

1.0 Mission and Governance of the University

1.1 Mission of the University

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) is a public land-grant university serving the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation, and the world community. The discovery and dissemination of new knowledge are central to its mission. Through its focus on teaching and learning, research and discovery, and outreach and engagement, the university creates, conveys, and applies knowledge to extend personal growth and opportunity, advance social and community development, foster economic competitiveness, and improve the quality of life.

1.2 Governance of the University

This section covers the structure of the university governance system. The board of visitors is the primary governing body of the university. The board appoints the president of the university, who serves as the chief executive. The president may delegate authority to the senior vice president and provost and vice presidents.

1.3 Board of Visitors

By statute of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the governing body of the university is the board of visitors, which exists as a corporation under the control of the Virginia General Assembly. The board is composed of 13 members appointed by the governor—subject to confirmation by the senate—and the president of the Virginia Board of Agriculture and Consumer Services, who is an *ex-officio* member. In addition, the board appoints two non-voting student representatives (one undergraduate; one graduate) who serve for a one-year term and attend open sessions. Board members appointed by the governor serve for overlapping four-year terms. The current membership of the board of visitors and its by-laws are available on the Virginia Tech website at www.bov.vt.edu. A rector and vice-rector are elected annually by the membership, and the board appoints a secretary annually. The president of the Faculty Senate and the president of the Staff Senate sit with the board at all meetings, except those held in closed session, and participate in discussion without authority to vote. By law, the board meets at least once a year, but typically meets quarterly to consider policy matters and to review the progress of the university.

The board of visitors is responsible for institutional policies except those under the direct jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The board's responsibilities are specified by state statute. Responsibilities include, but are not restricted to, the appointment of the university president; appointment, promotion, and granting of tenure; removal of members of the faculty; the prescription of faculty responsibilities; the setting of faculty salaries; the determination of student tuition, fees, other charges; and the government and discipline of students.

The *Faculty Handbook* serves as a compilation of these and other policies related to the general faculty of the university.

1.4 Central Administrative Organization

1.4.1 President

The president, the chief executive officer of the university, is selected by the board of visitors to execute approved policies and to administer the university, and holds office without term, subject to the pleasure of the board. The president is charged with the overall organization and supervision of the university and all of the state agencies, services, and regulatory activities, which have been placed under the president's supervision by the board of visitors. The president serves as the authorized officer through whom communication takes place between the board and the faculty, the board and the students, and the board and the other officers of administration or instruction employed by the university.

University officers who report to the president include the senior vice president and provost, vice president for administrative services, vice president for alumni relations, vice president for development and university relations, vice president for finance and chief financial officer, vice president for equity and inclusion, vice president and chief information officer for information technology, university legal counsel, university treasurer and chief operating officer of the Virginia Tech Foundation, the chief of staff to the president, the executive director of governmental relations, and the director of intercollegiate athletics.

The directors and executive officers of the individual agencies, services, and regulatory activities report directly to the vice president under whom the president has placed each organization.

1.4.2 Senior Vice President and Provost

The senior vice president and provost, who serves as the university's chief executive officer in the president's absence, assists the president in the administration, coordination, and development of learning, discovery, and engagement programs. Reporting to this officer are the college deans, dean of University Libraries, dean of Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, vice president and dean for undergraduate education, vice president and dean for graduate education, vice president for outreach and international affairs, vice president for research, vice president and executive director of the national capital region, vice president for student affairs, and the associate provosts.

Other offices reporting directly to the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost include: Academic Assessment, Center for Academic Enrichment and Excellence, Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, Center for Survey Research, Honors Program, Institute for Distance and Distributed Learning, Institutional Research and Effectiveness, McNair Scholars Program, Multicultural Academic Opportunities Program, Office of University Summer Sessions, Scholarships and Financial Aid, Southern Association of Schools and Colleges Accreditation, Student Athlete Academic Support Services, Undergraduate Admissions, Undergraduate Honor System, Undergraduate Programs, University Academic Advising Center, University Registrar, University Studies, and the Women's Center.

In addition, the senior vice president and provost is responsible for maintaining the university's relations with the academic program function of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV).

1.4.3 Vice President for Administrative Services

Reporting to the president, the vice president for administrative services provides administrative support services to the university's four strategic pillars (research and scholarship, graduate education, undergraduate education, and outreach). The vice president ensures proper management of the university's physical assets; planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operation of the physical plant; management of real estate activities; compliance with governmental, environmental, health, and safety regulations; and assures a safe and supportive campus environment. The vice president also provides direction to human resource functions of the university.

The vice president for administrative services oversees the operational departments of emergency management, environmental health and safety services, facilities, human resources, police, real estate management, and the university architect.

In addition, the vice president represents Virginia Tech with peer institutions, the local community, federal and state agencies, and corporate representatives to assist the university in meeting long-range objectives and emerging demands. The vice president also represents the university by participating as a member of related community/organization committees and boards.

1.4.4 Vice President for Alumni Relations

The vice president for alumni relations oversees the operation of alumni programs and activities. This officer serves as secretary-treasurer of the Virginia Tech Alumni Association; coordinates committees and activities of the alumni board of directors; guides strategic planning and budgeting of alumni programs and services; and shapes the communication program that promotes alumni programs and alumni support of the university.

The Alumni Association has numerous programs and activities designed to promote Virginia Tech to alumni and friends of the university, enhance financial support, and encourage alumni involvement. Among the most prominent programs of the Alumni Association are its network of alumni chapters, class reunions and academic college homecomings, special programs and seminars, legislative advocacy, career services support, professorship and scholarship programs, and a merchandising/group tours program. The Alumni Relations staff maintains records on the university's alumni and receives university internal requests for approved mailings to alumni.

Reporting to this vice president are the associate vice presidents for alumni relations and the director of the Office of Recovery and Support.

1.4.5 Vice President for Development and University Relations

The vice president for development and university relations is responsible for the development and maintenance of effective relationships with the university's various constituencies. This officer secures resources that enhance the academic quality of the institution; promotes public understanding and support for Virginia Tech; enhances the perception and knowledge of the university's programs and

accomplishments; and creates a positive public impression of the university and its faculty, staff, students, and programs.

Reporting directly to the vice president are the associate vice presidents for development, advancement services, and university relations, as well as the campaign director. The vice president works closely with the Virginia Tech Foundation, the Alumni Association, and the Virginia Tech Athletic Fund to focus on overall advancement of the university.

This officer also serves as one of the two executive vice presidents of the Virginia Tech Foundation.

1.4.6 Vice President for Equity and Inclusion

The vice president for equity and inclusion provides leadership for the continuous assessment and improvement of university-wide efforts to create and sustain a more diverse and inclusive community. This senior officer reports directly to the president, and advises university leadership on policies, programs, practices, and resources necessary to achieve inclusive excellence and equity in the learning, discovery, and engagement activities of the university.

The vice president for equity and inclusion works closely with all segments of the university community to embrace and maximize the benefits of a multicultural perspective. The vice president builds the university's capacity for recognizing, respecting, and valuing individual differences and encourages positive interactions between diverse populations. Through various training, assessment, planning, and development activities, the vice president encourages a more consistently welcoming and inclusive climate for people of differing social, cultural, racial, and other identities. In collaboration with individuals and departments, the vice president assists and advocates for those persons with special needs and/or significant cultural differences and those who may have concerns about their experiences at Virginia Tech.

Reporting directly to this vice president are the directors for equity initiatives, compliance and conflict resolution, diversity initiatives, and education for diversity and inclusion.

1.4.7 Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer

The vice president for finance and chief financial officer supports the university leadership by identifying, obtaining, and allocating the resources needed to achieve Virginia Tech's mission and the

goals and objectives of the university's strategic plan. This officer develops innovative solutions to challenging problems by using sound financial management practices and extensive financial planning. The vice president develops and maintains active relationships with key staff in the Commonwealth of Virginia's executive branch and general assembly to ensure a positive and effective working environment for the university. The vice president directs the university accounting processes (including financial and regulatory relationships with state and federal governments); supports the university's internal operations with innovative procurement operations; oversees an identification/debit/security card system known as Hokie passport; and leads in the development of effective business practices, which include financial/business information systems that offer electronic paperless services to the university community.

Reporting directly to this vice president are the assistant vice president for finance, university budget director, university bursar, director of capital assets and financial management, university controller, coordinator of university budget and financial systems, director of Hokie passport, director of internal audit, director of purchasing and surplus property, and director of risk management.

1.4.8 Vice President and Chief Information Officer for Information Technology

The vice president and chief information officer for information technology reports directly to the university president and manages Virginia Tech's information technologies.

Under the vice president's direction, the information technology organization provides and maintains information systems that enhance, support, and advance the university's tripartite mission. The vice president fosters outreach by developing partnerships with communities and promoting the capabilities of advanced networking and communications. As a national leader in building technological resources, the information technology organization supports, preserves, and publicizes the work of Virginia Tech's faculty, staff, and students.

Reporting to this vice president are the associate vice presidents for network infrastructure and services, learning technologies, enterprise systems, and research computing; the directors for administration and planning, secure enterprise technology initiatives, and strategic partnership initiatives; and the information technology security officer.

1.4.9 University Treasurer and Chief Operating Officer of the Virginia Tech Foundation

The university treasurer and chief operating officer of the Virginia Tech Foundation manages the financial assets and debt of the university and its related corporations. This senior officer issues checks against said accounts and serves as the liaison between the university and its related corporations.

University public funds are managed in accordance with state law and investment policy in the name of the university. The Virginia Tech Foundation—through an agency agreement—manages private funds. All financial assets supporting the programs of Virginia Tech are invested and managed in accordance with university goals and objectives. Debt is issued in the name of the university as authorized by the university's board of visitors and the treasury board of the Commonwealth of Virginia and is managed to maintain the university's debt rating of AA by Standard & Poor's and Aa2 by Moody's.

1.5 University Academic Administration

1.5.1 College Deans

The deans of the colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Architecture and Urban Studies, Pamplin College of Business, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Natural Resources, Science, and the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine are responsible for the academic activities of their respective colleges.

These responsibilities include the allocation and administration of resources, appointment and evaluation of faculty and support staff, and curriculum development. The department heads or chairs in each college report directly to their respective deans for all matters related to the programs of the colleges.

The college deans are usually appointed for five-year terms by the senior vice president and provost, and may be reappointed indefinitely following periodic evaluations of their effectiveness in this capacity.

1.5.2 Departmental Administration

The colleges are subdivided into academic departments and/or schools. Departments are under the supervision of department heads, chairs, or school directors, who report to the dean of the college.

Department heads or chairs are responsible for the growth and vigor of the academic programs, for the recruitment of new faculty, and for the administration of the curriculum and the budget of their departments. In certain cases, some of these responsibilities may be delegated to program chairs of specific disciplines.

Department heads or chairs serve for fixed-length terms, specified by the dean. The length of term and procedures for renewal are to be decided by the dean in consultation with departmental faculty, taking into account the periodic review required prior to reappointment. The president or the senior vice president and provost authorizes the appointment. (See policy 6100, "Department Head or Chair Appointments," for specific details and procedures.)

As an integral part of shared governance of the university, faculty committees are formed in departments to make recommendations and otherwise assist the head or chair in curricular modification, in the selection of new faculty, and in the determination and application of policies.

1.5.3 Dean of University Libraries

The dean of University Libraries directs the University Libraries in providing the Virginia Tech community with information collections and services necessary to support the learning, discovery, and engagement programs of the university. The dean allocates and administers resources, and appoints and evaluates faculty and staff in support of University Libraries goals. The dean reports to the senior vice president and provost.

Reporting directly to this dean are the associate dean of administrative and circulation services, and the directors of collection management, digital library and archives, interlibrary loan, research and instructional services, special collections, technical services, and library systems.

1.5.4 Director of Virginia Cooperative Extension

The director of Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) reports to the dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and is responsible for the administration of VCE programs in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and state and local governments, as well as the Cooperative Extension Service of Virginia State University. The director is responsible for the VCE programs in agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H youth development. Since three colleges provide these services, the director administers these programs under the guidance of a committee chaired by the senior vice president and provost. Committee members include the vice president for outreach and international affairs, director of VCE, director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, and deans of the colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Natural Resources, and Veterinary Medicine.

1.5.5 Vice President and Dean for Graduate Education

The vice president and dean for graduate education is responsible for the growth of the graduate school, both in terms of graduate student numbers and in the quality of graduate students and programs of study. The graduate education program currently has over 4,600 graduate students enrolled on campus and an additional 2,400 graduate students enrolled at several extended campus centers in Virginia. The vice president and dean for graduate education reports to the senior vice president and provost.

The vice president and dean for graduate education works in partnership with faculty, program chairs, department heads or chairs, deans, graduate students, and the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies (CGSP) to further graduate education at Virginia Tech. The vice president and dean develops academic policies and procedures; assists in preparing new graduate degree options/programs; implements graduate enrollment management strategies; oversees the graduate admissions process and the progress of graduate students; accepts and approves theses/dissertations; certifies successful completion of graduation requirements; manages tuition remissions and scholarship/fellowship programs; implements the health insurance subsidy program; coordinates university-wide graduate recruitment efforts; coordinates university-wide graduate student orientation and GTA training; assures federally-mandated compliance; and administers the graduate honor system.

Reporting directly to the vice president and dean are the associate deans, and the directors of graduate admissions and academic progress, graduate student recruiting, graduate student services, and international graduate student services.

1.5.6 Vice President and Dean for Undergraduate Education

The vice president and dean for undergraduate education reports to the senior vice president and provost and serves in the senior vice president's absence.

The vice president and dean works closely with college deans and the vice president for student affairs to serve students and faculty. This senior officer provides leadership to enhance the learning environment; oversees enrollment services; coordinates faculty development; directs academic support units; and establishes the vision of a land-grant learning community supported by the university's academic agenda. Units reporting to the vice president and dean are: the Office of Academic Support Services (Center for Academic Enrichment and Excellence, Multicultural Academic Opportunities Program, University Studies/University Academic Advising Center, and Student Athlete Academic Support Services), the Office of Enrollment Management (Undergraduate Admissions, University Registrar, and University Scholarships and Financial Aid), the Office of Distance Learning and Summer Sessions (Institute for Distance and Distributed Learning, University Summer Sessions), and the Office of Undergraduate Education (Academic Assessment, Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, Undergraduate Programs, and University Honors Program.)

The vice president and dean for undergraduate education annually allocates resources to college deans through an enrollment support model to supplement college resources for classroom instruction. Similarly, summer session resources are allocated annually based upon previous summer session instructional performance metrics. The vice president and dean also annually distributes grants to support initiatives that enhance undergraduate student learning.

1.5.7 Vice President and Executive Director of the National Capital Region

The vice president and executive director of the national capital region (NCR) is responsible for assisting the president and the senior vice president and provost in developing and implementing strategic directions for the region. In the national capital region, this vice president coordinates services and operations across multiple locations; enhances the visibility and presence of Virginia Tech and its programs; develops new opportunities for teaching and learning, discovery, and engagement; assists in the development of viable business models for programs; and leverages assets of the region to faculty on the main campus in Blacksburg.

Reporting to this vice president are the deputy director of the NCR region administration; directors of the center for technology, security, and policy, the global issues initiative, the research development

team, and information services; associate directors of outreach program development and research program development; and the manager of public relations and marketing.

1.5.8 Vice President for Research

Working closely with the college deans, the vice president for research provides administrative leadership to support, enhance, and advance the overall discovery mission of the university. This officer reports directly to the senior vice president and provost.

The vice president directs the offices of the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs. The vice president is responsible for fostering quality research and scholarship; providing access to funding information; assisting faculty in securing and managing external funding; enhancing the response to national research priorities and opportunities; encouraging and directing inquiry into new and emerging fields; promoting solutions and advances of basic knowledge in diverse disciplines through interdisciplinary cooperation; ensuring compliance with regulatory policies and ethical research conduct policies; supporting and promoting the research, scholarship, and creative activity of Virginia Tech's faculty, staff, and students; marketing faculty talent and university capabilities; and fostering partnerships with outside agencies and businesses.

The vice president serves as chairman of the board of Virginia Tech Intellectual Properties, Inc. and works with the Virginia Center for Innovative Technology and other agencies to market and commercialize the research results of faculty, staff, and students.

Reporting to this vice president are the associate vice presidents for research, research computing, research compliance, research programs; president of Virginia Tech Intellectual Properties (VTIP); assistant vice president and director of the Office of Sponsored Programs; and directors of the Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science (ICTAS), Fralin Life Science Institute, and Institute for Society, Culture, and Environment; and the senior director of administrative services.

1.5.9 Vice President for Student Affairs

The vice president for student affairs reports directly to the senior vice president and provost, and provides leadership to the university's services and programs in the Division of Student Affairs. The vice president is responsible for promoting students' academic success, personal growth, and life skills development; guiding the success of students from orientation through graduation; creating

environments that support the academic mission of the university and that are welcoming to all; promoting supportive and inclusive communities that contribute to a just and caring university; and offering high quality environments, programs, and services necessary for students to function successfully on campus.

Reporting to this vice president are the directors of career services, campus alcohol abuse prevention center, Cook Counseling Center, Cranwell International Center, fraternity and sorority life, housing and dining services, judicial affairs, multicultural programs and services, recreational sports, residence life, Schiffert Health Center, services for students with disabilities, student activities, and university unions; the commandant of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets; and the dean of students.

1.5.10 Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs

The vice president for outreach and international affairs leads the university's efforts to be fully engaged in society, here and around the world. The vice president is responsible for facilitating the exchange of knowledge that benefits both the university and society and for helping faculty disseminate research results that assist communities, business, non-profit and non-governmental organizations, and governments to solve real world societal and natural resource problems. This senior officer works with communities to address local and global economic development needs; manages U.S. government-funded projects that improve food security and natural resources management around the world; arranges opportunities for students to serve communities and organizations while learning; tracks Virginia Tech's international agreements with institutions abroad; provides visa assistance for the university's international visitors; oversees Virginia Tech centers abroad; explores new ways to leverage university resources for an effective international agenda; and spearheads implementation of the university's international strategic plan. The vice president tailors regional and online graduate and lifelong learning educational opportunities through continuing and professional education programming conducted at The Inn at Virginia Tech, Skelton Conference Center, the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center, and at commonwealth campus centers throughout Virginia.

Reporting to this vice president are the associate vice president for international affairs; directors of outreach program development, the center for organizational and technological advancement, economic development, outreach finance and administration, Reynolds Homestead, extended campus sites in southwest Virginia, Roanoke, Richmond, and Hampton Roads, outreach programs in Southside Virginia and the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR); chair of VT-STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) K-12 outreach; international fellow of the Center for European Studies and Architecture (CESA); and the outreach fellows for transportation and fine arts.

1.6 Governance by Shared Responsibility

There is a wide recognition of the complexity of university governance and general acknowledgment of the need for faculty, staff, and student participation in the conduct of university affairs. The University Council, university commissions, university advisory councils, and university standing committees provide an organizational structure through which faculty, staff, student and administrative responsibilities are shared and fulfilled.

The University Council and university commissions constitute the main resident bodies for policy formulation. Their memberships include representatives from administration, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, college faculty associations, administrative and professional faculty, Graduate Student Assembly, Student Government Association, and representatives from other interest groups where appropriate. The university commissions formulate and recommend policies to the University Council, which in turn makes recommendations to the president of the university. Final authority rests with the president of the university and the board of visitors.

The constitutions and bylaws of the University Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Graduate Student Assembly, and Student Government Association are presented in separate publications. Persons concerned with the governance of the university are encouraged to consult the constitutions and bylaws of these organizations. The constitutions and bylaws of the University Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Graduate Student Assembly may be found on the Virginia Tech website. The constitution and bylaws of the Student Government Association may be obtained from their office. The constitution and bylaws of University Council contain the specific membership lists for University Council, the commissions, and the committees. Also available are lists of the specific persons who hold membership on the various bodies. These lists are updated as the personnel change. The membership lists are maintained by the president's office and are available on the governance website at www.governance.vt.edu.

1.6.1 University Council

The functions of the University Council are to advise the president on matters of university governance; to accept functions and authority delegated to it by the president; and to review and make recommendations on matters of concern to the faculty, staff, students, and administration. Any council member, in accordance with its constitution and bylaws, may place such matters on the University Council agenda. The University Council refers appropriate matters to the commissions, advisory councils, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, groups, or individuals for consideration and recommendation.

1.6.2 Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs

The charge of the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs (CAPFA) is to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures affecting the employment and working conditions of administrative and professional faculty. Areas for consideration include: morale of administrative and professional faculty; procedures for appointing, evaluating, disciplining, recognizing, and promoting administrative and professional faculty; benefits, educational and personal leave, and extra-university professional activity; and matters of equity and diversity that affect the university's professional environment. The commission is also responsible for reviewing grievances advanced to the executive level and to advise the provost or associate vice president for human relations prior to action.

1.6.3 Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

The charge of the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity is to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures as they relate to the university's responsibilities for equal opportunity, affirmative action, accessibility, and compliance; diversity planning and evaluation; diversity training and education; assessment of institutional climate; and similar matters of equity and diversity that affect the university. In collaboration with other university commissions and/or units, the commission will address issues of diversity and equity as they relate to recruitment, retention, and advancement of faculty, staff, and students, particularly those from historically underrepresented groups and from international populations; student life; academic policies and support; curriculum; research, scholarship, and creative activity; and outreach.

1.6.4 Commission on Faculty Affairs

The charge of the Commission on Faculty Affairs is to study, formulate, and recommend to the University Council policies and procedures affecting employment and professional standing of members of the collegiate faculties and library or extension faculty on continued appointment. Areas for consideration include: commencement, academic freedom and faculty morale; procedures for appointing, evaluating, disciplining, recognizing, and promoting faculty—including department heads and chairs; tenure, benefits, academic and personal leave, extra-university professional activity; and matters of equity and diversity that affect the university's professional environment.

1.6.5 Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies

The charge of the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies is to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures concerning on-campus and off-campus graduate academic matters. Areas for consideration include: admissions, academic progress, degree requirements, commencement, registration, scheduling, curricula, courses, advising, instruction, teaching, research, financial assistance (including assistantships, scholarships, fellowships, and tuition), library resources, and other matters affecting the graduate student academic environment.

1.6.6 Commission on Outreach and International Affairs

The charge of the Commission on Outreach and International Affairs is to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures concerning the engagement of the university in service, outreach, and international affairs. Areas for consideration include: Virginia Cooperative Extension; continuing and professional education; economic development—including community resource and leadership development; liaison with affiliated corporations and institutes; international programs; and other matters affecting service, outreach, and international affairs. The Commission on Outreach and International Affairs will liaison with the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies on issues regarding education abroad and international exchange programs.

1.6.7 Commission on Research

The charge of the Commission on Research is to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures concerning research. Areas for consideration include: sponsored programs, core programs, and interdisciplinary research; intellectual properties; animal care and human subjects; indirect costs and overhead; research facilities, centers, and institutes; library resources; liaisons with affiliated corporations and institutes; and other matters that affect research.

1.6.8 Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs

The charge of the Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs is to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures affecting the working conditions of staff and to promote staff participation in the university community. Areas for consideration include: staff morale;

evaluation; communication with supervisors; recognition and career development; staff relations with administrators, faculty, and students; benefits and personal leave; extra-university professional activity; matters of equity and diversity that affect the university's professional environment; and other matters affecting the staff environment.

1.6.9 Commission on Student Affairs

The charge of the Commission on Student Affairs is to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures affecting graduate and undergraduate student life and morale. Areas for consideration include: student relations with peers, staff, faculty, administrators, alumni, and the community; student organizations, social life, and recreation; employment, placement, and counseling; residential life, health, safety, and quality of student-related services; and other matters affecting student life.

1.6.10 Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies

The charge of the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies is to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures concerning on-campus and off-campus undergraduate academic matters. Areas for consideration include: library resources, admissions, academic progress, commencement, degree requirements, honor systems, study environment, in-honors programs, curricula, courses, advising, instruction, student honors and awards, financial aid, scheduling, registration, and other matters affecting the undergraduate student academic environment.

1.6.11 Commission on University Support

The charge of the Commission on University Support is to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures related to supporting the learning, discovery, and engagement missions of the university. Areas for consideration include: accounting, budget administration, purchasing, computing, communications, publications, physical facilities, parking, transportation, corporations, auxiliaries, development, institutional research, and liaisons with the Virginia Tech Foundation and the Alumni Association, and other related matters.

1.6.12 University Councils

1.6.12.1 University Advisory Council on Strategic Budgeting and Planning

The Advisory Council on Strategic Budgeting and Planning serves a primary advisory role for the university budgeting and planning process. It reports jointly to the president and the University Council. Areas for consideration include: monitoring the university planning and budgeting processes; participating in and advising on the development of biennial budgets, formulation of the university plan, development of university capital and facilities plans, and reconciliation of the plan and available resources; consulting on other budget and planning matters; addressing matters of policy relative to budget and planning appropriate for governance consideration and, in such instances, making recommendations to the University Council.

1.6.13 University Committees

University standing committees are those committees constituted on a continuing basis by the president on recommendation of the University Council to deal with matters of a university-wide interest. Each standing committee reports directly to one commission. The university standing committees are: Academic Support, Athletics, Building, Commencement, Computing and Communications Resources, Employee Benefits, Energy and Sustainability, Faculty Honorifics, Graduate Curriculum, Honor System Review Board, Intellectual Property, Library, Transportation and Parking, and University Curriculum Committee for Liberal Education.

The president also constitutes *ad hoc* and special committees as may be needed for consideration of problems of a non-recurring nature.

In addition, there are university operational committees constituted on a continuing basis and appointed by the senior vice president and provost, the vice president for administration, or one of the other vice presidents. These committees deal with matters of university-wide interest that fall primarily within the responsibilities of the appointing officers. Unless made the subject of specific legislation to the contrary, each university operational committee is constituted, charged, and staffed, as the appointing administrative officer deems appropriate. The secretary of the University Council maintains a record of university operational committee chairs and members. Approved minutes of meetings of university operational committees are maintained by each committee and by the secretary of the University Council so that they are accessible, as required or requested, to the University Council.

1.7 Faculty Senate

The purpose of the Faculty Senate is to create an effective faculty organization that can enter into partnership for shared responsibility and cooperative action between the faculty, staff, administration, and students in order to promote the general welfare of the university.

The membership of the Faculty Senate consists of elected faculty members. A faculty member is eligible to be elected to the Faculty Senate and to vote in the election of faculty senators if the faculty member holds: (1) the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor [this includes faculty in the clinical professor series, professor of practice series, and all ranks of instructor]; (2) a full-time and continuing appointment to the university; (3) an appointment or tenure in an academic department, or in the library, or as an extra-collegiate faculty.

Although otherwise qualified, those faculty members in administrative positions at the college level, the university level, or the library, and those faculty members studying for a degree at the university are ineligible.

Faculty Senate members, though uninstructed representatives of their constituents, have the responsibility to seek the opinions of their electorate. Having done so, they make decisions and vote on matters brought before the Faculty Senate according to their own reasoned judgment.

The functions of the Faculty Senate are:

- to establish within the laws applicable to the university an effective means for advising and responding to the university commissions, the University Council, the administration, and the board of visitors on university affairs;
- to express opinion on university affairs as the Faculty Senate deems appropriate and necessary;
- to participate in the formulation of academic and educational policies that concern more than one college, division, or center;
- to consider policies, programs, and other matters that the administration, college faculties, student organizations, and individuals of the faculty may propose;
- to afford avenues and procedures whereby communications within the university may flow freely, fully, and systematically;

- to help create, maintain, and protect a university environment conducive to the richest growth of scholarship, learning, teaching, research, service, and respect for human dignity and rights;
- to accept and share responsibility with the administration, staff, and students in all efforts to improve the stature and usefulness of the university; and
- to advise, respond to, and participate in the Faculty Senate of Virginia, thereby providing university faculty with a voice in matters of broader concern to faculty across the commonwealth.

The following standing committees aid the Faculty Senate in performing its functions: Committee on Reconciliation, Faculty Review Committee, and Committee on Faculty Ethics.

The Faculty Senate cabinet is comprised of the officers and representatives of each of the colleges and the library. It is concerned primarily with the general business of the Faculty Senate. The president of the Faculty Senate may create additional work groups and *ad hoc* committees, as necessary to address specific issues or concerns of the faculty.

1.7.1 Committee on Reconciliation

The Committee on Reconciliation is composed of eight tenured faculty members eligible for membership in the Faculty Senate. Faculty appointed to administrative positions with responsibility for recommending promotions, salary adjustments, and distribution of teaching, research, and extension assignments are ineligible for membership. The functions of this committee are to offer advice and counsel to faculty members who seek it, particularly in relation to disputes with immediate supervisors or university administrators.

The committee has a designated role within the grievance process to assist in resolving disputes that are eligible for consideration as a grievance if so requested by the faculty member. See section 2.14.2 for guidance on valid and ineligible issues for grievance that define the committee's purview in relation to the grievance process. Faculty members who wish to engage the assistance of the committee in the context of a potential grievance must submit the request concurrently to the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost and the chair of the Committee on Reconciliation within 30 calendar days of the time when the faculty member knew or should have known of the event or action that is the basis for the potential grievance. The senior vice president and provost will automatically grant a 60-day postponement of grievance timelines for the Committee on Reconciliation to attempt to resolve the complaint between the parties.

The Faculty Senate Committee on Reconciliation may also be consulted by faculty members concerning serious disagreements with immediate supervisors or other university administrators concerning issues that may not be eligible for consideration within the grievance process. In such instances, the committee may contact the relevant administrator to determine if there is an interest and willingness to explore informal resolution of the dispute. The Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost need not be notified to initiate discussions with the committee in such instances.

Cooperation and candor from all members of the university community are prerequisite to the successful functioning of the Committee on Reconciliation in investigating serious and delicate cases. Confidential information concerning personnel and academic issues may be shared with the committee. The committee keeps no written records and treats all matters with utmost sensitivity.

In conducting its work, the Committee on Reconciliation takes special measures to assure that participating members have no conflict of interest in the matter. In contrast to the Faculty Review Committee (see section 1.7.2), which has responsibility for formally investigating a grievance through hearings, calling witnesses, and collecting and assessing evidence prior to rendering its judgment, the Committee on Reconciliation operates more informally as a facilitator. It meets with the respective parties to determine if there is common ground for resolution of the matter, facilitating a solution that is agreeable to the principal parties and consistent with university policy and practice.

Generally the faculty member initiates the request for assistance of the committee; however, an administrator may seek the committee's involvement in resolving a dispute with a faculty member. Both parties to the dispute must agree to be participants in the reconciliation process. If no resolution can be reached, the matter reverts to formal review as part of the grievance process if the matter is eligible for such consideration.

1.7.2 Faculty Review Committee

The Faculty Review Committee (FRC) will include a minimum of two faculty members from each college and two each from the library and the extra-collegiate extension faculty. Additional members from colleges may be appointed in direct proportion to the colleges' representation in the Faculty Senate. The president of the Faculty Senate, in consultation with the cabinet, appoints the chair. The chair may be a member of the senate or a member of the Faculty Review Committee. Committee members, who are appointed by the Faculty Senate president in consultation with the senate cabinet, must, at the time of their initial appointment, have served on their college or equivalent promotion and tenure committee or in the Faculty Senate. Members may not serve on a university or college promotion and tenure committee and on the Faculty Review Committee simultaneously. In the event

that no eligible faculty members from a particular college or the library or the extra-collegiate extension can be identified who are willing and able to fill a vacant position on the FRC, the Faculty Senate president in consultation with the senate cabinet may appoint the appropriate number of tenured faculty members to complete the membership of the Faculty Review Committee.

The functions of this committee are: to provide faculty review of faculty grievances (see section 2.14) and to consider appeals in the promotion and tenure process when the provost does not concur with a positive recommendation from the University Committee on Promotion and Tenure (see section 2.8.5.2).

The Faculty Review Committee reports annually to the Faculty Senate cabinet on the number of cases handled, their disposition, and on the effectiveness of the review process.

Separate grievance procedures have been established for administrative and professional faculty and for special research faculty. See the relevant sections of the appropriate faculty handbook for a description of the appeal process.

1.7.3 Committee on Faculty Ethics

Purpose: The Committee on Faculty Ethics (CFE) receives and considers charges of violations of faculty ethics that abrogate the principles of ethical behavior set forward in section 2.7. The CFE also acts to promote knowledge of and adherence to the principles of ethical behavior.

The CFE is not intended to be used to seek remedies such as monetary damages. The CFE will not act when legal, mediation, or other proceedings have been initiated or are ongoing by complainants that render the CFE's pursuit of an investigation redundant or disruptive. The CFE will not act on matters that have been or should be referred for investigation and action to an administrative officer, supervisor, or another appropriately charged committee in accordance with university policies and procedures. Complaints concerning personnel actions taken by a supervisor are to be handled by the applicable grievance procedure. If ethical issues arise from, or remain unresolved following such proceedings, the CFE will be available to receive or consider charges of violations of the principles in section 2.7 of the *Faculty Handbook*.

Composition: The Committee on Faculty Ethics is composed of one faculty member from each college, one from the library faculty and one from the extension faculty with continued appointment. The president of the Faculty Senate with the advice of the senate cabinet appoints committee members. All committee members must have tenure or continued appointment. The senate

president designates one committee member to serve as chair. Voting members of the CFE serve a two-year appointment and are limited to serving two consecutive terms. A quorum of the CFE consists of two-thirds of the appointed members.

While the Committee on Faculty Ethics is not a legal body, conflicts of interest may affect members' judgment on a given case. All members of the CFE must disclose any potential conflicts of interest with regard to cases that come before the CFE. Decisions concerning recusal will be made by the individual member in consultation with the committee as a whole. In the event of a conflict of interest concerning the chair of the Committee on Faculty Ethics, the chair will step down from that position during the course of any discussion or investigation of that case. In such a situation, the president of the Faculty Senate will appoint an interim chair from within the current CFE membership. Decisions with regard to the chair's recusal from the committee itself will be made in consultation with the committee and the Faculty Senate president.

When the allegation is against an administrative or professional (A/P) faculty member without tenure or continued appointment, a special panel of five administrative or professional faculty members shall be selected to review the charges and hear the case, if appropriate. The chair of the Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs (CAPFA) will choose panel members from among the A/P faculty at large. The CAPFA chair may invite an experienced member of the CFE to serve as a non-voting member of the panel. All potential members will disclose possible conflicts of interest concerning their participation in the case.

Procedures: Anyone may bring incidents to the CFE by writing to the chair of the CFE. The CFE will decide if a violation may have occurred and may conduct investigations, as it deems appropriate. The CFE will inform those involved of its findings and the processes and rationale by which the findings were formulated as described in the CFE operating procedures. When it is determined that a breach of faculty ethics has occurred, the CFE's findings along with its recommendations, will be reported to appropriate administrative personnel including, when appropriate, the Faculty Senate president. Strict confidentiality will be maintained. The CFE operating procedures are available on the Virginia Tech governance website www.governance.vt.edu.

The CFE chair will provide a summary of its activities to the Faculty Senate annually.

1.8 Other Governance Organizations

1.8.1 College Faculty Associations

The faculties are formally organized as faculty associations in the colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Architecture and Urban Studies, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Natural Resources, Science, and Veterinary Medicine, as well as in the University Libraries and in the Virginia Cooperative Extension division. These associations have constitutions that designate the purposes of the association, membership, officers, election procedures, standing committees and their duties, and other organizational and procedural matters. The Pamplin College of Business vests similar rights and responsibilities on its faculty members through a less formal structure.

1.8.2 Staff Senate

The purpose of the Staff Senate is to create an effective staff organization that can enter into partnership for shared responsibility and cooperative action between the staff, faculty, administration, and students in order to promote the general welfare of the university.

1.8.3 Student Government Association

The Student Government Association (SGA) is the official representative body for undergraduate students. Popular elections for officers and senators of SGA are held annually each spring. Senators are elected within academic colleges to represent proportionate enrollment in each respective college. The student senate and house make up the legislative branch of the SGA. The representatives to the house are elected or appointed by student organizations across campus.

The executive officers, senators, and representatives of the Student Government Association are primarily responsible for involving students in the university governance process, particularly in areas concerning student life.

The Executive Committee of the SGA consists of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, speaker of the house, chief of staff, and president *pro tem* of the senate. The Executive Committee implements legislation, performs strategic planning for the entire organization, and executes SGA-sponsored student programs. The president, vice president, and other appointed executive officers of the SGA are members of the University Council.

Regulations with respect to students are contained in the undergraduate student handbook, *University Policies for Student Life*, which is available at www.judicial.vt.edu.

1.8.4 Graduate Student Assembly

The Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) is the representative body for graduate students. The graduate students of each department offering graduate work elect two members of the assembly. Members of the GSA are elected to serve on University Council, commissions, and committees.