



What is the Faculty Senate?

The Faculty Senate comprises, and represents, Penn's Standing Faculty and Standing Faculty-Clinician-Educators within the University's system of shared governance.

Shared governance is the framework through which trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students collaborate in the planning and direction of the University. Within this system, faculty have distinct rights and responsibilities for:

- Curriculum and academic content
- Teaching and research
- Hiring and promotion of Standing Faculty

How does the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) represent faculty?

The Faculty Senate operates primarily through the [Senate Executive Committee \(SEC\)](#), an elected body representing constituencies across all 12 schools. The SEC:

- Discusses issues of faculty concern
- Drafts and votes on resolutions (recently, on the "[Compact](#)" and the [EEOC Complaint](#))
- Receives and responds to regular reports from University administrators

The SEC is led by Tri-Chairs (Chair-Elect, Chair, and Past Chair), who meet regularly with the President and Provost to communicate faculty concerns and provide consultative input.

Much of the Faculty Senate's work occurs through standing committees, which report to SEC and:

- Produce investigative reports
- Issue policy recommendations
- Provide oversight on matters including academic freedom and responsibility, research policy, educational policy, and faculty composition and compensation

What are faculty rights and responsibilities in shared governance?

The Faculty Handbook affirms that faculty:

- Hold primary responsibility for teaching and research missions
- Exercise academic freedom in speech, teaching, research, and publication
- Have the right to advise, discuss, recommend, and request action from the administration

Faculty also participate in leadership selection processes, including:

- Consultative and Search Committees for the University President
- Ad hoc committees advising on the appointment of a Provost

How can I bring a concern or idea to the SEC?

- Contact your [SEC representative](#)
- Email the Senate Office at senate@pobox.upenn.edu
- Volunteer to participate in Senate committees

How can I stay informed?

Faculty Senate activities are published regularly in [Almanac](#), Penn's publication of record. Subscribe to *Almanac* by sending an email to listserv@lists.upenn.edu with "subscribe e-almanac" in the body of the email. You may also visit the [Faculty Senate website](#) or the [Faculty Handbook](#) for full policies on faculty rights and responsibilities.