MISSION STATEMENT: ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE, UT DALLAS

The Regents Rules of The University of Texas recognize the traditional areas of faculty concern and provide a sound basis for an effective system of faculty governance, in which the faculty has primary responsibility for curricular and academic policies and procedures and the administration has primary responsibility for the institution’s financial and fiscal soundness and integrity.

The following excerpt from the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System (hereafter referred to as the Regents' Rules and Regulations), Series 40101, defines the Faculty Role in Educational Policy Formulation as follows:

Sec. 3  General Authority. Subject to the authority of the Board of Regents and subject further to the authority that the Board has vested in the various administrative officers and subdivisions of the System, the faculties of the institutions regularly offering instruction shall have a major role in the governance of their respective institutions in the following areas:

3.1 General academic policies and welfare.
3.2 Student life and activities.
3.3 Requirements of admission and graduation.
3.4 Honors and scholastic performance.
3.5 Approval of candidates for degrees.
3.6 Faculty rules of procedure.

The governance system at the University of Texas at Dallas is designed to carry out this responsibility. The central idea of the UTD governance system is that the Academic Senate is the principal policy making body, subject to review by the General Faculty. The Committees of the Academic Senate are executive committees. They are not simply advisory. Each committee has assigned a Responsible University Official (RUO). The RUO is an administrator whose area of responsibility is most closely aligned with the area of responsibility of the Committee. The RUO is subject to a general charge that they are to regard the advice of the Committee as the advice of the Senate, while the Committees are subject to the general charge that their advice and recommendations shall be consistent with the general policies of the Senate. If there is dispute regarding whether this advice is consistent with Senate policy, the Committee is further charged to bring this to the attention of the Senate, while the RUOs are further charged to bring this to the attention of their administrative superiors, for resolution in the Senate.

Relations between Committees and RUOs are defined in a Memorandum of Understanding passed by the Senate and accepted by President Franklyn Jennifer on October 17, 2001.

The Memorandum of Understanding is attached.
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
ON DUTIES OF RUOs ON SENATE AND UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

The Academic Senate of The University of Texas at Dallas and the President of The University of Texas at Dallas hereby agree to the following regarding the duties of Chairs and Responsible University Officials on Committees of the Academic Senate:

The general agreement of the Senate and Administration is that Responsible University Officials will be the administrative official or officials whose area of responsibility most closely accords with the area of responsibility of the Committee. Responsible University Officials shall regard interpretations of academic policy or recommendations by the Committees as the views of the Academic Senate and shall act upon them provided that such interpretations or recommendations are consistent with their budgetary responsibilities, standing law and other University policy.

If the interpretation or recommendation in question does not directly pertain to the Responsible University Official of record, that Responsible University Official will assist the committee in identifying the administrative officer that it does concern and in providing the committee with information on whether the necessary follow-up action is being carried out.

If in the view of the Responsible University Official there is a conflict between what the interpretation or recommendation of the committee requires and their budgetary responsibilities, standing law, or University policy, they are at liberty to seek guidance from their appropriate administrative superior, whereby it may ultimately come to Council and/or Senate for discussion. In a similar manner, if the Committee is not satisfied with the action of the Responsible University Official or otherwise considers the position of the Responsible University Official to be inconsistent with standing academic policy or good academic practice, the Chair is at liberty to refer the issue to Speaker, who may bring it for discussion to the Council and/or Senate.