

Faculty Executive Committee Annual Report 2023-2024

The Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) would like to begin by expressing gratitude to some key people with whom FEC has worked closely this academic year: Dorothy Mosby, Nora Graubard, Debbie Peterson, and the entire Office of the Dean of the Faculty; Chase Cunningham from Media Services; Jesse Rock and Tony Kowalick from IT; the website team from the Office of Communications and Marketing; Ben Harwood, Aaron Kendall, and Beth DuPont from the LEDS team. We are so grateful to these colleagues for their expertise, energy, and support of FEC's work throughout this year.

FEC's work began in July with requests from committees for replacements as well as consultation regarding operating procedures. At the beginning of September, the FEC chair worked closely with Jesse Rock and Tony Kowalick in IT as well as Debbie Peterson in the Office of the Dean of Faculty to prepare the governance software system for the elicitation of faculty preferences for service in late September. The FEC chair also worked with the new faculty parliamentarian (appointed in May 2023) and our new Dean of Faculty to prepare procedurally for faculty meetings for the year.

Consistent with past years, FEC's work during the academic year included responding to faculty and committee inquiries about governance-related topics and various aspects of faculty-administration relations. Other routine work for FEC included reviewing the *Faculty Handbook* for adoption in Fall 2023, updating the FEC Operating Code at the beginning of the Fall, and convening the Committee of Committees at the end of the fall and spring semesters (as well as writing and distributing the Committee of Committees report). In collaboration with LEDS, FEC introduced a new hybrid voting system in the October faculty meeting that allows for the collection of faculty votes across in-person and video-conference modalities into a single software system. Following up on work from the previous year, FEC worked with the Dean's office to secure the second floor of Murray-Aikins for the majority of faculty meetings this year.

The bulk of FEC's time in the Fall semester was spent overseeing elections and appointments to governance committees for service beginning in AY2024–2025. Throughout the fall, FEC hosted one Committee of the Whole (CoW) and facilitated another CoW with the HHMI Working Group on Inclusive and Accessible Teaching and Learning during faculty meetings, and consulted with governance and non-governance committees to create a plan of action for our governance system review, to start in earnest in the Spring. Finally, in response to requests from tenure-line faculty for more information regarding the ongoing non-tenure-track faculty collective bargaining process, FEC co-hosted a forum for tenure-line faculty with the Dean of Faculty's Office.

With elections and appointments to governance committees completed in the fall, FEC's work in the spring included responding to committee replacement requests, proceeding with our review of the governance system by conducting an Operations Audit on all governance committees, facilitating a Committee of the Whole with Promotions Committee, and providing feedback to various committees on their motions and other business. We also oversaw the nomination processes for selecting faculty to serve on Middle States Accreditation Working Groups, and on an expanded Institutional Policy

and Planning Subcommittee for Budget and Finance. Finally, we drafted a strategic plan to continue our review of the governance system in Fall 2024.

Below, we describe some key parts of our work this year in more detail.

Meetings

FEC met 24 times in AY2023-2024; meetings took place in person with the exception of 2 zoom meetings (one in the Fall, one in the Spring). During these regular meetings, FEC also met with the Dean of Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs (DOF/VPAA), the Working Group on Inclusive and Accessible Teaching and Learning, members of Promotions Committee, and the Director of the Center for Leadership, Teaching, and Learning (CLTL). Minutes for these weekly meetings held by the committee are posted on FEC's website.

The chair of FEC is a member of the Institutional Planning and Policy Committee (IPPC) and attended all scheduled meetings with the exception of 1 meeting which was attended by another member of FEC (Ting Li). Throughout the academic year, the chair of FEC also met with the DOF/VPAA monthly to discuss the faculty meeting agenda and other governance-related business. In addition, the FEC chair participated in meetings with members of the faculty, staff, and administration regarding matters of shared governance.

Governance Committee Elections and Replacements

FEC held elections to fill 10 positions on 9 governance committees. The following members of the faculty were elected to serve three-year terms, beginning Fall 2024:

Appointments and Tenure Committee (ATC): Nurcan Atalan-Helicke
Promotions Committee (PC): Kendrah Murphy, Joowon Park
Faculty Executive Committee (FEC): Lucia Hulsether
Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC): Oscar Perez-Hernandez
Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR): Erica Bastress-Dukehart
Curriculum Committee (CC): John Michael DiResta
Faculty Development Committee (FDC): Joshua Ness, Monica Das
Periclean Honors Forum Council (PHFC): Emmanuel Balogun
Athletic Council (AC): Catherine Berheide

FEC worked with the following committees to secure replacements for AY2022–2023:

Periclean Honors Forum Council (PHF): Cate Talley (for Spring 2024)
Athletic Council (AC): John Cosgrove, Mike Dunn (for Spring 2024)

FEC also worked with the following committees to secure replacements for AY2023-2024:

Faculty Executive Committee (FEC): Murat Yildiz
Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC): Patrick Reilly
Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP): Bob Turner (for Fall 2024)

Periclean Honors Forum Council (PHF): Bakary Diaby, Paul Benzon (for Fall 2024-Spring 2026)

Due to a larger cohort combined with a smaller number of open positions, the problem of not having enough candidates to run elections that had occurred in previous years did not happen this year. However, part of FEC's governance system review work in the fall will be to address the cohort-dependent asymmetries between committee needs and faculty availability.

Governance Committee Appointments and Replacements

FEC appointed 3 members of the faculty to serve on 3 standing governance committees. Appointments for three-year terms beginning Fall 2024 are as follows:

Self-Determined Majors Committee (SDM): Pablo Gomez
Committee on Academic Standing (CAS): Greg Pfitzer
Faculty Advisory Board (FAB): Ben Bogin

FEC also appointed the following members of the faculty as replacements for AY2023-2024:

Committee on Academic Standing (CAS): Katie Hauser
Faculty Advisory Board (FAB): April Bernard (until Spring 2026)

In addition, FEC appointed the following members of the faculty as replacements for AY2024-2025:

Faculty Advisory Board (FAB): Xander Prince (for Fall 2024)
Self-Determined Majors Committee (SDM): Sarah Sweeney (for Fall 2024)

FEC would like to express our deep gratitude and sincere appreciation for everyone's support of and participation in shared governance.

Committees of the Whole

In a continued effort to encourage broad engagement in meaningful discussion in faculty meetings, FEC hosted a Committee of the Whole in the October faculty meeting to solicit deliberative items for faculty meetings this year. FEC introduced the discussion by presenting a report of the committee's work from the previous year to respond to faculty input regarding faculty meetings, and followed the conversation with a survey to allow faculty to contribute further ideas. FEC summarized the numerous and varied themes that arose from this discussion in a report that was presented to faculty at the November faculty meeting, and encouraged faculty and committees to approach FEC to facilitate follow-up conversations in faculty meeting and beyond. Responding to logistical requests from faculty in this and last year's Committees of the Whole, FEC provided an orientation to running faculty meeting to the new Dean of Faculty and her office's new administrator, emphasizing the importance of Q&A after the President's and Dean's reports, alternating between questions coming from faculty in-person and on Zoom, and the careful management of time during the meeting. Securing the second floor of Murray-Aikins for the majority of faculty meetings this year provided a venue that

more effectively allows small-group discussion than previous locations. In accordance with faculty feedback reflecting a desire for diverse venues for meetings, FEC also hosted four meetings in Gannett Auditorium (one faculty meeting, one faculty-only meeting, and two fora).

FEC facilitated two additional Committees of the Whole in collaboration with other committees. In the December faculty meeting, the HHMI Working Group on Inclusive and Accessible Teaching and Learning hosted a CoW to discuss a draft of their Guiding Principles for Effective Learning Environments. In the February faculty meeting, Promotions Committee hosted a Committee of the Whole to solicit faculty feedback on the Faculty Handbook's current guidelines for Promotion to Full Professor.

Fora for Tenure-Line Faculty on NTT Bargaining Process

In the Fall, FEC co-hosted two fora with the Office of the Dean of Faculty for tenure-line faculty seeking information about the non-tenure-track collective bargaining process. In preparation for these meetings, FEC solicited questions from faculty for the Dean of Faculty. During the meetings, all FEC members took notes of the proceedings. Following the meetings, these notes were compiled and edited, shared with the faculty, and archived on the FEC website.

Governance System Review and Faculty-Only Meeting

In the Fall, FEC discussed aspects of the governance system to focus on for the review process. At the December Committee of Committees meeting (see below), we introduced a Committee Operations Audit that we asked all governance committees to complete. This audit asked for a self-assessment of each committee's membership, workload, chair responsibilities and selection procedures, with two goals: (1) To identify issues with committee operations that contribute to the overall efficacy of the governance system (2) To give each committee an opportunity to reflect on and improve their own processes. FEC discussed and then compiled the results of this audit in a report that was presented to the faculty in advance of the April faculty-only meeting.

FEC held an in-person faculty-only meeting in April 2024 to update faculty on what FEC had learned so far in our review of the governance system, and to gather feedback from faculty about this process. Although the purpose of the meeting was focused on the review of the governance system, faculty raised and debated important concerns beyond this scope, including philosophies of shared governance, the merit of faculty (and staff and student) presence in meetings of the Board of Trustees, and the contradictions between our service values and practices at Skidmore. Also discussed at the meeting was the pragmatic "accounting" issue: the mismatch that occurs some years between open committee positions and available faculty to serve. Summaries of notes and the slide deck from this meeting was shared with the faculty and archived on FEC's website.

Following this meeting, FEC discussed our governance review process extensively, and settled on a strategy for AY2024-2025 to focus on making inroads into solving the "accounting" issue, in order to create a clearer context in which to continue the more expansive conversations about service that faculty desire.

Committee of Committees

FEC convened two meetings of the Committee of Committees, both held in-person in the Murray-Aikins Dining Hall. The first meeting took place in December 2023. In addition to sharing information and updates from all the represented committees, FEC prepared committee chairs for the Operations Audit that would be carried out in the Spring. FEC presented the report from this meeting and provided an opportunity for faculty discussion during the February faculty meeting. The second Committee of Committees meeting was held in May. FEC plans to present the report from this latter meeting and provide an opportunity for faculty discussion during one of the first two faculty meetings of Fall 2024.

Working Group and Ad-Hoc Committee Appointments

From February to March, FEC worked with the Middle States Accreditation Steering Committee (including the Dean of Faculty and the Director of Assessment) to solicit nominations for faculty at-large members of working groups for the Middle States accreditation process. FEC received nominations of 19 faculty by 8 nominators. Eight faculty were selected to serve on 4 different working groups over AY2024-2025.

In May, FEC was asked by the President (in his capacity as chair of IPPC) to consult on the selection of two faculty to join an expanded IPPC Subcommittee for Budget and Finance in Fall 2024 (two staff were also selected in a parallel process). We received nominations of 29 different faculty, from 18 nominators, with 10 nominees indicating willingness and availability to serve. After soliciting faculty preferences for their representatives, FEC forwarded information about the top five candidates to the President.

Other Business

In the Fall, FEC consulted with the HHMI Working Group to develop a plan for effectively communicating their work to the faculty in announcements at the faculty meeting. FEC also advised ATC and PC on some operational issues of common interest.

In the Spring, FEC advised the chair of PC on how to respond to the unexpected loss of a member during the Spring semester. FEC also offered feedback to CEPP on their work to develop a policy on classroom recording, as well as their work with the Environmental Studies and Sciences Program to transition to a department. FEC gave feedback to the Chief Technology Officer on two drafts of a slate of new Information Technology policies. We also reviewed a motion from FAB introduced in the May Faculty Meeting that will introduce a departmental constraint on faculty appointments to FAB.

2023-2024 FEC Members:

Jeremy Day-O'Connell (Music)

Ting Li (Management and Business)

Oscar Perez-Hernandez (World Languages and Literatures)

Dominique Vuvan (Psychology, **Chair**)

2024-2025 FEC Members:

Jeremy Day-O'Connell (Music)
Ting Li (Management and Business)
Dominique Vuvan (Psychology, **Chair**)
Murat Yildiz (History)

Incoming Chairs/Directors of Governance Committees for 2024-2025

Appointments and Tenure Committee (ATC): Sarah DiPasquale
Promotions Committee (PC): Erica Wojcik (interim chair)
Faculty Executive Committee (FEC): Dominique Vuvan
Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC): Rodrigo Schneider
Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP): Nick Junkerman
Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR): Bill Lewis
Curriculum Committee (CC): Maggie Greaves
Faculty Development Committee (FDC): Tim Wientzen
Periclean Honors Forum Council (PHFC): Joseph Cermatori
Athletic Council (AC): Daniel Peterson
Faculty Advisory Board (FAB): Gwen D'Arcangelis
Committee on Academic Standing (CAS): Greg Pfitzer
Self-Determined Majors Committee (SDM): Catherine Berheide
Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU): Masako Inamoto