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FACULTY GOVERNANCE

This chapter explains the relationships among Faculty Senate committees.

When the Faculty Senate assumed oversight of General Education in 2001, it created the General Education Committee (GEC) and five¹ Faculty Boards to oversee the program. The GEC and its Faculty Boards follow the “Faculty Governance of University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa General Education” document that was approved by the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Faculty Senate on December 6, 2000.²

The governing document aligns with the Faculty Congress and Senate Charter, which mandates faculty governance to ensure that the people directly involved with teaching and learning will make curriculum decisions. The Charter states:

The authority of the Faculty Congress and Senate on academic decision-making and academic policy development is derived from and consistent with Board of Regent’s policy Section 1-10.

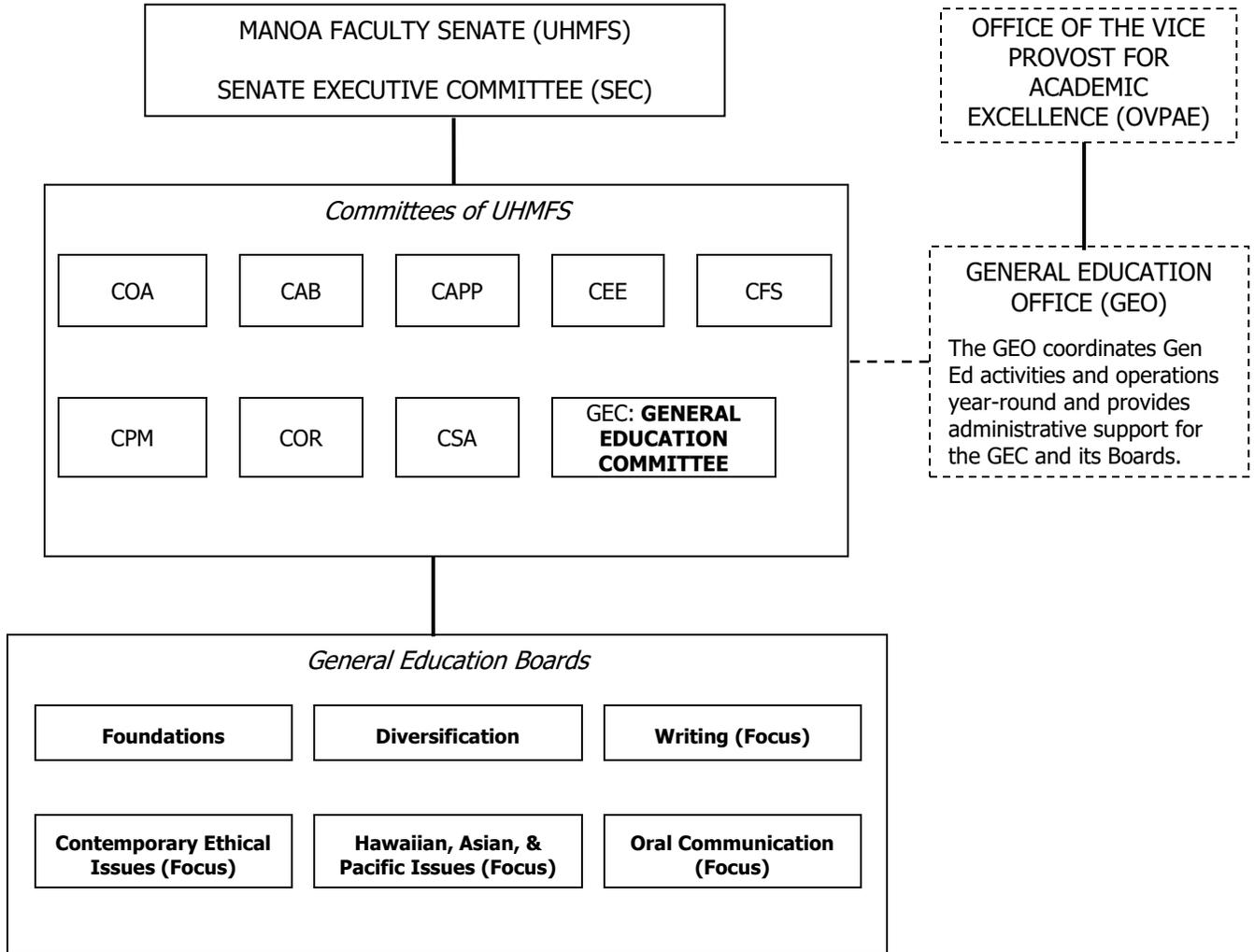
The governing document describes the General Education Committee as the committee that will develop policies and procedures for implementing and monitoring General Education at UHM, and that will undertake regular assessments of the effectiveness of General Education. The GEC and its subsidiary Boards will include faculty from diverse backgrounds, and undergraduate student representatives appointed by student government. Details of the make-up of the membership, terms of service, duties of the GEC, and the make-up and duties of the subsidiary Boards or committees are also spelled out in the document, which may be amended with approval of the Senate.

¹ The number of Faculty Boards grew to six with the creation of the Diversification Board in Fall 2019.

² The document has been modified several times since its approval, the most recent being in 2007. An annotated version of the most recent version of the governance document can be found on the GEC shared Google Drive.

The chart below shows the relationships between the Manoa Faculty Senate (MFS), its committees (including the GEC), the Gen Ed Boards, and other related Gen Ed units.

Organizational Chart



Experiences garnered within the two years following the General Education program’s launch indicated there was a need for the Faculty Senate to clarify its expectations of the General Education Committee and its Faculty Boards. A *Memo of Understanding* was subsequently approved April 2003 and updated in March 2021. The MOU provides guidance on faculty governance unit relations and operations.

Start of official document

This document updates and replaces the Memo of Understanding Regarding Relationships Between the Mānoa Faculty Senate/Senate Executive Committee, the General Education Committee, and the General Education Boards approved in April 2003 (and all previous agreements). It provides guidance on faculty governance, unit relations, and operations regarding General Education at UH Mānoa.

Memo of Understanding

Regarding Relationships Between the Mānoa Faculty Senate (MFS), the Senate Executive Committee (SEC), the General Education Committee (GEC), the General Education Office (GEO), the General Education (GE) Boards, and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (OVCAA)³

It is the mission of the MFS, the SEC, the GEC, the GE Boards, and the GEO to honor the spirit of the GE requirements in providing a quality educational experience for our students while working within the administrative structure. As a result, all parties support timely decision-making in order to accommodate academic schedules, administrative deadlines, accreditation timelines, and other practical issues that have to do with managing General Education.

The following principles are agreed upon in an effort to facilitate regular operations.

1. MFS is the campus authority on the GE requirements, including the definition of the different components, the associated hallmarks, and course credit requirements.⁴
2. The GEC has the responsibility and the authority to define the general procedures and processes by which the GE Program, including its requirements as established by the MFS and the Board of Regents (BOR), are administered and assessed. This requires close collaboration with the GEO and the GE Boards.
3. Proposals by the GEC to change GE curriculum requirements, including the definition of the different components, the associated hallmarks, and course credit requirements, shall be referred to the MFS via the SEC for review and consideration.
4. The GEC defines the general procedures and practices for regular assessment of the GE Program, as described in “Faculty Governance of University of Hawai’i at Mānoa General Education.” The GE Program assessment plan is implemented by the GEO and GEC. The GEC will summarize the GE assessment activities and outcomes in its annual report to the MFS.
5. GE at UHM underwent comprehensive program review in 2017 – 2018, and all parties involved in the process committed to an iterative five-year program review cycle going forward. The GEC, OVCAA, and GEO work together to implement the self-study and external review process, and

³ In Phase II of UH Manoa’s reorganization (effective July 1, 2021), the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs was renamed to the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Excellence (OVPAE).

⁴ The University of Hawai’i Board of Regents has final approving authority of the GE core [requirements](#).

the GEC is responsible for considering and composing the written responses to those recommendations, including one- and three-year progress reports.

6. The GE Boards are responsible for evaluating, approving, and removing GE course designations, as delegated by the GEC. GE Boards also determine the necessary content for course designation proposals. The GE Boards support the GE program by organizing teaching workshops, assisting with assessment, etc. The GEC will maintain regular and open communication with each Board via its liaisons or meetings with Board chairs to ensure effective collaboration and mutual support.
7. The GEO, an administrative office under the OVCAA, works with the GEC, the GE Boards, and many offices across campus and the UH System to implement the GE Program, including the requirements as established by the MFS and BOR, as well as the general procedures and processes defined by the GEC. The members of the GEO also serve as liaisons to various committees, conduct research on GE issues, track and collect data, and ensure continuity in discussions and decision making over time.
8. The GEO Director is a tenured faculty member appointed by the OVCAA with consultation and participation in the search process by the MFS (via the SEC), the GEC, and the GEO staff. The OVCAA will solicit feedback from the MFS (via the SEC), the GEC, GEO staff, and others as appropriate regarding the performance of the GEO Director to be used as part of the reappointment process. The GEO Director works closely with the GEC chair and vice-chair, who set the agenda and coordinate discussions for the GEC.
9. New appointments to the GEC and the GE Boards are recommended by the Committee on Faculty Service (CFS) and certified by the SEC. By March 1, the GEO Director and GEC determine the number of members needed for the following academic year and any specific requirements that must be met, and they convey that information to the SEC via the MFS Office. Members of the GEO, GEC, and GE Boards may encourage individuals with relevant experience and interest in serving on the Boards to submit their names to the MFS Office for consideration by the CFS. These names may be added to the list of Senators who express a desire to serve on the GEC or one of the GE Boards, as well as the list of other faculty volunteers compiled by the MFS. CFS will review the specific requirements for vacancies and the qualifications of all volunteers and make recommendations to the SEC for appointments to fill all vacancies and identify alternates for the next academic year by May. In the event that there are still vacancies after May 1 and the CFS is unable to work over the summer, the SEC will consider recommendations and make appointments to ensure all positions are filled in a timely manner.
10. The relationships between the MFS, the SEC, the GEC, the GE Boards, the GEO, and the OVCAA should be based on mutual respect, transparency and open communication. When making or proposing changes that may impact other parties of this MOU, there shall be consultation and discussion between each of the concerned parties in advance of a final decision. The BOR's policy on faculty governance shall be a guideline for these relationships.
11. If informal attempts to resolve disagreements among the parties to this MOU are unsuccessful, any appeals are made in writing to the SEC. The SEC will consult with relevant parties involved before making a decision.
12. All parties will review this MOU as needed, or at least every five years, and future changes to this MOU must be approved by all parties.

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