

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 26-21

Voting Units: Academic

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposed Revision to Policy 710.1:

ACADEMIC UNIT GOVERNANCE

Submitted by the Office of the Provost and the Academic Policy Committee

Rationale for Revision

This proposal will update the policy to; eliminate text that is not part of the policy, adjust for the current lack of Schools in the University and promote concise charters for each unit. The current version of Policy 710.1 contains historical narrative that was appropriate for the proposal to develop the policy but should not be included in the policy itself. What follows is a track changes version of the existing policy, showing all changes.

ACADEMIC UNIT GOVERNANCE

(Proposal 16-92)

(Proposal 5-11)

Senate Policy 710.1

Academic Unit Governance

Being necessary for the conduct of shared governance, every department, college (if without departments), library, and other academic units (hereafter all called “academic units” or “unit”) will establish and maintain a written charter. The charter should address issues that cannot constructively be defined in a university-wide manner, specifically including required policies and practices defined below.

A unit’s charter cannot conflict with University or Senate policies and in cases where this occurs the higher level governing document has priority and the lower-level document must be brought into compliance. Any language found not to be in agreement will immediately be considered invalid, but this will have no effect on the rest of the charter’s language.

A new unit may approve their provisional charter with a simple majority vote of the academic constituency of that unit. The unit may send representatives to serve as voting members of the University Senate as soon as it begins operating under their provisional charter. Those representatives should be selected by a simple majority of the voting members in the unit, as defined in section 1.a below. These representatives serve while the provisional charter is under review by the administration. When a new unit creates its first charter or an established unit revises their current charter, the document is registered with the University Senate and advanced, without further discussion or debate, to the administration as a senate proposal. The administration has 90 days to provide a written response to the proposal (as defined in Senate Constitution). If after that time the charter proposal is neither vetoed nor approved by the president, the proposal is considered approved and goes into effect.

Units are encouraged to develop additional documents to guide internal operations at the unit-level such as standard operating procedures or similar document. In most cases, it will be possible to develop charters that are short and can be easily consulted by all members of each unit.

A. Required Charter Contents to be Stated in the Following Order:

1. Procedures for updating the charter
 - a. A procedure for changing and approving the charter, including a definition of the voting members of a unit and the procedure for changing eligibility.
 - b. Procedures and responsibilities for updating the charter and keeping it in compliance with University-wide and Senate policies. Units should propose conflict resolutions in a timely manner once one has been identified.
2. A clear definition of the duties and responsibilities of the Department Chair, or Director or for Colleges without departments, the Dean.
3. Procedures for recommending promotion, tenure, and reappointment among their members. Specific areas that must be addressed in the charter are found in Appendix I. (Tenure, Promotion and Reappointment Procedures): Section 1. (Responsibilities of Each Academic Unit) of the Faculty Handbook which implements the Board of Trustees (BOT) Policy on Academic Tenure and Promotion as decreed in the BOT's Bylaws and Policies, Chapter 6.4 Academic Tenure and Promotion.
4. A definition of the role of professional staff and other non-tenure/tenure-track members in unit governance.
5. A procedure for obtaining advice from the unit faculty regarding recommendations for sabbatical leaves. (Senate Procedure 706.1.1)
6. A procedure for recommending Emeritus/Emerita status to the President for presentation to the Board of Trustees. This procedure shall include approval by unit faculty and an appeal system and may be initiated by the retiree or their unit. (Senate Policy 703.1)
7. A procedure for unit grievance. (Senate Policy 704.1, Procedure 704.1.1)
8. Units may include other policies or practices to cover unique aspects of their unit. Unique items should only be included if the unit membership feels them to be so significant that any changes should require review by the administration.
9. If the unit opts to create an operation or policy manual, then the unit should define the process of establishing, changing and approving the policies and manual as in Item #1 above, including establishing a definition of voting members of the unit, procedure for changing eligibility, the role of professional staff and other non-tenure track members in the process, and define procedures and responsibilities for updating the policy manual and keeping it in compliance with University-wide and Senate policies.

B. Guidance for Academic Unit-level policies and practices extra to the Charter.

1. The following items are examples of practices and policy that could be defined in an operation or policy manual within each unit. Once approved by the Academic Unit, these documents carry

no less weight than the Charter for internal unit governance, but do not require University-level review or approval. Methods for electing or appointing Senators, members of departmental committees (if applicable), and members for Senate, college, and university committees.

2. Procedures for selecting and onboarding new faculty and recommending disciplinary areas of emphasis for potential future faculty hires.
3. Processes for providing recommendations related to the long-term goals for the department (if applicable) or college.
4. Articulation of the role of the Academic Unit's Graduate Program Director and Graduate Committee.
5. Procedures for reviewing, updating, developing, or eliminating courses and degree programs.
6. Processes for developing job descriptions, hiring, and obtaining feedback on the performance of administrative staff that report to the chair (if applicable) or dean.

Document History

Proposal 16-92: Adopted as Amended by Senate: 29 September 1993, Approved by President: 15 February 1994, Approved by Board of Control: 18 March 1994.

Proposal 5-11: Introduced to Senate: 10 November 2010, Revised and reintroduced: 23 November 2010, Senate Returned to Committee: 08 December 2010, Revised and reintroduced to Senate: 19 January 2011, Slight editing done at Senate meeting: 19 January 2011, Adopted by Senate: 02 February 2011, Amended by Administration: 11 March 2011, Amendments Adopted by Senate with Friendly Amendment: 23 March 2011, Senate Amendment Approved by Administration: 31 March 2011, September 2015: Name changed from Board of Control to Board of Trustees.