

a
GUIDE
to
GOVERNANCE
at
COA

by Kiara Coriano

I realized that if I wanted to make any actual change at this school I needed to be on a committee.

Linnea Goh '25

Why Getty

I like practicing governance, just for myself. As well as like, I think it's one of the best ways I can stay informed and know what's going on.

Ben Troutman '24

Involved?

I really like CCS (and other committees are probably similar) because it feels a lot more direct than higher levels of governance. It feels like one of the most direct ways you can have an impact here on campus, and I've learned a lot from working with both students and faculty.

Marina Schnell '25

I started participating in governance because I believe that students should be able to take part in things that concern them.

Kandi Grey '25

It gives me ownership of the community and what's happening at school. It's also a great way to socialize.

Charles-Olivier Levesque '23

I think it's amazing how much input students can have on this institution.

Olivia Paruk '24

I went to one ACM and I had some different ideas about how the meeting could have been run, so I went to Steering to bring my comments and then I never left.

Ways To Get Involved!

COMMITTEES

Most committees meet every week during Wednesday morning. The chair of the committee usually sends out location, time, and agenda for the meeting every week, usually on Monday or Tuesday! Each committee has a charter which gives the committee their purview; what the committee is responsible for working on and what actions they are allowed to take. Students are on almost every single committee and are encouraged to attend a meeting even if they are not a member of the committee!

Faculty Search

When there is an open position there are searches for a new faculty member. If you are interested in being on a faculty search committee, Ken Hill sends out an email to students at the beginning of every term to create a list of interested students. This list is given to the committee chair and is used as a starting point to get students on the committee. Committee chairs will also reach out to students to serve on the search. To be on the search committee, a student cannot be a first year and has to be in good academic standing.

FACULTY REVIEW

Every year there are usually 3 faculty reviews. Typically, students and faculty make up a review committee. This committee gets feedback from other students, faculty, and staff about the faculty member that is being reviewed. To get on a faculty review committee there is a formal and informal way. At the beginning of each term Ken Hill sends out an email to students to make a list of interested students. This list is given to the committee chair and is used as a starting point. Committee chairs will also reach out to students to serve on the committee. To be on this committee the student must be in good academic standing and cannot be a first year. Often there are not enough student volunteers.

All College Meeting

EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 1PM THERE IS AN ALL COLLEGE MEETING (ACM). STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF ARE INVITED AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND! ACM IS A PLACE TO BRING CHANGE TO THE COMMUNITY, SUCH AS BRINGING A POLICY, AND IS ALSO A PLACE TO BUILD COMMUNITY.

ALL COLLEGE MEETING

What happens at ACM?

ACM is a place for many things! Policies are brought, discussed, and voted on. Students, faculty, and staff also discuss important issues that are happening at COA, have presentations and updates about what is happening in the community and is a place for community building.

What Are Minutes?

Minutes are reported by standing committees at ACM. Minutes are where the committee chair updates the community about what took place and the actions the committee took during their meeting. In order for the committee's actions to be approved, they have to be reported to the ACM. Minutes can be challenged.

HOW TO CHALLENGE MINUTES:

Challenging minutes happens when the minutes are being reported out during ACM. Any decision made or action taken by a committee unless specifically delegated to the committee as part of its autonomous purview by the ACM through the committee's charter may be challenged by any member of the ACM. If a challenge is seconded, 5 to 10 minutes will be allowed to discuss the action, with a simple majority vote (excluding abstentions) following to determine if further review is warranted. If the majority favor no further review, the committee action stands as reported. If a simple majority of those voting favor a further review of the action, it is returned to the committee for reconsideration and possible revision.



The OPERATING Model!!!

THE OPERATING MODEL FOR ACM CAN BE FOUND ON COA'S WEBSITE. TO ACCESS THE OPERATING MODEL GO TO "COLLEGE GOVERNANCE" AND CLICK THE HYPERLINK THAT SAYS "POLICIES." THIS WILL TAKE YOU TO THE PAGE THAT HAS HYPERLINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND IF YOU SCROLL DOWN BELOW THE PHOTO, THE ENTIRE OPERATING MODEL IS THERE!

ANYTHING IN PURPLE COMES STRAIGHT FROM THE OPERATING MODEL

It is expected that only current and/or matriculated students and COA faculty and staff are voting members of the ACM.

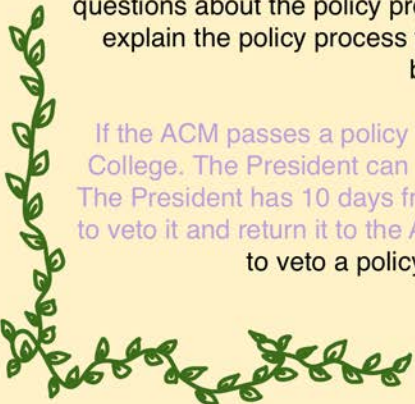
How to bring a PROPOSAL:

A proposal may come from either of two sources: a standing or ad hoc committee of the college or an individual or group of individuals in the community.

If the policy comes from a committee, the policy is shared with Steering first. If the policy is coming from an individual or group not through a committee then the proposal must be accompanied by a petition requesting that the ACM consider the proposal, and the petition must have 35 signatures from the campus community.

There is a process the policies must go through at the ACM. The policy process is on the COA website and the chairs of Steering, moderator, assistant moderator, or parliamentarian can answer questions about the policy process. Often, the moderator will also explain the policy process to the ACM when a policy is being brought!

If the ACM passes a policy it then goes to the President of the College. The President can accept the policy or veto the policy. The President has 10 days from the receipt of the adopted policy to veto it and return it to the ACM. It is very rare for the President to veto a policy passed by the ACM.



COMMITTEES

committees

There are 6 Standing committees
(+ many subcommittees)

STEERING ☒

The Committee is charged with promoting and overseeing governance at COA. The Committee serves as a liaison between the various entities of COA governance and its administration. In this role, it endeavors to facilitate and coordinate the work of other committees, groups, and individuals in the COA community, at all times respecting the different and interdependent roles that each of these entities has in self-governance. The committee coordinates the ACM, sets agendas and schedules ACMs, Dialogues, and Forums, makes available adequate background information for these meetings, chooses and trains moderators, evaluates the governance system on a regular basis, and serves as an educational forum for the community.

Projects from the past year that Steering has helped with:

The Landscape Policy

Revised Discarded Resource and Material Management Policy

The Energy Policy

Dialogues on the DEI strategic plan, the fiscal budget, the construction of new student housing, and parking.

Efforts to make governance transparent and accessible

PERSONNEL 👤

The Committee is charged with ensuring the quality of student life and recommending policies or services to meet student needs. In this role, it serves as an advocacy point for students. While the Committee might act as a liaison between the student body and the academic program, its primary area of purview is the non-academic realm: residential life, student activities, orientation, student judicial policies, as examples. The Committee also serves an important advisory role to the Associate Dean of Student Life with regard to administrative procedures within her/his area of administrative responsibility.

Worked on in the past year:

- Re-examining the staff manual
- Approving search materials for open positions
- Approving new policies per new state regulations
- Approving search committees

CAMPUS PLANNING AND BUILDING



CPBC is a standing committee of the All College Meeting (ACM). CPBC's purpose is to plan for, develop, maintain, and oversee property and facilities owned or rented by College of the Atlantic. We receive weekly updates from the Landscape Subcommittee, the Bike subcommittee, and the Community Energy Center.

In the past year, we have worked on approving space uses for senior projects, amending the parking policy, and have discussed issues such as construction priorities and on-campus composting. So far this year, we have been discussing accessibility, spread of roads and pathways, and space usage on campus

CAMPUS COMMITTEE FOR SUSTAINABILITY



CCS is responsible for overseeing the many aspects of sustainability at COA. CCS is responsible for updating and revising policies, creating new policies, overseeing sustainability projects, and works on education around sustainability. CCS is a student run committee.

Projects from the Past Year:

- Microplastic Filters on washers on campus
- Updating the Energy Framework
- Writing the Energy Policy
- Updating the Discarded Resources and Materials Management Policy

Projects in the Next Year:

- Writing a new Earth Day Policy
- Compost
- More sustainable lawns
- Updating the Sustainable Building Policy

STUDENT LIFE

The Committee is charged with ensuring the quality of student life and recommending policies or services to meet student needs. In this role, it serves as an advocacy point for students. While the Committee might act as a liaison between the student body and the academic program, its primary area of purview is the non-academic realm: residential life, student activities, orientation, student judicial policies, as examples. The Committee also serves an important advisory role to the Associate Dean of Student Life with regard to administrative procedures within her/his area of administrative responsibility.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Academic Affairs (AAC) is one of the most important and active committees at COA, and its an especially excellent place to see how community governance shapes the nature of what happens both inside and outside the classroom. While there is a lot of work to do, it certainly gives you a big picture perspective of events taking place all over campus. AAC has a broad role as we are tasked with overseeing and guiding all matters related to the academic curriculum, broadly conceived. This includes approving all new courses, recommending new faculty positions, arranging for classes to be taught by adjunct faculty, contemplating major changes in academic direction and programs, evaluating academic policies and procedures, setting graduation requirements, and monitoring the usage of academic spaces. Thats just a short list of the topics we discuss on a weekly basis. A lot of the daily "nuts and bolts" work we do is handled directly by our committee in consultation with the faculty resource areas. However, we often are tasked to collaborate with other committees and administrative offices, and that includes shepherding curricular related conversations as they move through various elements of college governance. In any given week you might find us reviewing a new course proposal from a faculty member, examining enrollment data for the upcoming term with the Registrar, considering changes to the internship requirements, discussing how to make advising more consistent, and figuring out which spaces to make available for dance and movement classes. Thats all in one week! Multiple that by 10 weeks, and you can see that spending one term on AAC will introduce you to many different facets of how COA operates.

SUB-COMMITTEES

INTERNSHIP

The Internship Committee is a subcommittee of Academic Affairs as both an academic requirement and its charge to award academic credit. The committee membership includes the director of the program, work study students who work in the office, faculty, staff, and students with or without internship experience. We review internship policies and review at times internship proposals a year for problem areas such as longer than normal work weeks, issues with student work performances, concerns about employers, etc. A real variety of work-related issues. The majority of our time is spent reviewing internship reports with students. We now do this through zoom and have students join us when we discuss their individual reports. This is the most fun to see the students who have completed internships and hear more about their experiences. Sometimes students are requested to revise or clarify their reports before their internship requirement is met.

Admission

COA's Admission Committee is tasked with reviewing all of the applications from prospective students to COA. We spend a lot of time (mostly during the winter term) reading, reviewing, and discussing student applications, and admitting students to form COA's incoming class. We don't publish committee minutes because our work, the reviewing of confidential student applications, is done in executive session.

Library

The Library Committee provides policy and planning advice to the Thorndike Library staff. The Committee serves as a primary link between the library staff and the greater COA community to ensure that optimal library services, collections and facilities are provided.

BIKE

We are the bike subcommittee! Our goal is to improve bike accessibility, promote alternative transportation modes, and cultivate a biking culture on campus. We are conducting bike registration, distributing abandoned bikes, and generating solutions for on-campus car parking. As an all-student subcommittee, we try to be fun, cooperative, and non-hierarchical.

EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

The committee is particularly important for those COA students who are working towards achieving teacher certification in Maine. Teacher certification students are supervised by the committee, with the final committee voting on whether to recommend students for certification to the Maine State Department of Education. Academic planning, as well as reviewing proposals for new Ed Studies (ED) courses to be offered by COA are also prioritized.

Recently, the committee has been working on the development of a new, internationally-focused Educational Studies Endorsement. This will cater to international students and those aspiring to work in an educational setting outside of Maine.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The Committee is charged with the allocation and distribution of the Student Activities Community Fund generated by the revenue from the student activities fees raised each term. The Community Fund supports ongoing classes, e.g. yoga, one-time events such as performers or film festivals, and student clubs and organizations, e.g. the Outing Club, the Life-Drawing Club. The SAC is charged with enriching cultural life on-campus in ways that encourage the community to come together and share those experiences in ways that are inclusive, educational, legal, and with an appropriate eye on risk-management.

Events In the Past Year and Coming Year

Two open mics per term

Haunted House

Halloween Costume Fashion Show Contest

Trip to the Corn Maze in Levant

Aurora Ballealis - Winter Dance

Concerts - Supported 2 so far this term

Community Show

Provide funds for Spanish Festival

Shopping/Outing Trips to places such as Bangor, Ellsworth, Blue Hill, Belfast each term

Shuttles to the Trampoline Park in Ellsworth

Landscape

The Landscape Subcommittee reports to the Campus Planning and Building Committee and supports the work of Campus Planning by augmenting efforts in research, discussion, planning, and policy issues related to the campus landscape. All are welcome to attend and participate.

Projects from the Past Year:

Updating the Tree Replacement Policy

Writing a new policy about future development on campus

Current and Future Projects:

Working on erosion and deposition issues on campus

Discussing the impact on the spread of gravel roads + pathways

Developing a new list of woody plants that should be added to the campus

Composting on campus

STUDENT MEETING

Student meeting ebbs and flows. There are periods of time where student meeting happens irregularly and usually pops up in reaction to issues that are happening here. There are also periods of time where the meeting happens on a regular basis and is a space to talk about issues at COA or to talk about anything else.

MUSEUM

The Museum Committee is the governing body of the museum. The committee, chaired by the museum director, makes decisions regarding the long range planning of the museum and provides input on museum exhibits, programs, fiscal and personnel matters, and physical facilities. The committee also works to ensure offerings of museum-related courses and other museum experiences in the curriculum.

