

Advocacy Working Group Terms of Reference -FINAL DRAFT-

Mandate/Purpose

The Advocacy Working Group shall act as a subcommittee of the COFA Senior Board. Its purpose is to

1. Advise and lobby the Students' Union on matters related to faculty-level advocacy and student-friendly faculty good governance
2. Advise the Students' Union on matters related to quality of instruction, academic assessment, accreditation, and other matters that affect the overall quality of the undergraduate experience at the University.
3. Act as a forum for collaboration on matters related to the promotion of student-friendly good governance and collegiality in University and faculty governance.

Powers/Duties

1. The "Advocacy Working Group" shall
 - a. Provide advice to the Students' Union with respect to
 - i. Support provided by the Students' Union to enhance the ability of student representatives to adequately represent their constituents to faculty decision-making bodies
 - ii. Proposed changes to University policies and procedures that have an impact on the academic experiences of undergraduates.
 - iii. Proposed changes to those sections of SU Bylaw that have a direct impact on student faculty associations in other Students' Union Bylaw including 3000, 5600, or 8100.
 - iv. Matters of interest to the members of the Working Group" and/or their constituents with respect to University-sponsored initiatives, University governance, accreditation, and the University budget.
 - b. Provide formal recommendations to the Students' Union via the Senior Board with respect to
 - i. Any item presented to the Working Group for advice
 - ii. Any matter where a request for formal recommendation has been made either by the Senior Board or the Students' Union Vice President (Academic)

- iii. Any matter of interest to the members of the Working Group and/or their constituents with respect to University-sponsored initiatives, University governance, accreditation, and the University budget where the Working Group feels that a formal recommendation is appropriate.
 - c. Formal recommendations
 - i. May be issued as reports, joint statements, letters, or any other method of communication that the Working Group deems appropriate.
 - ii. Will be made by simple majority vote
 - iii. Need only be signed by the members that voted in favour of the recommendation
 - d. Hear presentations from individual student faculty associations on issues related to the quality of the undergraduate experience that may be of shared interest.
2. The Advocacy Working Group may hear presentations from the University community provided that
 - a. The presentation is germane to the mandate of the Working Group
 - b. The presentation was submitted for consideration at least two (2) business days prior to the meeting
 - c. The presentation submission included a title, brief description, and contact information for the person acting as the liaison between the Working Group and the presenters
 - d. The presentation does not exceed twenty (20) minutes in length excluding time for questions and discussion.

Membership

1. Each faculty association will have one (1) vote on the Working Group.
2. A maximum of three (3) members can attend on behalf of each faculty association.
 - a. Members are expected to be familiar with their faculty association's operations as they relate to external communications, academic affairs, faculty relations, external relations, advocacy, publicity, and/or university governance
 - b. Representatives of each faculty association will be appointed by whatever method each faculty association deems suitable, and by submitting the name and contact information in writing to the Students' Union Vice President Academic by September 30 of each year.
3. The Students' Union Vice President (Academic) will be a non-voting ex-officio member.

4. The Students' Union Student Governance Officer will be a non-voting ex-officio member.
5. The Finance and Administration Working Group may appoint other non-voting members as it sees fit.
 - a. The term of non-voting members appointed under (6) will expire on April 30.
6. The Students' Union Vice President (Academic), in conjunction with the Students' Union Student Governance Officer and the meeting facilitator will be responsible for the administrative needs of the Working Group including setting the time and place of meetings, booking space, and creating and disseminating agendas.
7. The responsibility for facilitation of meetings will rotate amongst the members of the Working Group.
 - a. Either voting or non-voting members of the Working Group may serve as meeting facilitators.
 - b. Members may facilitate as few as none or as many as all of the meetings of the Working Group in a given year.
 - c. Members may co-facilitate meetings, provided both facilitators agree in advance to do so.

Meetings

1. The Advocacy Working Group is expected to be advisory and collaborative. As such, it is expected that meetings will be conducted informally, with a view to fostering dialogue and active participation from all members. All members share responsibility for ensuring that the meetings of the Working Group are inclusive, empowering and productive experiences.
2. Meetings will be facilitated using whatever method the facilitator deems appropriate.
3. Regular meetings of the Advocacy Working Group will be held once every two (2) months in the Fall term and Winter terms.
4. Additional meetings may be called
 - a. At the request of no fewer than three (3) student faculty associations, provided that a request in writing is provided to the Students' Union at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the proposed date and notice of at least seven (7) calendar days is given to all members of the Working Group.
 - b. At the call of the Students' Union, provided that notice of at least seven (7) calendar days is given to all members of the Working Group.
5. Quorum of the Advocacy Working Group will be four (4) student faculty associations.

- a. If the Advocacy Working Group fails to achieve quorum, the members present may choose to continue with the items on the agenda that are relevant to professional development, provided that the Working Group takes no substantive decisions in the absence of quorum.
6. Except as otherwise stated in these terms of reference, motions require a majority vote of a quorate meeting to pass.