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College Senate Assessment Overview

- Fulton-Montgomery Community College (FM) is guided by a “culture of assessment,” and in accordance with such a culture there exists an evolving Senate Assessment Plan that the Senate Chair, in direct conjunction with the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) and more indirect conjunction with Senators, is to follow the Senate Assessment Plan lays out a timeline for assessing its various charges as informed by the [charges highlighted](#) from College’s [Strategic Plan](#)
 - Each year, a different charge is assessed.

2021-2022 Senate Assessment Overview

- As detailed in the [2020-2025 College Senate Assessment Plan](#), the charge for the 2021-2022 academic year is to “review and recommend college and academic policies.”
 - While this charge is connected specifically to the Goal # 1 in the Campus Strategic Plan in place during the 2021-2022 (Improve Student Success and Retention), policies can inform and be informed by all of FM’s Strategic Goals.
 - Assessment measures related to this charge are specifically grounded in and generated by a Senate-approved [Senate Committee Assessment Rubric](#) and [Senate Assessment Rubric](#).
 - Assessment outcomes of the charge are gleaned via identifying and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data at both committee and Senate levels, including:
 - Appropriateness of the scope of policies reviewed and recommend
 - Effectiveness of internal processes and procedures for review and recommendation of policies
 - Effectiveness of external processes and procedure and for review and recommendation of policies
 - Review and analysis of Senate assessment conclusions and suggestions spanning the previous assessment cycle (2016-2022)

Actions

- The process for conducting assessment of the given charge include the following:
 - Identification, clarification, and discussion of the charge at the [October 2021](#) and [November 2021](#) Senate meeting
 - Creation of the [Senate Committee Assessment Rubric](#) by the Senate Executive Committee (SEC), which was brought to the [December 2021](#) Senate meeting and subsequently presented to Senators’ constituents for review and discussion
 - Creation of the Senate Assessment Rubric by the SEC, which was brought to the [February 2022](#) Senate meeting and subsequently presented to Senators’ constituents for review and discussion.
 - During the summer of 2022 the Senate Chair began construction of this assessment report via available data from the past assessment cycle, including the 2021-2022 academic year as guided by the related [Senate Assessment Rubric](#).
 - Senate Committee assessment reports, as guided by the [Senate Committee Assessment Rubric](#) were submitted to the Senate Chair by September 2022, which were required for the Senate Chair to complete the Senate Assessment report.

- A motion to approve the Assessment report was made at the September 2022 Senate meeting, after which discussion and input from their constituents were afforded.
- The report was approved at the October 2022 Senate meeting and subsequently turned over to the Assessment Committee.

Observations

- This report is the first assessment of the charge as currently worded, as it was changed from “review and recommend non-academic policies” to “review and recommend college and academic policies” ([2017 March Senate Meeting](#)). This change impacts, to some extent, the relevancy of the [last assessment of the charge as it was worded](#) to the revised charge.
- The Senate’s procedure for determining what policies require review and recommendation is straightforward: committees bring policies to the Senate for motioning and discussion, and then they are voted on the following Senate meeting, unless deferred or tabled for further discussion or clarification. The time it takes for policies brought to the Senate to be voted upon is almost, therefore, always is two months, which corresponds with the College’s shared governance procedure to vote on non-curricular motions the month following their introduction to the Senate. This process affords constituency groups opportunity to review and offer input regarding such policies that, in turn, helps their respective Senators vote in line with constituents’ sentiment.
 - In almost every instance policy was voted upon and approved the month after brought to the Senate, and when there was discussion (which was infrequent), it revolved around clarification of a policy versus debate about it. With this, it seems the process for determining what policies require review and recommendation is effective.
 - The inclusively representative composition of FM’s shared governance system, along with the required one-month deferral of Senate voting to afford all constituent groups opportunity to further review and make recommendations regarding policy assures all concerned constituent groups are adequately represented.
- Discussions regarding the charge at Senate meetings indicated some uncertainty about the nature and applicability of it in relation to some Senate Committees because they tend to not review or recommend policies.
 - It was noted that this charge might not directly or substantively apply to every committee, for Policy Committee is, as expected, is from where most policies are initially reviewed and recommended that are brought to the Senate for broader review and recommendation.
 - While committee assessment reports verify the above observation, it is also evident that all committees, to varying degrees of specificity, directness, and extent, address the charge (see the Senate Committee Reports for specific data).
 - The committee reports also verify this observation because they often addressed issues not pertaining to the charge, likely due to chairs wanting to submit a report more substantive than what would be submitted if only focusing on the specific charge.
- Source and number of policies brought to the Senate for review and recommendation from committees since last assessment of the charge (see the [Senate Tracking Sheet](#) for specific dates of initiation and Senate approval of policies):

- Assessment Committee: 0
- Curriculum Committee: 2
- Institutional Advancement Committee: 0
- Policy Committee: 24
- Safety Committee: 0
- Senate Executive Committee (Previously Senate Structure Committee): 7
- Student Life Committee: 0
 - These numbers bear out that for most committees, the assessed charge does not pertain to their committee charge
 - A few of the policies brought by committees other than Policy could be cast as procedures, so one could argue they do not belong in this assessment, which, if the case, even further illustrates how most committees do not directly review or recommend policy.
- The time it takes for policies requiring approval from the Board of Trustees (BoT) after Senate approval varies, ranging from as little as one month to as long as seven months, with the average duration being between three months see BoT [agendas, minutes, and motions](#).
 - Often, longer durations for policy approval derive from the requirement for campus-wide votes if an *Articles of Governance* change, policies introduced right before winter or summer breaks, when holidays and vacations can disrupt expedient voting, or lingering matters the BoT must address first.
- A number of policies were never brought to the College Senate but were instead initiated, motioned, and voted upon exclusively by Leadership and the BoT. Some of these instances related those mandated by SUNY, some due to COVID disruption, but many, possibly most, did not fall into such categories.
 - There has been discussion in the Senate about this issue, specifically about why this occurs, the significance of such bypass for the efficacy and viability of shared governance, and what measures, if any, can be employed to thwart bypasses that connect to shared governance.
- The process and timeliness of approval by Leadership and the BoT after Senate approval appears to be generally effective, but there are some issues related to what that could require address.

Notable Previous Assessment-Cycle Data and Actions

- As noted in the [2015-2016 Assessment Report](#) related to this charge, Policy, understandably, continues to bring a majority of policy items and motions.

Actions Taken *via* Previous Assessment of the Charge

- The charge was changed from “review and recommend non-academic policies” to “review and recommend college and academic policies” ([2017 March Senate Meeting](#)).
- The Senate Activity Tracking Sheet continues to be an important instrument to record College Senate activity on motions and recommendations, but a formal motion to codify its use, as recommended in the past assessment, has still yet to be made.

Unaddressed Action Items from Previous Assessment

- The Senate should consider a formal motion recommending the College Senate Activity sheet, or other instrument to be determined, as the formal record of College Senate activity on motions and recommendations
- The model established in proscribed duties of the College Senate Vice-Chair to serve as a mentor to new members of the College Senate has yet to be employed to orient new committee and Senate members of committee's and the Senates past actions, charges and methods of practice.
- A procedure to manifest clearer communication between the Senate and Leadership/BoT regarding the status of policies moving from the Senate for consideration should be established.
- Discussion regarding the viability of this year's charge as a stand-alone assessment area should be initiated, as most committees do not review or recommend policy, so this charge could potentially be combined with another, which, in turn, would allow for the assessment cycle to complete earlier or to add another assessment charge, if needed/appropriate.

College Senate Committee Assessments 2020-2021

[Assessment Committee](#)

[Curriculum Committee](#)

[Institutional Advancement Committee](#)

[Policy Committee](#)

[Safety Committee](#)

[Student Life Committee](#)