

Faculty Senate Structure (A Proposal)

Preface

- I would like to take some time at the next meeting of the Faculty Senate to begin discussing with you (and through you, with the overall faculty) about revising the structure through which the Faculty Senate conducts its business. It has become increasingly difficult for the Faculty Senate President and the Operations Committee (OPS) to adequately meet all the legitimate needs and time demands of their respective roles. It is also increasingly difficult for the Faculty Senate to respond to new initiatives and weigh in proactively on strategic directives coming from the Administration, the Regents, and our wider organizational environment. If shared governance within the University is to really work well, and lead UNM in the best strategic pursuit of its academic mission in the future, I believe we simply *have to have* a structure that both embodies democratic practice *and* is capable of responding in an efficient way which is less centralized in the person of the FS President.
- The initial proposal attached strives to do this, and is intended only to initiate discussion in this direction. The Operations Committee has discussed it extensively, and I have consulted with many other individuals. **This is not a finished product.** Indeed, the point of bringing this proposal – call it a pre-proposal – to you today is to ask for your counsel, insight, and concerns in how best to address the need for a democratic, more efficient, and less centralized structure. Throughout this proposal, I attempt to identify what I think are core components necessary to meet this end, and to identify areas of uncertainty for which there are many valid solutions. I invite your input and reaction to all of it.
- In putting this proposal together, the members of the task force realize that while many of the problems that the Faculty Senate and its committees are facing could be fixed without changing the structure (by garnering more faculty and administration support for the missions of the committees, etc.), however, we feel that these are symptoms of the underlying structural problems.

Statement of Purpose

- The University of New Mexico Faculty Senate Operations Committee created a Task Force on Structure to form a proposal for restructuring the Faculty Senate to be more responsive and flexible to the needs of the faculty, administration and the University as a whole.

Executive Summary

- The current structure of the UNM Faculty Senate is not optimized for flexibility and responsiveness. We propose to build umbrella structures (Councils), led by elected faculty leaders. These Councils will have broad authority within their domains to create and define committee structures and to make operational decisions in collaboration with the Faculty Senate and administration representatives. Policies formed by Councils (or Committees of the Councils) would be taken to the Faculty Senate for adoption or rejection.

Current Faculty Senate Structure

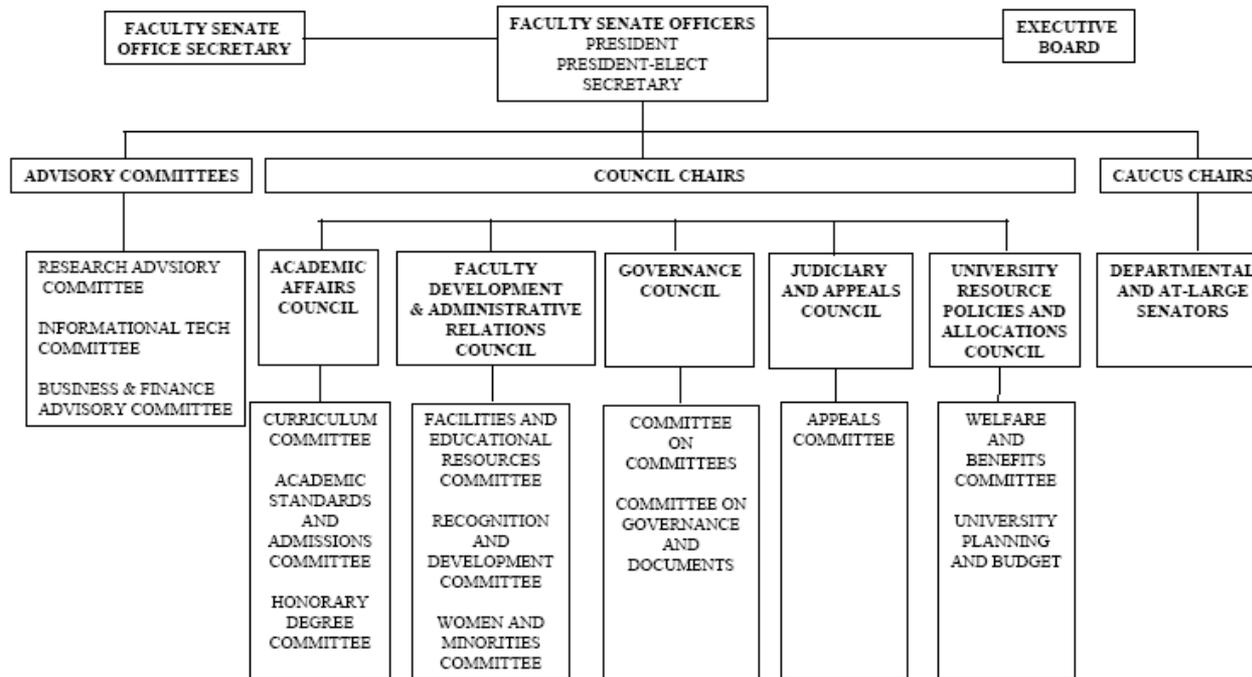
- The current structure of the UNM Faculty Senate is as follows:
 - The Faculty Senate is comprised of Senators elected from the entirety of the UNM campus, including the branch campuses. There are 55 Senators divided between the various units, with an addition 8 at-large Senators.
 - There is one executive committee, known as the Operations Committee (OPS) of the Faculty Senate. It is comprised of the FS President, the President-elect, the past-President and 4 members, all elected by the Faculty Senate. The charge of this committee is to oversee the workings of the FS Committees, set the agendas for the Faculty Senate Meetings, and be a conduit between the administration and the FS Committees and Faculty Senate.
 - The standing Committees of the Faculty Senate are currently:
 - Admissions and Registration Committee
 - Athletic Council
 - Budget Committee
 - Campus Planning Committee
 - Computer Use Committee
 - Curricula Committee
 - Faculty Ethics and Advisory Committee
 - Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee
 - Graduate Committee (members appointed by Colleges/Schools)
 - Governmental Relations Committee
 - Intellectual Property Committee
 - Library Committee
 - Policy Committee
 - Research Allocations Committee
 - Research Policy Committee
 - Scholarship Committee
 - Teaching Enhancement Committee
 - Undergraduate Committee
 - University Honors Council
 - University Press Committee
 - Each of these committees has, in its charge, a definition of the faculty voting members and administrative, staff, and student ex-officio (non-voting) members. The faculty membership usually is defined in such a way as to have representation on the committee by as diverse a group as possible.

Structures at Other Universities

- There are as many Faculty Governance structures as there are universities. A full study on the efficacy of each structure is beyond the scope of this document. We present here one example of a structure that is similar to what we are envisioning for UNM. Below is the organizational chart for Iowa State University Faculty Senate. Many others (University of Washington, SUNY, University of Virginia...) have similar structures.

Iowa State University Faculty Senate

FACULTY SENATE STRUCTURE



Summary of Criticisms of the Faculty Senate Structure

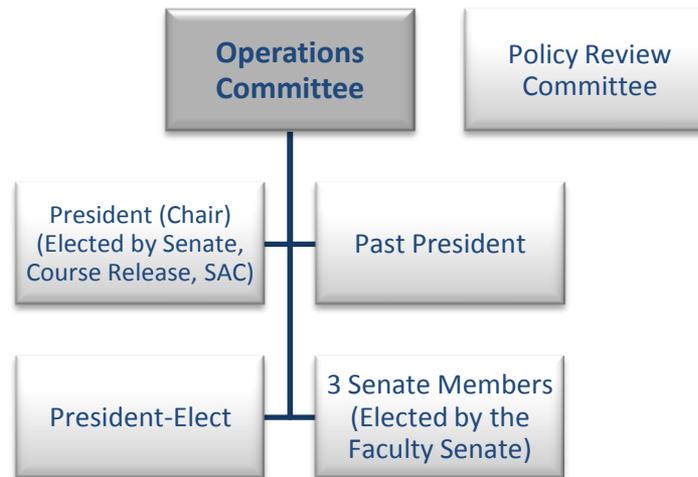
- The number of committees reporting directly to the OPS committee:
 - Makes it hard to organize tasks
 - Makes it difficult for faculty and administration to decide which committee to go to with issues
 - Makes it difficult for faculty to understand responsibilities, and decide on which committee to sit
 - Dilutes the authority and power of each committee
 - Makes it impossible to offer compensation for committee chairs
- Rigidity of charges
- Rigidity of membership

Proposal for Structure

- The general guidelines for this proposal for Faculty Senate structure are:

The Operations Committee

- The Operations Committee of the Faculty Senate (OPS) will be composed of the President of the Faculty Senate (Chairs the OPS committee), the past-President, the President-elect and three at-large members of the Senate. The charge of the Operations Committee is to coordinate issues that cross Council boundaries, act as an information conduit from global structure such as the Regents, upper administration and the general faculty and staff, and to provide a conduit of information from the councils back to these general structures. The Operations Committee meets weekly, and monthly with the chairs of the Faculty Senate Councils (as the Executive Council, see below).



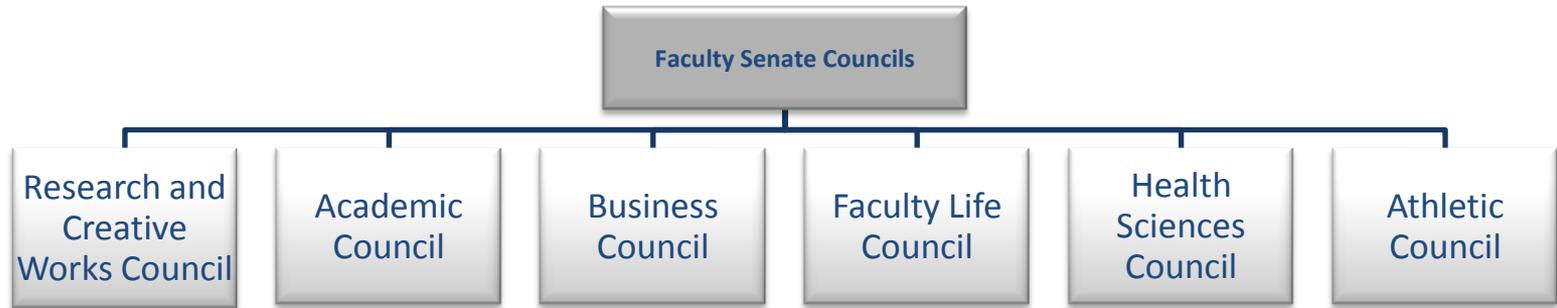
Policy Review Committee

- The Policy Review Committee is charged with oversight of policies in the faculty handbook and in Big Red. Voting members of the committee are: the Chair (elected to a two-year term by a vote of the Faculty Senate, to be given an appropriate course release and SAC), three members of the Faculty Senate (elected by that body for a one-year term), and the chairs of any sub-committees of the Policy Review Committee (both standing and ad-hoc committees, appointed by the Policy Review Committee Chair). Non-voting members of the Committee include a representative of the University Counsel's office. The council meets monthly, or as needed.

Faculty Senate Councils

- The Councils of the Faculty Senate are created paralleling the divisions of university life - Research and Creative Works Council, Academic Council, Business Council, Faculty Life Council, Health Sciences Council, and Athletic Council. Each Council is chaired by a faculty member elected by the faculty as a whole, and given appropriate course release(s) and special administrative compensation (SAC) to allow the Council Chairs to fulfill their duties and to attract experienced faculty into these positions. In addition, each Council has three representatives from the faculty senate, elected by that body. Non-voting members of each Council from the administrative structure bring knowledge of current situations and facilitate dialog between administrative and faculty governance structures. Each Council may have standing Faculty Senate Committees assigned to it (by the OPS Committee), but are charged with the design of each committee's charge, membership and duration of existence, with the approval of the faculty senate.

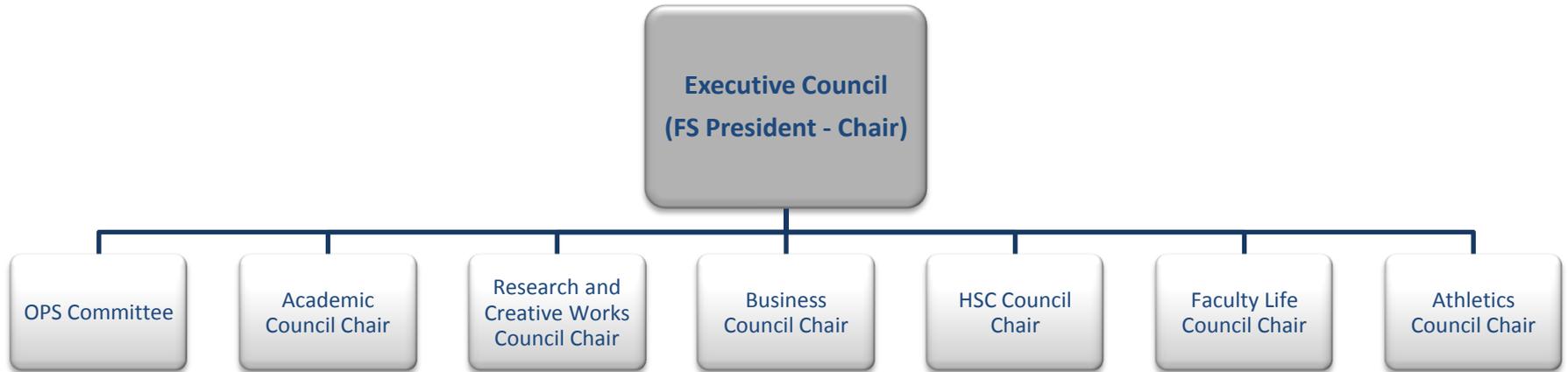
Faculty Senate Councils



Executive Council

- The OPS committee, together with the chairs of the Councils, form the Executive Council of the Faculty Senate. The charge of the Executive Council is to coordinate activities across Councils, ensure that information (policies, resolutions, etc.) flows promptly from the Councils to the Faculty Senate, and that issues brought up at the University-wide level finds the appropriate place within the Council structure for deliberation. The Executive Council shall meet monthly throughout the year.

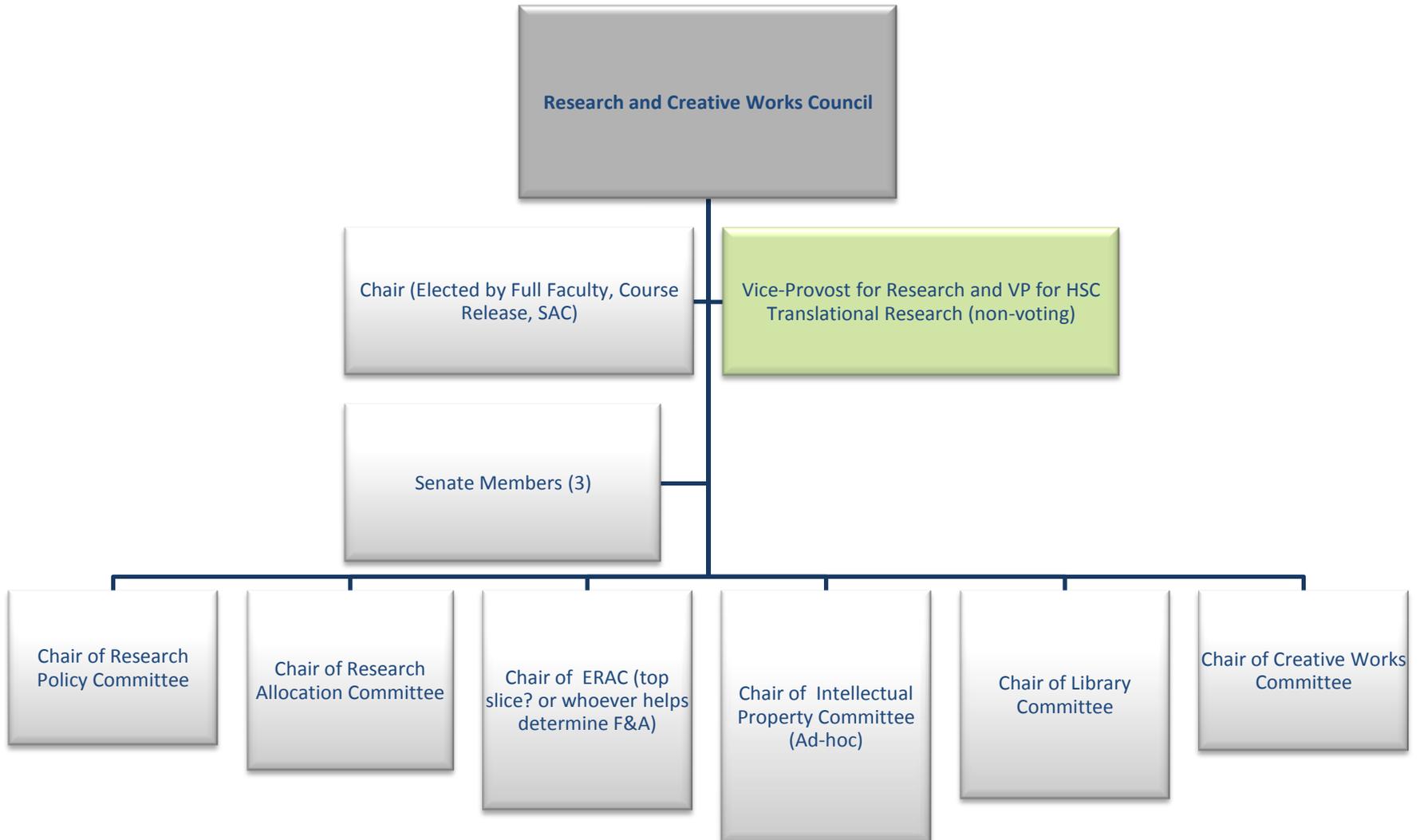
Executive Council



Research and Creative Works Council

- The Research and Creative Works Council is charged with oversight of the research endeavor of the university including both “big-science” and smaller, unfunded or underfunded creative works. Voting members of the council are: the Chair (elected to a two-year term by a vote of the full faculty, to be given an appropriate course release and SAC), three members of the Faculty Senate (elected by that body for a one-year term), and the chairs of any committees of the Council (both standing and ad-hoc committees of the Council, appointed by the Council Chair). Non-voting members of the Council are: the Vice-Provost for Research and the HSC Vice-Provost for Research, and Council committee members. The council meets monthly.

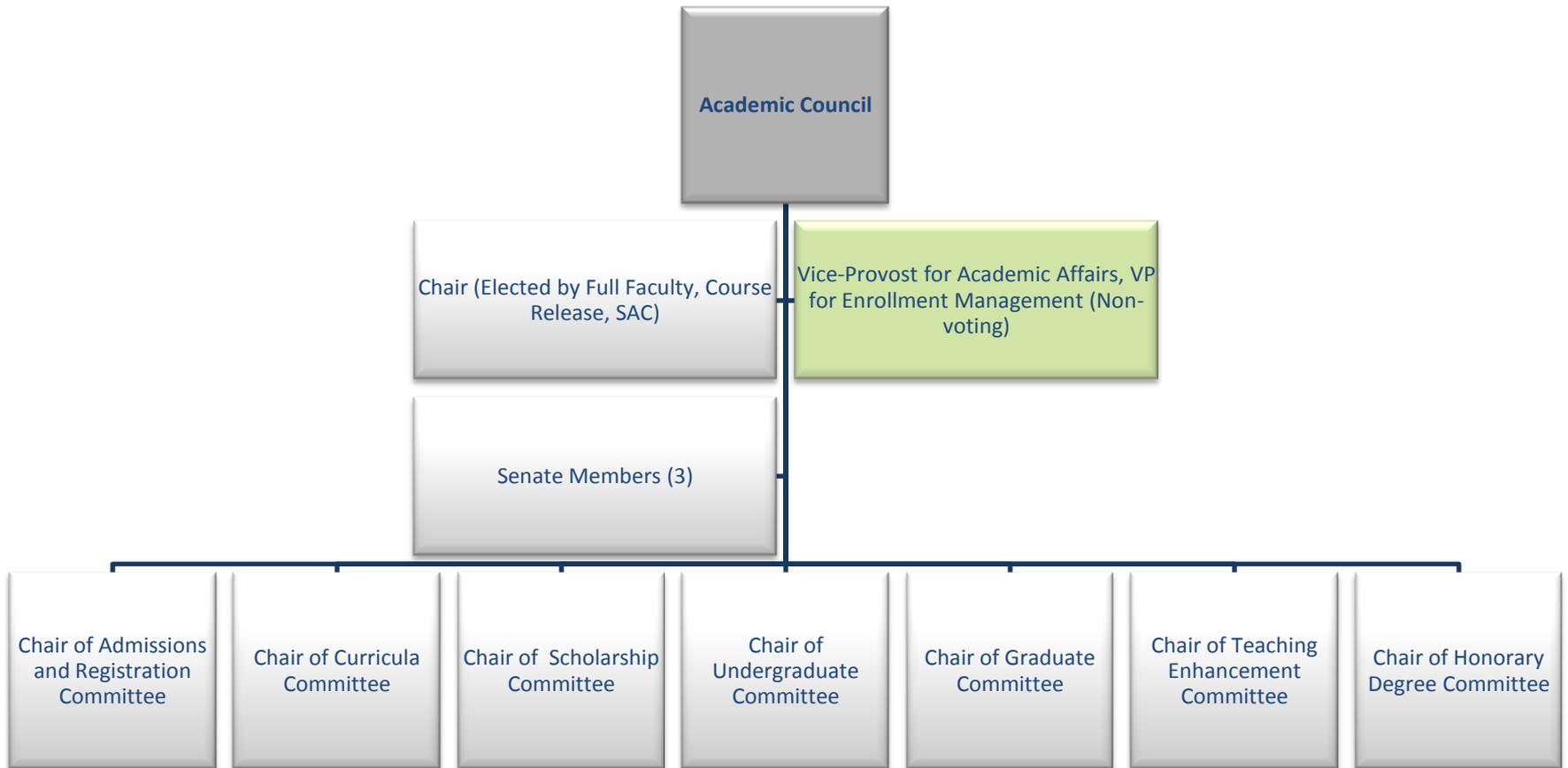
Research and Creative Works Council



Academic Council

- The Academic Council is charged with oversight of the teaching and curricula of the university including at the undergraduate, graduate and professional levels. Voting members of the council are: the Chair (elected to a two-year term by a vote of the full faculty, to be given an appropriate course release and SAC), three members of the Faculty Senate (elected by that body for a one-year term), and the chairs of any committees of the Council (both standing and ad-hoc committees of the Council, appointed by the Council Chair). Non-voting members of the Council are: the Vice-Provost for Academic Affairs, the VP for Enrollment Management, and Council committee members. The council meets monthly.

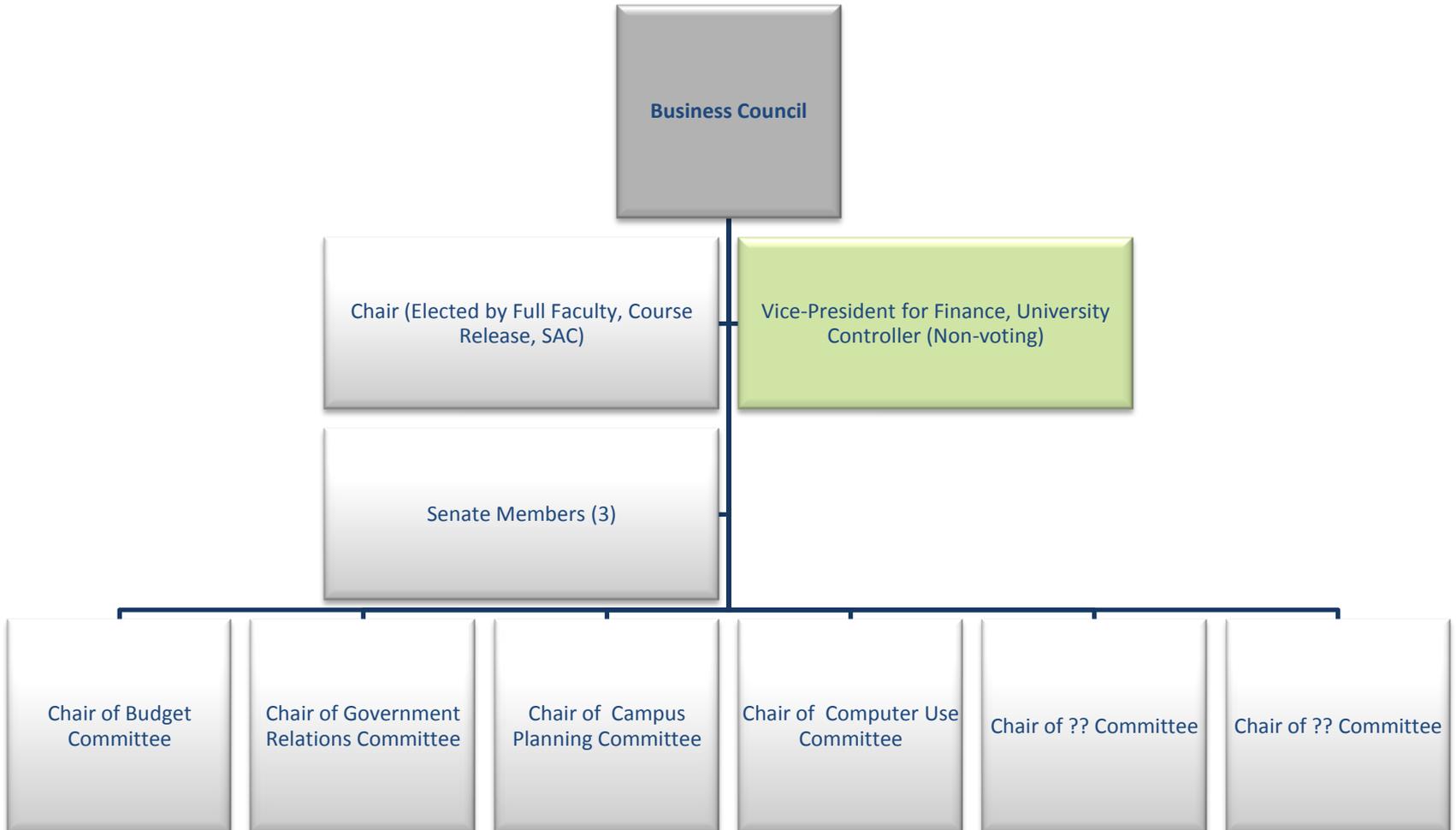
Academic Council



Business Council

- The Business Council is charged with oversight of the business aspects of the university including the budget, government relations, campus planning, capital projects, etc. Voting members of the council are: the Chair (elected to a two-year term by a vote of the full faculty, to be given an appropriate course release and SAC), three members of the Faculty Senate (elected by that body for a one-year term), and the chairs of any committees of the Council (both standing and ad-hoc committees of the Council, appointed by the Council Chair). Non-voting members of the Council are: the Vice-President for Finance, the University Controller, and Council committee members. The council meets monthly.

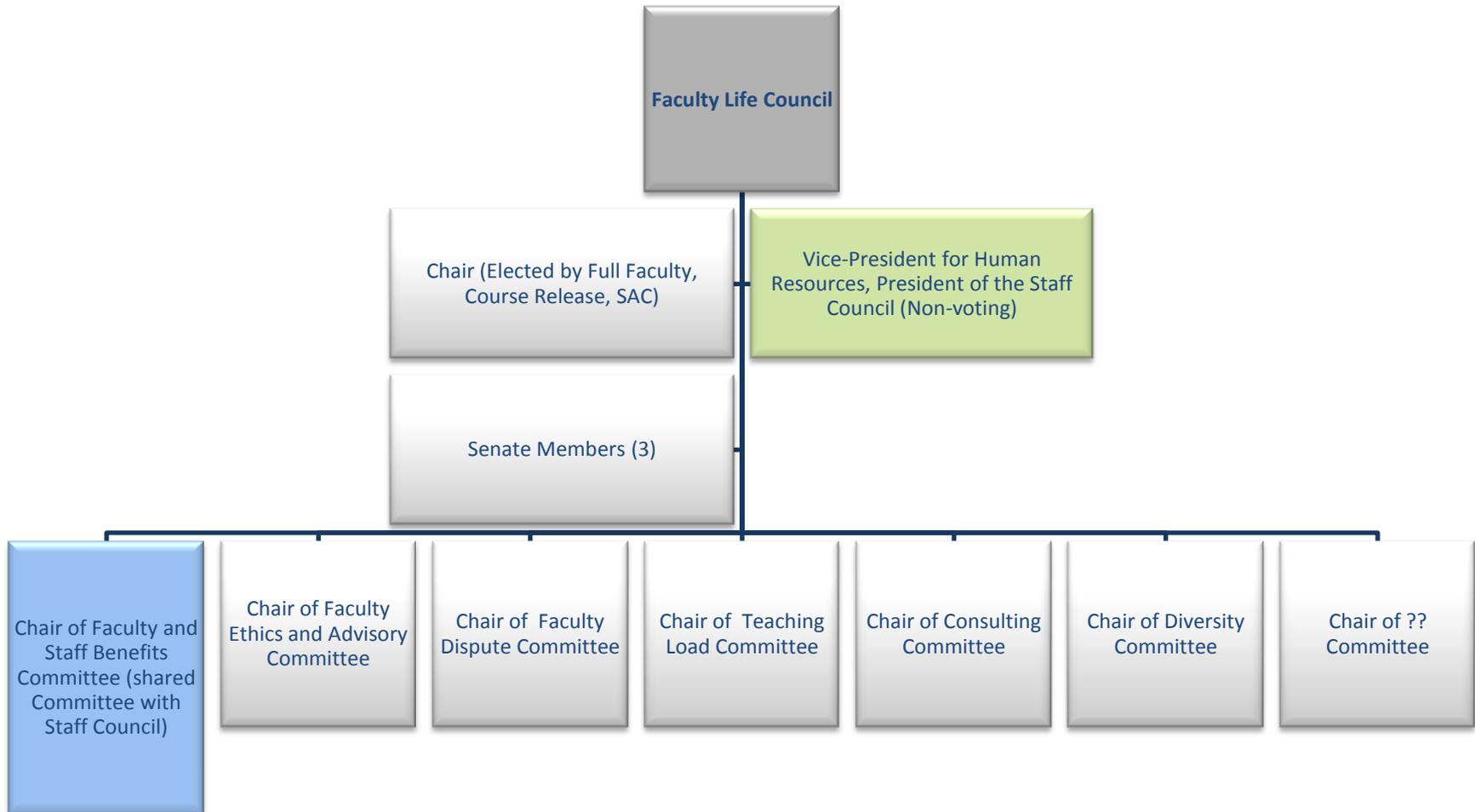
Business Council



Faculty Life Council

- The Faculty Life Council is charged with oversight of faculty benefits, faculty responsibilities, faculty ethics, as well as the Faculty Club. Voting members of the council are: the Chair (elected to a two-year term by a vote of the full faculty, to be given an appropriate course release and SAC), three members of the Faculty Senate (elected by that body for a one-year term), and the chairs of any committees of the Council (both standing and ad-hoc committees of the Council, appointed by the Council Chair). Non-voting members of the Council are: the Vice-President for Human Resources, the President of the Staff Council, and Council committee members. The council meets monthly.

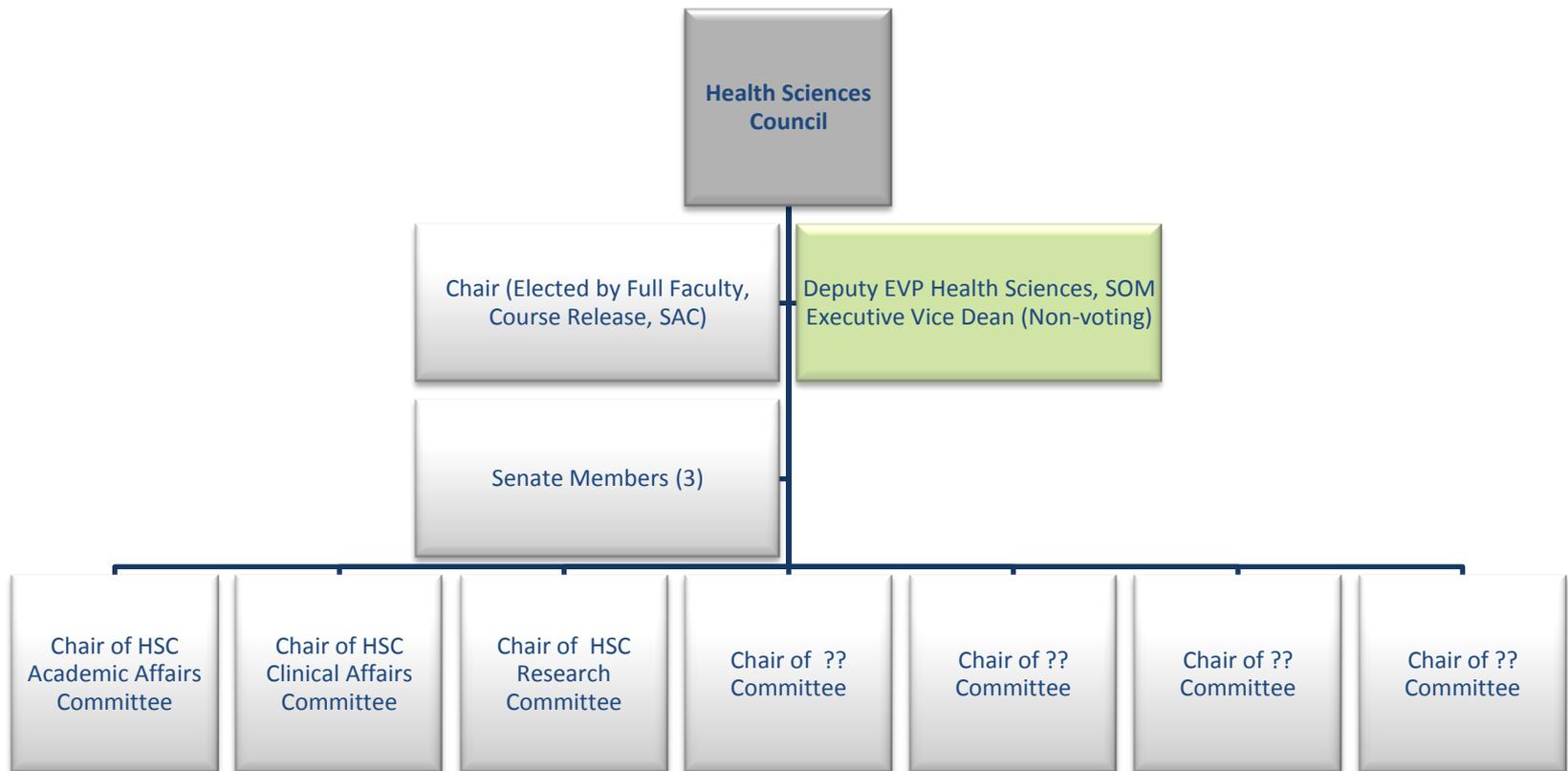
Faculty Life Council



Health Sciences Council

- The Health Sciences Council is charged with oversight of faculty issues that are unique to the Health Sciences Center and the School of Medicine. Voting members of the council are: the Chair (elected to a two-year term by a vote of the full faculty, to be given an appropriate course release and SAC), three members of the Faculty Senate (elected by that body for a one-year term), and the chairs of any committees of the Council (both standing and ad-hoc committees of the Council, appointed by the Council Chair). Non-voting members of the Council are: the Vice-President for Human Resources, the President of the Staff Council, and Council committee members. The council meets monthly.

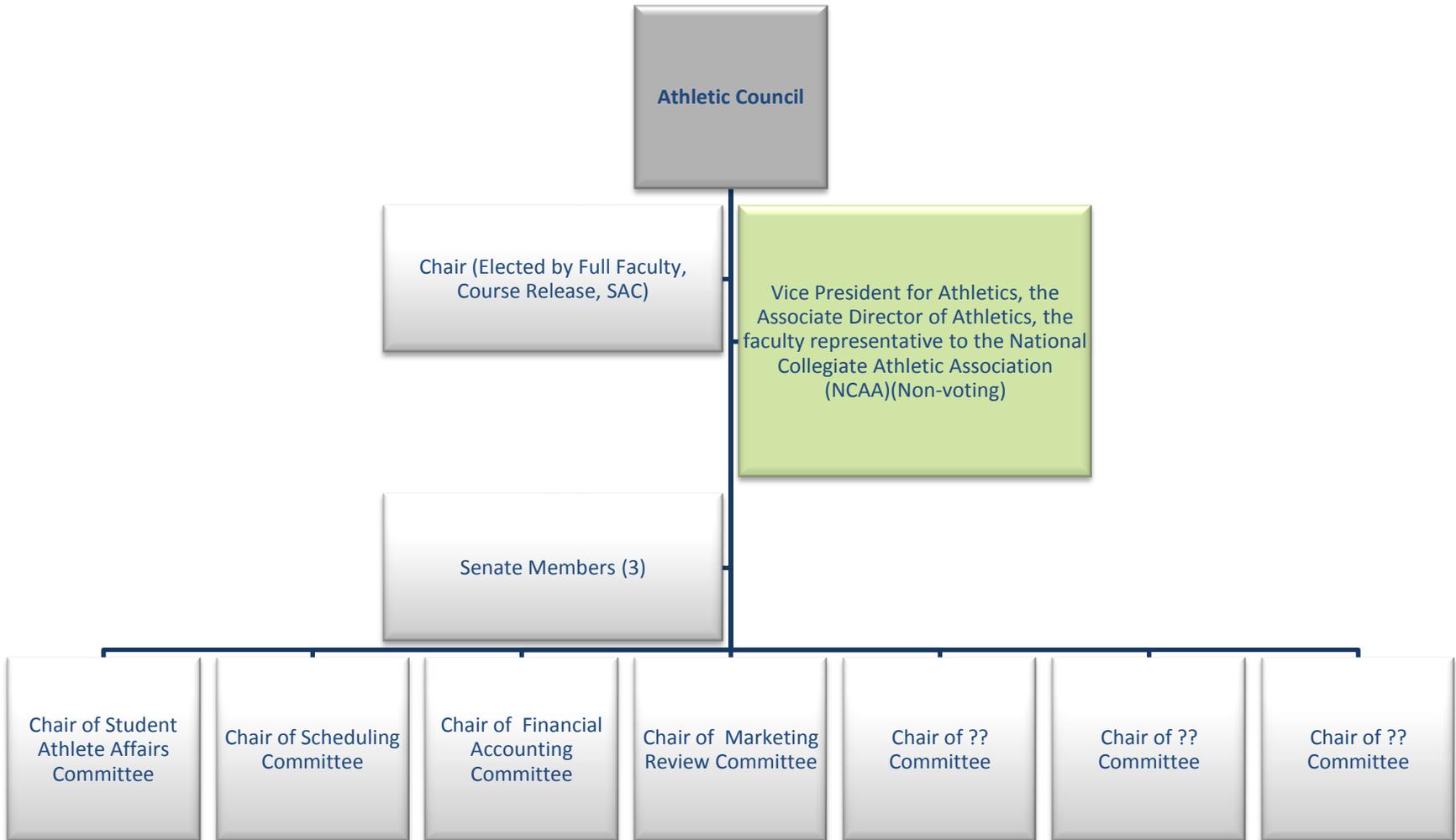
Health Sciences Council



Athletic Council

- The Athletic Council is charged with oversight of intercollegiate and intramural athletics. Voting members of the council are: the Chair (elected to a two-year term by a vote of the full faculty, to be given an appropriate course release and SAC), three members of the Faculty Senate (elected by that body for a one-year term), and the chairs of any committees of the Council (both standing and ad-hoc committees of the Council, appointed by the Council Chair). Non-voting members of the Council are: the Vice President for Athletics, the Associate Director of Athletics, the faculty representative to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and Council committee members. The council meets monthly.

Athletic Council



Suggestions:

At universities where I previously worked, both in the California State University System (which has been noted for a strong presence of faculty governance, including a voting faculty member of the board of Trustees), there were several arrangements that helped the Academic Senates work well.

1. Every standing committee has, in addition to the elected faculty members and Chair, an "Executive Secretary". That person was the administrator responsible for the subject area of the committee.

- The Dean of Academic Planning is "Executive Secretary" of the Instructional Affairs (curriculum) Committee.
- The Vice President for Finance is "Executive Secretary" of the Committee on Finance.
- The Associate Provost is "Executive Secretary" for the Faculty Affairs Committee.
- etc.

- What is the job of the Executive Secretary?
 - They and their office staff prepare and send out agendas, minutes, resolutions, etc. They arrange meetings and meeting rooms, etc.
 - The Executive Secretary and the Committee Chair work closely together. The Executive Secretary is the "staff" for that committee. Together they created the agendas and minutes (and the ES' staff actually takes minutes).
 - The ES' office is the repository for Committee actions, agendas, minutes, etc. This provides continuity.
 - The Executive Secretary may or may not be a voting or non-voting member of the Committee, but their attendance and participation and support is NOT OPTIONAL.

- This arrangement
 - strengthens the communication between the Committee and the university Division responsible for administering policy in that area.
 - reminds the administration that they work to support faculty.
 - provides for continuity of committee operations.
 - provides the staff support that a committee needs and a Chair should not have to do.

2. The Faculty Senate (as a whole) on each campus has its own office (with an office for the Faculty Senate President) and its own full time staff; usually a Department Administrator and an Administrative Assistant, to support the effective functioning of the Faculty Senate. That office was NOT the Secretary of the University, but instead a stand-alone, independently functioning department with staff and a budget, reporting to the equivalent of the Operations Committee.

These are some features of the California system (as I knew it when I left 15 years ago) that help the faculty spend their valuable time on substantive issues rather than day-to-day operations of faculty governance.