School of Education Academic Planning Council Self-Study report

Self-Study Review Committee: Gary Diffee (chair), Andrea Harris, James Wollack
May 11, 2021

Summary of Recommendations:
1. Improve communication to faculty and staff about the role that the APC plays in SoE governance, particularly explaining the specific roles and responsibilities of APC, Administrative Council, the Chair's Council, and the Programs Committee.
2. Better definition and articulation of the role that the APC plays within the program review process.
3. Bring into better alignment the APC's charge and the committee's operations.
4. Formalize the process of election of APC representatives in the SoE.
5. Work with CASI to implement a policy that ensures all eligible academic staff are included in elections for representation on the APC, and that takes into account the range of academic staff positions and content knowledge in the SoE.

Background:
FP&P requires that each Academic Planning Council conduct a review of itself once every five years, stating (FP&P 3.08 B.2.2): *At intervals which shall not exceed five years, the elected faculty members of each council shall review its structure and functions to assess its effectiveness as a faculty voice and its compliance with Faculty Policies and Procedures 3.08. The self-study report shall be submitted to the Dean, the faculty of the school or college, and to the University Committee.* The last evaluation of the School of Education APC was conducted in 2016. In February 2021, Dean Hess charged the review committee to conduct this self-study, including a charge to include; *"…a review of the recommendations in the 2016 self-study and a discussion of how those recommendations were addressed. It should include a description of the structure, role and functioning of the SoE APC and its relationship to other governance bodies in the School, and should make recommendations for changes needed to improve the role and functioning of the committee."*

1. Evidence Sources
A. Results of surveys. We surveyed individuals who have presented program proposals to the APC over the last 3 years. We also surveyed current and past (last 3 years) members of the APC. Finally, we conducted interviews with 4 individuals who presented program reviews to the APC over the past 3 years.

Survey questions were developed out of our readings of the SoE 2016 APC self -study, the SoE Policies and Procedures, the L&S 2016 APC self-study, the L&S Policies and Procedures, the CALS 2016 self-study, and the CALS Policies and Procedures. Through discussion of these documents, we designed survey and interview questions that focused on individuals' experiences with the APC and their familiarity with the role(s) of the APC in relation to other SoE committees. The survey results and the interview questions can be found in **Appendix A** of this report.

The survey of people who had presented at both Programs Committee and APC in the past 3 years indicated a lack of clarity regarding the roles of APC versus Programs in the review and approval process. People who had taken proposals through Programs and APC did not understand how their presentations

should differ in relation to the two bodies and expressed that there was significant overlap between the questions asked of them by Programs and APC in the process. Responses also showed that people felt positively about the feedback they received on their proposals at APC, and that the SoE APC process prepared them well to present their proposals to campus governance committees such as UAPC or GFEC.

The survey of current and former members of the APC indicated that the majority of respondents did not fully understand the role of APC versus Programs. Responses indicated that the understanding of how APC relates to the Administrative Council and the Chairs Council was better, but there was still a mixed level of knowledge of the differing roles of these bodies. APC members also conveyed that when they joined the committee, they did not always have a sufficient understanding of what APC does and how they should contribute to its duties, despite any orientation materials that may be provided to new members.

Overall, the strongest theme that emerged across all groups was a lack of understanding of the different roles played by the Programs committee versus the APC.

B. _Analysis of APC Agenda Items._ The 2016 Self-study included an analysis of APC agenda items, for purposes of helping to determine alignment between the stated purposes of the committee and the nature of the topics discussed. A similar analysis was done here.

The official charge to the APC, as provided in the APC 2020 Policies and Procedures document, identifies seven broad areas over which the SoE APC is responsible for providing advice to the Dean. These areas include the following:
1. Program reviews and the development or deletion of academic programs (e.g., majors, certificates, Ph.D. minors, etc.);
2. Strategic and long-term planning;
3. Budgetary planning and resource allocation
4. Programmatic decisions likely to affect promotion and tenure or the non-renewal of faculty;
5. The impact of programmatic decisions on diversity;
6. Provide feedback about academic proposals from other Schools/Colleges or UW System institutions; and
7. University or School policies or other factors that affect the school's ability to fulfill its academic mission.

Over the time period evaluated, and excluding procedural items such as approval of minutes, the APC discussed 62 different agenda items. Three-quarters of those items involved reviewing proposals for SoE academic programs (42) or Program Reviews (5). Strategic Planning consumed 15% of the agenda items (9). As a result, issues relating to promotion and tenure decisions and University or School policies/factors that affect our ability to fulfill our academic mission did not come before the APC, while issues relating to budget, academic proposals from other Schools/Colleges, and the impact of programmatic decisions on diversity each represented 5% of SoE APC agenda items[1].

C. Interviews with Dean's office. Interviews with Senior Associate Dean Carolyn Kelley and Dean Diana Hess were conducted. These interviews indicated that, from the Dean's perspective, the APC's advisory role is meant to provide a higher-level, "big picture" view regarding programs, whereas the Programs Committee's role is to review more detailed aspects of the proposed programs and changes. The LUMEN process asks the Dean's office to confirm whether the School has "the capacity and resources (financial, physical, instructional, and administrative) to meet the responsibilities associated with offering the program." The Dean's office considers APC input as crucial for confirming those resources; hence, the Dean's office considers APC to be an "Executive Board" for programmatic decisions.

2. Current structure and operations of the SoE APC.
A. *Membership:* Voting membership of the APC includes one faculty member elected from each SoE department and two academic staff members elected by the Committee on Academic Staff Issues (CASI). The Dean or their designee serves as chair of the Committee. Committee members' terms are for three years, with elections staggered among departments to maintain continuity. Department chairs are not required to serve as their department's APC representative but, in practice, for several departments (5 out of 10) the chair routinely serves as the department representative. For other departments, representatives are often asked by the chair to serve in this role rather than being elected by the department.

METHOD	DEPARTMENTS
Assigned by Chair	T&D, RPSE, ELPA, EPS, C&I
Chair and/or Assoc. Chair	Art, Dance, Kinesiology, CP
Elected by Dept.	EP

Although current APC Policy states that "...All academic staff in the SoE may vote for academic staff representatives in elections conducted by CASI..." it is not clear that all SoE academic staff are able to participate in this process. Discussion with CASI indicates that, in current practice, academic staff appointments to APC come from within CASI membership.

B. *Role of APC and relationship to other governance bodies in the School.* FP&P gives wide latitude to the role of the APC in School governance, mentioning only that "*...the dean shall consult with...*" the APC, and that the APC shall "*...advise the dean...*" on such matters as *"...program review and future development or contraction of academic programs within the school or college.*", *"...developing strategic*

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[1] Note that in all cases, the items relating to the impact of various programs on diversity were components of a larger issue that was counted in the strategic and long-term planning category. One-third of the strategic planning topics included a significant diversity component, even if "impact on diversity" may not have been the primary focus of the discussion.

plans and long-range planning for the school or college", and *"…any other factors relevant to the capacity of the school or college to fulfill its mission*."

Of the seven broad areas of responsibility identified in the School's APC 2020 Policies and Procedures (see above), responsibilities (1), (2), and (7) map most directly onto language from FP&P. Analysis of agenda items reveals a strong alignment between the actual operations of the APC and these items--(1), (2), and (7) -- from the APC charge. However, there appears to be a disconnect between other stated responsibilities of the committee and the actual topics discussed. Specifically, outside of program reviews, development or deletion of academic programs, and strategic and long-term planning, there is little attention paid in APC to the other matters in the SoE's APC charge. And while "strategic and long-term planning" comprised 15% of APC agenda items, given that the period covered by this review included a global pandemic, a complete transition away from in-person instruction, and a gradual transition back, the emphasis on strategic issues seemed relatively light, and raises speculation that these issues are, perhaps, addressed more comprehensively elsewhere within the SoE governance structure. The other SoE governing bodies that have the most direct relationships to the role of the APC are: The Administrative Council, The Chair's Council and the Programs Committee. As revealed in surveys and interviews with individuals who have presented program proposals at Programs and APC, confusion exists about the role of APC versus Programs. Furthermore, given that several APC responsibilities encompass issues that were not discussed by the APC, an opportunity exists to clarify the roles of each of these committees in SoE governance.

3. 2016 SoE APC self-study recommendations and actions:
The 2016 self-study made a number of recommendations for improving the function of the SoE APC, most relating to the structure and the membership of the APC and its relationship to the larger body called the Administrative Council (AC). These recommendations are listed below, followed by the response that has been made to each recommendation.

A. Hold APC meetings separate from the larger AC and create a smaller, dedicated APC, with 6-10 elected faculty members. **Response:** *This separation between the APC and the AC was made and the structure of the APC was changed to its current form. Although this change brought the APC into better compliance with FP&P, it may be worth evaluating how this separation is working from an Administrative Council standpoint, perhaps through a similar self-study of that body.*

B. Update the APC charge and create a policy document that provides APC members with information necessary for them to understand their role and responsibilities specific to this governance body. **Response:** *The charge and policy document has been created and is regularly shared with APC members along with meeting materials. Nevertheless, based largely on the feedback from our surveys, it appears as though APC members (and, those in the School who are tasked with presenting before the APC) do not have a clear understanding of the specific responsibilities of the APC, and how they may differ from those on the Programs Committee. One factor which may contribute to this confusion is that several of the responsibilities listed as part of the APC mission are topics that very rarely appear on APC agendas.*

C. Increase Academic Staff members to include different categories of representation. **Response:** *The number of academic staff members has doubled from 1 to 2. it is unclear what different "categories of representation" means or how this influences CASI's selection of APC representatives.*

D. Allow APC members to suggest agenda items, in addition to items added by the Dean and Associate Deans. **Response:** *Current policy makes it clear that members of the SoE community are free to suggest agenda items. Given the general lack of understanding of the role of the APC in School governance, it may be desirable to make the possibility of submitting agenda items to the APC more generally known.*

E. Create agendas that focus on issues where discussion is desired and create another mechanism for announcements and updates on ongoing initiatives. **Response:** Under the current structure, a*gendas generally now focus on items for discussion or action rather than on updates or announcements.*

F. Appoint one member to the committee who is familiar with campus diversity initiatives to ensure that consideration of equity and affirmative action policies are not overlooked in discussions. **Response:** *It is not clear what "familiar with campus diversity initiatives" means in this context. There is currently no part of the APC membership policy that calls for this.*

G. Invite the Chair of SoE Programs Committee to serve as an ad hoc member to create easy communication channels between the APC and the Programs Committee. **Response:** *Currently this continuity of communication is accomplished by the fact that the Senior Associate Dean sits on both committees.*

H. De-couple APC membership from department chair-ship **Response:** *Although changes to APC structure initiated by the 2016 report made it possible to de-couple APC membership from department chair-ship, it is clear that many departments choose to continue to have the chair serve as the APC representative, perhaps because, in many cases, department chairs may be in the best position to represent the views of their department faculty and staff. However, this should be a decision made by department vote and reviewed regularly by the department, in context of the information that a Chairs' Council also exists.*

I. APC members should serve staggered 3-year terms (in keeping with the norm in other schools and colleges) to ensure that no more than 33% of the council would turn over in any given year. **Response:** *Current APC policy calls for such staggering of APC member elections. While having the department chair serve as APC representative may hold some advantages for departments, it is noted that this may complicate the 3-year APC terms if there is mismatch between the APC representative term and the department chair term.*

J. Hold elections for APC membership would ensure that individuals serving on APC have a vested and specific interest in APC participation and would bring the SoE APC into compliance with FP&P. **Response:** *While the election process for APC representatives is spelled out in current APC policy, it is clear that many departments are using other means (appointment by chair, chair serves by default, etc.) to select their APC representatives. Faculty representatives to APC should be elected by their departments, even if departments choose to elect department chairs into this role.*

4. Summary and Recommendations

We conclude that the structure and function of the SoE APC is fulfilling the mission of the APC as outlined in FP&P 3.08 to provide advice and consultation from the faculty and staff to the Dean regarding Program development and strategic priorities for the School. However, there are a number of opportunities for improvement in the structure and function of the APC that could make it more effective.

In order for the APC to be more effective as a voice for faculty and staff in the School to "advise and consult with" the Dean, it is crucial that faculty and staff in the School better understand that they have this voice. Recommendations below are meant to foster better understanding of the role of the APC by faculty and staff in the School.

1- Better communication to faculty and staff about the role that the APC plays in SoE governance. In particular, the specific roles and responsibilities of APC, Administrative Council, the Chair's Council, and the Programs Committee should be clearly articulated (possibly developing a chart that describes the interaction between these committees and the types of issues that are discussed with each). For overlapping areas that are addressed by multiple committees, it would be helpful to elaborate on the nature of the contributions expected of each committee, so as to ensure that the committee members and those bringing items to the committee understand how to prepare and to contribute to the governance process to best serve the School.

2- Better definition and articulation of the role that the APC plays within the program review process. In particular, we believe that all participants would benefit by clarifying the basis for the APC's vote of approval, the nature of the feedback the APC is expected to provide to the Dean and the program, and what responsibility, if any, the department/program has to take action on behalf of feedback from the APC.

3- Bring into better alignment the APC's charge and the committee's operations. There are multiple ways in which this might be accomplished, including (a) eliminating from the charge responsibilities which are adequately addressed elsewhere within the SoE; (b) expanding the APC agendas to allow discussions across the full range of topics currently included in the charge, if it is advantageous for all topics to be addressed by a single body; or (c) some combination of (a) and (b).

4- Formalize the process of election of APC representatives to ensure that departments and APC members are aware of their role as a voice for faculty and staff in the School. Although the process of APC elections was articulated in the APC Policies and Procedures document approved in October 2020, there is still wide variability between departments in how their APC representatives are selected. It should be made clear that the department should formally decide if they want to have the department chair serve as their department representative, and if not, the department should elect an APC representative from their department rather than having this individual be appointed by the chair. This would provide departments a regular opportunity to discuss the role of the APC in the School.

5- Work with CASI to implement (with modifications, if necessary) a process by which eligible academic staff representatives to the APC are elected by the entire SoE academic staff, rather than being appointed from CASI members. The 2020 Policies and Procedures articulates one such policy. We recognize that no two people can truly be representative of all SoE academic staff; however, we further recommend that the policy include a mechanism to ensure that, over time, the academic staff committee members represent the diversity of academic staff roles and responsibilities and disciplinary knowledge.
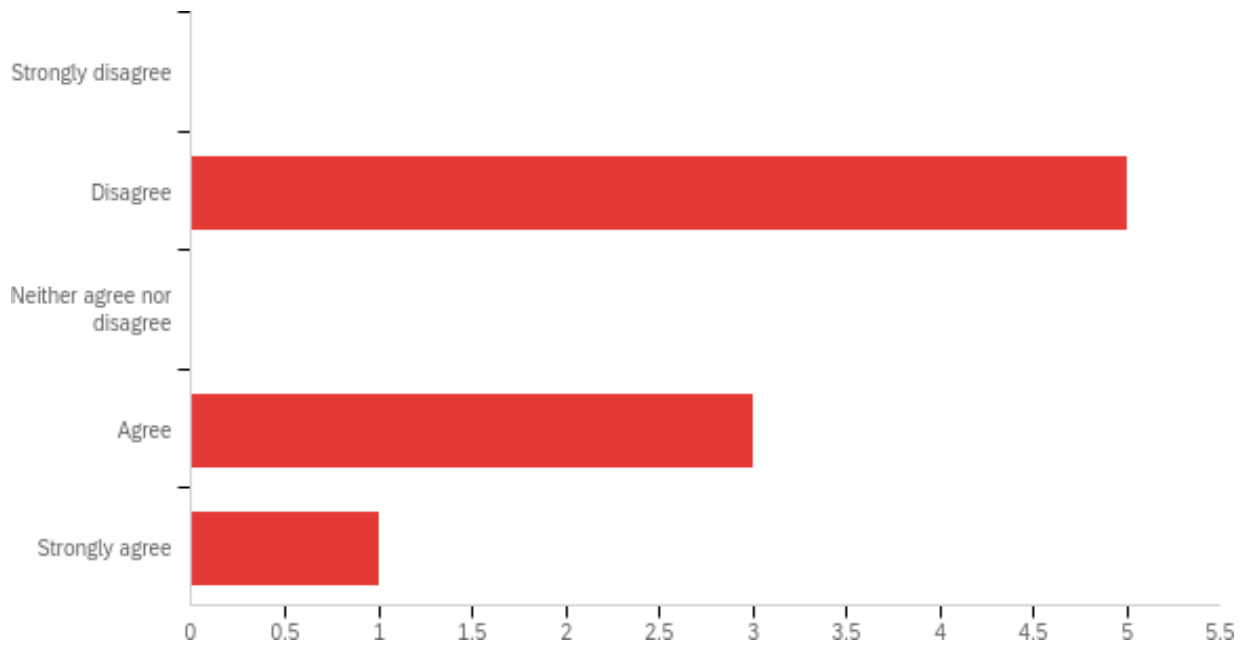
Survey of individuals presenting to APC 2018-2020

April 19th 2021, 8:04 am MDT

Q1 - Prior to presenting to the SoE APC, information about the SoE APC's role in the program review/approval process was shared with me that helped me to prepare for the meeting.

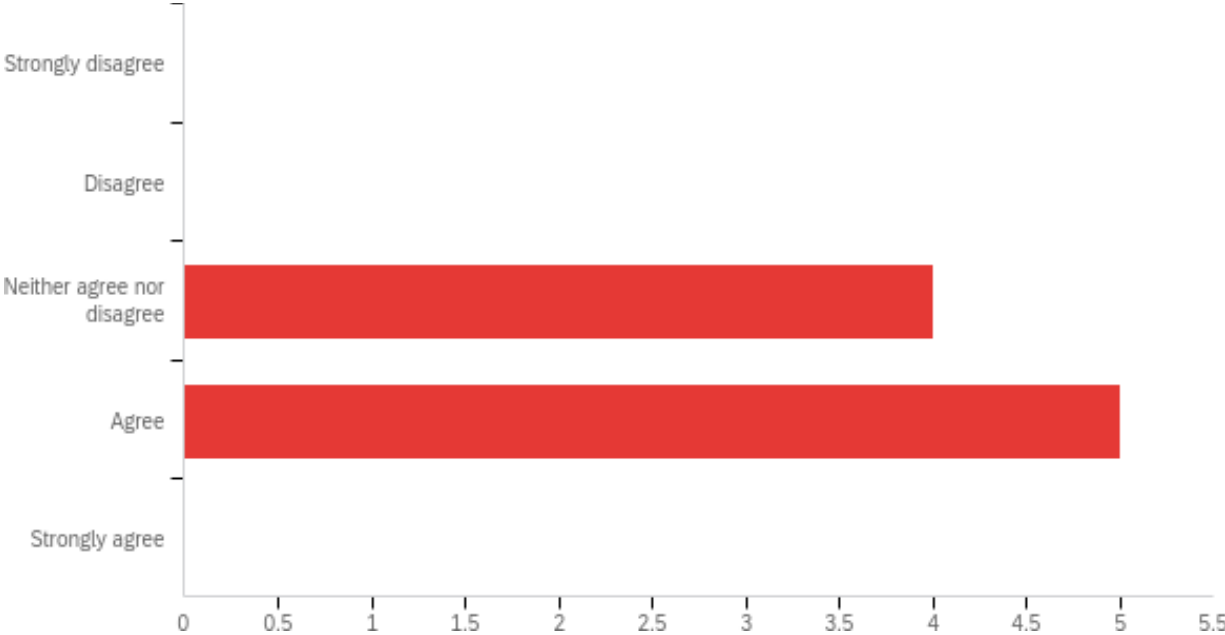| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Prior to presenting to the SoE APC, information about the SoE APC's role in the program review/approval process was shared with me that helped me to prepare for the meeting.	2.00	5.00	3.00	1.15	1.33	9

Q2 - The presentation(s) that I made for the SoE APC emphasized different aspects of my proposal than the one(s) I made for the SoE Programs Committee.
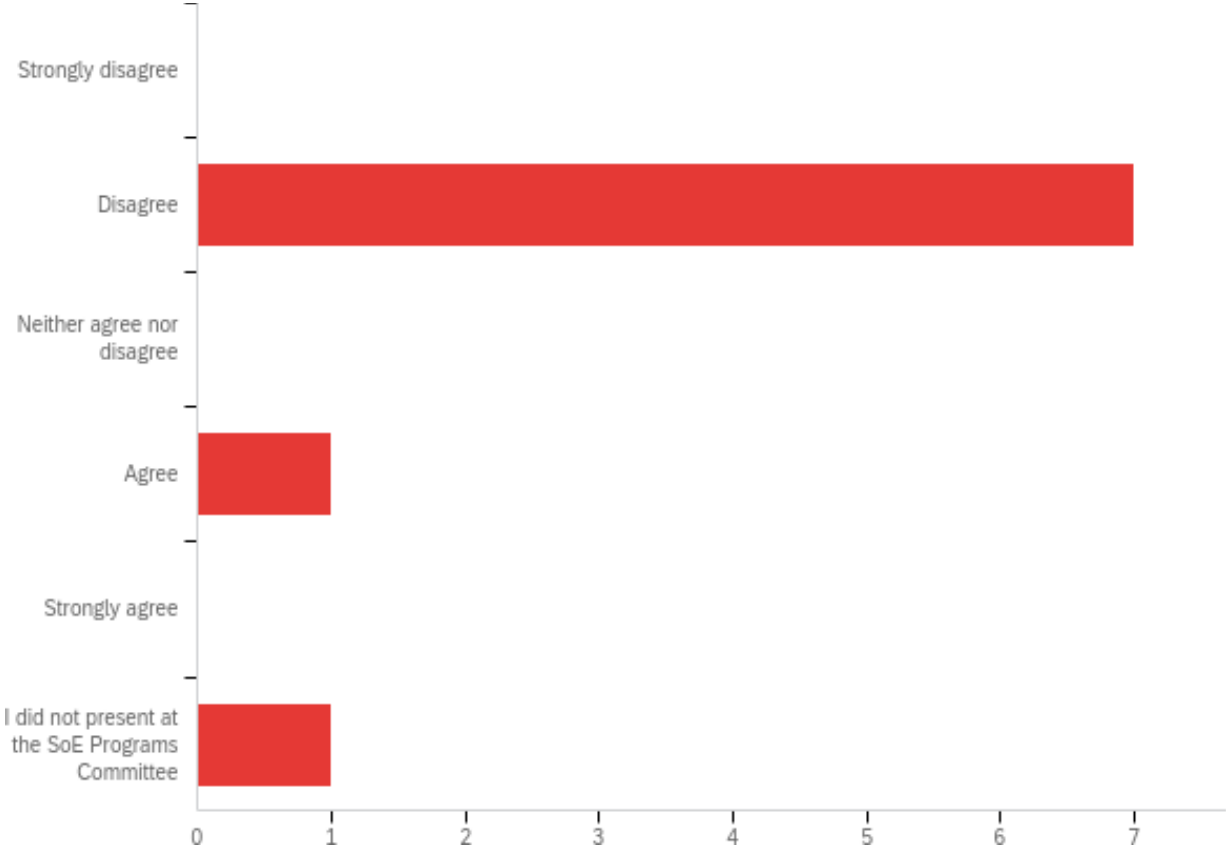
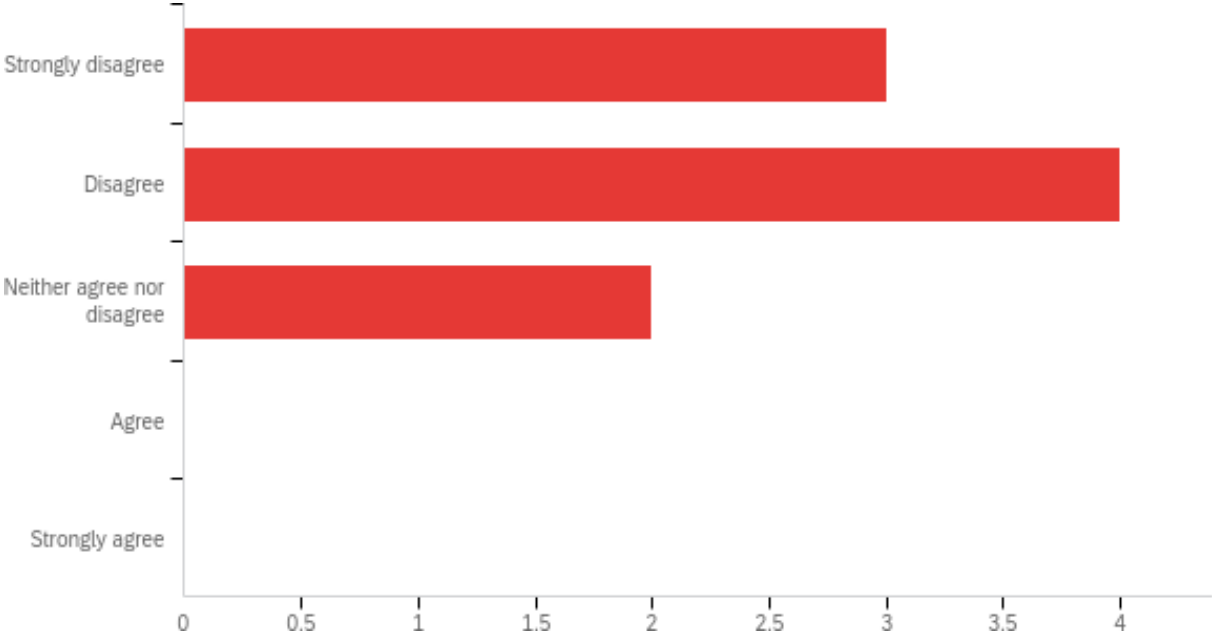| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	The presentation(s) that I made for the SoE APC emphasized different aspects of my proposal than the one(s) I made for the SoE Programs Committee.	2.00	6.00	2.67	1.33	1.78	9

Q3 - The questions and discussion at the SoE APC meeting(s) differed substantively from those at the SoE Programs Committee.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	The questions and discussion at the SoE APC meeting(s) differed substantively from those at the SoE Programs Committee.	2.00	6.00	2.67	1.33	1.78	9

Q4 - Feedback from the SoE APC helped to improve the quality of proposal(s) brought by my department.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Feedback from the SoE APC helped to improve the quality of proposal(s) brought by my department.	3.00	4.00	3.56	0.50	0.25	9

Q5 - Campus-level governance committees (e.g., UAPC, GFEC) raised issues which I believe ought to have been identified first by the SoE APC.
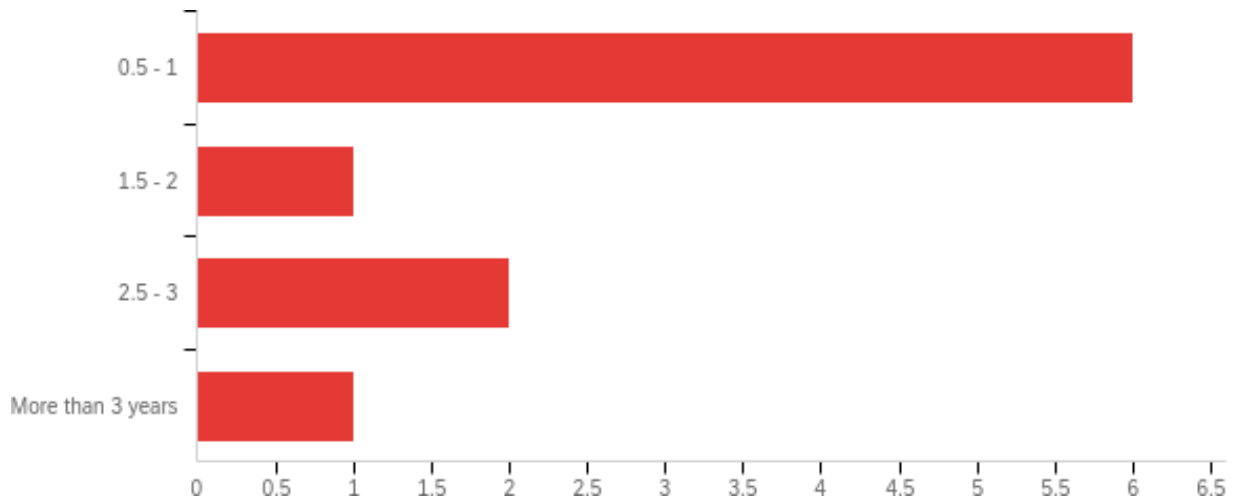

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Campus-level governance committees (e.g., UAPC, GFEC) raised issues which I believe ought to have been identified first by the SoE APC.	1.00	3.00	1.89	0.74	0.54	9

Q7 - Please feel free to provide any additional information to help us better understand your ratings.

Exceptional support from Elizabeth Jach, Maddie Sychta, and Carolyn Kelly in advance of meetings was essential to the success of our proposals. Committee feedback seems to vary but is mostly constructive.

## Q1 - By the end of this academic year, for how many years will you have served on the SoE APC?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	By the end of this academic year, for how many years will you have served on the SoE APC?	1.00	4.00	1.80	1.08	1.16	10

Q2 - During my time on the APC, I feel that I developed a sufficient understanding about the role that the APC plays in the School.
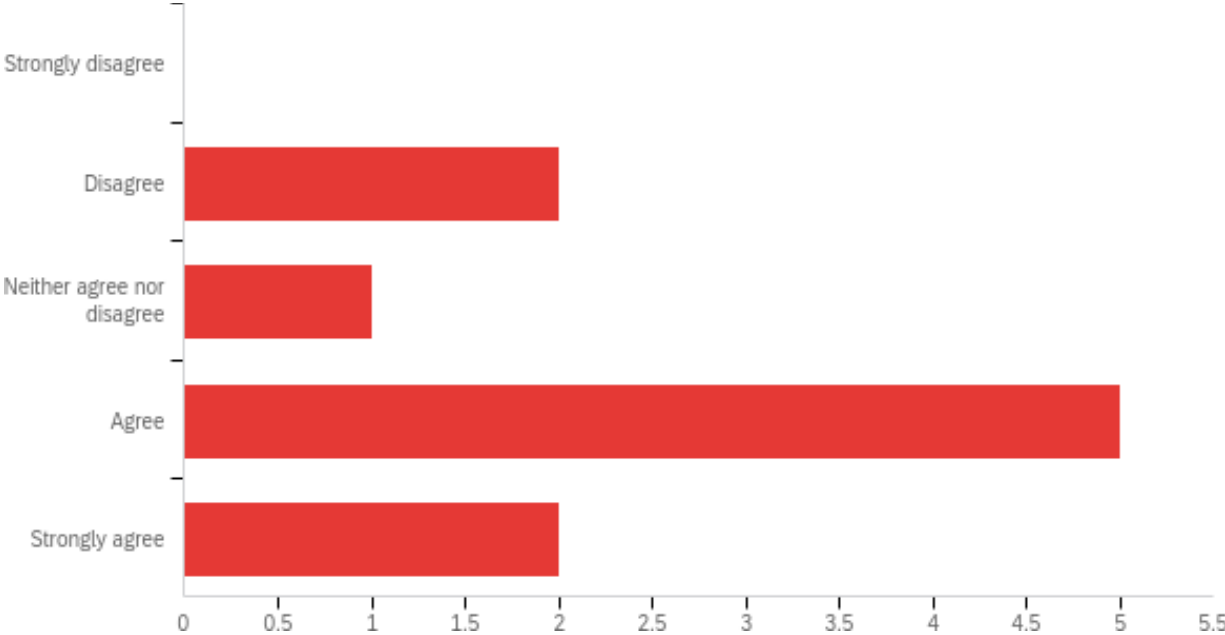
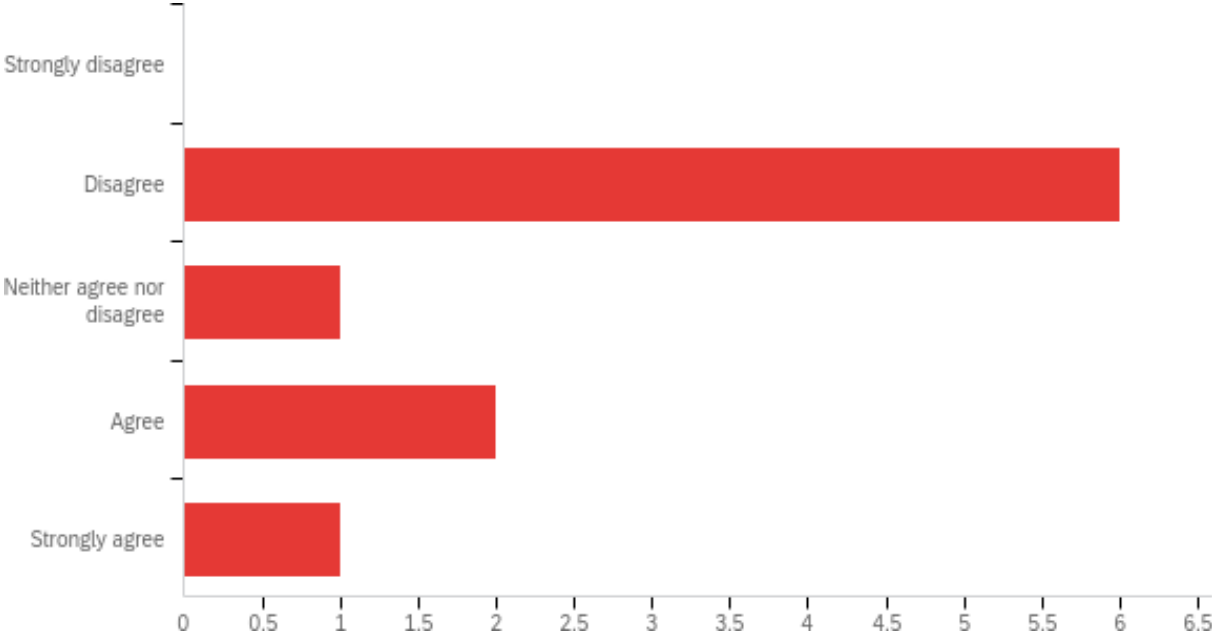| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	During my time on the APC, I feel that I developed a sufficient understanding about the role that the APC plays in the School.	2.00	5.00	3.70	1.00	1.01	10

Q3 - When I joined the APC, the introductory/orientation material provided to me gave me a sufficient understanding of how I could best contribute to the duties of the APC.
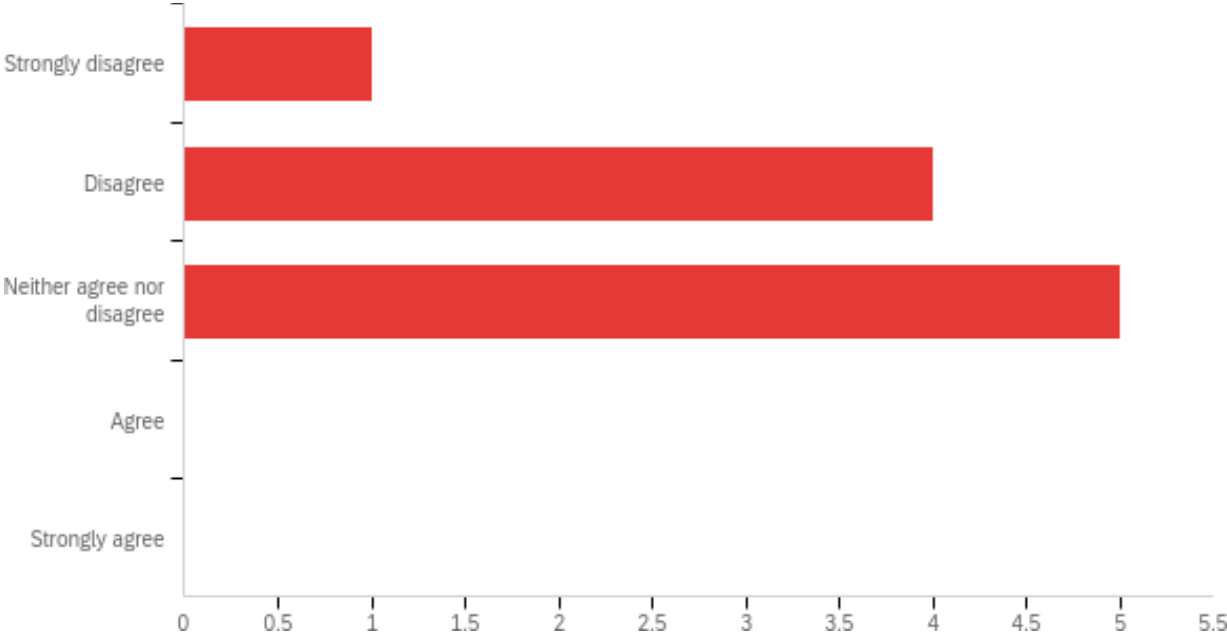
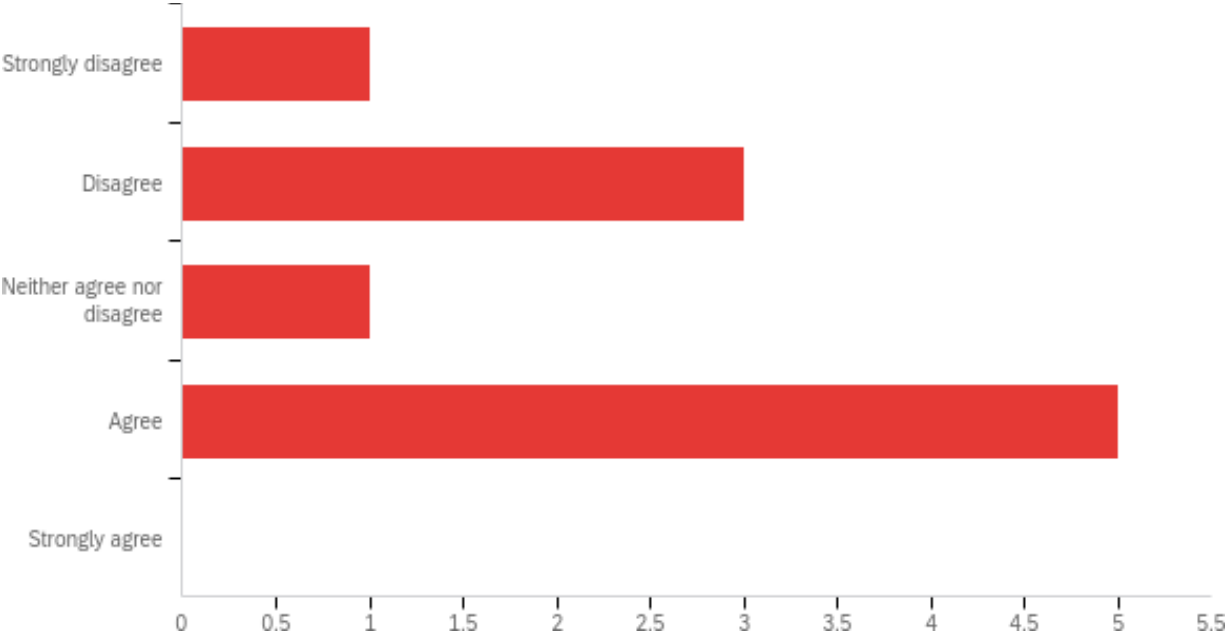| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	When I joined the APC, the introductory/orientation material provided to me gave me a sufficient understanding of how I could best contribute to the duties of the APC.	1.00	3.00	2.40	0.66	0.44	10

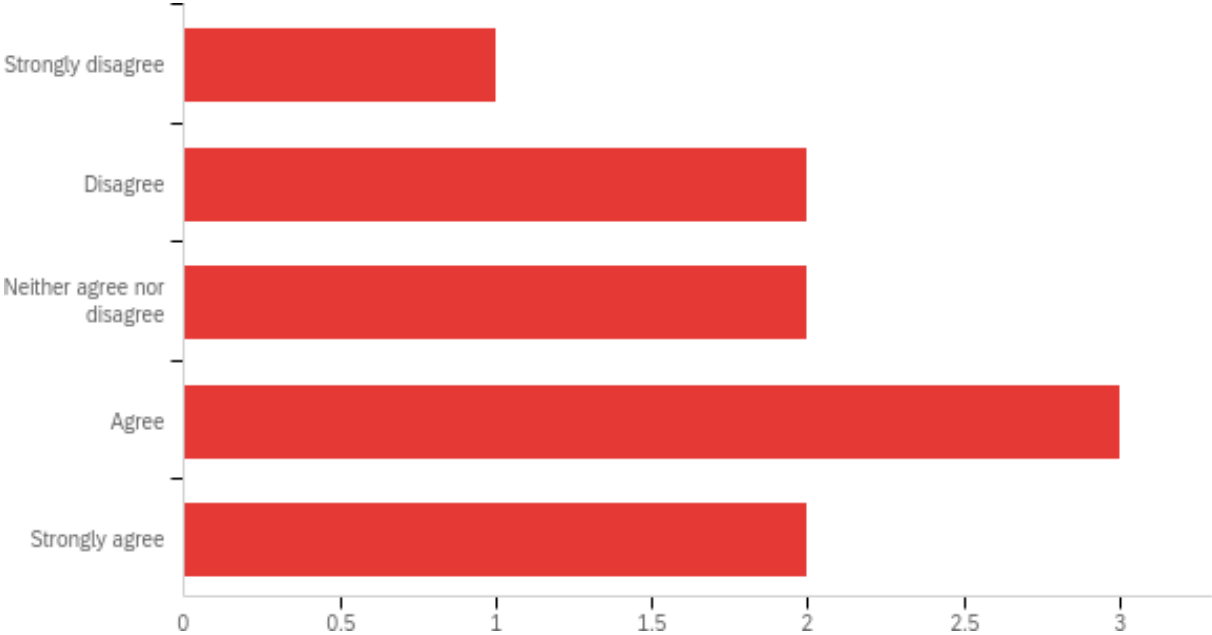**Q4 - I feel confident in my understanding of how the APC works in relation to the Programs Committee.**

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	I feel confident in my understanding of how the APC works in relation to the Programs Committee.	2.00	5.00	2.80	1.08	1.16	10

Q5 - I feel confident in my understanding of how the APC works in relation to the Administrative Council.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	I feel confident in my understanding of how the APC works in relation to the Administrative Council.	1.00	4.00	3.00	1.10	1.20	10

Q6 - I feel confident in my understanding of how the APC works in relation to the Chairs Council.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	I feel confident in my understanding of how the APC works in relation to the Chairs Council.	1.00	5.00	3.30	1.27	1.61	10

Q7 - Please feel free to provide any additional information about your term of service on the APC.

Honestly as a 1st year Dept. Chair - I am not sure what is going on.

I haven't done what I should do to try to clarify what the APC is meant to do and how it relates to other committees, but I will also say that I don't think its always clear how it relates (or doesn't) to other bodies. Because of this, its also a little unclear how to think about AC/APC/Programs service and how to think through who should be appointed to these different bodies and communicate them to departments. I am a chair right now and have, during my chair time, served and not served on AC/APC. Though I'm not entirely sure of what I am about to say, I feel like maybe it would be good for chairs to be expected to serve on AC and APC--in part because I don't honestly feel like I get to know fellow chairs very well, and in part because these big program decisions probably should have regular chair feedback.

I don't recall receiving any introduction or orientation materials. I just learned what was going on by osmosis. However, my experience was a very positive one--I learned a lot about how the SoE functions, met a lot of people who I otherwise would likely not have met, and made some valuable connections to people and their work.

Questions asked of individuals presenting Program Reviews to APC 2018-2021

Q1 - It was clear to me which pertinent aspects of the program review needed to be discussed with the SoE APC.

Q2 - The process of discussing with, and receiving feedback from, the APC added value to the review process for our program.

Q3 - Please briefly summarize your understanding of the role that the SoE APC plays in the program review process.

Q4 - Please feel free to provide any additional information to help us better understand your experience with program review at APC.