

SCHOOL COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE



PURPOSE:

The School Council is:

- the first level of academic governance where the expertise of faculty can be applied to the formulation and delivery of quality academic programs and to the formulation of academic policy.
- responsible for making recommendations regarding:
 - new programs and curricula
 - changes in programs and curricula
 - admission and graduation requirements
 - grading and assessment guidelines
 - hiring criteria for academic staff
- responsible for providing input into decisions concerning efficient and effective allocation of resources
- responsible for recommending, defining, and supporting scholarly activity within the School in accordance with the policy Scholarly Activity at Red Deer College

The School Council:

- ensures students are at the center of all the activities of the School ;
- ensures alignment with the Red Deer College Strategic, Academic and Comprehensive Institutional Plans;
- provides input to the formulation of the strategic objectives of the School.

MANDATE:

The Vice President Academic (VPA) is responsible for the planning, management, supervision, and accountability of the Academic Portfolio. The VPA reports directly to the President.

Deans are responsible to the VPA for planning, management, supervision, and accountability within their School. Each Dean is required by the VPA to establish a School Council. Every School with credit programs will have a School Council with the exception of the School of Continuing Education.

In carrying out his/her mandate, the Dean requires the School Council to provide recommendations regarding program, curriculum, student admission and graduation, grading and assessment guidelines, and hiring criteria of academic staff in all credit programs.

Through its Curriculum Committee, Academic Council requires that recommendations for programs, curriculum, and student admission, grading and assessment guidelines, and graduation requirements be recommended by the School Council before they are considered by Academic Council.

The School Council Terms of Reference must be approved by Deans' Council.

The School Council, led by the Dean, is engaged to support the following activities and have appropriately identified levels of authority granted as follows below.

1. Planning

- A. Recommending authority to the Dean for implementing structures and processes (e.g. committees, task groups) within the School, subject to College policy, to address the overall work of the School
- B. Recommending authority to the Dean regarding the definition of scholarly activity for the School, in accordance with the policy Scholarly Activity at Red Deer College
- C. Recommending authority to the Dean for the support of scholarly activity as defined by the School and in accordance with the policy Scholarly Activity at Red Deer College
- D. Advising authority to the Dean for the School Annual Operating Plans
- E. Advising authority to the Dean for planning related to the academic portfolio including the Academic Plan and the Comprehensive Institutional Plan
- F. Advising authority to the Dean in the formulation of other College-wide plans

2. Coordination

- A. Advising authority to the Dean in assuring alignment of faculty and program activities within the School with the College Strategic Plan and the annual enrolment plan
- B. Advising authority to the Dean in the formulation and application of policies and regulations in other Schools and Divisions that impact faculty, non-instructional staff, and students.

3. Policy Formation

Advising authority to Academic Council through its Academic Policy Committee in the formulation of academic and student policy.

4. Communication

- A. Advising authority to the Dean in establishing communication plans within the School.
- B. Advising authority to the Dean in the establishment of external communication plans.

5. Program Decisions

- A. Principal authority for the structure and processes for gathering input from program, department, and respective stakeholders
- B. Recommending authority to Academic Council through its Curriculum Committee and to Deans' Council regarding:
 - i. new programs
 - ii. major changes in existing programs
 - iii. new curricula
 - iv. major changes in curricula
 - v. major changes in student admission and graduation requirements.
- C. Recommending authority to the Dean regarding the hiring criteria for academic staff.

6. Forum for Input and Response

- A. Advising authority through the Dean to non-academic areas in all matters related to students and employees within the School
- B. Advising authority through the Dean on any matter as requested by the President, Senior Administration, the VPA, Deans' Council, or the Dean

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COMMITTEES:

- Academic Policy Committee (of Academic Council): The School Council may provide advice to this Committee when requested by the Committee or the Dean.
- Curriculum Committee (of Academic Council): The School Council may make recommendations to Academic Council through the Curriculum Committee.
- Program and Service Review Advisory Committee: The School Council will consider the annual data provided by this Committee. The School Council will formulate plans when asked to do so either by the Committee or by the Dean or Associate Dean.
- Deans' Council: The School Council may advise on the annual financial and operating plans through the Dean. Deans' Council may ask the School Council, through the Dean, for advice on any matter associated with academic governance.
- Program and Stakeholder Advisory Committees: The School Council will receive recommendations from program advisory committees or stakeholder advisory committees (where in place) as part of the planning process for the School.

COMPOSITION:

1. Members of the School Council:
 - a. Dean
 - b. Associate Dean(s)
 - c. All faculty in the School
 - i. Sessional and part-time faculty hold membership within the term of their contracts
 - ii. Faculty must always constitute a minimum of 50% of the School Council membership
 - d. Non-instructional staff as appointed by the Dean
 - e. Students registered in programs delivered by the School
 - i. Appointed to the School Council by the Dean for a period of one academic year
 - ii. Membership is limited to the duration of active registration in a School program
2. All members of the School Council are voting members.
3. Proxy voting is not permitted.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

The School Council is accountable to the Dean.

RESPONSIBILITY:

The Dean of the School is administratively responsible for the operation of the School Council including issuing agendas, record keeping, and communication.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT:

The Dean of the School provides administrative support to the School Council.

OPERATING PROCEDURES:

The School Council:

- Must meet at least three times per year.
- May conduct in-meeting or electronic votes as determined by the Dean.
- May request information from any group or individual in the College.
- May request people to attend.

- May strike sub committees and/or working groups and may appoint members outside the School Council to sit on these.
- May invite guests to its regular meetings.
- Is normally chaired by the Dean, or in the Dean's absence, an Associate Dean.
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Agendas:

- Are set by the Dean in consultation with the School Council.

Quorum:

- Is achieved when the Dean and/or Associate Dean, and one-third of the full-time faculty, are present.
 - Full-time faculty is defined to include: Probationary, Conditional Probationary, Continuous, Conditional Continuous, Sessional and Replacement Sessional Members.

*** Levels of Authority for Decision Making:**

Decision authority: The right to make a decision or create a policy without consultation with other individuals or groups.

Principal authority: The right to make a decision or create a policy with input and recommendations from other groups or individuals; such input may be accepted or rejected. Principal authority allows for the right to make decisions and create policy which is forwarded to another body for action or recommendations. Decisions or policies may be forwarded to another group or individual for approval where such approval would not be unreasonably denied. Principal authority also permits policy creation within the guidelines established by another group or individual. Finally, principal authority accommodates decision-making or policy creation within the parameters set by another body.

Shared authority: Authority to make decisions or create policy that is delegated equally to two or more groups or individuals where all parties are required to approve the decision or policy.

Recommending authority: The right to make recommendations for approval by another group or individual, where the final decision may approve, reject, or amend the recommendations. Recommending authority specifies the requirement that the recommendations be received by the decision making group or individual before a final decision is made.

Advising authority: The right to provide advice on a decision or policy created by another group or individual. The final decision may include or reject the advice provided. The group or individual making the decision in this case would be considered the principal authority.