



# Faculty Council Guide 2024

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## Welcome to Faculty Council

The Faculty Council is the independent voice and representative body of the Faculty Assembly at Boston University. The Faculty Council also has a close association with the University Council. The guide will define these terms and explain the relationship between the Assembly, the Faculty Council, and the University Council.

We recognize that Boston University is a very large place and the way policy is developed may not be clear. This guide will explain how Faculty Council works within the larger governance structure of the University.

As you review this guide, if you have any questions about process, please ask Samantha Khosla, Senior Director of the Faculty Council, [skhosla@bu.edu](mailto:skhosla@bu.edu), or make an appointment to meet with her in the Faculty Council office: 1 Silber Way, Room 912. Our website is [www.bu.edu/fafc](http://www.bu.edu/fafc).

The Faculty Council is a great place to meet faculty from all of the schools and colleges and to learn about the remarkable breadth of Boston University. The Faculty Council is excited to work with the Administration as the University community embarks upon the next chapter of its growth under new leadership.

While there is work to accomplish, we hope that you will find your interactions with the Faculty Council enjoyable as well.

Welcome aboard!

Kevin Smith  
Chair  
Faculty Council

Samantha Khosla  
Senior Director  
Faculty Council

Professor of Physics  
Professor of Chemistry  
Professor of Engineering

## Definitions

The **Faculty Assembly** are those faculty who serve a minimum of .50 FTE or above and hold an unmodified or modified professorial rank (except for adjunct, emeritus, or visiting), lecturer rank or instructor rank. Assembly membership is defined by the [Constitution of Faculty Assembly/Faculty Council](#).

The **Faculty Council** is the representative body of the Faculty Assembly at Boston University. It speaks for the Assembly on matters of importance to the University, and considers and acts, or recommends action, as appropriate, on all matters affecting the academic and professional concerns of the faculty of *two or more Schools or Colleges* in the University. The Council meets monthly September through May, and as needed. The Faculty Council Chair presides over the meeting.

The **Faculty Council officers (Chair, Vice-Chair/Past Chair, and Secretary-treasurer)** are elected by the Faculty Assembly to represent them before the Administration. They serve on Faculty Council, University Council, and the Board of Trustees Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing. Officers do not represent their school/college. The **Faculty Council Chair** serves on the Board of Trustees, ex officio.

The **Faculty Council representatives and alternates** are elected by their faculty to represent them on Faculty Council. **The representatives also serve on University Council.**

The **Nominating Committee** is elected by the Faculty Assembly. Five Assembly members serve a term of two years. The Committee identifies candidates for Officer and Committee Chair positions.

The **University Council** is a body of faculty and administrators that considers and recommends action on academic matters including degree requirements, the creation and discontinuation of academic programs, and the development of policies that impact either faculty or students. The work of the University Council is accomplished through standing committees that draw on the expertise of faculty and administrators throughout the university. University Council meetings are held throughout the academic year and are open to University Council members and invited guests. The President of the University presides at University Council meetings. The University Council Constitution is published in the [Faculty Handbook](#).

## Relationship of Faculty Council and Administration

The Faculty Council has an open-door policy with the President and University Provost. The Faculty Council Chair meets with the President monthly and with the University Provost as needed. The Chair also meets with the Associate Provosts as needed.

The President and the University Provost each meet with the Council at least once per year for a scheduled meeting. Council members collect questions from their colleagues and submit them in advance of the meeting. The President and University Provost also bring forward issues for faculty perspective. Recent issues include: the University academic calendar; the AI Task Force Report; ongoing discussion about test optionality for undergraduate admissions; DEI-related concerns for faculty recruitment and retention; and evaluation for promotion for non-tenure track faculty.

In addition to the scheduled annual meeting, the President and University Provost are welcome to attend any of the meetings of the Faculty Council, or its Executive Committee. For a pressing matter, we will schedule a special session of either body for the President and University Provost. At times, when an Associate Provost is scheduled to join us, the University Provost may attend as well.

The minutes of the Faculty Council meetings are published on the website, available to all Assembly members, upon approval of the Council.

## Structure of the Faculty Council and Membership

**Everyone who sits on the Faculty Council is elected to serve.**

The Faculty Council is composed of:

- Officers of the Faculty Assembly: Chair, Vice-chair/Past-chair, and Secretary-Treasurer.
- Chairs of the Faculty Council committees.
- Faculty who are the elected representatives and alternates of the schools and colleges of Boston University.

The Assembly elects the Nominating Committee, a panel of five (5) Assembly members who are charged to identify the candidates for Officer and Committee Chair seats. The “Nom Com” serves a two-year term.

The Officers are identified by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Faculty Assembly. The Committee Chairs are identified by the Nominating Committee, or nominated from the floor of a Council meeting, and are elected by the Faculty Council. They also serve a term of two years and may be elected to a second term. The School/College Representatives are elected by their faculty and serve a term of two years. They may be re-elected to a second term.

The Faculty Council reviews new proposals for academic programs, evaluates and provides feedback to the Administration on new or modified academic policies and administrative policies that affect faculty, and forms its own initiatives based on recommendations made by individual Council members or by the Faculty Council committees. The Faculty Council fosters an open, continuous dialogue with the University by inviting senior members of the Administration to attend Faculty Council meetings and present new policies or projects to the Council for comment.

The Faculty Council Chair presides over the Faculty Council meetings and sets the agenda in consultation with the Executive Committee and the Senior Director. Council members and senior administration members may also request items to be added to the agenda.

The Faculty Council usually meets on the first Tuesday of the month from September through May of the academic year. Additional sessions are added, as needed.

### Faculty Council Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Faculty Council is composed of:

- Officers of the Faculty Council: Chair, Vice-chair/Past-chair, Secretary-Treasurer.
- Chairs of Faculty Council committees.

The Faculty Council Chair presides over the Executive Committee and sets the agenda in consultation with the Senior Director and the Executive Committee. It meets regularly from September through May and in the summer, as needed.

The Committee Chairs must be members of the Faculty Assembly (but not necessarily members of the Faculty Council) and are recruited by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Faculty Council. They serve a term of two years and may be re-elected for one additional term. Committee Chairs are responsible for informing the Council of the activities of their committees and for bringing draft policies to the Council for discussion.

### Faculty Council Committees

The Committees of the Faculty Council are:

- Academic Freedom
- Administrative Policies
- Awards
- Compensation and Benefits
- Credentials and By-laws
- Equity and Inclusion
- Faculty Policies\*
- Graduate Academic Policies and Programs\*
- Research and Scholarly Activities\*
- Student Policies and Programs\*
- Teaching Resources
- Undergraduate Academic Policies and Programs\*

Committees with an \* are University Council Committees that are co-chaired with an Associate Provost. The Co-chairs determine the membership of the Committees and may include staff, where appropriate.

### Website

Our website has public and private content. The approved minutes of our meetings are available to all Faculty Assembly members of the University. Information is available on the website:

[www.bu.edu/fafc](http://www.bu.edu/fafc)

# Structure of the University Council

## University Council

The University Council is a body of faculty and administrators that considers and recommends action on academic matters including degree requirements, the creation and discontinuation of academic programs, and the development of policies that impact either faculty or students. The work of the University Council is accomplished through standing committees that draw on the expertise of faculty and administrators throughout the university.

University Council meetings are held throughout the academic year and are open to University Council members and invited guests. The President of the University presides at University Council meetings.

The University Council is composed of:

- The President.
- The University Provost.
- The Medical Campus Provost.
- The Academic Deans of the Schools and Colleges.
- The **Faculty Council representatives holding the rank of senior lecturer, master lecturer, or a modified or unmodified professorial title, committee chairs, and officers.**
- The University Librarian; the Dean of the Chapel; and those whose titles include Associate Provost, and those who engage with issues directly related to faculty or students.

**Unlike Faculty Council, there are no alternates for the University Council. Faculty Council alternates do not attend University Council, even if their school/college representative cannot attend.**

The President of Boston University presides over the University Council and sets the agenda in consultation with the University Provost, the Medical Campus Provost, and the Faculty Council Chair.

The [University Council](#) is managed by the Provost's office. The University Council meets monthly from September until June. The meeting dates are posted also on the [Faculty Council's calendar page](#). The Executive Committee of the UC acts when the Council is not in session. The President may call for a special session at their discretion.

The policies and degree proposals that Council members are asked to comment on via eDAAP and eCAP are presented and voted on at University Council. The members will receive emails from [policy@bu.edu](mailto:policy@bu.edu) requesting their input on policies and degree programs and curriculum changes.

### University Council Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the University Council is composed of:

- The President.
- The University Provost.
- The Medical Campus Provost.
- The Chair, the Secretary-treasurer and either the Vice-Chair or the immediate past Chair of the Faculty Council.
- The Co-chairs of the standing committees of the Council.

The Executive Committee shall act for the University Council when it is not in session and engage in such additional functions on behalf of the University Council as may be requested by the President and University Provost. The Executive Committee shall report to the University Council at each meeting on all actions taken by it since the last Council meeting. The actions of the Executive Committee are subject to review and modification or rescission by the University Council.



## The Relationship between Faculty Council and University Council

The Faculty Council is the representative body of the Faculty Assembly at Boston University. It is the place where faculty can have candid conversations about University policy and raise questions and concerns about matters affecting the academic and professional concerns of faculty of two or more Schools or Colleges of the University. Faculty Council may take up issues independently and make recommendations to the Administration to change its current policies, or adopt new ones.

The University Council is “where the laws get made.” The Faculty Council Officers, Committee Chairs, and Representatives sit on University Council. The policies and curricula that Council members comment on via eDAAP and eCAP are formally presented and voted on at University Council. After a policy is endorsed by the University Council, it is forwarded to the President for final approval.

The University Council has its own Constitution. Membership is limited to faculty who hold a modified or unmodified professorial title, or a senior/master lecturer title. Faculty with a lecturer title or instructor title are not eligible to serve on the UC, per its constitution.

## Reference Documents

- [BU Policies Guide \(scroll down to view the Academic Policy Approval Process and the Administrative Policy Approval Process\)](#)
- [BU Faculty Handbook](#)
- [Summary of Faculty Council Activities 2023-2024](#)
- [Constitution of the Faculty Assembly/Faculty Council](#)
- [Constitution of the University Council](#)
- [University Annual Report 2024](#)
- [University’s audited financial statement](#)

## Setting the Faculty Council Agenda

The Faculty Council both responds to policy that is in development and takes up issues *sua sponte*.

The Faculty Council Chair and the Senior Director, in consultation with the Executive Committee, develop the agenda for the Faculty Council. Typical items on the agenda include: new academic policies, discussion and feedback on a policy before it is voted on in University Council, reports from committee chairs of their own investigation and recommendations, and review of reports of ad hoc committees commissioned by the University Provost. In addition, Faculty Council members may ask that topics be added to the agenda, and may also raise topics during “new business,” which is always on the Faculty Council agenda. Also, we respond to requests from the senior administration to discuss topics, review policy, and provide feedback.

The Faculty Council meets from September through May. Time management for the agenda is important. We try to strike a balance between meeting with academic administrators to report on University business and holding discussions among Council members only, to allow for candid and thoughtful discussion. The Faculty Council committees and the Executive Committee are important to achieving this end. Some issues may be sent to the appropriate committee to discuss first before bringing it to the full Council.

Meeting documents are usually sent directly to the Council members and scheduled guests the Friday before the Council meeting. The meetings are generally paper-free.

If Faculty Council members have issues they would like the Faculty Council to address, please contact the Faculty Council Chair, Kevin Smith, [ksmith@bu.edu](mailto:ksmith@bu.edu), or the Faculty Council Senior Director, Samantha Khosla [skhosla@bu.edu](mailto:skhosla@bu.edu).

## The Role of a Faculty Council Representative/Alternate

Faculty Council members are responsible for:

- Voicing the interests and concerns of faculty of their respective school or college.
- Reporting back to their colleagues about the activities of the Faculty Council. Contact the dean and ask for time on the agenda for the all-college faculty meeting to report on the activities of the Faculty Council.
- Commenting on draft policies during the 15-day comment period on eDAAP (Electronic Development and Approval of Academic/Administrative Policies).
- Commenting on new degree proposals and curriculum changes on eCAP (Electronic Curriculum Approval Process).<sup>1</sup>
- Notifying the Faculty Council of new developments, policies, or concerns of their school or college.
- Serving on a Faculty Council Committee or University Council Committee.
- Recruiting and coordinating elections of new representative and alternates of their school or college for the Faculty Council.
- Encouraging colleagues to attend and to participate in Faculty Assembly.

Faculty Council meetings are open to the officers, committee chairs, and Faculty Council representatives and alternates, or by invitation. Alternates are encouraged to attend all Faculty Council meetings and to participate in discussion. However, alternates do not vote on motions, unless the representative for their school or college is absent.

Unless otherwise specified, Council members are free to discuss the deliberations of the Faculty Council and new policy developments with their colleagues. At times they are encouraged to do so, to get adequate feedback before signing off on a policy. When a policy is in development, however, draft documents are normally available to Faculty Council members only.

The President, the University Provost and the Medical Campus Provost address the Faculty Council at least once per year. During their presentations, they may share confidential information with the Faculty Council. The speaker will indicate whether the information is for public consumption. Please be mindful.

### Elections

Elections for new representatives and alternates should be held in the spring, no later than the end of May. The Senior Director can assist with coordinating school/college elections, by request of the school/college representatives.

### Events

[See Calendar for details](#)

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<sup>1</sup> The policies and degree proposals that Council members are asked to comment on via eDAAP and eCAP are voted on at University Council.

## Faculty Council Committees

**Academic Freedom Committee:** considers issues and concerns of academic freedom with respect to teaching, research, and creative work for faculty. Recent examples: Discussed trigger warnings, departmental antiracism policies.

**Administrative Policies Committee:** considers non-academic administrative policies as they impact faculty. Recent examples: Reviewed proposed changes to MyCV and Title IX.

**Awards Committee:** The Distinguished Service Awards were established in 1981 by the Faculty Council and since 1984 have been sponsored by the estate of John S. Perkins, who served the University for over fifty years in various capacities as faculty member, member of the administration, Trustee, and Treasurer. These awards, now known as the Perkins Awards, are presented annually by the Council to three members of the Boston University community in recognition of distinguished service to the University. The award is a prize of \$500 and a plaque recognizing the service of the recipient to Boston University. The Awards Committee solicits nominations and reviews the candidates, then recommends three winners to the Faculty Council for a vote. The Committee Chair also drafts the commendations to be read at the Perkins Ceremony and may be interviewed by BU Today, or similar publications, as well.

**Benefits and Compensation Committee:** considers and reviews existing and proposed compensation and benefits policies and programs in relation to how they impact faculty. Recent examples: Reviewed proposed changes to retirement investments, engaged w/senior leadership to discuss health-insurance usage.

**Credentials and By-laws Committee:** considers issues related, and proposed changes, to the By-laws of Faculty Council and their alignment with Boston University's Constitution. Recent examples: Reviewed and proposed changes to the Constitution and the By-laws.

**Equity & Inclusion Committee:** considers issues related to equity and inclusion for faculty. Recent examples: Advocated for the hire of an associate provost for diversity and inclusion; engaged w/ Associate Provost for Community and Inclusion to discuss hiring and retention of under-represented minority faculty.

**Sustainability:** considers issues, processes, and topics related to the effects of environmental change on the University and their impact on faculty. The Committee assists with the integration of faculty efforts with the Sustainability Office and the University Climate Action Plan. Recent examples: Met with Associate VP of Sustainability to review the proposed Climate Action Plan.

**Teaching and Learning Resources Committee:** considers and reviews teaching resources, practices, and procedures as they impact faculty. Recent examples: Engaged with members of the Task Force for Evaluating Teaching to discuss faculty evaluation.

## University Council Committees

University Council Committee Co-chairs report to the University Provost. They receive their charge from the University Provost and work in collaboration. Committee membership is determined by the Committee Co-chairs. The members of the Committees are formally appointed by the Provost. The processes for meetings, reports, etc. are managed through the Provost's office. UC Committees report to the University Council for discussion and vote. The University Council Committee Charters below are taken from the Office of the President's website at: <https://www.bu.edu/uc/university-council-committees/>

**Committee on Faculty Policies:** Co-Chairs with Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs, the University Council Committee on Faculty Policies.

### Committee Charter

The Committee on Faculty Policies considers policies that are specific to Boston University faculty. The Committee may be charged with drafting a new policy where none exists, modifying an existing policy, or working with the developer of a faculty policy to ensure appropriate consultation and final presentation to the University Council for discussion and vote. The Committee also oversees all substantive changes to the text of the Faculty Handbook. *This charter was approved on 12/1/14 by the University Council.*

**Committee on Graduate Academic Programs and Policies:** Co-Chair with Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs, the University Council Committee on Graduate Academic Programs & Policies

### Committee Charter

The Committee on Graduate Academic Policies and Programs considers and votes on proposals for new and revised programs submitted through the eCAP system, and for new and revised policies put forward by the Graduate Council or other bodies. As required, the Committee presents program and policy proposals to the University Council for discussion and vote. The Committee will meet at least once per month on the Charles River Campus. The University Council Committee is the first stage in developing policies that will be implemented University-wide. The active engagement of faculty and key staff members of the University community is vital to shared governance. *This charter was approved on 12/1/14 by University Council.*

**Committee on Research and Scholarly Activity:** Co-Chairs with Associate Provost for Research, the University Council Committee on Research & Scholarly Activity

### Committee Charter

The Committee on Research and Scholarly Activity considers and votes on proposals for new and revised policies concerning research and scholarship. As required, the Committee presents proposals to the University Council for discussion and vote. The Committee will meet at least once per month on the Charles River Campus. The University Council Committee is the first stage in developing policies that will be implemented University-wide. The active engagement of faculty and key staff members of the University community is vital to shared governance. *This charter was approved on 12/1/14 by the University Council.*

**Committee on Student Life & Policies:** Co-chairs with Dean of Students, the University Council Committee on Student Life & Policies

#### **Committee Charter**

The Committee on Student Life & Policies shall be responsible for considering issues relating to student life and the student experience at Boston University. The Committee shall also be responsible for the development and review of Student University Policies, which are defined to include student-related academic and student affairs policies. The Committee shall consider student policy issues that have been presented to it, shall ensure that all stakeholders are identified, and shall assign drafting responsibilities to a drafting group. The Committee shall have the ability to seek the assistance of individuals having expertise or information relevant to the issues under consideration and shall present its recommendations regarding proposed student policies to the University Council. *This charter was approved on 12/1/14 by University Council.*

**Committee on Undergraduate Academic Programs and Policies:** Co-Chairs with Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, the University Council committee on Undergraduate Academic Programs & Policies

#### **Committee Charter**

The Committee on Undergraduate Academic Programs and Policies considers and votes on proposals for new and revised programs submitted through the eCap system, and for new and revised policies put forward by the Undergraduate Council or other bodies. As required, the Committee presents program and policy proposals to the University Council for discussion and vote. The Committee will meet at least once a month on the Charles River Campus. The University Council Committee is the first stage in developing policies that will be implemented University-wide. The active engagement of faculty and key staff members of the University community is vital to shared governance. *This charter was approved on 12/1/14 by the University Council.*

- Subcommittees: General Education Council & the Hub Council