

Public work of the Senate of the FAS and SEAS

A central tenet in the FAS-SEAS Senate (FASS or Senate) is that work occurs through collaboration and consensus generation using the following processes and policies to create several documents.

Committee Reports

Description Committees and their leadership are established by the Chair in the Fall of each academic year. A committee may consider an issue that requires an in-depth report (see examples [here](#)), which include descriptions of the background on the issue, administrative responses thus far, and suggestions from the Committee. In some cases, reports may include data acquisition and analysis.

Process Committee reports are submitted to the Executive Committee (EC) for feedback and discussion. Committee chair(s) should communicate suggestions of the EC to the committee and consider improving the report accordingly. Once a revised draft is ready, the EC determines when a report should be added to the full Senate agenda for deliberation and discussion per Senate bylaws. Reports are typically revised multiple times before approval by a majority vote of the FAASS.

Approval and Communication A report should not be communicated outside of the Senate until it is approved by a majority vote of the full Senate. The final report is published on the FAASS website and emailed to the appropriate individuals by the Chair of the Senate.

Resolutions of the Senate

Description Resolutions express the Senate's opinion on a particular University matter (see example [here](#)).

Process Committees or individual senators may propose a resolution to the Executive Committee, who will discuss and provide feedback to the senator or committee. The EC will then schedule the proposed resolution for deliberation and possible approval at a full Senate meeting per Senate bylaws.

Approval and Communication A resolution of the Senate should be approved by the full Senate by majority vote. The final resolution is published on the FAASS website and emailed to the appropriate individuals by the Chair of the Senate.

Statements of the Senate/Chair

Description The Senate Chair may send statements to the faculty on a particular issue or to communicate updates on Senate work to the faculty. The Chair may invite additional EC members or Senators to add their name to a statement. Statements should be related to our work as educators and mentors, concern issues that impact the FAS community

(e.g., we should support marginalized groups where needed), represent a likely consensus among Yale FAS faculty, and be simple enough that research is not needed.

Policy: Confidential nature of Senate work

Senators are elected by a broad and diverse faculty and our work should represent our constituencies. Furthermore, our mission of shared governance with Yale's administration requires excellence, sound judgement, and thoughtful communication that represents the faculty and respects the relationship of the Senate with the administration. Senators and the senate as a whole have a dual responsibility. First, we should be transparent about our processes and outcomes. We must provide all materials produced in the senate to our constituents. But this only applies to finished materials and completed project, where the Senate has formed a consensus. In the process of forming opinions, researching topics, and coming to conclusions, sensitive topics are often discussed. Reports pass through debates with multiple positions, in which new information has to be taken into account. To protect this vital process, the written documents should remain confidential until final full Senate approval. In the interim, Senators can consult verbally with fellow faculty. In addition, drafts of non-approved reports clearly marked as confidential may be shared with former Senators, with the usual expectations of confidentiality. Senators can of course discuss anything with anyone (simple freedom of speech), including any matters still under discussion by the Senate, provided they identify their comments as their own personal opinions rather than a representation of the Senate view. Finally, only the Senate Chair will communicate the final version of a report or resolution to the appropriate person in the administration.

In rare cases in which written Senate work in whole or in part should be communicated with the Yale administration prior to final approval from the full Senate, the draft must be approved by the Executive Committee before the Senate Chair communicates the written communication with the appropriate Yale administrator.