Public Work of the Senate of the FAS and SEAS
Approved by FAS-SEAS Senate on October 13, 2022

Collaboration and consensus generation are central tenets of the work of the FAS-SEAS Senate (hereafter simply Senate). The following processes / policies serve to guide the Senate toward generation of various work products, including Committee Reports, Resolutions, and Statements.

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 requiring an in-depth Report (see examples [here](#)), which includes a background description, a list of 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. The Committee Chair(s) communicate(s) any suggestions of the EC back to the Committee, and consider(s) improving the Report accordingly. The EC determines when a Report may 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 FASS.

*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 (see below under Policy). Approved Reports are published on the Senate website and emailed to 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 EC, who then discuss and provide feedback to the Senator or Committee. The EC schedules a deliberation and vote on the Resolution 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 Senate website and emailed to the appropriate individuals by the Chair of the Senate.

Statements of the Senate/Chair

*Description* The Senate Chair may communicate to the FAS-SEAS faculty Statements on a particular issue and/or recent Senate activities. The Chair may invite additional EC
members or Senators to sign the Statement. Statements should relate to the Senate’s work as educators and mentors, concern issues of impact to the FAS-SEAS community (e.g. support for marginalized groups), represent a likely consensus among FAS-SEAS faculty, and require little research.

**Policy: Confidential nature of Senate work**

The FAS-SEAS Senate is elected by a broad and diverse faculty body, and its work should represent these constituents. Furthermore, its mission of shared governance requires excellence, sound judgement, and thoughtful communication that respects the Senate-Administration relationship. Senators, and the Senate as a whole, have a dual responsibility. First, the Senate should be open and transparent about topics being addressed, processes, and outcomes. Senators are of course free to communicate with fellow faculty members regarding Senate activities, and to express their opinions. The Senate must eventually make all completed work products available to its constituents. The key word here is *completed*. In the process of forming opinions, researching topics, and coming to conclusions, sensitive issues are often discussed. Work products evolve over numerous debates, where multiple positions are expressed and where information becomes increasingly available. To protect this vital process, and to insure to the greatest extent possible free and open debate, the Senate’s second responsibility is to keep written documents confidential until approved by the full Senate. (As an exception, drafts of non-approved documents clearly marked as “confidential” may be shared with former Senators.) The Senate Chair bears the sole responsibility of communicating approved work products to the appropriate person in the administration.

In rare cases where Senate work in whole or in part is to be communicated to the Yale administration prior to final approval from the full Senate, the draft must be approved by the EC and the Senate must be informed before the Senate Chair communicates the work with the appropriate Yale administrator.