

Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)
AY 2008-2009 Operating Code

PREAMBLE.

This Operating Code forms a set of guidelines for the functioning of the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC). The guidelines are just that: guidelines. Situations arise during the academic year that will require FEC to use its best judgment, in the light of these guidelines, on a particular course of action. This Operating Code should be distributed to all members of FEC at the beginning of each academic year and reviewed and modified at the end of each academic year.

I. FUNCTION AND ROLE IN ALL-COLLEGE GOVERNANCE.

A. Function.

1. The Faculty Executive Committee serves as the primary conduit of information and ideas into and out of the Faculty concerning all-college issues and policies; it oversees faculty governance and faculty participation in all-college governance; and it acts as Faculty Observers of the Board of Trustees.
2. FEC fosters communication within the Faculty, via both reports to the Faculty Meeting and organization of other faculty discussion meetings and forums, about all-college issues and policies. FEC, together with IPPC and SGA, is responsible for the proper constitution of all-college committees and subcommittees.
3. FEC is responsible for coordinating faculty committee work and for furthering democratic representation and committee efficiency. FEC is responsible for ensuring the proper constitution of faculty committees: it solicits nominations for, conducts elections for, and makes appointments to faculty and all-college committees; it provides advice and oversight of procedures regarding faculty appointments to search committees for senior administrative positions; and it maintains a list of all faculty members on all committees. In addition, FEC reviews operating codes of all faculty committees and maintains files of annual committee reports, and is responsible for ensuring that the text of the *Faculty Handbook* appears and remains precisely as approved by the Faculty.
4. FEC convenes the Committee of Committees (comprising faculty members of FEC, IPPC, CAPT, CAFR, CEPP, Curriculum Committee, FDC, Athletic Council, and any current ad hoc committees whose presence FEC believes would be helpful to the Committee) at least twice a year to assess the interactions among member committees and between them and the Administration, and to discuss ongoing issues and any problems in committee operations. FEC is then required to inform the Faculty at large of the issues raised by the Committee of Committees.
5. Finally, FEC observes the on-campus meetings of the Board of Trustees, at the invitation of the Board, and reports its observations in writing to the Faculty. (In

addition, CAPT, CAFR, and the chair of CEPP meet annually with the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.)

B. Role in all-College governance.

1. Several key faculty and college committees (e.g., IPPC, CEPP, IRC, Athletic Council, Curriculum Committee, etc.) include representatives from several constituencies within Skidmore's governance structure, e.g., the Faculty, the Administration, and the student community. The steady and accurate flow of information between these committees and their represented constituencies is essential to the proper functioning of College governance. In the case of communication with the student community, the normal vehicle for such exchange of information is through the student representatives on these committees.

2. In addition,

a. The Student Senate may request a meeting with a chair or other appropriate spokesperson of a faculty or an all-college committee (on which students serve) to provide information and exchange viewpoints about committee matters that are public.

b. Following this information meeting, the Student Senate may choose to put the issue on the agenda of IPPC through their representatives.

c. As a result of its discussions, IPPC may choose to provide input on this issue back to the original faculty or all-college committee.

NOTE: The privileges listed above for the Student Senate also apply to other constituencies in the College community, such as academic departments and administrative offices.

II. MEMBERSHIP OF FEC.

Six faculty members elected to serve three-year terms, together with the three elected faculty members of IPPC, who also serve three-year terms. The Committee will normally elect a Chair from among the continuing members.

III. BEGINNING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR TASKS.

A. The Chair requests from the Dean of the Faculty a “FEC-Eligible List.” The Chair, in consultation with the other members of FEC, must then determine all full-time members of the Faculty who are eligible to serve on committees and vote in elections.

B. The mailing list of eligible faculty (i.e., “fec-eligible-list@skidmore.edu”) must be brought up to date.

C. The Committee Membership List must be reviewed to determine if any committee members need to be replaced for the academic year or for a semester. The replacements should be made as soon as possible. Committee Chairs should be asked to notify FEC if they know of or anticipate needing any replacements and to deal with any vacancies that have arisen over the summer.

D. The Committee membership list is posted on the Governance web site at the beginning of the year.

E. The FEC Chair will participate in the new faculty orientation to introduce new faculty to Skidmore’s faculty governance system.

F. A representative of FEC should meet with student leaders and inform them of policies for exchanging information between faculty committees and student governance. This discussion should include interpretation of key language (e.g., what constitutes “public information”).

G. The schedule of elections for the upcoming year is determined, ideally at the first or second FEC meeting of the year (see Articles V and VI, below). The election schedule is then circulated to all faculty members at the beginning of the year.

IV. MEETING GUIDELINES.

A. Meetings of FEC will be run by the Chair. Every other week, the six regular members of FEC will meet to conduct the normal operational business of the committee. At these meetings, questions of committee governance, *Handbook* amendments, elections, appointments, administrative queries, Faculty Meeting agendas, etc., will be the primary subjects of discussion and action. Such meetings are informally known as “FEC-6 meetings.”

B. Every other week, the nine members of FEC will meet. The primary purpose of these meetings will be to receive information from the three IPPC faculty representatives and address issues raised on IPPC. As appropriate, FEC will make recommendations to the IPPC representatives, and/or inform the Faculty of developments and seek further deliberation through Faculty Meetings, Faculty Caucus meetings, or open fora. Such meetings are informally known as “FEC-9 meetings.”

C. The duty of taking minutes at FEC meetings will rotate among the membership as determined by the Chair. Minutes of FEC-6 meetings should be approved at FEC-6 meetings; minutes of FEC-9 meetings, at FEC-9. The Chair will place electronic copies of all minutes, once approved, in the FEC archives (see article XII, below).

V. ELECTION GUIDELINES (Rounds I-III).

A. Generally, there will be three rounds of elections (Rounds I-III), followed by a round of omnibus appointments and special elections (also known as Round IV; see Article VI, below). Rounds I and II are typically held in the fall semester, while Rounds III and IV are typically held in the spring. The dates for each round as well as the list of committees involved in each round are determined as soon as possible at the beginning of each academic year.¹ The responsibility to conduct each round will be assigned to a different member of the Committee. FEC will conduct the elections electronically.

B. Willingness-To-Serve.

1. At the appropriate time, a Willingness-To-Serve (WTS) form should be distributed to all eligible faculty members via e-mail at the beginning of each round of elections. The WTS forms are prepared by the Executive Secretary in the office of the Dean of the Faculty (hereafter the Executive Secretary). Members of FEC will review the WTS forms. A copy of this form should be kept by the Chair of FEC for the Committee archives. The form must include the following information:

- a. The current date;
- b. the name(s), function(s), and composition(s) of the committee(s);
- c. the names and departments of continuing members;
- d. the number of faculty members to be elected and any restrictions on eligibility (including tenure status);
- e. relevant information such as frequency of committee meetings, or regular day of meeting (if available);
- f. the deadline by which the form must be received by the person running the election;
- g. the name of the person to whom the form must be returned; and
- h. space for faculty members to declare their willingness to serve, their name, and their department;

¹ A list of all elected committees appears in Appendix A, Section 1, of this Operating Code. The typical schedule of elections and appointments, which should be updated annually, appears in Appendix B.

2. A sample Willingness-To-Serve form is available from the Executive Secretary or from the Chair of FEC.
3. During the willingness-to-serve period, the FEC member running an election will provide a daily update of the names of those who have expressed a willingness to serve.

C. Final Ballot.

1. The electronic Final Ballot is prepared by the Executive Secretary in consultation with personnel in Information Technology, and should be distributed electronically as soon as possible after the results of the willingness-to-serve period are determined, or as soon as possible after the deadline for the return of the willingness- to-serve forms. It is desirable that the person running the election should not be one of the candidates on the Final Ballot. However, FEC recognizes that this may not always be possible and will refrain from strict enforcement of this policy in cases where it would result in denying an FEC member the opportunity of being a candidate. The Final Ballot should contain the same information as (a) through (h) in Section B, Part 1, above. Faculty members who are candidates should be listed alphabetically by their last names together with their departmental affiliations. Faculty members are asked to vote for the number of people who are to be elected to the committee. If a faculty member votes for more than the requested number of candidates, that ballot is considered to be void and is not to be counted.
2. The positions are to be filled by the candidates receiving the highest number of votes. In the event of a tie for the last position available in the committee, a run-off election must be held for the position.
3. A sample Final Ballot is available from the Executive Secretary or the Chair of FEC.

D. Announcing the Results.

1. The Executive Secretary retrieves the electronic results from IT. The Executive Secretary then tabulates the results and informs FEC of the results electronically. FEC then ensures that the results produce correctly-constituted committees, i.e., that restrictions of membership to committees by department or by tenure status are met. The outcome is then announced, first to the candidates, and then to the Faculty at large. The latter announcement should include the date, the committee name, the names and departments of the elected individuals, the total number of Final Ballots received, and the term of service for each elected individual. A copy of this announcement should be sent to the Chair of the FEC for the Committee's archives.
2. In addition, copies of the current election schedule, willingness-to-serve forms, final ballots, and announcements of results should be sent (marked "for your information") to the Dean of the Faculty and the Vice President for Academic Affairs for their records.

E. Record Keeping.

All willingness-to-serve forms, final ballots, announcements of the results, and the tally sheets are retained electronically and in hard copy by the Executive Secretary for a period of three years, after which they are turned over to the Skidmore College archives. The FEC Chair also places these materials in the Committee's archives (see Article XII, below).

VI. APPOINTMENTS AND REPLACEMENTS (Round IV).

A. Round IV, which largely consists of appointments to several standing committees and replacements for faculty entering sabbaticals, leaves or retirement, is typically conducted late in the spring semester, once the Trustees have approved sabbaticals, leaves, and retirements for the upcoming year.² A special election to find sabbatical replacements for certain committees may also be conducted during this round.

B. In the case of appointed committees, FEC circulates Willingness-To-Serve forms to the Faculty via e-mail. Faculty return the forms to FEC, indicating prioritized interest in service on specific committees. Appointments are made from among those willing to serve, balancing factors such as individual interests, diversity of representation on appointed committees, and widespread inclusion of faculty members in committee service.

C. Consultative appointments.

1. In those instances where committee or subcommittee appointments are made by others in consultation with FEC, the following procedure applies:

- a. FEC requests lists of candidates under consideration;
- b. FEC requests a rationale for the recommended appointments;
- c. FEC provides its input as to the appropriateness of the appointments; and
- d. the appointing body retains the right to make the final appointments.

2. In those instances where FEC makes appointments in consultation with other parties, the following procedure applies:

- a. FEC forwards a list of candidates to the appropriate person or body;
- b. FEC provides a rationale for the recommended appointments;
- c. FEC receives input as to the appropriateness of the appointments; and
- d. FEC retains the right to make the final appointments

² A list of all appointed committees appears in Appendix A, Section 2, of this Operating Code.

D. Replacements.

1. When a faculty member of an elective committee needs to be replaced, the replacement should be made after consultation with the committee concerned either by election or by appointment, procedures for which are described below. The consultation should focus on the replacement procedure, not on replacement candidates.

a. A replacement may be elected as follows. A special election is to be held which follows the procedures outlined above under Article V, Sections B-E. In addition to issuing a Willingness-To-Serve form, the FEC member running Round IV should contact runners-up in the previous elections for these committees and ask whether they will be willing to serve.

b. A replacement may be appointed as follows. The replacement should be the individual who received the next highest number of votes to those elected in the most recent election for that committee's membership, unless either that person declines or the appointment of that person would result in an incorrectly-constituted committee according to membership requirements. If necessary, the next highest vote recipient should be considered. This procedure is iterated until either the position is filled or until the list of potential candidates is exhausted. If no potential candidates are available, a special election must be held.

2. Procedure (a) is the usual procedure to follow for replacements lasting longer than a year. However, this guideline may be superseded by FEC if in a specific instance a special election or some other alternative procedure is deemed to be in the best interest of all concerned. Procedure (b) is the usual procedure to follow for replacements of one academic year or less (with the possible exception of replacements on CAPT and CAFR), unless there are no potential candidates to appoint.

3. Newly elected FEC members may be invited to omnibus appointment meetings in the spring.

VII. OVERSIGHT OF THE *FACULTY HANDBOOK*.

A. FEC is charged with overseeing changes in the *Faculty Handbook*. The oversight is done in consultation with the CAPT, CAFR, SGA, and the Administration. The master copy of the *Faculty Handbook* is maintained by the Office of the Dean of the Faculty. The outgoing FEC Chair must submit by June 1 any changes which have come to his/her attention over the course of the year to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Chair of FEC in coordination with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and, where appropriate, the President of SGA revises the *Faculty Handbook* in order to present the *Handbook* at the first fall Faculty Meeting. The revised *Handbook* then must lay over for one month before it is voted on. The *Handbook* becomes official only after the Faculty have adopted the revisions. (*Handbook* Part One, XXI, describes the procedures for amendments).

VIII. COMMITTEE OF COMMITTEES.

A. The Committee of Committees (COC) is convened twice a year, once in the Fall and once in the Spring.

B. The first session, held in early December, permits FEC to discern the state of interactions among member committees and between them and the Administration, and to discuss ongoing issues and any problems in committee operations. As a courtesy, the Chair of FEC writes up the minutes to this first session, omitting names, and sends the minutes to the President and the VPAA. Should the President and/or the VPAA decide that they would like to address issues raised by the COC, a second session will be convened for that purpose in late January. Alternatively, the President and/or the VPAA may chose to prepare a written response to the COC minutes, which will be posted on the FEC web site.

C. The same procedures are followed in the Spring Semester, with the first session taking place ideally in mid April, and the additional session ideally in early May.

D. FEC then writes up an Annual Report of the COC. The Annual Report is read into the minutes of the final Faculty Meeting in mid-May. As a courtesy, the Chair of FEC provides the President and/or the VPAA with a copy of the Report as far in advance of the mid-May Faculty Meeting as possible; the purpose of this advance notice is to afford these administrators the option of preparing a response, to be given after the COC Report is read.

E. The Chair of FEC is responsible for scheduling all COC meetings, and for securing meeting space. The Dean of the Faculty's office traditionally pays for light refreshments at COC meetings.

IX. BOARD OBSERVATION.

A. The six regular members of FEC will act as Observers to the meetings of the Board of Trustees. Where appropriate and necessary, however, the three members of FEC who sit on IPPC may also be asked to serve as Observers.

B. The protocols for Observers are as follows:

1. The Chair of FEC will request a schedule of an upcoming BOT meeting from the President's Office.
2. Observer duties on Board committees will be decided upon by the committee, and the Chair of FEC will send this information to the President's Office.
3. The Chair of FEC will obtain meeting binders when they are ready and make them available to observers.
4. Observers will take copious notes of their sessions and submit them as quickly as possible either to the Chair of FEC or to the member(s) of FEC designated to compile the notes. Confidentiality requirements will be observed by all Observers.
5. FEC will review the compiled notes and send them to the VPAA and/or the President for review with an eye toward accuracy and the operational needs of the College.
6. FEC will carefully consider all suggested emendations, and will accept those that it deems appropriate for the operational needs of the College.
7. The notes will then be published electronically, in password-protected form, for access by the Faculty.

X. FACULTY CAUCUS MEETINGS.

A. FEC calls Faculty Caucus (a.k.a. "faculty-only") meetings either as it deems appropriate (typically once per academic year) or when faculty express a desire to hold a meeting to discuss a pressing issue. The meetings allow faculty to discuss, as a body, issues of concern to the Faculty and enable our committees to gain a sense of the Faculty's opinions. Caucus meetings are run informally, and while those present may, if it is thought necessary, vote on resolutions, the results are not binding on the Faculty.

B. FEC may decide that a Faculty Caucus would profit from the presence of the College's administrators, so that they can hear faculty concerns or, when appropriate, address those concerns. Accordingly, FEC will invite administrators as necessary to attend some portion or all of a Caucus.

C. Minutes, or at least detailed notes, of Faculty Caucuses will be taken, with the scribe protecting speakers' anonymity wherever possible. The Chair of FEC, in consultation with the other members, may publicize minutes or notes as he or she sees fit.

D. The Chair will reserve rooms for Faculty Caucus meetings, and will notify the VPAA and/or the Dean of the Faculty about scheduled meetings.

XI. END OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR TASKS.

A. In March, immediately following spring break, FEC sends a reminder to the committee chairs to do the following:

1. File a written annual report and send a copy to FEC for its records;
2. update their Operating Code and send a copy to FEC for its records;
3. alert FEC to the need for any sabbatical replacement on their committee;
4. remind the faculty committees to select a chair for the following academic year;³ and
5. consult with any student representatives who will be on their committees before scheduling meeting times.

B. In early May new Chair for FEC and a summer liaison for the Committee is selected.

C. In mid-May the Annual Report of the Committee of Committees is read into the minutes of the final Faculty Meeting (see Article VII, Section D, above).

D. In mid-May a list is obtained of all students appointed by SGA to committees, and the administrative assistant to the Dean of the Faculty and chairs of the relevant committees are informed of incoming student members.

E. By June 1 changes to the *Faculty Handbook* made over the course of the year are submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs

E. In June a copy of the FEC Annual Report, along with a list of those faculty elected or appointed to committees during the academic year, is distributed to the Faculty.

F. In June, the FEC archives are updated (see Article XII, below).

XII. ARCHIVING OF COMMITTEE RECORDS

A. In June the outgoing Chair of FEC must place within the Committee's archives the following items from the most recent academic year:

³ Unless constituent committees of the Committee of Committees select a summer liaison to the Administration and inform the FEC of the liaison's identity, the chair-elect of the committee will be the summer liaison.

1. Approved minutes of all FEC-6 and FEC-9 meetings;
2. the results of the prior year's elections and appointments;
3. Board of Trustees Observers' notes;
4. notes from Committee of Committee meetings, written responses to these notes from the Administration, and the Committee of Committees Annual Report;
5. notes from Faculty Caucuses;
6. the FEC Annual Report;
7. the newly revised FEC Operating Code;
8. reports from ad-hoc committees; and
9. any other items deemed by the Chair helpful to future incarnations of FEC.

B. The FEC Archive is a series of electronic folders, ideally accessible on the world wide web, over which Chairs of FEC will have ownership privileges. Although the FEC website may link to materials from the FEC Archive, the website and the archive are considered to be different entities. Chairs should take care to maintain the file structure in an organized and transparent manner.

C. Items stored in the FEC Archive for more than three years should be turned over to the Skidmore College Archives for permanent storage. NOTE: This does not necessarily mean that the items in question should be removed from the FEC Archive. In fact, Chairs are encouraged to retain records from previous years for as long as is possible and practical.

APPENDIX A: FACULTY, ALL-COLLEGE, AND SGA COMMITTEES

1. Elected:

- Athletic Council
- Committee on Academic Freedom & Rights (CAFR)
- Committee on Appointments, Promotions, & Tenure (CAPT)
- Committee on Educational Policies & Planning (CEPP)
- Curriculum Committee
- External Master of Arts Committee (EMAC)
- Faculty Development Committee (FDC)
- Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)
- Honors Council
- Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC)
- Tenure Review Board (TRB)
- University Without Walls Committee (UWWC)

2. Appointed:

- Board of Appeals
- Committee on Academic Standing (CAS)
- Honor Code Commission
- Information Resource Council (IRC)
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACU)
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- Integrity Board (IB)
- Safety in the Workplace Committee

APPENDIX B. NORMAL SCHEDULE OF ELECTIONS (to be updated annually).

1. Round One

- Committee on Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure (CAPT)
- Faculty Development Committee (FDC)
- Honors Council (HC)
- Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC)

2. Round Two

- Athletic Council (AC)
- Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP)
- Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)
- University Without Walls Committee (UWWC)

3. Round Three

- Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR)
- Curriculum Committee (CC)
- External Master of Arts Committee (EMAC)

- Tenure Review Board (TRB)
4. Round Four
- Appointed committees
 - Replacements for sabbatical leaves (appointed or elected)