleagues. While individual representative discretion is often constrained by the context of standing committee deliberations, acting on one's own simply is not a wise approach in academic governance. This in turn points out the great importance of regular reporting, consultation, interaction and discussion between the representatives and faculty colleagues in the college, department or school with which they are affiliated.